



COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus

Unshakeable Church

July 26, 2020

Passages

- Primary passage: Acts 20:17-38
- Matthew 16:18
- Psalm 41:1; Proverbs 19:17; Hebrews 13:16

Questions

- Opener:
 - Have you ever had the experience of building something? What was that like? How sturdy was it? What made it sturdy or not?
 - 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 did you first hear the Gospel preached? What was your response? How long did it take you to believe the message you were hearing?
 - Have you ever experienced good spiritual leadership? How did that help your spiritual growth? How have you experienced unhealthy spiritual leadership? How was that harmful for your spiritual growth?
 - Have you ever experienced a season of disunity in church? What was that like? What was the end result?
 - Do you see any needs around you right now that you sense God may be inviting you to step into?
 - Where do you see that our church could especially use prayer in this season? Have you sensed any ways God is especially inviting you to pray for SCBC (or your home church)?
 - How have you seen people stay at a church and be faithful during a church transition? How has that made a difference in the life of the church?
- Dig Into:
 - Whose responsibility is it to see that a church is faithful to the 4 marks of an Unshakeable Church (1. Bold Gospel Preaching, 2. Godly Leadership, 3. Protecting Against Satan's Attacks, 4. Meeting People's Needs)? Why?
 - What would happen to a church that was lacking in any of these areas?
 - What does it mean to proclaim the full counsel of God (v. 27)? Do you believe you understand the full counsel of God? Why or why not?
 - Why do you think disunity is one of the most frequent ways Satan attacks the church? Why do we seem especially vulnerable to this? Can unity ever be a bad thing?

Creative Ideas

- **Exercise:** Do a brainstorming exercise where you imagine a church that was missing one of the four marks of an Unshakeable church. What would that church look like? Go through and repeat this exercise for each of the four marks. How does this exercise shed light on the necessity of being well-rounded as a church?
- Listen to the song "The Church's One Foundation" by Cardiphonia (See Additional Resources Below). What thoughts and emotions does this song stir in you? Does it help you think in any new ways about the church in this season on pandemic and transition?

Practices

- Pick a member of the staff and a member of the elder team and pray specifically for them this week. At the end of the week, consider sending them a note letting them know you've been praying for them.
- Each day this week, read through Acts 20:17-38 and practice the method of Prayerful Reading of Scripture (*Lectio Divina* - See Additional Resources below). Each day, record in your journal what stood out to you from your time of reading and praying. At the end of the week, read back through your journal and notice if there are any themes that have emerged in your prayer time.

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>
- Song: "[The Church's One Foundation](#)" by Cardiphonia
- A Guide to *Lectio Divina* by InterVarsity - <https://greek.intervarsity.org/resources/lectio-divina-guide>

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?