

Change is something all of us have in common. We all want it, but for some reason it seems to be allusive. The Bible says a lot about change. Particularly that we cannot change. Yes, we may be able to change superficially, but true change doesn't happen apart from God's work in our lives.

Icebreaker: If nothing could stand in your way, what fun thing would you like to accomplish in the next year?

1. From an early age we don't like to be told "no." Why do you think "no" is so hard for people to hear?
2. Share an instance where your parents told you "no" over something; that at the time didn't make much sense, but later made perfect sense.
 - a. Share a time in your life where you felt that God told you "no."
 - b. Do you think it is possible to interpret God is saying "no" in our lives when actually He might be saying "yes?" Why or How does this happen? Give an example if it might help.
3. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10: Why do you think Paul refers to his current infliction (a thorn in his flesh) as a "messenger of Satan?"
 - a. There were three different season in which this "thorn" in Paul's flesh drove him to plead with God to take it away. What do you think Paul was dealing with physically, emotionally, and spiritually at this time?
 - b. Looking at this passage and at your own life, what usually causes us to become dependent on God's strength, power, and leading for our lives? Is there something this should tell us?
 - c. God's answer to Paul was simple and yet profound. Take sometime to discuss the notion that God's grace is sufficient. What does this mean in your life?
 - d. Paul doesn't just go through life making it...but instead he says he now boasts of his weakness. What do you think Paul understood and experienced that helped him make the change? Is that possible today? Is that change possible in your life?
 - e. Read verse 10 again; Paul says he is content in some unbelievable circumstances. Think about your own life and whether or not you really are content. Is there something that God may want you to trust him in so that you can live a life that is content? What practical steps are you willing to take to allow God to be seen in your weakness this week?

Prep for next week: How do you define love? How does the media define love? Read 1 John 4:7-12 and write some observations you observe about love.

PRAY
