



Week 1 Small Group: Loving Friends

Opening Prayer:

God of love, we invite you into this place.

Jesus, we light this candle as a sign of your presence.

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten us.

We pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to new ideas and that we may grow in our understanding of your ways. Amen.

Quote: I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. Maya Angelou

Breaking the Ice:

What would you do to pass the time, if Jesus had asked you to wait for him?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read John 21:3-4, 10-17

- Peter's response to his failure to follow Jesus to the end is to go fishing. Why? What does this say to the others? Have you ever done the same?
- Share some other passages of the bible that have helped you understand what it means to care for each other?
- Why is each affirmation of Peter's love followed by a command? What does this mean for your faith journey?

Next Steps:

- Jesus meets the physical as well as the spiritual and emotional needs of his friends. Why is this important? How are we able to do the same?
- What does the support of friends look like to you? How might you encourage someone going through hard times?
- How should our relationship with Jesus affect our view of others?

Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, we thank you for the friends that you have placed in our lives. We are grateful for all those who have walked alongside us in good times and in bad. Help us to hold one another accountable in love. May I be a source of encouragement and support for those I call friends. May we grow closer to each other and to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Week 2 Small Group: Loving Community

Opening Prayer:

God of love, we invite you into this place.

Jesus, we light this candle as a sign of your presence.

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten us.

We pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to new ideas and that we may grow in our understanding of your ways. Amen.

Quote: The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members. Coretta Scott King

Breaking the Ice:

When you were a kid, what did you bring for lunch at school?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read John 6:1-13

- What was the reaction of Jesus, Andrew and Philip to the needs of the crowd?
- Why did Jesus want to feed the people? Why not just let them prepare their own food? Are there other biblical examples of God providing food for people in need?
- What is the significance of the boy offering his lunch? How might this inspire the ways we can show love to our community?

Next Steps:

- How might we be like the crowd, seeking our needs to be met? How might we be like the disciples, unsure of how to meet the needs of the crowds? How does following Jesus change us?
- How do we live out this call from Jesus to feed our community? How is that done in love?
- Can you name a time when God provided more than you needed? How did this come about?

Prayer for the Week:

Generous God, we thank you for this community where you have placed us at this time. We pray for those who are suffering, those in need, those without hope. Inspire us to use what you have provided to overcome the obstacles we face. Give us hearts that are confident that needs will be met when we bring them before you. Direct us in the way to serve in your name. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.



Week 3 Small Group: Loving Family

Opening Prayer:

God of love, we invite you into this place.

Jesus, we light this candle as a sign of your presence.

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten us.

We pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to new ideas and that we may grow in our understanding of your ways. Amen.

Quote: Family, the ones you live with, laugh with and love. Unknown

Breaking the Ice:

What's one unique role you had in the family you were brought up in?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read: Luke 10:38-42

- List at least two things you learn about Martha in this passage and at least two things you learn about Mary. How would you sum up Martha in one word? How would you sum up Mary?
- How would you describe the relationship between Mary and Martha?
- Who in this story do you identify with? Martha, Mary, or the disciples who are on the sidelines watching?

Next Steps:

- Martha wanted Jesus to correct Mary, rather than address her concerns directly with Mary herself. How might we sometimes skip hard conversations with family? How does this affect the situation?
- Both Martha and Mary are deeply spiritual women who care for Jesus, yet they show that love in different ways. How can we learn from those who are different from us new ways to draw close to Jesus?
- How do worry, desire for perfection, and distractions play into our relationships with family? With Jesus?

Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of family in good times and ask for your care in times of challenge. We ask for your healing for disputes that have caused division over the years. May our relationships be renewed through your love. We pray for safety, and guidance and joy, most of all we pray for love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Week 4 Small Group: Loving God

Opening Prayer:

God of love, we invite you into this place.

Jesus, we light this candle as a sign of your presence.

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten us.

We pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to new ideas and that we may grow in our understanding of your ways. Amen.

Quote: *Believe me, count as lost each day you have not used in loving God. Brother Lawrence*

Breaking the Ice:

What is one spiritual tradition you have or always have wanted to have in your life?

Wrestling with the Word:

Read Mark 2:23-28

- Read some of the scriptures concerning Sabbath, Exodus 20:8-11, Isaiah 58:13-14, Mat 12:12, Leviticus 23:3. How does rest honor God?
- In what ways were the rules about Sabbath hindering the Pharisees from loving God? In what ways have you made Sabbath all about rules?
- The Pharisees leaned on rules as an expression of their love for God. What rituals, practices or traditions have we possibly replaced for a loving relationship with God?

Next Steps:

- What do you think an ideal Sabbath would look like? What practices would take place?
- What areas in your life do you need to rest from or need to be restored? What are some of the possible results of neglecting taking a Sabbath in our lives?
- Has the way you practiced Sabbath impacted how you experience the love of God? Has your example of Sabbath rest allowed those around you to experience the love of God?

Prayer for the Week:

God of Rest, help us to be still enough to know you and love you. Allow us to see how times for rest and slowing down are part of your plan for us. May we not just seek this restoration for ourselves, but instead be advocates that all your children can enjoy in sabbath rest. During this time, may we recommit ourselves to you and to living in a way that leads to new life. In Jesus name, Amen.