

6 WEEKS

**stuff  
happens**





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# stuff happens

## WEEK 1

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### **Kicking it off:**

What kind of “stuff”, that happens in your life, throws you off most?

#### **Big Idea:**

When I learn to see where God is involved in the stuff happening in my life, I can live with liberating freedom, ease, confidence and growth.

#### **Key Scriptures:**

##### **Isaiah 40:26**

*“Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.”*

##### **Isaiah 40:12**

*“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand*

*marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?”*

##### **Acts 17:24a**

*“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth...”*

##### **Romans 8:28-29**

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...”*

##### **Matthew 5:44-45**

*“But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”*

## Deuteronomy 6:5b

“...Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

### Discussion:

1. When bad things happen in your life, where do your thoughts typically go?
2. When good things happen in your life, how do your thoughts play out?
3. *Read Isaiah 40:26, Isaiah 40:12 and Acts 17:24a.* How do the truths in these passages contribute to your understanding of the circumstances that happen in your life?
4. What challenging circumstance are you currently facing that keeps you up at night?
5. *Read Romans 8:28-29 and Matthew 5:44-45.* Things happen to people who believe in God the same that they happen to people who do not believe in God, both good and bad. Discuss how you see that God is at work for the good of those who love him, and he's also at work for the good of those who don't love him.
6. In Romans 8:28, the apostle Paul says “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him...” How do we know that?
7. How does that truth impact you when you are walking through difficult circumstances?
8. “When I obey God, I find out that the law of God, the will of God is given for my own good and it leads to the best life.” Discuss how you've seen this truth played out in your own life.
9. How have you seen it play out when you've lived in disobedience to God?
10. What might it look like for you to live, not at the mercy of your circumstances, but above them, because you serve a God who is above your circumstances?
11. *Read Romans 8:29.* What does this passage tell you about God's plan, not simply being really good circumstances in your life, but having the character of Jesus Christ through eternity?


## **Wrapping It Up:**

Throughout this week, take notice of all the stuff that happens to you – both big and small. And as you do, ask yourself “How is God at work in this thing?”

## **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our Revive Counseling Ministry who are there for people when “stuff happens”.

## **Memory Verse:**



**“And we know that in all things  
God works for the good of those  
who love him, who have been  
called according to his purpose.  
For those God foreknew he also  
predestined to be conformed to  
the image of his Son...”**

**Romans 8:28-29**



# trouble happens

## WEEK 2

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### **Kicking it off:**

What has been the most memorable thing that has happened to you that brought the realization that you're not in control?

#### **Big Idea:**

Trouble happens, but you can take heart knowing Jesus has overcome the world.

#### **Key Scriptures:**

##### **Psalm 10:1**

*"Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"*

##### **John 16:33**

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

##### **Romans 8:28-29**

*"And we know that in all*

*things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son..."*

##### **John 9:1-3**

*"As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him."*

##### **Psalm 10:14**

*"But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand."*

#### **Discussion:**

1. Read Psalm 10:1. Have you ever felt the way the psalmist does? How have you navigated through troubled times when you felt God was far away?

2. *Read John 16:33.* Right before He was to be arrested and taken away to be crucified, Jesus shared these words with His disciples. What is Jesus trying to teach them, and us, as He shares these words?
3. Jesus has already defeated sin and death, but we're not yet fully free of its pain and frustration. Jesus knows how the story ends, but we're still living through the uncertainty and doubt. How do you navigate through this truth in your own life?
4. What are some practical ways that you can "take heart" when faced with the troubles of this world?
5. *Recite Romans 8:28-29.* In what ways can our memory verse for this series encourage you, or can you encourage others with, in the midst of trouble?
6. *Read John 9:1-3.* How might the works of God be displayed in you in the midst of any trouble you face?
7. *Read Psalm 10:14.* Contrast this passage with verse 1 of Psalm 10, which we opened with. Discuss how the psalmist may have come to this conclusion after his lament at the beginning of the psalm.
8. How might you do the same when trouble happens and you're feeling God is far away?

