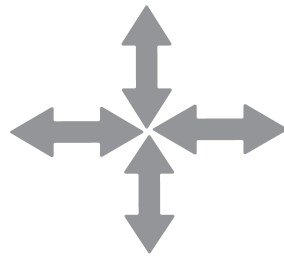




GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of March 29th

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 – Everybody's In, Nobody's Out (Matthew 15:21-28)

Key Verse:

Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted."

And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Matthew 15:28

Getting Started:

What is a social barrier? What are the greatest social barriers in our city? What does it mean to be exclusive? What does it mean to be inclusive?

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 15:21-28.

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

1. What is your initial reaction to the words of Christ in this passage?
2. What do we know about the relational tensions between the Jews and the Canaanites at the time of this passage?
3. What character traits do we learn about the Canaanite woman? How can our own faith grow by observing the Canaanite woman?



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

1. In our text this week, Jesus is breaking through a social barrier. What is a Biblical understanding of a social barrier? What social barrier might God have you help break through in this city as we strive to be the light and life of Christ to our neighbors?
2. As you walk with the Spirit and opportunities arise, how can you present the inclusive reality of the gospel (Salvation is offered to all)? What about the exclusive reality of the gospel (Christ alone)?



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.