

'Tweeners

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"Be Kind"

Icebreaker: How do you like your eggs?

What to Expect:

- Hardship, difficulty, and strife. At least that is what many of us have come to expect from life. Even sprinkled with good times, life can seem burdensome and difficult. But then we meet Jesus, who promises (and fulfills) to ease the burden of life, to make the path straight. But His message is not just for us...

Texts for Discussion:

- Read **Matthew 5:13-16** (try the Message version and compare it to another translation)
 - Jesus, preaching to a large number of people, is addressing some of the "need to know" about our place in the universe.
 - What do you think about some of the things Jesus mentions here?
- Read **John 8:1-11**
 - The woman caught in adultery is a common story if you have been around church for any length of time.
 - How good do you think the woman felt, knowing she was guilty, but that she had been pardoned by Jesus?
 - How good does it feel for us to be pardoned?
- Read **Romans 1:28 - 2:4**
 - We're coming into the middle of a rant from Paul. Just as in **John 8**, Paul in **Romans** is expressing the reality we often encounter: a world not only full of sin, but actively against God.
 - Worse, this world lies and says that God is against us from the beginning: an attempt to add more burdens.
 - What does Paul say about God's character in regards to our behavior? Are you comforted by His kindness or intimidated by His judgement?

Going Further:

- If you would like further reading, the book of **Romans** is an excellent place to start. It is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the churches and people in Rome which was the cultural and political center of the western world at that time.
 - Paul covers a wide range of topics, but consistently points his audience (and us) toward Jesus for the answers to what "ails ya".

Going Deeper:

- Are there any areas in your life that you feel condemned or burdened by the world?
Things that you have done or have been done to you that you carry the weight of?
 - What do you think God would say to your trials?
 - What do you think God wants to you right now?

Prayer: Collect prayer requests from the group and pray out loud for each of them.