

Small Group Study - Week 1

INTRODUCTION

The following is a guide to help facilitate discussion between you and the person you're studying with or with your Connect Group. Feel free to add, subtract, or change questions to fit the conversation, and pray for the Spirit to lead in all things.

OPEN QUESTIONS

Do you know what your name means, why it was given to you, and have you always gone by that name, or another name/nickname? If another name, why?

HEAD

1. Read Numbers 13:16, Matthew 1:21, Exodus 24:13, Numbers 11:28, Exodus 17:8-13, Galatians 6:4, Deuteronomy 34:5-12 together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading.
2. In our first passage, Moses changes Hoshea's name to Joshua. What other name changes can you think of in Scripture? In a time when names were so important to calling and character, why do you think a name change was important for Joshua?
3. Thinking of the story of Joshua, what comparisons can you make with the story of Jesus, both names translated as "Yahweh saves"?
4. What was so important about the relationship between Joshua and Moses, and what can we learn from it in our relationships with others today?
5. From Galatians 6:4, why is comparison so dangerous in the spiritual life? How about in life in general? Social Media is a place of comparisons, who do we avoid making comparisons in everyday life?
6. After a eulogy like what's found in Deuteronomy 34:10-12, how do you think Joshua would have felt with such big sandals to fill?

HEART

1. When people hear your name and think of you, what do you want them to think about? Is that different from what you think they actually think about? If different, how do we close the gap between the two?
2. Is there anyone of the younger generation that you are or have mentored, spoken truth into? If so, what was that like and do you think it made a difference in their

life? If not, or if it's been a while, is there someone in your circle that you could encourage and mentor?

3. Have you ever had to take over for someone who was larger than life? If so, what was that like and how did you handle it?
4. Knowing that Jesus and Joshua's lives were meant to point to the saving work of God, how can our lives today do the same?

HANDS

Since Paul wrote in I Corinthians 5:17, that we are all new creations in Christ (which can be represented in Scripture by a new name), what do you think is new about you with Christ that wasn't that way before Christ? Take time to celebrate what God has done and is doing in your life, and then take some time to notice those changes in the life of someone around you. Affirm God's work in their life this week, tell them what you see and appreciate, and encourage them to keep walking hand-in-hand with Christ.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

"So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 NLT

Small Group Study - Week 2

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

Share one thing in your life that you never thought you'd be able to accomplish, or others thought you'd never accomplish, but then you did. What was that like? What helped you achieve your goal?

HEAD

1. Read Joshua 1:1-5, Hebrews 11:1, Deuteronomy 11:24, Proverbs 16:9 together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading.
2. Knowing how the people revered Moses, what do you think it was like for Joshua to now step into Moses' shoes, especially with God promising to do such big things through him?
3. In Joshua 1:5, the promise God makes is that He will be with Joshua as He was with Moses. Do you think this was hard for Joshua to believe? If so, why? If not, why not? (see Joshua 1:9 and how God has to reaffirm Joshua)
4. Joshua must have faith, as described in Hebrews 11:1. What kinds of things are we sure of what we hope for, and what kinds of things are we certain of, that we do not see?
5. What do you think Solomon was really saying in Proverbs 16:9? Does it not matter what choices we make because God's purpose will prevail? If so, how does that work? If not, what are we to do in our journey with God so that His purpose in our lives does prevail?

HEART

1. God promised to give Joshua and the Israelites every place they set their foot. That meant there was something for them to do (move their feet), and something God would do in return. What does this look like in our faith journey today? In what ways are we challenged to move, trusting in God to live up to His end of the promise?

2. How would you describe what faith is to another person who doesn't know?
What is your faith journey like for you, and what do you think it gives you?
3. Proverbs 16:9 is really about surrender. It's about making plans but recognizing that at the end of the day, God is in control. What are some ways you and I can practice surrender in our daily walk with God?
4. God promises Joshua that he will not fail or abandon us. But have you ever felt as if God failed you, or abandoned you? So how do we reconcile those negative feelings we have from time to time in our journey with God? Just because we feel a certain way, does it mean our feelings are reality?
5. How can you and I persevere in our faith, even in those moments that it feels as if God has abandoned or failed us? What helps us keep going?

