



GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of September 2nd

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 9 weeks?

Have you ever been given an endearing nickname (not one from Jr. High bullies)? What was it, how did you earn it, and what did it communicate about you?



IN: Connect with Each Other

As you prepare to engage God's word, take a few minutes to go around the circle and ask if there is anything weighing on people as they arrived this week. Take a few minutes to bring these concerns to God in prayer.

If no one has anything in particular to share, simply pray for your time together and for your study of God's word.



UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word

Read aloud the passage for the week: : Exodus 20:7 and 2 Peter 2:1-3. 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 Exodus 20:7. Do you think using the name of God as an expression of shock, outrage, or anger ("Jeez! Oh my God!") is breaking the third commandment? Why or why not?
2. The Old Testament listed a large number of violations to this command. It included things like: blaspheming or cursing the name of God, uttering false oaths in God's name, sorcery, child sacrifice, cutting corners in sacrifices, unlawfully touching holy things (ark of the covenant) and putting unholy things in holy places. Whenever people or things belonging to God were defiled, the Lord – whose name they bore – was also dishonored.

What are some of the ways in which people dishonor the name or reputation of God in our culture today?

3. God doesn't want us to empty His name of its meaning or use it in a careless/wicked way. So, let's consider the flip-side of this command, if we are called to not misuse God's name, how should we use it? And what does this tell us about God?"
4. The third command also sought to stop the Israelites from falsely signing God's name to ideas and deeds which were not His. We do this today if we say things like, "God told me ____" or "God says _____," when God actually did not say _____. How have you seen people do this? What is the result or effect of doing this?
5. Re-read 2 Peter 2:1-3. These false teachers are deliberately misrepresenting the Lord, and ultimately it will lead to their destruction. They are motivated by greed, financially exploiting the people with false doctrine, and this is leading to scandalous behavior which is giving Christianity a bad name. The church has continued to experience this (in recent times we've seen a rise in the prosperity gospel, corrupt evangelists, etc.). How should we respond when we encounter this? Is there a Christ-like response?
6. As Christians, we bear the name of Christ. We are called to act, think and speak in ways which honor the holy name of God, and to faithfully represent God to our culture. What does it look like for you to faithfully represent Christ in your life? Are there any adjustments you need to make in your daily habits to better honor God's name?



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

Take a few moments to consider one person in your life whom you hope to intentionally and faithfully represent Christ to this fall. Go around the circle and share who this person may be. Then close your time together by having one person pray for each of these people by name.