

*Invite* *Care*  
*Walk Around The Block*  
*Hope* *Trust*

Small Group Study  
and Discussion Guide



— *A study & discussion guide* —

# Walk Around the Block

God invites each of us to build relationships as we build bridges to Him. He expects us to care for those he puts in our path and then he shows us how to build a trust connection with those we are coming alongside.

This study/discussion guide is designed for you and your small group or for use during your own quiet time each day. As you begin this study ask God to send the Holy Spirit to give you a heart filled with an overflowing love for him.

Pray for wisdom as you discern what God is saying to you through this study and then ask, "What am I going to do about it?"



## Scripture Reading

### John 1:35-42

*The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>When he saw Jesus passing by he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"*

*<sup>37</sup>When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.*

*<sup>38</sup>Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi," (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup>Come," he replied, "and you will see."*

*So they went and saw where he was staying and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.*

*<sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>The first thing Andrew did was find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). <sup>42</sup>And he brought him to Jesus.*

*Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).*

## Group Discussion

Jesus gave the invite to "Come and you will see." This simple invitation was the start of something so big, they couldn't possibly

have considered what was to come. The two were disciples of John the Baptist. They weren't people Jesus had been hanging out with. They were strangers, or maybe faces in the crowd and the Holy Spirit nudged Jesus to address them in this way.

Are there any faces in the crowd of your daily life that the Holy Spirit might be nudging you to reach out to? Is there someone you have been meaning to get to know?

- a. Are they a person of peace, someone who is open to you and what you might say?
- b. What would it take to help you feel comfortable inviting them into your life?
- c. How are you feeling right now after reading these questions?
  - I can do this.
  - I want to do this.
  - I am afraid but will step out in faith.

## Prayer

Pray each morning for God to open your eyes to those whom the Holy Spirit is preparing. When you come together next week, before you begin your next study, review these questions and your responses. Report how it is or isn't working for you.

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*You know what a challenge this is for me; for us. But, we are coming to understand that it is up to us to reach out and to share the Good News of Jesus. Our world is in turmoil and only a relationship with Jesus will rectify that. We need you, we need Jesus and we need your Holy Spirit. Guide us and give us the courage and the words. Amen.*

# Daily Devotions

For more in-depth study and conversation use the daily reading texts and discuss the following:

## **MONDAY - Luke 5:1-11**

<sup>4</sup>*"Put out into the deep and let your nets down for a catch."*

How is this command a parallel to the "invite" portion of our walk around the block?

## **TUESDAY – Mark 2:13-17**

<sup>14</sup>*"Follow me." (Jesus' invitation to Levi the tax collector)*

When we invite someone into a relationship with us it is subtle, but filled with genuine motive. How will this play out for you?

## **WEDNESDAY – Romans 12:9-16**

<sup>9</sup>*"Let love be genuine"*

<sup>10</sup>*"Brotherly love"*

<sup>16</sup>*"Live in harmony with one another."*

How do these selected phrases from the passage help you?

**THURSDAY – Romans 15:1-7**

<sup>2</sup>*“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.”*

<sup>7</sup>*“Welcome one another.”*

Discuss how these words can help you when reaching out to that person the Holy Spirit has placed on your heart,

**FRIDAY – Luke 10:38-42**

<sup>38</sup>*“A woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.”*

Are you ready to welcome someone into your house, or backyard for a cookout? Discuss ways this could be done.

**SATURDAY – 2 Timothy 2:24-25**

<sup>24</sup>*“The Lord’s servant must be kind to everyone.”*

Who is everyone? Can you list where we might find some of these people – where we might encounter them regularly?



## Scripture Reading

### Titus 3:3-8

<sup>3</sup>At one time, we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

<sup>4</sup>But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing and rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

<sup>8</sup>This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

## Group Discussion

You are building a new relationship with \_\_\_\_\_. Remember, this is someone who needs to know about Jesus. They must be someone you consider a person of peace. Each time you encounter this person you are creating an authentic relationship. Remind yourself that he/she is not a project but someone God has put in your path to minister to in a very real way.

As with any new friendship, it will move at differing paces. The only way to get to know someone is to spend time with them. That's how they will get to know you too.