HANDS

Take some time to think about the goals you want to accomplish in your life in the next 3-5 years. Then, surrender those goals to God, asking Him to help you persevere or let go when and as you need to, trusting that God wants the absolute best for you in your life. Then share what you learn from this experience with at least one other person.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT

Small Group Study - Week 3

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

They say that in the US, the number one shared fear is public speaking, followed by death, heights, bugs and insects, and drowning. What is one of your greatest fears and why? Have you ever had to face that fear? What happened?

HEAD

1. Read Joshua 1:6-9, Numbers 14:30, Joshua 3:14-16, Joshua 1:10-2:1, Joshua 3:1-5, Joshua 3:14-16 together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading.
2. If I were Joshua, I'd be shaking in my sandals to take over for Moses, the hero. God tells Joshua three times to be strong and courageous, reminds him that He'll be with him wherever he goes. Do you think Joshua heard this speech and stopped worrying or comparing himself to Moses from that moment on? Would you?
3. Think of the Israelite journey out of Egypt on their way to the promised land. What incidents caused them to think about turning back? How much disappointment can one take before giving up? What do you do when you face disappointment? Where do you go for encouragement?
4. Obstacles. The Israelites faced them constantly, as do we. They were told that on the other side of the Jordan River, was the land God promised them. But the Jordan River at flood stage was huge, dangerous. What did the Israelites have to do to trust God and step forward in faith, again? What can we learn from this?
5. Just like God commanded the Israelites to purify themselves before crossing the Jordan River, we too often have things that keep us from following God, trusting Him, believing His Word. What kinds of things get in the way for us? How do we surrender those things to take hold of all that God has promised us?

HEART

1. Have you ever had to move forward in faith, not knowing exactly how things would work out, but convicted that you had to move? What happened?
2. Joshua likely compared himself to Moses regularly, yet comparisons can often keep us from growing, from moving forward, from being creative. How can you and I avoid comparing all the things we know about ourselves (our shortcomings, challenges, sins), from all the things we don't know about someone else (we only see the external, we don't know all that is really happening in their heart or lives)?
3. When you face an obstacle in your life, in your faith, how do you address that obstacle? Is it a sign to turn a different direction? Is it a matter of prayer, trying to find the courage to remove the obstacle? How do you know which route to take?
4. What are some of your own practices of confession? How do you confess? When do you confess? When you do confess, are you able to let it go or do you find it hard to forgive yourself and move on? Would there ever be any advantages of sharing your confession with others?
5. Momentum is one of our core values at Crosswalk. How can we encourage one another to keep moving forward in faith, even when our circumstances seem against us?

HANDS

Think about someone in your faith community that you could encourage this week to keep going, to not give up, to cling to Jesus no matter what is happening, reminding them that He is always with them, will never leave them or forsake them. You can even say you don't know everything going on with them, but you just wanted to share a word of encouragement. Then send them a text, write them a note, or if you're comfortable enough, talk to them directly. Encouraging others has a crazy reverse affect of encourage us as well.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

"So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11 NLT

Small Group Study - Week 4

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

Have you ever held on to something that is a souvenir or reminder of an amazing experience in your life? If so and you'd be willing to share with the group, show the item and share the story.

