



We were made for more in our relationship than what we often settle for. God created and wired us to have deep, meaningful relationships with others that grow us as followers of Jesus. We were made to live in a biblical community and build relationships that build disciples.

WEEK TWO

Made for More Community: One with God

Passage: John 17:1-9

OPENING DISCUSSION

When have you felt closest to God in your life? What made that season different?

What usually helps you feel connected to God? What tends to distract you?

TEACHING AND VIDEO NOTES

CONTEXT: This prayer comes immediately after Jesus finishes teaching His disciples in John 13–16. Judas has already left. The cross is hours away. This is not theoretical theology. This is Jesus praying about what matters most before His death.

Jesus isn't just teaching here. He is interceding. He is going to the Father on our behalf!

JOHN 17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you."

"Glorify" (Greek: doxazō)

- Means to reveal nature
- Jesus is saying: *Let the cross reveal who You really are.*

JOHN 17:2-3 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

- God granted Jesus authority to give people life by giving His life for people!
- Eternal life ≠ just living forever
- Eternal life = knowing God

GET THIS: God's goal isn't simply that you would believe in Him, but that you would know Him.

One goal each of our small groups must have: Let's grow to KNOW GOD together. This isn't just a social group, though we will have fun together. This isn't just a serving group, though we will make a difference together. This isn't just a Bible study group, though we will learn the truth together. This is a group where we will grow to KNOW GOD together.

“Know” (Greek: *ginōskō*)

- Experiential, relational knowledge
- Not facts about God, but **fellowship with God**

We will grow to know and live in relationship with God TOGETHER.

We don't just learn about God, we experience life with Him TOGETHER.

- Open Our Bibles - know Him through His word.
- Open Our Mouths - to understand truth and to encourage others
- Open Our Hearts - know Him as we pray
- Open Our Hands - know Him as we care for and serve one another

In every small group, let this be your cue:

- Open the Bible - not just to learn but to know God
- Open Your Mouth - not just to discuss but to know God
- Open Your Heart - not just to pray but to know God
- Open Your Hand - not just to do good but to know God

When we do this, we learn how to do what Jesus prays for next.

JOHN 17:4-5 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

How did Jesus glorify the Father? How did He show us who God really is? He finished the work. He did God's will 100% of the time and brought God glory 100% of the time.

As we grow in our relationship with God, we can and should glorify Him, too.

COMMIT: Knowing God leads to living for God.

JOHN 17:6-9 “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

Jesus reminds us who He is praying for. He's praying for those God gave Him. He is praying for people like you and me, and as He does, don't miss it:

- We are His because God chose us.
- We are His because we heard the Gospel and believed.

GAMECHANGER: We make it our goal to know Him because He sent His Son to know us!

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. As a group, we said we want to know God by opening four areas of our lives:

Open Our Bibles – knowing Him through His Word

Open Our Mouths – knowing Him speaking truth, asking questions, encouraging others

Open Our Hearts – knowing Him through honest prayer

Open Our Hands – knowing Him through serving and caring

Which of these comes most naturally to you right now? Which is most challenging?

Read: John 17:1-9

2. What stands out to you the most about the section of Jesus' prayer that we read tonight?

Leader Note: With each answer that is given, you can ask, "What does that say about Jesus that he chose to pray about that with his last night of freedom?" This question helps people see that this prayer in John 17 reveals the heart of our Savior because our priorities come through clearly in our prayer, especially those in our desperate hour of need.

3. Jesus defines eternal life as "knowing God." How is that different from how people usually think about eternal life? If eternal life is about "knowing God" today, how does that change how you see your day-to-day life and responsibilities?

Leader Note: "Everyone will live eternally, either in heaven or in hell. Eternal life, then, is not merely the continuation of life but the experience of God's reality. This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent—Jesus Christ. To receive eternal life is to enter into the divine realm with the goal of experiencing an intimate relationship with God through Jesus, a relationship that will grow throughout eternity. It is the uninterrupted, deepening knowledge and experience of God and the resources of his Son shared with believers who live by faith. This is the purpose for which we were created: intimate fellowship with God as we represent him in all that we do."¹

4. Would you say your relationship with God is about knowing Him, or knowing more about Him? What is the difference?

Leader Note: Knowledge of God or about God is not a bad thing. But it is stopping short of the goal. The goal, as we see in John 17, is to know God relationally. To follow Him (Luke 9:23). To remain in Him (John 15:4). If our knowledge of God remains strictly academic, we are making one of the key mistakes the Pharisees made.

5. What would it look like for this group to truly "know God together," not just meet together? How can this group help you know Jesus more?
6. What is one simple step you can take this week to grow in knowing God?

¹ Tony Evans, *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2019), 1056.

7. Vs 1-5. Jesus prayed specifically that he would glorify God the Father and that God the Father would do likewise as the time for Jesus to die on the cross drew closer. How did Jesus specifically glorify God with his time on earth?

Leader Note: With each answer given, you can follow it up with, "What does it look like for us to do likewise?" This helps everyone remember that Jesus is both our Savior and Lord, but he is also our example if we are to truly be followers of Him.

PRAYER TIME

Spend time praying together. Ask for prayer requests and pray for the group's current needs. Also, pray for the group to grow to know God together. Encourage everyone who is comfortable to pray for the group and for what God wants to do in and through it. Close the prayer by thanking God for sending Jesus so that you can know God.

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