

Dear Life Group Leaders,

John, in his Gospel, has been making known to us Jesus who is God made flesh; Jesus in turn makes known to us the Father, teaching the disciples, and us too, that we can relate to the Father directly and ask him for anything in Jesus' name. There are some wonderful verses in this passage to savour together!

God bless,

Amanda (*This week's Life Group Guide was prepared by Amanda Featherstone, who is part of the leadership team at Everyday Sutton.*)

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

John 16:16-33

This week's BIG IDEA: We can pray directly to the Father; we can ask and keep on asking and our joy will be complete.

Please read John 16:16-22

1. What is the context of this passage?

[Leaders note: Jesus has celebrated the Passover with his disciples; we are in the middle of a long discourse which continues as they leave the upper room and walk through the streets to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will be arrested].

2. v17-19, how does Jesus draw out what the disciples want to ask?

[Leaders note: Note Jesus' tenderness! It's good to ask questions, has anyone been on an Alpha Course? There are new courses starting January 2023.]

3. v20-22, Jesus likens the disciples' pain to come and the joy of the resurrection to childbirth. We know the end of the story. Are there any circumstances where you are labouring to see resurrection joy? How does focusing on the joy that is to come help you face the difficulties of today?

[Leaders note: See Galatians 4:19]

Please read John 16:23-26

4. v23-24, Jesus referring to God as Father/Abba was radical. He states that we can approach the Father directly. Is this a new concept for you? What helps you pray to God as Father?

[Leaders note: see Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 10:19-22; Romans 8:14. The Holy Spirit; Jesus bridges the gap, making us right before God; making space.]

5. v23. What do you think asking in Jesus' name means?

[Leaders note: Commentators talk about asking the Father with all the riches of Jesus available. You may also want to consider: Sin covered (Romans 8:1; 2 Cor 5:21). Identity assured (Ephesians 1:4). Adopted as sons and daughters, beloved of the Father (Ephesians 1:5; Luke 3:22). The living Jesus interceding for us, standing in the gap (Romans 8:34). Seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). Joint heirs with Christ (Ephesians 1:18). All God's promises are yes in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20). We pray from a place of identity, authority and inheritance. We pray the prayers Jesus prays for the glory of the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit, that we may be fruitful.]

6. v24, "Ask and you will receive". What do you think Jesus means?

[Leaders note: See also Matt 7:7, the original Greek here means 'ask and keep asking'.]

7. What is the significance of Jesus' words at the end of v26?

[Leaders note: Prayer isn't asking Jesus to ask the Father. No, we can approach our Father directly!]

Please read John 16:27-33

8. Jesus speaks clearly to his disciples – what makes you think he knows them deeply and understands their weaknesses? What comfort does he offer them for the trials ahead?

9. In what ways does Jesus' resurrection victory give you confidence, joy and peace?

Let's finish with being still before our Father with this song <https://youtu.be/7sroPrjCoGY>; resting in his love for us and the peace he brings. Bring to him the things you are asking for in the name of Jesus.