HEAD

1. Read Joshua 3:17-4:7, 9, 19-20, 5:13-15, 6:1-3, 15-16, 20 together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading.
2. Why do you think God has to help the Israelites think of ways to remember the ways in which He's blessed them, guided them, and cared for them in the past?
3. How significant do you think it was for Joshua to build an altar that would eventually be buried? Do you think this helped him move on from his past? if so, how?
4. The Israelites seemed to face one obstacle after another, with little time to celebrate a victory of having overcome one before the next one hits (the Jordan river crossing meets the battle of Jericho). How do you think they kept going? How do you and I keep going when faced with one obstacle after another?
5. What significance do you think the encounter with the angel was for Joshua, who had heard of Moses' encounter at the burning bush?
6. Do you think the Israelites were ready to march around Jericho as soon as they heard their instructions, or do you think there was pushback? How often do we hear God's instructions for us and think they make little to no sense? How do we help each other trust in the Lord and move even when what we're told to do doesn't make sense?

HEART

1. What are some of the ways you try to remember how God has led you in the past? If you're willing, share about something you've held onto as a symbol of remembering a special moment in your faith journey.

2. Is there someone in your life that you go to for encouragement, hope, and/or help in your spiritual journey? Are you that person for anyone else? Have you ever felt God tell you, or ask you, to do something that made little to no sense? If so, how did it make you feel and what happened?
3. Can there be anything positive about the obstacles we face in life? Have you ever faced an obstacle that you realized later on helped you prepare for another one?
4. I wonder if the Israelites shouting was akin to worship. Have you ever chosen to worship, instead of sulk, in the midst of adversity? If so, did it help, or make things worse? Explain.

HANDS

This week, find some time to do some intentional worship. That might be at your faith community, it might be in your prayer closet, or it might be out in nature. But no matter what is happening in your life, and no matter how hard it may be, take time to worship. Listen to or sing your favorite songs. Write a psalm of praise to God for all He has done in your life. Thank Him for creation, for those near you that you love, for the promises you hold dear. Simply, worship Him even if life feels like it's falling apart, and even if there are tears in your eyes. Then reflect on what that experience was like.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

“Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.”

Psalms 100:1-5 NLT

Small Group Study - Week 5

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

Were you ever picked last for a team? If so, why? Or were you ever surprised by someone doing something that you never would have imagined or chosen them to do that thing in a million years (this could be a personal thing, or something you witnessed in the world of sports, or something you learned about in history).

HEAD

1. Read Joshua 6:17-18, 21-23, Numbers 24-28, 30, Numbers 13:31-14:6, 9, Joshua 14:9-12 together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading.
2. Many would say that Rahab was the last person that would have considered or expected to help the Israelites out. What do you think this experience did for Rahab? Was there ever anyone in your life that would have been the last person you would have chosen for a task, who ended up being the best person to help?
3. Rahab's story, from prostitute to hero, is a great example of how God is NEVER done with any of us. What hope can you find for your own journey through the account of Rahab and the Israelites?
4. Caleb chose to focus not on the obstacles or challenges, but on the God of the universe who had delivered them time and time again. How can you and I help each other stay focused on God, instead of what we see with our eyes?
5. Why do you think the Israelites' faith was so fickle? God had done so many amazing things, supernatural things, but they are so quick to weep and cry and seek to run after the report of the spies in Canaan. Why?

HEART

1. What are some of the promises God has made that you most cherish and remind yourself of, especially when life gets tough?
2. How has God blessed you in this life that you, at one point, never thought was possible?
3. Thank God for Caleb, who chose to see God instead of the obstacles. What are some ways you and I can be a Caleb, today? Are there Caleb's in your community that you could thank and affirm?

4. Moving forward in faith is easier when we do it together, in community, and when we remind each other along the way of all the Lord has done. How do you see this happening in your community of faith? How can you contribute to this in your community of faith?

HANDS

What obstacles are you facing in your life right now? What is holding you back from getting involved in your community, from reaching out to reconcile with the person you've suffered a broken relationship with, from doing whatever hard work that is in front of you today? What promises of God's can you claim that would help you step forward in faith? Take time this week to remind yourself of God's promises, searching through Scripture to see the many ways God has promised to be there for you, in you, never leaving or forsaking you. Then pray for the courage to move forward in faith, and move.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

"For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory."

2 Corinthians 1:20 NLT