Were you able to fill in a name in the blank on the previous page?

Realizing it will take time to get this relationship solid enough to turn that corner from Invite to Care, the following are hypothetical questions to be thinking about, praying over and then filling in as you move around the block.

1. Does this person I am coming alongside listen to me? Is his/her mind open to my words?
2. Is this person teachable?
3. Am I feeling comfortable and do I look forward to our time together?
4. Does it seem like we will be able to have open and honest conversations? What might that look like?

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus,*

*You know what is happening here and you know our hearts. Send your Holy Spirit to guide and to direct us in this new relationship of love. We are all so busy that taking time to meet isn't always easy, but so worth it. We all could use another friend, someone who will know us and be there for us. Help us to be that friend to \_\_\_\_\_. Holy Spirit, remind me to pray for them daily and to recognize when they need a tender touch an understanding heart. We are Your servants. In the precious name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

# Daily Devotions

For more in-depth study and conversation, use the daily reading texts and discuss the following:

## **MONDAY - Luke 10:30-37**

<sup>33</sup>*"But a Samaritan ...had compassion... <sup>34</sup>he took care of him..."*

What might care look like for you and this new friend? Have they shared enough yet for you to identify a need they might have?

## **TUESDAY – 2 Corinthians 12:5-10**

<sup>7</sup> *"...a thorn was given me in the flesh."*

<sup>10</sup> *"For when I am weak then I am strong."*

Sharing is a two-way street when we are talking with our friends. They need to know that we are not carefree because we are Christian; we suffer pain and loss too. Discuss.

## **WEDNESDAY – Matthew 15:29-32**

<sup>30</sup> *"...great crowds came to him (Jesus), bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and he healed them."*

Jesus took the time to sit down with the people, to love, care, feel and heal them. What would/could this look like when we are caring for our new friends?

**THURSDAY – John 5:11-12**

<sup>11</sup>*"Take up your bed and walk."*

Chances are, your prayers and your care won't be healing a crippled person, but it is very likely they could bring healing to a spiritual cripple. Discuss.

**FRIDAY – Philippians 1:12-30**

<sup>12</sup>*"What has happened to me has served to advance the gospel."*

Does this verse remind you of your testimony? Do you have a story to tell of a time you were hurting and God surrounded you with his love? Is it time now to share this?

**SATURDAY – Acts 8:26-31**

<sup>30</sup>*Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading."*

<sup>31</sup>*"How can I unless someone guides me?" said the Ethiopian.*

How indeed? Talk about the above statements and draw a parallel with what you are doing as you take this walk around the block.



## Scripture Reading

### Matthew 5:13-16

<sup>13</sup>"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

<sup>14</sup>"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

## Group Discussion

Jesus was trustworthy. He meant what he said and said what he meant. We need to learn how to be this real too. If this were how everyone behaved, how different would things be? It is called honesty and while not always easy – it is the right way to live. Imagine how different our relationships could be if we practiced openness and trust; not easy, but better. It wasn't easy for Jesus either, but it was best.

The words "authentic" and "honest" are not things that come naturally for many of us. As we walk around the block with someone, a special someone hand-picked by the Holy Spirit, what challenges can you see ahead?

How can we be real, never hiding our faith, but never forcing it on others either.

- How did Jesus do this?
  
- His disciples?

There is now a new level of vulnerability for both of you. Discuss what this means to you.

Sharing our pain opens wounds. Opportunity to minister is an outcome of our vulnerability. Have you experienced this yet?

## Prayer

*Come Holy Spirit,*

*Fill my heart with your love and wisdom. Give me the right words and actions to display my sincerity to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Help him/her to know that I want to be real and I truly care about them and all that hurts them or gives them joy. Show me how to be vulnerable and trustworthy. In the precious name of Jesus. Amen.*

# Daily Devotions

For more in-depth study and conversation, use the daily reading texts and discuss the following:

## **MONDAY - 2 Corinthians 6:2-11**

<sup>2</sup>"Now is the day of salvation. <sup>3</sup>Put no obstacle in anyone's way."

We are not guaranteed tomorrow, so this day may very well be the day of salvation for us.

- Today is the best day to do the next right thing. Discuss.

