



# COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

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

### Declaration of Dependence

July 5, 2020

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#### Passages

- Primary passage: 2 Chronicles 14:2-15, 16:1-14
- Exodus 14:13-14

#### Questions

- Opener:
  - What does Independence Day mean to you? Why do you think it holds this significance for you?
  - 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:
  - As Christians, we know that dependence ought to be a good thing and yet as modern Americans, we often resist this. Can you describe the thoughts and emotions that come up for you when talking about dependence?
  - How do you recognize a tendency towards independence in yourself where God is inviting you into dependence? Is the reverse ever true for you too?
  - Can you recall a time in your life where God invited you into dependence in a difficult situation and you responded in trust and dependence? How did that work out for you?
  - Can you recall a time when you chose independence over dependence on God? How did that work out for you?
  - Asa was a leader of God's people who, like so many, didn't finish well. Who, if anyone, have you seen finish well? What can you learn about finishing well from them?
  - In his early years as King, Asa was relentless about rooting out idolatry from Israel. Are you able to identify any "idols of the heart" that can tend to lead you away from dependence and stillness before God?
- Dig Into:
  - What does our world value more, Independence or Dependence? Why?
  - Describe what dependence looks like in the story of Asa in 2 Chronicles 14. Is this different than passivity? How would you describe the kind of trust and dependence that God invites from us?
  - In 2 Chronicles 16, what do you think led Asa to act independently of God in the last 6 years of his reign when he had been so faithful for 35 years?
  - How is stillness before God not passivity? Or is it? Why?

## **Creative Ideas**

- Listen to the song “We Have Overcome” by Rivers & Robots (See Additional Resources below). What thoughts and emotions does this song stir in you? How does this song help you connect with the idea of depending on God through Jesus? Are you able to sing this song from the heart?

## **Practices**

- At the end of every day or the beginning of each day, practice reviewing the previous day with God for 10-15 minutes. Ask the Spirit to lead you in remembering how He invited you into dependence that day. Thank God for the ways you were able to respond to God’s invitation. If you didn’t notice or didn’t respond to God’s invitation, rather than guilt or shaming yourself, receive God’s love and mercy for you and ask Him for the strength to respond differently in similar circumstances in the coming day. Spend a couple minutes journaling, thanking God for His grace and noting your intention for how to respond to His promptings in the day ahead.

## **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: “We Have Overcome” by Rivers & Robots - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRc6tvvEe94>

## 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?