

CONNECT GROUP LEADER GUIDE

THEOLOGY #1

BEGIN WITH YOUR HEART

As a leader, be prepared to **share an experience of your own** to get this conversation started. Share a moment, an event, a tragedy, or an experience that became life defining for you because God was uniquely present or it shaped your relationship with Him. Encourage your group that each person's story of a life changing encounter with God will likely be very different, at least that has been my experience in the past.



A LOOK AT THE WORD

Discovery Experiences with Jesus. Pastor Staff clarifies that these three passages engaged His followers to “*discover Jesus’ unique power over entrenched evil in a life, how much we must depend on God in ministry to broken people, and how God measures true greatness.*” That framework could help you choose which passage of the three you want to focus on or help your group sharpen their answers about what discovery about God each experience led to.

Side Note – The Bible is unlike any other book

What a privilege we have to study the Bible together! Take a moment as a group this week to be amazed again that we have the very words of God to encourage us, to challenge us, and to shape our lives around. How is your response to the Bible different when you read it and remember that this is a message from your loving Heavenly Father? He wants to make your day and scripture is a key part of that relationship.

MY LIFE- OUR MISSION

How will what you believe about God grow this year? What routine or experience would help you, your family, or your group discover more about Jesus in 2017? This section of the study gives you a variety of things to think about with your group in the area of applying what you have learned about how discovery experiences with God continue to be life defining for us.

Christ Community Church - Announcements

Financial Peace University Class | Dave Ramsey's nine-week financial principles course will be on Monday nights, 6:30-8:00pm, starting JAN 23 through MAR 27 [skips Mar 13 during Spring Break]. More details and REGISTER BY JAN 18 at the church web site; \$89 participant materials fee [per person or couple] can be paid at the first session. Questions? Contact Brad Kerr [bkerr@iastate.edu]

Women's Morning YADA [study/fellowship] Thursdays, 9:30-11:00a in C3/4. Spring study, Lisa Harper's "Perfect Love". Come join us for a new study and a great time of connection and fellowship. Childcare provided. Contact Lyndee Heemstra lyndeeose04@gmail.com with questions.

SERVE - CHURCH

Blinks Volunteers Needed | for the upcoming Upward Basketball season. Contact Marilyn Rohlf to find out more information [jammr@isunet.net or 515-203-1018].

LAUNCH | Beginning Bible readers need a chaperone. An 8wk-Launch is about to blast off again. Interested in becoming a "Bible-reading chaperone" for a group of 3rd-5th grade students? Contact Karen at kheilighenthal@ccames.org or 232-2765. Launch runs on Wednesdays [JAN 18-MAR 8] from 6:30-8:00p.



CONNECT GROUP STUDY

SERIES: The-o-logy: I Am What I Believe about God

GOD and My Theology #1 January 8-14, 2017

This week's teaching explored the experience of a young prophet, Isaiah, and how his discoveries about God began to shape who he was—a remarkable account. This study explores **how our discovery experiences with God can re-shape us**.

BEGIN WITH YOUR HEART

To get the juices flowing, share with your group (or family) the following –

- An experience (an encounter, event, etc.) that was truly life-changing for you. *How* did it change you?
- An experience in which you know God was uniquely present, and seeking to reveal or teach you something important. What was God urging you to believe? (and, thus, shape or change you)

Follow up: What's your sense...*how often* is God revealing Himself in your experience? (rarely...some...often?)

A LOOK AT THE WORD

The essence of this 2017 teaching series (THE-O-LOGY) is that the more we discover, and *believe* about God, the more we change and become what He created us to be, or called us to do. Take some time to explore what people, in these accounts from Mark's gospel, discovered and came to believe about God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Depending on your time, do one...or all three). Read the episode, answer the questions. Discuss the discoveries within the experience.

Mark 5:1-20 What happened? What was discovered about God in this?
Who were those who experienced what Jesus did for the possessed man?
What changes (positive and/or negative) happened in those involved?

Mark 9:14-29 What happened? Who was involved and what was the struggle?
What did the disciples discover in their failure?
As Jesus stepped into the situation, what did he want his disciples to discover about God?
What changes do you think happened in the disciples as a result?

Mark 10:32-52 What happened here? (note the three successive events)
Upon what were the disciples focused? Why do you think this was so?
What did Jesus want his men to discover...and how did he illustrate this?
What change was God looking for in these future leaders of God's people?

Clearly, Jesus engaged his followers in *discovery* experiences to re-shape them. In these three, they could discover Jesus' unique power over entrenched evil in a life, how much we must depend on God in ministry to broken people, and how God measures true greatness .

Think about it. Our daily walk with Jesus can be as dynamic as in the Gospels. As you meet with God daily (God "makes your day"), what is He helping you discover, and believe, about Him? Are your discoveries changing you?

MY LIFE- OUR MISSION

MY LIFE – Perhaps a new thought for us: *I am what I believe about God*. Yet this "believing" is not static; it is a growing experience...or should be. Dare to do an attitude assessment: Have you "peaked" or is there yet more the Spirit wants you to discover about the Lord? Ways He wants to grow you in a living faith? Take a moment to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what He wants you to discover? [This could shape your prayer time together]

YOUR FAMILY – Let's admit it. It is easy to hurry through the swirl of weekly events, quickly bouncing on from this to that. A purposeful family, together inviting "God to make their day," will set aside some moments to explore what God's Spirit is doing in the experience of the members in your family. Go ahead...slow down a bit. Invite God in. Talk about what the Spirit is doing.

OUR MISSION - If we are going to connect others in a life-defining relationship with Christ, our lives need to be an expression of this very thing: being "defined" by our growth in faith/belief in God. *We can only impart what is alive and powerful in us*. It's early 2017! Ask God for a year of discovering more about the Lord...and being changed by it!