



COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

Going Further: Learning to Walk In the Way of Jesus

Renovate: Resentment

September 20, 2020

Passages

- Primary passage: Matthew 18:23-35
- Romans 12:1-2

Questions

- Opener:
 - Have you ever had a big decision to make? What were the choices facing you and how did you reach a decision? What do you think were the consequences of that decision?
 - 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 resentment when someone has hurt you?
 - In what ways have you wrestled with the choice to either pursue forgiveness or hold on to resentment?
 - What happens in your internal world when resentment grows in you?
 - Have you had an experience of being able to forgive someone who's deeply hurt you? What was that like?
 - How have you experienced being set free by forgiveness; either by being forgiven for something you've done against someone else or by forgiving someone for things done against you?
 - In what ways has God met you and given you the strength to choose the path of forgiveness?
- Dig Into:
 - In Matthew 18:35, Jesus says that we will be treated like the unforgiving servant unless we forgive our brother or sister from the heart. Jesus seems to tie forgiveness by God to the act of forgiving others. As Christians who say that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone, how do we understand what Jesus is saying here?
 - According to the Matthew 18 passage, how should the forgiveness we receive from God transform us, especially our hearts and minds?
 - In Romans 12:1-2, Paul urges us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. How would you describe this transformation process? What has it looked like in your life?

Creative Ideas

- Listen to the song "Brother" by The Brilliance (See Additional Resources below). How does this song stir your thoughts and emotions? What light does it shed on the topic of forgiveness and letting go of resentment?
- **Activity:** As a group, read through the Healing Prayer (See Additional Resources below). Then give everyone 5 minutes to pray through the prayer silently. Invite them to fill in the blanks of the prayer for themselves. Make it the intention of the group to pray this prayer at least 1x per day this next week. Come back next week and discuss how praying this prayer began to shift your hearts.

Practices

- Pray the Healing Prayer every day this week. Print it out and post it somewhere you'll see it each day. When you come back to the group next week, discuss with each other what shifts you noticed in your heart and mind around this issues of forgiveness as you prayer consistently this past 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: [Brother by The Brilliance](#)
- Healing Prayer - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1c1NrX56CJV4yRT2fOJg2S0Yv1HInSONqB86zYEgWL-E/edit?usp=sharing>

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?