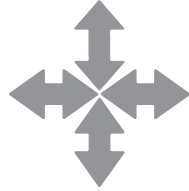




GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of March 8th

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.

Sermon: Jesus – From the Start (Matthew 3:11-17)

Key Verse:

*I baptize you with water for repentance.
But after me comes one who is more powerful than I,
whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
Matthew 3:11*

GettingStarted:

How do you react to authority? Do you like rules or resist them? Do you enjoy following someone else's agenda?

Time of Prayer:

Together, begin with prayer. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and guard your time together. Pray that you will understand what God is speaking to you through His holy Word. 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 3:11-17 .

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

1. What appears to be the most significant Kingdom reality at play within this passage?
2. Why does Jesus say he comes to John to be baptized? What does this mean?
3. What warning do we find in verse 12?



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

4. What is Jesus inaugurating through his baptism?
5. Pastor Tim talks in his sermon this week about "God's agenda." What is God's agenda in the world?
6. How can you further join God in His agenda this week as it relates to His Kingdom spreading throughout Colorado Springs?



IN: Connect with Each Other

Pastor Tim encourages us to imagine we are John the Baptist and asks, "what would it feel like to wade out into (the Jordan River) with Jesus? Would you feel worthy? Would you feel aware, exposed, ashamed?" Tim later writes, "we want God to bless our agendas, but God comes with his own agenda."

How are you doing in letting go of your agenda and living fully for God's agenda?

Pressing into the level of vulnerability that your group has built to date, close your time by sharing your highest joys and sorrows with one another. Celebrating that Jesus desires direct access into your mess, 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.