## **TUESDAY – Luke 7:1-10**

<sup>7</sup>"But say the word and my servant will be healed."

The centurion's faith in Jesus was evident by the trust he placed on Jesus' merely "saying the word."

- Is a strong trust evident in the relationship you are building now?
- Are there struggles even in the trust? If so, explain.

## **WEDNESDAY – Matthew 14:32-36**

<sup>32</sup>"And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down."

Peter took his eyes off Jesus for a second and began to sink. Can you relate? Explain more.

What does it take to trust completely?

## THURSDAY – 1 John 1:5-10

<sup>8</sup>*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves, truth is not in us."*

In this stage of the relationship, truth is what our trust is based on. Trust grows when transparency is practiced. Have you experienced this openness yet?

## FRIDAY – James 5:13-16

<sup>15</sup>*"And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well."*

Have you had a chance to pray with your person yet?

Do they trust you enough to share a personal prayer request?

Do you trust them enough to share a personal prayer request?

## SATURDAY – 1 John 3:16-20

<sup>18</sup>*"Let us not love with words or with speech, but with actions."*

Share your action plan.

Ask your group to pray for the Holy Spirit to step in and take charge.



## Scripture Reading

### 1 Peter 3:13-18

<sup>13</sup>Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? <sup>14</sup>But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened."

<sup>15</sup>But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup>keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

<sup>17</sup>For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

## Group Discussion

Hope is the one thing missing from many lives; it is this missing piece which opens doors and helps people to turn the corner. It is the home stretch on the path to Jesus who is our ultimate goal.

Many of us have this faith in Jesus because we were so lost before and felt there had to be more to life than this type of existence. We were searching for a better way to live and so is everyone else. It is on this final leg of the walk around the block that we run right into Jesus, who is that “better way.”

At this point, it isn't up to us to make someone accept Jesus. Whether they accept or not, it is the Holy Spirit's work from here on. We only need to ask the right questions along the way, encourage conversation and share our story—and we all have one.

Regardless of whether you have been on this journey from the beginning with this person, or if you picked them up on the way, this is the moment you have been waiting for. How will you share the reason for the hope you have?

How do you share with gentleness and respect? Play out a scenario in your mind and explain how you feel God might use your testimony to tell of your hope.

Encourage their questions and answer them honestly. Are you prepared to pray with them?

## *Prayer*

*Oh, Father God,  
I need to feel your presence now. Bless any conversations I  
have with \_\_\_\_\_, and let me know you are near. Come Holy  
Spirit and fill me with your words and actions. I am doing my  
part and I am ready to put them into your hands. In the pre-  
cious name of Jesus, Amen.*

# Daily Devotions

For more in-depth study and conversation, use the daily reading texts and discuss the following:

## **MONDAY - John 3:14-21**

<sup>16</sup>*"God so loved the world."*

This is the verse we cling to while walking around the block.

Talk about how God's love has impacted you in this new relationship. Discuss.

## **TUESDAY – Mark 16:1-7**

<sup>6</sup>*"He isn't here! He is Risen from the dead!"*

Is it time to share how you once were dead, but Jesus gave you a new life?

Knowing your new friend better now, how can you encourage them so they too will have a new life?

## **WEDNESDAY – John 17:20-26**

<sup>20</sup>*"I am praying for these disciples and for all who ever believe in me through their message"*

Talk about what it means to you, to know that Jesus is praying for you...and for the one you are taking around the block.

## THURSDAY – John 4:4-26

<sup>10</sup>*"If you only knew..."*

As you journey around the block, tell of some of these things you discovered from the statement, "if you only knew."

- What God has done for me...
- What God wants to do for you...
- Other thoughts...

## FRIDAY – Mark 2:1-12

<sup>12</sup>*"...we've never seen anything like this!"*

There will be many exclamations of awe and amazement once they accept and embrace Hope. Faith is an amazing gift and it is meant to be shared. Discuss which part of this passage is speaking to you.

## SATURDAY – Revelation 22

<sup>7</sup>*"Look, I am coming soon!"*

How can you share this sense of urgency with folks?

- Without being too pushy?
- With gentleness and respect?





Our Mission:  
To be and to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

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