

HOW TO USE THIS GROUP GUIDE

CONNECT (10 MINS)

- Pick one or more of the warm-up questions and have all the group members give a response to the question(s).
- Make sure everybody gets a chance to speak. Don't let talkative people dominate the conversation, but graciously welcome everybody to participate.

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TRUTH (15-20 MIN)

- Read the scriptures and paragraphs in this section to clearly communicate... what the Bible says about the week's topic.
- **Discussion Questions:** These questions get people thinking about the practical implications of the truth being discussed. Have one or two people give an answer, but don't spend too much time on these questions.
Truth (10-15 min)

GRACE (5 MINS)

- Read the grace scripture and section which shows how the passage points to Jesus Christ and God's grace.
- This section is really important, because it shows that life change begins with the grace of God and not our own efforts.

CHANGE (10-15 MINS)

- Have everyone give an answer to each of the change questions.
- Take a good amount of time here. Really encourage people to think through how they can practically put truth into action.

PRAYER (10-15 MINS)

- Read through the prayer focus points and have one or two people in the group pray.
- Make sure not to rush through prayer. The things we want God to change in our lives will often happen through prayer.

MISSION

WEEK 1

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE



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WARM-UP

- ▶ What was your nickname when you were younger and where did it come from?
- ▶ What's something you've done in your life that took prolonged effort over a long period of time? What was it like finishing it?
- ▶ Do you think faith should be only personal? Why or why not?

TRUTH

Read John 17:13-20

Here's what we mean by mission: it is the responsibility Jesus has given every Christian to share the gospel with others in the hope that they'll believe. When Jesus spoke about mission, he made it clear that it's an inextricable part of discipleship. For many though, the thought of doing something to change another person's beliefs is nerve-wracking, unnecessary, or rude. Jesus, however, explained why mission is very good news.

Motivation

“But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” (John 17:13)

Duty seems to be the primary motivator for mission. But that's wrong. Jesus says joy drives mission. Jesus came into the world for the joy of reconciling sinners to God. This shows us that joy in mission isn't just for those who believe the gospel, but also for those who share it with others. When we see mission for what it is, the joy of it is obvious. We share the gospel in the hope that people we love and care for will be rescued to spend eternity with God and us. That is a joyful thing indeed.

- ▶ What makes it difficult to see mission as a joyful endeavor?

Challenge

“I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.” (John 17:14)

When Christians involve themselves in mission they experience joy, but they experience hate too. The gospel exposes the world for what it really is – a place filled with people who've made themselves enemies of God through sin. This is a frightening diagnosis, but it's true. Those who aren't willing to accept the diagnosis will suppress the truth and those who voice it. But Jesus prayed to the Father for protection, so although we'll experience fierce opposition from the enemy, God will protect us.

- ▶ Read John 17:11. Given that many Christians have died for their faith throughout history, what do we learn from this verse about the nature of the God's promise to protect (or "keep") us?

Affect

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

The usual meaning of sanctify is the removal of sin. John uses it differently. (We know this because Jesus used the same word of himself in verse nineteen, translated “consecrate,” yet he was sinless.) Here the word “sanctify” means “set apart for mission.” This is significant. Jesus prayed that his disciples would become all God wanted them to be, but that this would only happen while they were involved in mission. The reason it’s worth engaging in a dangerous mission, is because the fullness of God’s promises and blessings for us are only accessible in mission.

GRACE

Power

“And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.” (John 17:19)

When our mission feels perilous and we need courage, we can look to Jesus. We might risk hatred but Jesus faced murder. We might risk derision but people spat in Jesus' face. We're told in Hebrews twelve that he endured all this for the "joy set before him." The possibility of us being with him made the price of Jesus' mission worth it. Because Jesus fulfilled his mission, we get eternal joy in God's presence. May we be a people of mission with hearts set on the joy of salvation.

CHANGE

- ▶ What challenges make you fearful of mission?
- ▶ In what ways does the mission of Jesus give you courage to endure hatred from others?
- ▶ Who are the people on your Faith for Five list? How can you be mission-minded this week?

PRAYER

- ▶ Pray for each person on your Faith for Five card, that God would move on their hearts.
- ▶ Pray for boldness and a revelation of Jesus in mission.



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