

Did you miss the Grad Ring?
Life Group Topic #9- March 8

WELCOME: (15 minutes)

- What was your favorite subject in high school?

WORSHIP: (15 minutes)

Use whatever means possible to turn the group's attention to the wonder and majesty of our God- including music, prayer, meditation on the Psalms, and other art forms.

WORD APPLICATION: (45 minutes)

Briefly read or paraphrase the following topic. Note that today the application questions are embedded in the text.

Dr. Katrina Firlik provides a glimpse into the training of a brain surgeon in her book, ANOTHER DAY IN THE FRONTAL LOBE...in one chapter she shares a story from the last year of her residency..

I walked into yet another examining room...a brand-new consult from out of town; 18 years old, cerebral palsy, spasticity. Okay, okay, I've seen this before, I just needed to get a good history before my supervisor walks in. Efficiency is key. I looked at the patient for a second: very skinny, special wheelchair, arms contracted, head support in place, mouth hung open. It was clear I wasn't going to get the story from him, so I turned to the parents, my back toward the patient, and started to take down the history...

When my mentor walked in, I cringed...He sat down on the examining table, the only seat left in the cramped room. After introducing himself, he surveyed the compact scene—the patient, the parents—and then focused his gaze back on the patient. After what seemed like several, almost uncomfortable, quiet seconds, he looked the patient in the eye and asked, “So, when did you graduate from high school?” The young man’s face lit up like I had no idea it could. My mentor had noticed something I had missed. The patient was wearing a large high school ring, so large that it looked a little silly on his bony finger. His body, far more than his mind, had borne the brunt of his cerebral palsy. He was a proud, beaming high school graduate, who used a specialized computer to help him communicate. For the remainder of the visit I sat in the corner, dunce-like, humbled by the enormity of this ring now staring me in the face.

1. **Do you ever find that you miss things? Give examples from your life this week** It is almost as if you are blind until those things are pointed out to you. That is never truer than of how we view people.
2. **On what basis do you tend to assess value to people? How does God evaluate people?**

John waited 30-40 years to write his gospel. He was moved to write by the Spirit of God and he brings years of percolation...years of thinking over the events of being with Jesus.

His presentation of Jesus and how he dealt with people...how He encountered them, is a lesson in really seeing things.

John 1:10-13 pictures things from God and Jesus' perspective...*He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.* Jesus came and was not recognized by the people He came for. They actually met him...walked into the examining room and didn't see the grad ring.

3. If the world does not recognize Jesus for who He really is, who do they typically recognize him to be?

Nicodemus came to Jesus, attracted by the miracles that Jesus did and viewing him as a teacher. But Jesus came as a Saviour and anyone's first encounter with Him will always be meeting Him as Savior...(John 3:1-8)

4. (Read John 3:1-8) Consider your contacts and friends who do not recognize Jesus for who he is. Why is it so difficult for them to recognize Him as Savior?

*There is a condition of the human body, known as **MYASTHENIA GRAVIS**, in which the muscles of the body cannot respond to the signals being sent from the brain. In the human body the brain normally originates the signal for a muscle to expand or contract. The signal is sent to the muscle through a nerve and is received in the muscle by an apparatus known as a motor-end-plate. In the condition of myasthenia gravis the motor-end-plate is missing. Consequently, the signal is sent to the muscle, but is never received. Because it is not received, the muscle does not respond, and because the muscle does not respond it eventually withers away and dies. **In the human system, the spirit was meant to play the part of the motor-end-plate. It was meant to receive God's signals but sin destroyed the connection.** James Montgomery Boice...THE GOSPEL OF JOHN...236*

Nicodemus needed to be born again...he needed life in his spirit. As we look at people in our sphere of influence, they are the ones who, because of death in their spirits don't seek God. Jesus came and they didn't recognize Him. We all need revelation...

5. Who are some of the people you know who have spiritual Myasthenia Gravis?

6. What part can we play in freeing the "motor-end plates" of those we love in order that they would recognize God's signals to them?

7. If you could chart your own heart, how sensitive or how callous are you to receiving the signals of God in your own spirit? What can we do to help each other remain sensitive?

WITNESS: (15 minutes)

This section is a vision-casting time designed to get the group strategizing and making concrete plans towards reaching outward to a lost world. Relational outreach always has the goal of ultimately enfolding those we reach into the Life Group.