



# COMMUNITY GROUPS

SANTA CRUZ BIBLE CHURCH

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

### Take Heart, Seizing Hope

January 3, 2021

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#### Passages

- Primary passage: 1 Peter 1:13
- John 21:1-8

#### Questions

- Opener:
  - What do you hope for in 2021?
  - 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:
  - When you hope for something, what do you mean? What does that typically look like for you?
  - What steals your hope?
  - What strengthens your hope?
  - What examples of "active hope" have you seen in your life?
  - Where do you long for hope at the moment?
- Dig Into:
  - What is hope according to the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 1:13?
  - How does being "alert" and "fully sober" support our hope?
  - How does the hope of Jesus' future return impact life in the present?
  - If lived out in a community of people, how might the active hope of 1 Peter 1:13 impact a city like Santa Cruz?

### **Creative Ideas**

- Listen to the song "Farther Along" by Josh Garrels (See Additional Resources Below). As you listen, you may want to simply close your eyes and let the song wash over you or you may want to watch the lyrics as they come across the screen. Either way, notice what words, phrases, or ideas catch your attention. What thoughts or emotions does the song stir in you? How does it help you think about hope in this moment in your life?

### **Practices**

- Meals with people have a special power to kindle or sustain hope in us in the midst of difficult circumstances. This week, plan ways to make an ordinary meal with people in your COVID bubble special. What are touches you can add to help sustain hope in your self and anyone with whom you share the meal?

### **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: ["Father Along" by Josh Garrels](#)

## 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?