

4 WEEKS

THIS IS THE



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEEK 1

I am the Resurrection and the Life.....4

WEEK 2

I am the Good Shepherd7

WEEK 3

I am the Light of the World.....9

WEEK 4

I am the Vine 11

Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group 14

Group Agreement..... 15

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

WEEK 1

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Describe a time when you have felt most hopeless in your life.

Big Idea:


If my God can defeat death, my God can do anything including resurrecting me from my dead ends.

Key Scriptures:

John 1:1-44

"Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." "But Rabbi," they said, "a

short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light." After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you



whatever you ask." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Jesus, once more deeply

moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

Discussion:

Read John 11:1-44. In this passage we see three dead ends faced by those in the story:

- **DEAD IN DOUBTS.** Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." John 11:16
- **DEAD IN DESPAIR.** When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. John 11:20

- **DEAD IN DELAY.** On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days... 21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died." John 11:17, 21

1. Do you most often encounter dead ends in your doubts, despair, or in the delay? Explain.
2. What dead ends are you currently facing? How have these dead ends affected you?
3. What are some of the spiritual doubts you wrestle with? Have you overcome these doubts? Why or why not?
4. How have you experienced the truth that God's delays are not God's denials?
5. What steps can you take to resurrect yourself from your dead ends?
6. The resurrection is not an event – it's a person. What does that statement mean to you?

Memory Verse:

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."

John 11:25

Wrapping It Up:

Jesus uses this passage to show His followers that anything is possible with God, even going from death to life.

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

WEEK 2

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Share a time when you found yourself in deep trouble and needed someone to rescue you.

Big Idea:

As the Good Shepherd, Jesus guides us, provides for us, corrects us, and protects us.

Key Scriptures:

John 10:11

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

John 10:1

"I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber!"

John 10:10

"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."

Four challenges of being a sheep

1. Sheep get lost easily.
2. Sheep are defenseless.
3. Sheep are very stubborn.
4. Sheep are filthy.

WHAT DOES THE GOOD SHEPHERD DO?

HE GUIDES

Psalm 23:3

"He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake."

John 10:3-4

"The gatekeeper opens the gate for [the shepherd], and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice."

HE PROVIDES

Psalm 23:1-3

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul."

HE CORRECTS

Job 5:17-18

"Blessed is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. 18 For he wounds, but he also binds up; he injures, but his hands also heal."

Hebrews 12:11

"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

HE PROTECTS

Psalms 23:4-6

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Luke 15:4-6

"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home."

Discussion:

Read the passages and outline above and discuss the following:

1. How have you experienced the challenges of being like a sheep?
2. Where in your life might you need God's guidance and protection?
3. Describe a time when God provided for you during a time of need. How did that experience affect your relationship with God?
4. How do you know when God is guiding you?
5. Describe a time when God corrected you. How did you respond to His correction?
6. What steps can you take to become even closer to the Good Shepherd so you can hear His voice?

Wrapping It Up:

Spend some time praying that you will trust in and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Memory Verse:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

John 10:11

JESUS I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

WEEK 3

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Describe the darkest place you've ever been.

Big Idea:

As the Light of the World, Jesus reveals to us our guilt, God's grace, and our hope.

Key Scriptures:

John 8:12

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Acts 26:17-18

"Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God."

Review this outline and Scriptures from this week's message:

THE LAW, THE LOVE, THE LIGHT

THE LAW REVEALS OUR GUILT

John 8:2-6

"At dawn [Jesus] appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him."

THE LOVE REVEALS GOD'S GRACE

John 8:6b-11

"But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her. Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at

a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin."

THE LIGHT REVEALS OUR HOPE

John 8:12

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 12:46

"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness"

Micah 7:8

"Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light."

Discussion:

1. What does God's grace mean to you and how has it illuminated your life?
2. Describe a time when Jesus helped you endure a hopeless situation. How did He reveal hope to you? .
3. What guilt might Christ be revealing to you? What's your

next step to dealing with your guilt?

4. "By God's grace, what you did doesn't stop who you can become." What does that statement mean to you?
5. What darkness might you be in the midst of right now? How could Jesus help illuminate your darkness?
6. How should you treat people that sin based upon what you read in these passages?

Wrapping It Up:

How might you share the Light of Jesus with others this week? Pray and look for opportunities to do so.

Memory Verse:

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

JESUS

I AM THE VINE

WEEK 4

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

What is your favorite fruit and why?

Big Idea:

We stay connected to Jesus by doing what He says and loving like He loves.

Key Scriptures:

John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:1

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener."

STAYING CONNECTED PRODUCES FRUIT

Galatians 5:22-23

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

BEING DISCONNECTED PRODUCES NOTHING

John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:6

"If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."

HOW DO WE STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE?

DO WHAT JESUS SAYS

John 15:10

"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love..."

LOVE LIKE JESUS LOVES

John 15:12

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

Discussion:

1. What challenges do you most face in staying connected to Jesus?
2. What steps might you take to become more connected to Him?
3. What fruit have you seen produced in those times you are connected to Jesus?
4. Is there anything in your life that consistently prevents you from producing fruit? If so, what is it and how are you dealing with it?
5. Describe a time when you loved like Jesus loves. What did you learn from your experience?
6. In what situations do you find it most difficult to love like Jesus loves and why?
7. What dead branches from your character has Jesus removed from your life? What dead branches may yet need to be removed?

Memory Verse:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

Wrapping It Up:

What fruit of the Spirit would you most like to see produced in your life? Take some time to pray now for that to be cultivated in your life.



MEMORY VERSES:

I AM

*"I am the resurrection and the life.
The one who believes in me will live,
even though they die."*

John 11:25

*"I am the good shepherd.
The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."*

John 10:11

*"I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life."*

John 8:12

*"I am the vine; you are the branches.
If you remain in me and I in you,
you will bear much fruit;
apart from me you can do nothing."*

John 15:5

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.
 - Ephesians 4:1-3
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?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
 - Childcare _____
 - When we will meet (day of week) _____
 - Where we will meet (place) _____
 - We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
 - We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
 - Our primary worship service time will be _____
 - Date of this agreement _____
 - Date we will review this agreement again _____
 - Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____
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