

Recalculating...



Small Group Study Guide

RECALCULATING

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Thank you for being willing to lead and care for people in your Small Group! This is not an easy task, but it is an important one. You are leading a group of people to help them engage in community, and encounter God together. This doesn't mean you have to be serious and solemn when you lead, it means that you get to help a group of people learn more of who God is, what He is about, and how we can follow God more fully in our life. This can be a fun and exhilarating adventure!

Below are some things that will help you in your role as the leader:

Focus of the Series: The Covid-19 Pandemic has forced all of us to Re-calculate the daily patterns of our lives. In this series, we are learning from Paul's willingness to Recalculate the priorities and methods of his ministry. We are doing this so that we can also apply these same principles to our lives as we Recalculate our pathway forward, given all of the changes that have fallen upon us during this Covid Shut-down period.

Structure of the Study: The format of the study is broken down into three sections (Share, Study, Symbolize), progressing from easy-conversational questions, exploring the Bible passages, to personal reflection and thought. There are plenty of questions from which to choose from. Do not feel pressured to have to get through every single question in the study. The study was specifically designed in order that you can pick and choose the questions that will be most effective in navigating the discussion. The ultimate goal is for the group to engage in discussion to better understand God's grace together. If there is good dialogue happening, and you only get through a few questions, that's great! If you need more questions to help move the group along, then feel free to use whatever you need.

Some Tips For Leading The Study:

Your role is to be a facilitator. You do not need to be the in-house expert of the Bible, you simply need to lead the group in good discussion. This means speaking less yourself, and giving as many people in your group as possible a chance to share their thoughts and insights.

Silence is OK! Don't get nervous if no one answers the question right away. If too much time goes by (say, 45 second), ask if you need to repeat the question, or if the question was clear.

It's OK if you or the group does not have an answer to a question. If someone asks a difficult question, and the group is unsure of the answer, it's ok to table the question

for a week in order to research the answer. Some of Apostle Paul's letters were responses to questions and problems in the church, and they waited months for an answer!

Expect God to Show Up: Most of your prep-time should be prayer-time. Ask God to be present in your group. Invite the Holy Spirit to be present in your group. Ask God to show you where He is working in your group. Pray for the challenging dynamics in the group. Allow God to lead your group's discussion by being open to what is coming to the surface in the discussion. Shepherd the group to engage with what God is doing. Pray that group members don't leave the same way they came!

Honor Start/Stop Times. Your group should agree together on when the group should start and end. Honor those times by beginning on-time, and manage the time so you don't go over.

Recalculating Study Guide: Week Five

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 3:1-14

SHARE: Get the group talking

1. What stands out for you about the life of the Apostle Paul?
2. Pastor Paul talked about his "crucible" experience playing fullback for his football teams. On each play, he got knocked down but he got up and lined up again for the next play. This became a life lesson and guided him particularly in pastoring to North River. What might be your "crucible" experience?

STUDY: Get the group into the Bible

1. Pastor Paul talked about the transforming encounter of the Apostle Paul with Jesus. How would you describe Paul before this encounter and then afterwards?
2. Who are some other people in the Bible who had transformations with Jesus?
3. How difficult do you think the decision was to reach out to Gentiles to spread the Good News? What might have been the arguments against accepting them without converting them to Jews? Read Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:8.
4. In verses 5-6, Paul lists seven things that he had counted as gains. What are they?
5. In verse 8, Paul says that he "has lost all things." Can you imagine what these might have been? Why would he have referred to them as "garbage?"
6. In verse 14, Paul talks about the goal of winning the prize. What is the prize?
7. What does the joy of Christ mean to you?
8. The Apostle Paul wrote, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ." Galatians 3:28. What does this mean to you? What does it mean for North River Church?

SYMBOLIZE: Get the group to reflect on their own life

1. What are some of the things that you need to let go of to fully realize the joy of Christ? What gets in the way?
2. What is God's purpose for you?