



Week 1 Small Group: We > Me

Opening Prayer:

We have come together to share, to grow and to change.

May we all feel safe with each other. Safe to explore the scriptures and question. Safe to consider new ideas.

Safe to share our lives with each other, and with our amazing God. Amen.

Quote:

Don't ever forget that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Meade

Breaking the Ice:

What is your favorite “community” depicted in a TV show, movie or book? Share about a time or a place where you really felt a part of a community? What were the elements that could be reproduced?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read: Acts 2:14-18

- As Peter stood to address the crowd, the other 11 apostles stood with him. How might that be significant? How could we stand with one another today?
- Peter explains that what they have seen and heard had been spoken about by the prophet Joel. How do our connections with believers in the past help us today?
- Peter emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is poured out on all, not just the select few. How does this action point to the importance of community?
- How do Peter’s words point to a new way for people to live as community?

Next Steps:

- The crowds ask themselves “what does this mean?” What does the pouring out of the Holy Spirit mean to us today?
- Are there times or people that you have dismissed because what they were saying seemed like the utterances of “drunk men,” later to see that God was at work in them?
- What are some visions and/or dreams you have for the church? How might you inspire others to catch the spirit?
- How can you make yourself available to live out dreams much bigger than yourself?

Prayer for the Week:

Holy Spirit, we ask you to fill us with the same passion as Peter and the apostles to share the Good News in our communities and to the ends of the earth. Help us to see that ministry is best done together. Let us find ways to invite others to join us on the journey and not the sprint of faith. Amen.



Week 2 Small Group: Investment > Quick Fix

Opening Prayer:

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May we all feel safe with each other. Safe to explore the scriptures and question. Safe to consider new ideas.

Safe to share our lives with each other, and with our amazing God. Amen.

Quote:

Earn as much as you can, save as much as you can, invest as much as you can, give as much as you can. John Wesley

Breaking the Ice:

Have you ever built a new house? If so, what was your favorite part? If not, would you want to? Why or why not?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read Matthew 7:24-27

- What differentiates the wise man from the foolish man in Jesus' teaching?
- What does having a good foundation look like and act like?
- Jesus calls us to hear his words and do them. What keeps us from hearing and obeying the words of Jesus?
- Matthew 5-7 is categorized as the Sermon on the Mount. Glance over the various topics Jesus discusses and ask why is this parable a fitting end to the Sermon on the Mount?

Next Steps:

- In what ways is "living out our lives" like "building a house"? What is the purpose of a foundation?
- Nobody sets out to build their life on sand, but so many still do. How do so many well-intentioned people end up in a place where their lives collapse in the storm?
- Where have you intentionally invested in "building" something of value in your life? Where have you seen your church invest in something of worth?
- This has been a difficult year, with many unexpected challenges. How do you need to continue to prepare to weather storms of life? How might your church need to do the same?

Prayer for the Week:

Dear Jesus, we thank you for the stable foundation that you have set for us. Keep our eyes focused on the good investments you offer us rather than the easy quick fix, so that we can withstand the trials that will come our way. In all that we do let us do it in a way that brings glory to you. Amen.



Week 3 Small Group: Abundance > Comfort

Opening Prayer:

We have come together to share, to grow and to change.

May we all feel safe with each other. Safe to explore the scriptures and question. Safe to consider new ideas.

Safe to share our lives with each other, and with our amazing God. Amen.

Quote:

Gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion. Mahatma Gandhi

Breaking the Ice:

Can you remember your attitude towards money as a child? Did that change as you earned your own money? How might this mindset still be affecting the way you manage your money?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read: Malachi 3:10 (for context read Malachi 3: 6-12)

- What attitude do these verses reveal about the people?
- What might it mean that someone has robbed God? What does this principle teach us about God? About people? About money?
- God does not need our sacrifices and offerings, so how does this text lift up why this matters?

Next Steps:

- During COVID-19 many of us experienced things that did not make us comfortable. What was the motivation for doing things out of your comfort zone? Did anything lead to something “greater than” being comfortable?
- The primary reason people choose not to give is fear. How might the statements in Malachi, by God when it comes to generosity, “I can be trusted” and “I can be tested” affect our fear?
- Do you have any systematic habits of generosity? What are they?
- What principles can we learn from this passage to apply to our giving today?

Prayer for the Week:

Generous God, help us recognize all we have as a gift from you. Help us see the hidden blessing around us, so we can give out of our abundance, rather than trying to keep ourselves comfortable. Let our actions become contagious so that the needs are many are not just met, but instead cared for abundantly. Amen.



Week 4 Small Group: Possibility > Status Quo

Opening Prayer:

We have come together to share, to grow and to change.

May we all feel safe with each other. Safe to explore the scriptures and question. Safe to consider new ideas.

Safe to share our lives with each other, and with our amazing God. Amen.

Quote:

The soft-minded {person} always fears change. He feels security in the status quo, and he has an almost morbid fear of the new. For him, the greatest pain is the pain of a new idea. MLK

Breaking the Ice:

Was there a time when a teacher, boss or mentor invited you to do something more significant than even they were doing? What was the result? Have you ever done this?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read: John 14:11-14

- What promise does Jesus make to anyone who has faith?
- Why does Jesus claim that the apostles will be able to do works that are greater than his own?
- How is Jesus using the hopeful future to encourage the apostles as they are about to face times of trouble and trials?
- How does pray help us to see greater possibilities?

Next Steps:

- Whether or not we like the way things are, we tend to default to the status quo. How have you defaulted to status quo when it comes to thinking about giving?
- Leaning on Christ, we have the power to discover endless possibilities. How might you lean into the “greater than” power Jesus offers.
- Jesus isn’t really describing generosity in this passage. Nevertheless, this is something worth considering when it comes to our giving. In what ways might Jesus’ words apply to us today?
- How might a generous attitude lead to greater possibilities in our church, community and world?

Prayer for the Week:

Dear Jesus, we long for all the possibilities that you offer for the future. Help us to see how you have empowered us to do greater than what we would expect or dream. Give us the vision to see our ministry, the church and the world when we lean into your power and love. Amen.