

## Let's Go Group Studies

### Leader's Notes

1. We're providing this material to you to remove some of the stress and frustration of developing a plan to lead a specific group study. It isn't meant to replace your individual preparation to lead. Our hope is that you would use it as a guide to your engagement with the text and the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you as you help your study's participants to have their own relevant encounter with scripture and the Holy Spirit.
2. This plan isn't meant to constrain you to lead in any specific way. Please feel free to modify it to better meet the needs of your group and to honor your gifting and authentic style. For example, when and how you pray and share prayer needs should be in a rhythm that is good for your group as long as you are praying as a group. For another, who reads it and how scripture is read should fit your group and its needs as long as it is read somehow.
3. Be authentic. If you find yourself saying "They are asking" as in, 'I didn't write this question and I don't really understand why it is being asked.' Don't ask it. Ask something else. It is okay not to understand everything. No one understands everything. If you don't believe in what you're saying, why should anyone else believe it? One way to turn this into a positive is to admit to the group that you are struggling with figuring out a particular bit and allow someone else to contribute their God-given wisdom.
4. Some questions, especially earlier in the study, aren't meant to be a mile deep or transformative. These questions are intended to prompt the participants to notice what is there. It gives them a way to begin to care about the specific words on the page.
5. Portions of the plan in quotes are meant to be spoken out loud to the group as in, "Who is buried in Grant's Tomb?" You don't have to repeat the question or statement exactly as it appears. Say it in a way that feels comfortable and natural for you.
6. Portions of the plan in *italics* are meant to be notes to you that you can use as prompts in aiding group discussion. They aren't the definitive answer but should be a good possible answer.
7. The last page is the participant handout.

## Let's Go- God's Family

- 1) Scripture: Mark 3:31-35, Gal 6:10
  - a) Parallel passages: Matt 12:46-50, Luke 8:19-21
- 2) Objective: After studying the listed scripture and participating in the discussion, each person should be able to describe how Jesus has redefined family and should have examined if their understanding of family needs to change.”
- 3) Resources: Book of Mark, Grassmick. The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord & Zuck, Copyright 1983, 2003, 2004 by Cook Communications Ministries
- 4) Preparation:
  - a) Pray for guidance
  - b) Read entire lesson plan
- 5) Prayer requests & Open in prayer
- 6) Intro:
  - a) “We will be looking at one brief event in the earthly ministry of Jesus. Although brief, this passage is loaded with significance for the follower of Jesus and for the life of his church. Jesus radically redefines what ‘family’ means and it is not what that culture, or our own, is comfortable hearing.
  - b) Let’s look at what Jesus has to say and examine some of the practical aspects of putting that teaching into practice. As we go along, I’d like you to consider how being a vital part of a family strengthens us to do ministry inside and outside that family. When we are done, each of us should be able to describe how Jesus has redefined family and should have examined if our understanding of family needs to change.”
- 7) The study
  - a) Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 3:31-35.
  - b) Ask everyone to complete question 1 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
    - i) “What is your sense of what is happening in this passage?” *Any, all or more of: Jesus’ family is concerned for his health and state of mind and wants to help him. Jesus’ family is embarrassed and hurt by what they are hearing about him and want him to stop. Jesus understands his family’s concerns but wants everyone to see family from a different (his?) perspective. Jesus is radically redefining our relationships to put our focus on God.*

- c) Ask “If you were Jesus’ mother, brother or sister, how would you feel about his statement in verse 34?” *Confused, hurt, cheated, angry, depends on how I felt about the situation before I heard what he said.*
- d) Ask “If you were one of the crowd Jesus was addressing, how would you feel about his statement in verse 34?” *Happy, hopeful, thankful, confused.*
- e) Ask everyone to complete question 2 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
  - i) “Look again at the passage. Jesus makes inclusion into his family conditional on obedience to God’s will. What practical questions do you have, or do you think might reasonably arise, from the application of this condition? *Once included in his family, does Jesus kick me out for disobedience? Can I get back in? What does this mean for my natural, earthly family relationships? How do I navigate this change in my relationships and becoming part of this new family? Does this new family relationship supersede my existing, natural family relationship or make it obsolete? Should I repudiate my earthly family if they are not obedient members of the family of God?*
- f) Ask “Practically speaking, what good comes to me if I am part of a family?” *Resources, protection, love, companionship, social connections.*
- g) Ask “What responsibilities or burdens do I have as part of a family?” *Providing for the common good, love, companionship, forgiveness.*
- h) Read Gal 6:10. “Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.”
- i) Ask everyone to complete question 3 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
  - i) “If you are a member of the family of God, what things have hindered or helped you navigate becoming and feeling a vital part of our family? What should happen to make that process one that better honors God’s will?” *Ideally, these answers come from the participants. Whether they get them from the study, the Sunday sermon or elsewhere, the best thing that can happen here is they are verbalized by the participants.*
- j) Ask “In this moment, what does being a member of Jesus’ family mean to you?” *Short of obvious heresy or something horrifying, you can affirm the participants answers and simply allow space for sharing on this.*
- k) Ask everyone to complete question 4 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
  - i) “Is there something keeping you from the ministry of being a good family member? Is there a failure you need to confess and leave in the past? Do you

need to change your perspective on how you as a follower of Christ views and treats the family Jesus has given you? What commitment has God laid on your heart right now to be obedient to his will? Will you make it?" *Same plan here.*

8) Summary:

- a) You can briefly recap main points raised in the discussion or you can affirm and encourage the lessons and applications the participants developed.
- b) Close in prayer

# Let's Go- God's Family

Mark 3:31-35

1) What is your sense of what is happening in this passage?

2) Look again at the passage. Jesus makes inclusion into his family conditional on obedience to God's will. What practical questions do you have, or do you think might reasonably arise, from the application of this condition?

3) If you are a member of the family of God, what things have hindered or helped you navigate becoming and feeling a vital part of our family? What should happen to make that process one that better honors God's will?

4) Is there something keeping you from the ministry of being a good family member? Is there a failure you need to confess and leave in the past? Do you need to change your perspective on how you as a follower of Christ views and treats the family Jesus has given you? What commitment has God laid on your heart right now to be obedient to his will? Will you make it?

For next time... Read Mark 4:1-25