



Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus
Foxhole Friends - Philippians 2:12-30
May 10, 2020

Passages

- Primary passage: Philippians 2:12-30
- Matthew 11:28-30

Questions

- Opener:
 - Who was your most significant best friend during your growing up years? Why? What happened to that friendship?
 - 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:
 - How have you experienced loneliness in your adult life? What was that experience like? How do you experience loneliness today?
 - What kind of effort have you put into the best friendships you've experienced in your adult life? How did your friend(s) respond to that effort on your part?
 - On Sunday, Richard shared 5 levels of communication ranging from least personal to most personal (1. Social Politeness 2. Information Exchange 3. Sharing Opinions 4. Sharing Feelings 5. Sharing the Soul) Which of these do you tend to feel most uncomfortable with? Why? Why might it be important for Christians to communicate at all 5 of these levels in our close relationships?
 - In what ways have your friendships drawn you closer to Jesus? In what ways did have your friendships helped you to understand Jesus more clearly?
 - As an adult, how have you found it difficult to foster deep friendships? What are the barriers you've experienced?
 - Recognizing this is a safe space without judgment, have you ever put too much expectation on a relationship; expectations that should only be directed to Jesus? What did that do to the relationship? How has Jesus invited you to put all your expectations for belonging on Him?
- Dig Into:
 - JC Ryle once remarked that friendships "halve our sorrows and double our joys". Do you believe this to be true? Why? If so, how have you experienced this?
 - What does Paul say in our Philippians passage about why he and Timothy were so close? How did this close relationship serve God's Kingdom and His mission in the world?
 - If, as Richard said on Sunday, all of our longings for intimacy and belonging are designed to be met in Jesus, then what is the role of our human relationships? Is it possible that intimacy with Jesus can actually enhance our human relationships? How?

Creative Ideas

- Listen to the song “What a Friend” by Matt Maher. As you listen to this song, what thoughts and emotions does it stir in you? Does this help clarify how all our longings for belonging and intimacy are meant to be found in Jesus? Does it spark any thoughts about your friendships could look like?

Practices

- At least 3 times this week, reach out to a friend or several different friends and let them know how much you appreciate their friendship and why.
- As you look over you Go Love Card, are there any relationships there that you feel are close enough where you could reach out and express gratitude for the relationship? If yes, reach out to that person this week. If not, what are some tangible ways you could deepen a relationship with one or more of them? Take that step this week!

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: “What a Friend” by Matt Maher - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6qXfZPtzM>
-

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?