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Close your time for praying for one another to trust God in the midst of trouble, that His works may be displayed in you.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for those who are seeking help in the midst of their troubles through our many support groups at Sunnybrook.

### **Memory Verse:**

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**“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...”**  
**Romans 8:28-29**

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# guidance happens

## WEEK 3

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### Kicking it off:

Share with the group about a time when you got hopelessly lost and how you found your way back to where you were going. (i.e. on a road trip, in the woods, etc.)

#### Big Idea:

God can take the difficulties of life and use them to guide us and show us His will.

#### Key Scriptures:

##### **Jeremiah 10:23**

*"Lord, I know that people's lives are not their own; it is not for them to direct their steps."*

##### **Psalms 48:14**

*"For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end."*

##### **Psalms 25:1-2, 4-5 (NASB)**

*"To You, O Lord, I lift up my*

*soul. O my God, in You I trust... Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."*

##### **1 Samuel 28: 5-7, 11,15-16,18**

*"When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. Saul then said to his attendants, 'Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.'... Then the woman asked, 'Whom shall I bring up for you?'" "Bring up Samuel," he said... Samuel said to Saul, 'Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?'" "I am in great distress," Saul said. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do." Samuel said, "Why*

*do you consult me, now that the Lord has departed from you and become your enemy?... Because you did not obey the LORD... the LORD has done this to you today."*

## **Romans 8:28-29**

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son..."*

### **Discussion:**

1. Open your discussion with how you've been intentional about planning out your life thus far. Include sharing who you may have sought out for guidance in your plans.
2. Read *Jeremiah 10:23* and *Psalm 48:14*. There will come a time (maybe you are living in that time right now), that stuff will happen, and it will quickly become clear, "I don't know the way. I need a guide." How do you align your will with the will of God when that happens?
3. Read *Psalm 24:1-2, 4-5* and *1 Samuel 28: 5-7, 11, 15-16, 18*. Discuss the contrast between how David asks for

guidance (*Psalm 25*) and how Saul asks for guidance.

4. Saul wanted to satisfy his intentions, David gave God his intentions. Saul wants guidance without knowing the Guide. David says, "I want to know the Guide." Discuss the difference between the two.
5. Discuss this Dallas Willard quote (from *Hearing God*): "I fear that many people seek to hear God solely as a device for obtaining their own safety, comfort, and sense of being righteous. My extreme preoccupation with knowing God's will for me may only indicate, contrary to what is often thought, that I'm over-concerned with myself, not a Christ-like interest in the well-being of others or in the glory of God."
6. Consider your own motivations for seeking God's guidance. Do they more align with David or with Saul?
7. Often, we want God's guidance to guide us toward particular circumstances, but God is more interested in guiding who we become in the midst of those circumstances. How does our

Romans 8:28-29 (our memory verse for this series) affirm that?

8. How might you focus your prayers this week on giving God your intentions and your motivations, truly seeking His will over your own?


### **Wrapping It Up:**

Set your intention this week to, like David, daily lift up your soul to God and trust Him as your guide.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for those who will be taking part in our immersion baptisms in all our services next week.

### **Memory Verse:**



**“And we know that in all things  
God works for the good of those  
who love him, who have been  
called according to his purpose.  
For those God foreknew he also  
predestined to be conformed to  
the image of his Son...”**

**Romans 8:28-29**



# growth happens

## WEEK 4

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### Kicking it off:

Do you or have you ever had a garden? Discuss what things are the hardest to grow and why.

#### Big Idea:

In all things in life, God is at work, growing us to be conformed to the image of His Son.

#### Key Scriptures:

##### **Mark 4:26-29**

*“This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”*

##### **Ephesians 4:11-16**

*“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*

##### **Galatians 6:9**

*“Let us not become weary in*

doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

## **Romans 8:28-29**

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...”*

### **Discussion:**

1. Discuss your belief on what it takes to grow spiritually.
2. Why do you suppose spiritual growth can seem so elusive?
3. *Read Mark 4:26-29.* What insight do you gain regarding growth from this passage?
4. *Read Ephesians 4:11-16.* What does this passage teach about spiritual growth?
5. What has been the most significant catalyst for spiritual growth in your own life?
6. *Read Galatians 6:9.* When are you most tempted to give up when it comes to growing spiritually?
7. How might this passage encourage you?
8. How does our memory verse in Romans 8:28-29

encourage you in your spiritual growth?

