



COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain - Philippians 1:12-26 April 26, 2020

Passages

- Primary passage: Philippians 1:12-26
- 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Questions

- Opener:
 - [You may want to make sure that your entire group has heard Richard's announcement from this weekend. Rather than letting it be an elephant in the room, it's good to address it directly and let people express their thoughts and emotions in response. This is part of healthy processing and grieving. (See Richard FAQ in Additional Resources Below)]
 - How are you doing this week? What do you need right now? (Continue to refer to the Needs Inventory, see Additional Resources below)
- Share Experience:
 - When walking through a trial, how hard or easy is it for you to acknowledge God's purposes in that trial? How hard or easy is it to acknowledge your honest thoughts and emotions to God and others?
 - Have you ever had a time in your life where you had a window into God's purposes for a season of trial while it was happening? What was that like? Did it help you or make the suffering worse? Why?
 - On Sunday, Richard shared that for Paul, the gospel was like a beloved family dog with its favorite tennis ball; he loved it and always kept coming back to it in everything he said and did. What in your life today brings up that kind of tennis ball enthusiasm?
 - In what ways do you feel inadequate to speak the good news about Jesus? How does Paul's encouragement in Phil. 1:18 speak to the inadequacies you feel?
 - When have you experienced moments of joy in the midst of suffering? What was that like? How would you explain this?
- Dig Into:
 - One would assume that Paul's imprisonment would have made people less likely to speak the good news about Jesus out loud; but instead it actually gave people confidence to speak the gospel. Why do you think this was?
 - In v. 23, Paul tells the Philippians that to depart and be with Christ is far better. Why is this? Does this ever echo your experience? Why or why not?
 - What does Paul mean when he says that "living is Christ" and "dying is gain"? Does this sound attractive to you? Why or why not?

Creative Ideas

- Listen to the song “Rejoice and Lament” by Josh Garrels. Notice what thoughts and emotions this song stirs in you? How does the message of the song shed light on our passage in Philippians?

Practices

- Practice rejoicing in difficulty this week. Find a favorite hymn, worship song, or Psalm and say/sing it out loud to God at least 1x per day this week.
- Remember your Go Love cards? Dig that out and ask God to identify at least one person you can call up.

Additional Resources

- The questions at the end are fantastic! <https://timchester.wordpress.com/2016/03/21/following-up-the-sermon-in-small-groups/>
- Needs Inventory - <https://www.cnvc.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/CNVC-needs-inventory.pdf>
- Richard FAQ Sheet: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/bbemail/PROD/ulib/qztrww/docs/97e38815-303d-06b2-68cc-af19c8929232/RGFAQsbulletpoints.pdf>
- Song: Rejoice and Lament by Josh Carrels - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EktsivHFMMM>

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?