



GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of November 11th

This study is designed to help your community group grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. There are three dimensions to following Jesus.



UP: growing in relationship with God

IN: growing in relationship with other followers of Jesus

OUT: growing in relationship with the world around us as we join God in God's mission

Get Started:

As you think back on your faith journey, what initially attracted you to Jesus? (Qualities, mannerisms, the lives of others who followed Jesus, etc.)



UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word

Read aloud the passages for the week: 1 Peter 3:8–18. Allow a few moments to silently reflect on what you heard. Underline or note words or phrases that seem meaningful.

1. Verse 8 calls the readers of this letter to, “be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.” How does a community achieve these things? Is this just an attitude to strive for or are there practices which foster this?
2. Verse 9 says, “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.” Have you ever had a time when you have repaid evil or insult with blessing? What was this experience like?
3. Re-read verse 15. Many people have used this verse to emphasize the need to be ready to stand up to defend your faith and it has been used as a call to practice aggressive apologetics. What does it look like to bear witness to Christ with gentleness and respect?
4. Author Brian Zahnd says, “Our task is not to protest the world into a certain moral conformity, but to attract the world to the saving beauty of Christ.”¹ What is it that makes Christ beautiful? How can we participate in attracting the world to Christ?

¹Brian Zahnd, *Beauty Will Save the World*, (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House, 2012), xvii.

5. Re-read verses 17–18. Sometimes people talk about following Jesus in a way which makes it seem that being a Christian means an easy life of constant divine blessing and “good luck.” However, Peter includes suffering as a real possibility for those following Christ. What might it look like to “suffer for doing good” in our culture? Has anyone in the group experienced this sort of suffering?
6. As we think about sharing Christ gently and respectfully with those around us, what tangible steps might you take in the coming weeks to become more effective in this effort?



Out: : Connect with the World Around Us (Join God in His Mission)

Earlier this fall, our groups named people in our lives we wanted to intentionally and faithfully represent Christ to. (If you didn't do this earlier in the fall, take some time now to go around the circle and name such a person.) Check in on these relationships. Has anyone had significant conversations with these people in the last few months? Have you been able to represent Christ with, “gentleness and respect?”



IN: Connect with Each Other

Take time to share prayer requests with your group. Close your time by praying for one another.