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Every moment is an opportunity for spiritual growth. As you close your time together, discuss how you can be intentional in those moments to be “all in” in your commitment to grow.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our church, that we will be a place where people can be equipped to grow and flourish in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

### **Memory Verse:**

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**“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...”**  
**Romans 8:28-29**

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# healing happens

## WEEK 5

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### **Kicking it off:**

Share a time when you injured yourself or suffered with a significant illness. What happened in the healing process?

#### **Big Idea:**

When you bring your whole truth to Jesus, healing happens.

#### **Key Scriptures:**

##### **Exodus 19:4**

*"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself."*

##### **Psalms 91:4**

*"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."*

##### **Malachi 4:2**

*"But for you who fear my name,*

*the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings."*

##### **Mark 5:21-42**

*"When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her*

bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed

at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished."

### **Isaiah 53:5**

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

### **Romans 8:28-29**

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son..."

### **Discussion:**

1. In this message series, we're learning how we find God in the stuff of our lives from one moment to the next. God is always at work, and healing is one of the ways

He works best. Read Exodus 19:4, Psalm 91:4 and Malachi

2. Discuss the images that come to mind as you read these passages and the character of God that is revealed in them.

2. *Read Mark 5:21-42 together.* This is an account of two healings: one for a “somebody”, and the other for a “nobody”. Discuss what you learn from the contrast of these two healings, and Jesus’ intention in interrupting the somebody to be with the nobody.

3. *Read Isaiah 53:5.* J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *Lord of the Rings*, writes: “For it is said in old lore, ‘The hands of the king are the hands of a healer, and so shall the rightful king be known.’” Discuss the dichotomy of Jesus’ healing coming from His wounds.

4. Share any experiences you have with receiving healing from God, whether physical, spiritual, or emotional. How did that come about?
5. Is there any specific wound that you are dealing with from which you need healing? Take some time to pray together for God’s

healing over the areas shared.

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Is there anyone whom you know is hurting that could benefit from an invitation to join you for Thanksgiving? If that’s not possible, pray for their healing and comfort in this week.

### **Prayer Focus:**

As a group, give thanks to God for all the blessings He has brought into your life as you prepare to commemorate Thanksgiving this week.

### **Memory Verse:**

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**“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...”**  
**Romans 8:28-29**

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# grace happens

WEEK 6

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

What's the highest height that you've ever climbed up to?

### Big Idea:

The primary expression of the grace of God through Jesus comes to us not when we climb a ladder, but when Jesus goes to a cross.

### Key Scriptures:

#### **Psalm 19:12**

*"But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults."*

#### **Romans 5:8**

*"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

#### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is*

*the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."*

#### **Romans 8:28-29**

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son..."*

### Discussion:

1. In what ways, over the years, have you attempted to be "good enough" for God?
2. How have you tended to deal with your failures in that endeavor?
3. Most religions are about doing things to make one's way up to God. Only in Christianity does God's love compel Him to make His way down to us. Discuss why this seems, for some, to be difficult to grasp.
4. Read Psalm 19:12, Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:8-9. One of the problems with

our sin is that we are often not even aware of the most grievous of them inside of us. Discuss how these passages reveal God's provision of grace.

5. Go around and have each person quote our memory verse for this series one last time. How does God's grace show that God is working for our good?


### **Wrapping It Up:**

Each person share how God's grace has impacted your life, then pray together and give thanks for all He has done.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for many people to come to Christ after hearing this message of God's extravagant grace.

### **Memory Verse:**



**“And we know that in all things  
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**Romans 8:28-29**





# Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
  - Take time to prepare.
  - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
  - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
  - What is the purpose of our group?
  - What is the vision for our group?
  - What are your expectations?
  - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
  - What are some things we value as a group?
  - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
  - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
  - Encouraging and challenging one another
  - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?



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