



# COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

## Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus

### VISION: A Family of Wounded Healers

February 9, 2020

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#### Passages

- Primary passage: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
- Acts 2:42-47
- Luke 4:14-21

#### Questions

- Opener:
  - What was your first experience of Church? What was it like?
  - Have you ever decided to make a significant change to your lifestyle? Why? What was the result?
- Share Experience:
  - How do you typically respond to change? Why?
  - What excites you about the potential of your church changing? What makes you nervous about it?
  - Early on in your Christian journey (or even before you became a Christian) who laid down their rights for you so you could hear the gospel and grow in Jesus?
  - What in the history of your experience at SCBC do you need to celebrate? What do you need to leave behind to see Jesus do a new thing?
  - How do you feel about living in Santa Cruz County? What do you like? What don't you like?
  - Do you know your spiritual gift(s)? If so, how might you be able to use them in this season for the flourishing of SCBC and Santa Cruz? If not, would you like to know the unique gifts Jesus has given you? (See Spiritual Gifts test in Additional Resources below)
- Dig Into:
  - What would a church that is *for* the flourishing of Santa Cruz look like? How might this be different from our current reality?
  - If SCBC (or your current church) was successful in reaching people far from Jesus, who would be present on a Sunday morning with us?
  - How do you believe God feels about our community? What are His deep desires for Santa Cruz County? Can this really happen?
  - Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9 that he's willing to become all things to all people so that they would encounter Jesus and be saved. What does this mean? What doesn't it mean? What might this look like in Santa Cruz County?

## Creative Ideas

- **Exercise:** As a group, take 2 minutes to imagine what SCBC (or whatever church you regularly attend on Sunday) would look like if God has His way there. Ask God to guide your imagination. Then take 2 minutes to imagine what SCBC would look like 2 years from now if nothing at all changed. Ask God to guide your imagination here as well. What did you see? Is one vision more compelling to you? Why?
- Listen to the Song “Here Am I, Send Me” by Matt Papa based on Isaiah 6 (See Additional Resources below). What thoughts and emotions does this song stir in you.
- **Exercise:** As a group, come up with a list of everyone’s Spiritual Gifts that they’re aware of. How might Jesus want to use this unique mix of gifts? Take a few minutes to dream together. You might also want to take a few silent moments as a group and invite the Spirit to reveal a unique direction for you all.

## Practices

- Practice Listening Prayer at least 5 days this week (See Additional Resources below for a Biblical understanding of and ways to implement listening prayer). Ask Jesus to make his voice and calling on your life in this season clear. Then sit and wait for God’s voice. This can come in the form of a particular scripture coming to mind, a specific image, etc. Notice what’s happening in your mind and heart as you wait. If you’re not sure that what you’re hearing is from God, test it against Scripture and bring it back to your Community Group to help you discern.
- Identify three people in your life who need to know and experience Jesus’ love for them. Commit to pray for them daily over the next 21 Days. As you do so, ask Jesus if there’s a next step he’s asking you to take in your relationship with them.
- Commit as a group to pray daily for SCBC and for one other local church of your choice. Pray for ministries that 1) Are outward focused 2) Develop people’s gifts 3) Offer people an opportunity for Wholistic Transformation.

## Additional Resources

- The questions at the end are fantastic! <https://timchester.wordpress.com/2016/03/21/following-up-the-sermon-in-small-groups/>
- Song: “Here Am I, Send Me” by Matt Papa - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRKaqZfWajY>
- Spiritual Gifts Assessment (Based on the five gifts in Ephesians 4) - <http://www.fivefoldsurvey.com>
- Listening Prayer, the Centrality of Scripture, and Discernment: A Biblical Approach for InterVarsity Ministry by Lina Sánchez-Herrera and Jon Ball - [http://collegiateministries.intervarsity.org/sites/collegiateministries/files/resource/file/Listening%20Prayer.the%20Centrality%20of%20Scripture.and%20Discernment\\_format ted.pdf](http://collegiateministries.intervarsity.org/sites/collegiateministries/files/resource/file/Listening%20Prayer.the%20Centrality%20of%20Scripture.and%20Discernment_format%20ted.pdf)

## How to use this Walking in the Way Guide

1. It's important to know that there's more material here than any one group can cover in one night. Please DO NOT try to get through every scripture passage, question, and creative idea. That is a recipe for discouragement and burnout!
2. Do use this guide as a way to spark some discussion following from last Sunday's message. As the Community Group Leader, you know your group the best. Select which elements from this guide would be most helpful and relevant to your group!
3. **Scripture:** We will always give two or more passages of scripture that are relevant to the topic from Sunday's sermon. Ideally select one passage and stay there. Use only two at the most. You may want to have someone read the passage out loud and then work through the questions from the *5 Questions to Ask When Reading Your Bible* guide below. This is a great resource to print out and give to every member of your Community Group to help guide their own Bible reading at home!
4. **Questions:** There are more questions here than you'll likely be able to get through in one night. Select some questions you think might resonate with your group and throw questions to the group for discussion until one really takes off! You know a good discussion is happening when group members are interacting with and responding to what each other is saying and not just what is coming from you as the group leader!
5. **Creative Ideas:** If you feel it will help your group, select one of these creative ideas to help your group process and interact with the theme for this week. Feel free to add in your own creative ideas as well!!
6. **Practices:** This is how we grow in grace! Practices are what move a good discussion from merely interesting to life transforming. These sample practices are given to help you and the group live into the reality that was talked about on Sunday and that you interacted with in Scripture this week. **Choose one or (at most) two practices that you as a group will commit to doing this next week to live into God's truth.** As you come back next week, debrief how those practices went the previous week!
7. **Sample Schedule:** Here's a sample timeline for how to budget your time for a Community Group meeting. Keep in mind, this is a suggestion, not a rule to follow. **Do what works best for your community!**
  - **Arrival:** Catching up and Snacks - 15 min
  - **Intro:** See how everyone's doing. Maybe throw out an icebreaker question. As the group gets more comfortable, you can use this time to debrief the previous week's practice. - 10 min
  - **Scripture:** Dig into one passage from scripture using the 5 Questions (See Below) - 25 min
  - **Discussion** - 20 min
  - **Closing:** Decide on which practice(s) you'll commit to this week. Spend time praying for each other and those you sense God is sending you to - 10 min

## **5 Questions To Ask When Reading Your Bible - Worksheet**

Whether you're a seminary professor or you've just recently picked up a Bible for the first time, these five questions can help you engage with Scripture. Try using it by yourself or with a group of people to read, understand and live out the Bible.

### **Question 1: What is going on in the passage?**

- What's happening here?
- Who are the main characters?
- Very simply, *what is*?

### **Question 2: What do I like about the passage?**

- What parts of this passage/story encourage me?
- What inspires, pleases or excites me based on what I've read?
- Why?

### **Question 3: What disturbs or startles me about the passage?**

- What is it about this passage that reveals truth that may be hard to accept?
- What disturbs me or jolts, confronts or even offends me in my understanding of God, His Son, the world or my life?
- Why don't I like that?

### **Question 4: What does this say about the nature of God and/or the character of Jesus?**

- What does this passage say about who God actually is?
- What does this say about the essence of his nature?
- What can I see about the character of Jesus (his patience, holiness, compassion, righteousness, etc)?

### **Question 5: What will I do with what I just learned in the next seven days?**

- How will we respond to what we've just read?
- What will I do with what I just learned?
- How do I make sure that this wasn't just intellectual ascent? How do I put this into practice?