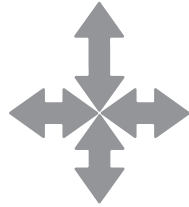




## GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of August 26th

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:

If your group is meeting for the first time, take time to introduce yourselves around the circle. What is your name, etc. What are you hoping to get out of these next 10 weeks?

What is one of your favorite family traditions (either growing up or with your family now)?



### **UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word**

Read aloud the passage for the week: Exodus 20:4-6. Allow a few moments to silently reflect on what you heard. Underline or note words or phrases that seem meaningful. Pray for your study of God's Word.

1. Re-read verse four. Some people look at this verse and conclude that there is no place for art/sculpting/painting in the Christian life. Does this seem like an appropriate reading of Exodus 20:4? Why or why not?
2. Verses five and six reference a challenging concept for western ears. What do you think about the idea that God would punish four generations because of the great grandparent's sin? Is this outweighed by the promise to love to a thousand generations those who love God and follow His commands?
3. Physical idols (stone, wood, etc.) are far less common in American culture than they were in the ancient context in which Exodus was written. But this second commandment is not limited to the worship of physical idols. What kinds of things could be considered idols in our context? What sorts of things does our culture "worship?"
4. Pastor Tim Keller describes idolatry as turning "good things" into "ultimate things." What do you think about this idea?
5. Consider the "idols" that were brought up in question 4 and perhaps add to the list: career, fitness, social media, youth, a person (children, a celebrity), sports, the USA, materialism, etc. Are any of these a struggle for you? What are some good things in your life that you are tempted to turn into "ultimate things?"

6. Romans 12:1, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” Paul explains that worship involves giving our entire selves over to God as a sacrifice. Is there anything other than God that you are tempted to you give yourself over to (career, hobby, family, etc)? What would it take to surrender these things to God in order to receive the life offered in Christ?



### **IN: Connect with Each Other**

Whatever occupies the highest place in your heart, this is your god. Whatever occupies your mind last at night and first in the morning, this is your god. Whatever you turn to when you are confused or lost or frightened, this is your god. Whatever you must have and cannot do without, this is your god. The human heart is a factory for idols. Remove them all and hold God in the highest place.

Close your time together by praying as a group that you would be quick to look to God, to live life with God rather than lesser substitutes. If any other concerns arose during your conversation take some time to pray for these as well.



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

Last week your group started a conversation about ways to be outwardly focused as we head into the fall (CityServe? Bless neighbors? Etc...). Spend a few minutes following up on this conversation. Were there any other ideas that came to you throughout the last week?

If your group is meeting for the first time this week, take some time to have this conversation. As you look towards the fall together, initiate a brainstorming conversation about how your group could be outwardly focused. Will you sign up for CityServe together? If you meet in a neighborhood, is there a way in which you could bless your neighbors? How can your group actively demonstrate that Jesus is Lord of your lives this fall?