

PATHS AND MY SHOES

Guidelines for group leaders:

Preparation:

You may use this idea or one of your own: depending on the room you use or area for your group, hang crepe paper streamers from the door or something that will grab their attention and curiosity (this is for an illustration when you come to the group time: God used the burning bush with Moses and the man (Prince of the Lord of Hosts) with Joshua to get their attention. He wanted to see if they would be drawn aside. You can ask them about what “grabbed their attention” when they arrived. During the group time: I related on how before God changed their course of action/their path, He first got their attention and then once they did, He then told them to take off their shoes...they were on holy ground. This was all done BEFORE He told them the next path they were to take.

I also had little plastic shoes (I got at the Dollar store...little shoes that were for baby showers) and placed in each shoe a strip of paper with the Scripture reference Exodus 3:5 and Joshua 5:15 for them to take home as a reminder. I had them placed on their chairs. You may distribute as you desire if you use this.

The first part of this study is designed for them to spend alone to fill out the information/Scriptures (a self study) up to the group time. As they come together as a group, a good discussion time is appropriate. Have those briefly share what path they checked and why that particular one. You may also ask if anyone had the Lord reveal anything to them during this time.

Group Time:

Together and as discussion: look at and list the natural purpose of shoes. Two that you can use (among the list) which are good for the application are: shoes have a rigid sole and because of shoes, we aren't always concerned where we walk.

Under 2 Instances (Moses and Joshua): Both instances were before God changed their course (their walk). He was about to take them on a different path.

Under Importance/purpose (Biblical times..natural): Their shoes were more like sandals. As they walked the sandals let in gravel, sand, dust and therefore they would have to wash their feet frequently.

TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES: When the Lord uses something or someone to get our attention to see if we will leave our “path”, when we take off our shoes, it is symbolic of “Lord, I am willing and submit myself to your path. I am turning aside from my path I'm on and coming before You to see what the path is that you now want me on (The Lord will sometimes change our paths). As I take off my shoes, I am laying aside the pollution(sin) in my walk and coming to walk the path You have for me. (We must not be walking with a rigid sole on our feet or be unconcerned about the path we are on). I am standing and walking the way of holiness. We read in Scripture to cleanse ourselves, strip off/ “wash your clothes”: it must come to the point that we have stripped ourselves of everything (our dirty clothes, our shoes) and willingly stand “naked” before the Lord. Adam and Eve (before they sinned were naked and were not ashamed). We too must be “naked” and not ashamed as we stand on holy ground before the Lord Almighty willingly submitting to the path He now has for us to walk.

During our group time prayer, as a symbolic act: we took off our shoes and during the prayer time told the Lord we were willing to stand on that holy ground before Him.

PATHS AND MY SHOES

If you ever go hiking on a path, you know that paths can all be different...some easy, some moderate, some more difficult. Thinking about your path (spiritually), can you relate to this? How would you describe your path?

Can you identify your path with any of the pictures below?



Place a check mark in the box which you feel best describes “your path” at this time.

Why did you check that particular path?

As you know, when we walk and follow a path, it will lead us to a destination (as long as we stay on that path). Can you find some Scripture references that might apply to this principle?

According to God’s Word, how do we know which path we are to follow?

Before we became followers of Jesus Christ, our paths could be best described as how?

There are several Scriptures which describe the path of the wicked (those not walking God’s way/path). Some of these are listed below. Looking through these, from your own experience would any of these describe the path you were on?

Job 24:13 Isaiah 59:8 Proverbs 2:18 Isaiah 59:7
Hosea 2:6

How are the Lord’s paths described in the following verses?

a. Proverbs 4:11 and Isaiah 26:7:

b. Proverbs 4:18:

That path (in verse 18) is what is found in verse 11:

When walking “wisdom’s path”, what is the promise as found in verse 12?

c. Even though Scripture says our paths will be level and straight, does it mean there will be no afflictions? What is the promise as recorded in Psalm 34:19?

Read Isaiah 40:3,4. Sometimes when we are in those wilderness places that is a place where the Lord requires a time of clearing away the obstacles in order to “prepare a highway for our God.” Every valley (or low place in our lives) He will raise up where He can be exalted and those hills and mountains (pride, self-exaltation, our own plans, desires wishes that are obstacles to Him) will be made low.

**NOW FOR OUR “SHOES”
GROUP TIME**



Looking at shoes (natural)

Purpose:

No shoes:

“Take off your shoes for you are on holy ground.”

2 Instances:

- a. Moses: Exodus 3:5
- b. Joshua: Joshua 5:15

“Getting Our Attention” (Question: Was there anything that “grabbed your attention as you arrived?)

a. Moses:

b. Joshua

Importance/Purpose:

a. Biblical times (natural)

b. Spiritual application

God's Ways: (Let's look at how He talks about His ways/paths):

- a. Isaiah 55:8
- b. Proverbs 16:9
- c. Proverbs 14:12
- d. Psalm 37:23

In Jeremiah 12:23 (NIV), Jeremiah acknowledged to God: “I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own, it is not for man to direct his steps.”

We too must acknowledge that! Take off your shoes!! Are you standing on holy ground?
The implication of this: meaning

Group Prayer Time:

God's ability to direct our lives well is definitely beyond our own abilities. Sometimes we may become afraid of God's power and His plans and the uncertainty of where He would have us walk. If God uses something or someone to get your attention, don't be afraid to allow God to correct your plans/paths. He will give you wisdom and direction if you are willing to “take off your shoes” and walk His way which is holy (a highway of holiness).

OTHER SCRIPTURES FOR YOU TO LOOK AT REGARDING PATHS

As you continue to look at this topic, if you have not previously read the following Scriptures, take time to look these up and meditate further on what God is speaking regarding your path. Suggestion: Even read from different translations.

Psalm 16:11
Psalm 17:4,5
Job 23:11
Proverbs 6:23

Psalm 25:10
Psalm 44:18
Psalm 119:105
Psalm 119:130



The Holy Spirit is the oil to keep our lamps lit!