



“God > My Entropy”

2 Corinthians 3-4 Small Group Plan

Entropy

noun - en·tro·py [en-truh-pee]

from the German Entropie (1865)

The amount of energy not available for work. The degree of disorder or uncertainty. A process of degradation or running down.

What is indifference? Etymologically, the word means “no difference.” A strange and unnatural state in which the lines blur between light and darkness, dusk and dawn, crime and punishment, cruelty and compassion, good and evil ... It is so much easier to look away from victims. It is so much easier to avoid such rude interruptions to our work, our dreams, our hopes. It is after all, awkward, troublesome, to be involved in another person’s pain and despair ... In a way, to be indifferent to that suffering is what makes the human being inhuman ... Indifference elicits no response. Indifference is not a response. Indifference is not a beginning; it is an end ... not to respond to their plight, not to relieve their solitude by offering them a spark of hope is to exile them from human memory. And in denying their humanity, we betray our own. Indifference, then, is not only a sin, it is a punishment.

— From *The Perils of Indifference* by Elie Wiesel

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- What is most likely to let the air out of your spiritual tires?
- Where does discouragement begin?
- How does Revelation 3:14-16 help to define indifference?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

— Barriers Are Removed —

2 Corinthians 3:12-14

¹² Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. ¹³ We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. ¹⁴ But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

- What in your religious past has made your faith sluggish and “dull” (v. 14)?
- Describe the source of your “hope” (v.12).
- How does “hope” bring “boldness” (v. 12) and how can we keep our boldness from becoming arrogant?

— Freedom Is Experienced —

2 Corinthians 3:15-17

¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

- Why is Paul so careful to highlight the “Spirit of the Lord” (twice)?
- How does **MY** “turning to the Lord” work in partnership with **HIS** “Spirit” to bring about “freedom”?

— Transformation Begins —

2 Corinthians 3:18

¹⁸ And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- Why did God say that we are **being** transformed instead of saying that we **are** transformed?
- How would you describe the life-long experience of our transformation? How does it happen?

— Life Overcomes —
2 Corinthians 4:7-10

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

- Living life is described here as being “hard pressed” “perplexed” “persecuted” and “struck down.” How does God’s “all-surpassing power” (v. 7) help us to overcome all the pressure?
- Why does Paul say it should be absolutely clear that the power in our life “comes from God and **not** from us” (v. 7)?

— Hope Wins —
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- What is the difference between “what is seen” and “what is unseen” (v. 18)? What is Paul describing here?
- Why is one described as “temporary” while the other as “eternal” and what does it mean to “fix our eyes” on one or the other?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- What areas of your life have seen the most “transformation” in the past year?
- What areas have been more difficult for you to give to God?
- Close by asking God to help you to have a life open to his Spirit and the transformation he can bring.