

Twelfth Grade- Self-Helpism

These next few Life Groups set out to tackle some of the major heresies of our day and age, and help students learn to seek the Biblical rebuttal. This practice of apologetics will be essential for students as they set out into the next stage of life and encounter endless new beliefs. So many of the core “doctrines” of our culture sound almost like biblical truth, but closer inspection reveals they are dangerous distortions that will lead our hearts and minds astray. We want to spend time this Sunday talking about the idea of “Self-Helpism”.

Introducing the Topic

As always, we want to start off by assessing what students already know and think about the subject, and then turn to what Scripture says on the matter! Students have a unique perspective on our culture, so we want to give them time to process what they’re seeing together!

- When you hear the phrase, “self help”, what comes to mind? When the people around you say “self help” what do they mean?
- What are some “self help” strategies or mantras you hear being promoted?
- What do you think about the phrase, “God only helps those who love and help themselves”?
- What do **you** think about self-help? When is it good? When is it bad?
- Do you think our culture has a healthy view of self-help? Where has our world gotten it wrong?

Scripture Study

As you transition to the Scripture Study portion of this session, remind students that Scripture is where we turn for truth. We want to continually reiterate that we study Scripture not just for the “Christian take” on a matter, but God’s revealed word, given to us out of love for our good.

-Self-helpism is the idea that you, within yourself, have what it takes to overcome all of life’s challenges. So you need to focus your energy on digging deep and believing in yourself so that you can work for a better life for you and others. Let’s look at what the Bible has to say about that idea one part at a time.

-The world says: “you have it in you”. Scripture says: Romans 3:10-18

-What do you hear this passage saying?

-What does this say about the nature of humanity?

-Do you see that in the world around you? Do you think we are innately good, or innately evil? What makes you say that?

-The idea that we have it in us to help ourselves hinges on the idea that deep down, we're all innately good. We just have to focus in and unlock the goodness. Turn to this passage in Judges to see what Scripture says about us "doing our best".

-Read Judges 21: 16-24. Give some context on what you're about to read: This passage follows a story about how the Benjamite tribe had gone to war with the people of Israel, and as a result, all of Israel swore to never give their daughters to the Benjamites to marry. This meant the tribe would eventually die off, and so they had just attacked a neighboring tribe to steal their unmarried women, but it still wasn't enough for every man to have a wife. The following passage details their solution to the issue at hand.

-Did this seem right to you? Is what Israel and the Benjamites did good?

-What is the significance of the final verse? What does it have to say about human nature?

-The world says if we can't help ourselves, we are doomed. Therefore, we need to strive to do our best. Here's what Scripture says to that. Read II Corinthians 12:5-10.

-What do you hear this passage saying?

-How does this challenge the idea of "self helpism"?

-How does our culture view weakness? How does Scripture view weakness?

Practical Application

In this practical application, we want to help students internalize what they heard from Scripture today and be able to distinguish between a cultural heresy and biblical truth, even when culture uses "spiritual language". We also want to help them see where in their own lives they've been adopting the idea self-helpism and turn instead to the freedom that comes in Christ.

-What do you think God would say to the idea of "God helps those who help themselves"?

-What misbeliefs does Self-Helpism preach? *(The idea that we have within us what it takes to fix ourselves and our lives)* Why are those lies so dangerous? *(That lie teaches us to look somewhere other than Jesus for our salvation and our help)*

-What is the effect of believing in Self-Helpism? Where do you see those effects in your own life?

-What is the truth of the Gospel when it comes to human nature? Where does Scripture say our help comes from?

-Do you have a hard time relying on help from God? What areas of your life are the hardest for you to trust God in?