



# COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

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

### Renovate: Anxiety

September 20, 2020

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#### Passages

- Primary passage: Philippians 4:4-9
- 1 Peter 5:6-7

#### Questions

- Opener:
  - Have you ever struggled with a totally illogical fear going into a situation? What was it you imagined would happen?
  - 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 has anxiety shown up in your life? Do you tend to be an anxious person? Why or why not?
  - What's helped you when you've been anxious? What's been unhelpful for you?
  - What helps you rejoice? How does rejoicing and celebration impact your anxiety?
  - In what ways has God met you in your anxiety? What was that like for you?
  - When have you been most at peace? What was that like?
  - Have you ever had success changing what your mind dwells on? How did that happen?
- Dig Into:
  - What help does the passage in Philippians 4 offer us for anxious thoughts that assault us?
  - What are the things we need to do to experience the presence of the God of Peace (Philippians 4:9)?
  - What are ways to "cast your cares on God" (1 Peter 5:6-7)?

## Creative Ideas

- **Exercise:** As a group, take 2 minutes to practice the 6 Breaths Per Minute Exercise (See Additional Resources below). Afterwards, process together, what was that like? How does focusing your attention on the present moment through our breathing impact our sense of stress or anxiety? How are you able to experience the love and grace of God as it comes to you in the present moment?
- **Song:** Listen to the song "Peace Be Still" by The Belonging Co. What thoughts and emotions does this song stir in you? How does it help you think about the Philippians passage and Paul's encourage to not give in to anxiety? How does it help you think about the anxiety in your own life?

## Practices

- If your group chose to do the 6 Breaths Per Minute exercise, continue with this practice this week. Notice your stress and anxiety levels as the week progresses. What happens to your anxiety?
- Keep a notebook with you this week or create a note in your phone: notice and jot down every time you catch yourself dwelling on any of the thought patterns from Philippians 4:8. Also note if you catch yourself dwelling on negative thoughts. As the week goes on, what do you notice about the patterns of your thought life?
- Practice Prayerful Reading (Lectio Divina - See Additional Resources below) with the Philippians 4:4-9 passage this week. Do you have any new insights after practicing this? Do you sense any new invitations from God in your life?

## 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>
- Theologian, Therapist, and Author Curt Thompson on Anxiety - <https://rhythms-for-life.simplecast.com/episodes/curt-thompson-zvprH4uQ>
- 6 Breaths Per Minute Exercise - <https://cct.biola.edu/neuroplasticity-and-self-control/>
- Song: [Peace Be Still by The Belonging Co \(Featuring Lauren Daigle\)](#)
- Lectio Divina Guide - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xf-lKuj2SD-G6WWJ7JJhvP32GwDuwiV5/view?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?