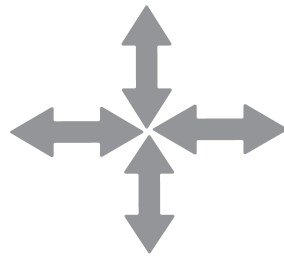




GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of March 22nd

Friends, humanity is being rocked right now by needing to physically distance ourselves from one another. For the Christian, we do this out of love for neighbor. Fight hard to distinguish these two realities: physically distancing and relationally separating.

Now is the time to become the greatest artist you have ever been. Create ways to stay relationally and spiritually tethered to your core circle. We need each other. We are gifts to one another! Make phone calls; text photographs; set up video gatherings. Together, we are the hands and feet of Christ to one another and this city!



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.

Sermon: Jesus – Enacting the Kingdom (Matthew 9:1-13)

Key Verse:

But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."
So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home."
Matthew 9:6

Getting Started:

What is the difference between "talking the talk" and "walking the walk"? Can you think of an example of someone backing their words with their actions?

Time of Prayer

Together, begin with prayer. Lift up this present hour to the Lord. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and guard your time together. Pray that God will use this time to further direct your heart to Him, to walk in all His ways. Pray that your time together results in the further inbreaking of the Kingdom of Heaven, which heals our hearts and brings salvation ever closer to the yet-believing community around us as we move toward our neighbors in the love and strength of Christ.



UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word

Together as a group, read aloud Matthew 9:1-13.

Allow a few moments to silently reflect on what you heard. Underline or note any words or phrases that seem meaningful.

1. Compare and contrast the man laying on a mat and the man collecting taxes. What are these two men thinking and feeling as the story opens?
2. What claim does Jesus make in verse 6 (and what is the extent of this claim)?
3. What purpose does Jesus give in verse 13 for His ministry? How does this make you feel?
4. Going back to the two men from question one, how are their lives impacted by encountering Jesus?



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

1. What needs do you see around you right now?
2. How might God "enact" His kingdom through you this week?



IN: Connect with Each Other

COVID-19:

Spend time connecting with one another on how you are doing.

What's hard right now? What has surprised you most this week? What do you need most right now? What are the greatest needs in your community and family that come to mind?

Pressing into the level of vulnerability that your group has built to date, close your time in prayer. Celebrating that Jesus is King, confess and rejoice together. Invite the Spirit to minister to your hearts. Ask God to give you the spiritual eyes to see how He desires to use you to be His witness in the coming days. Groups of 3 – 5 are ideal for this intimate, crucial time together.