



COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus

Unshakeable Hope

August 2, 2020

Passages

- Primary passage: Matthew 6:25-34
- Romans 12:1-2

Questions

- Opener:
 - Would you describe yourself generally as an anxious person? Why or why 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:
 - On a scale of 1-10, how would you describe your level of anxiety in the last 5 months since the beginning of the lockdown?
 - What is at the root of your worry? How would you describe it?
 - What has helped you when you feel anxious? How has Jesus met you in the midst of your anxiety?
 - How has serving others (whether through the church, out in the community, on a mission trip, etc) impacted your worry and anxiety? Why do you think that is?
 - What are ways God has tangibly demonstrated his love and care for you through your life?
 - What are activities and thought patterns you can turn to to help you when you're overcome by anxiety?
- Dig Into:
 - Is it wrong to worry? Why?
 - What does Jesus offer us in the Matthew 6 passage to help us combat worry and anxiety?
 - How do we square Jesus' teaching in this passage with the reality that some people do experience real lack and even death?

Creative Ideas

- Listen to the song "I Shall Not Want" by Audrey Assad. What thoughts and emotions does this song stir in you? What perspective does it bring to whatever anxiety you may be experiencing right now?

Practices

- This week, every morning or evening (whichever works best for you) practice a prayer of examen reviewing the previous day. Ask the Holy Spirit to review your previous day with you. First recognize and thank God for the gifts that He brought you during your day. Then ask the Spirit to help you see where anxiety was present. When you recognize anxiety, instead of feeling guilty or judging yourself, try to be curious. Ask the Spirit if He can help you understand where your anxiety stems from. Finally, ask the Spirit for the grace to cling to the truth of God's care for us when similar situations arise in the day ahead.
- Do you know any anxious people? Often times people experiencing anxiety simply need calm people to be with them. Is there anyone for whom you can be this calm presence this week? It could be as simple as going for a socially distant walk with them or calling them up and letting them vent to you. Allow your presence to bring the presence of Jesus to them in their anxiety!

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: "[I Shall Not Want](#)" by Audrey Assad

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?