

SAC Small Groups Discussion Guide – Feb. 22nd, 2026

This guide comes with the expectation that even if someone has missed the Sunday service, they have watched the sermon before coming to their small group.

Fellowship Time

Make sure to have time where people can chat and catch up. This section could include a dinner together, having a potluck, preparing snacks, etc. The key to this section is make people feel welcomed and seen.

Read the Scripture & Overview Aloud Together

This section contains the text and a brief summary of the sermon that was preached on Sunday. It will have the main point explained as a way to help those remember the sermon. This is not an in-depth overview because the expectation is that everyone will take the time to listen to the sermon. Make sure to read this aloud for everyone to hear.

Text

John 17:1-19

17 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. 6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. 9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. 11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. 13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by[d] the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Overview of Sermon

John 17 marks the beginning of Jesus' prayer for his disciples before His journey to the cross. What's striking is that Jesus' prayer is not for Himself or the pain that awaits him, rather His heart is for those closest to Him to endure and keep faith in God. Jesus begins His prayer by praying that the Father would glorify the Son who would in turn bring glory back upon the Father. Jesus makes the connection that eternal life isn't just knowledge about God, but a relationship with God. Jesus' relationship with God is the model for all disciples, that they would know God and their lives would be transformed by the words the Father provided through Christ.

Jesus' prayer is not directly for the world, but for those who are His disciples whose mission is for the world. Jesus' prayer is preparing His followers for life after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. Jesus has affirmed throughout the Gospel of John the incoming hostility that the disciples would face after Jesus' departure and prays that the disciples would be equipped to stand firm through persecution. He continues to ask the Father to give the disciples joy to overcome the hostility. Jesus wants us to know Him and be known by Him. But more than simple knowledge, His prayer is that those who know Him would accept Him and believe Him. That as the Spirit works in their lives, they would experience transformation. That their set-apart lives would look different in a broken and hostile world. The barriers to others knowing Jesus are not so much what a church does as much as how the community functions in relationship with one another.

Discussion Questions

These questions are prompts to help the group have meaningful dialogue over the sermon this past weekend. Do not feel the need to ask all these questions. You are more than welcome to create your own questions or mix the questions together.

Connection to Other (Icebreaker/Light)

- What would you title this chapter of your life story?

Connection to Head (Study/Knowledge Questions)

- Read John 17:1-19. What does this passage teach us about Jesus? What does it teach us about being a disciple of Jesus?

Connection to Heart (Deeper Engagement)

- Jesus prayed that His followers would be protected from the evil one while remaining in the world, not taken out of it. What do you think it means to live a set-apart life in a hostile environment without withdrawing from the world entirely?
- In the face of His own arrest and crucifixion, Jesus prayed for His disciples rather than focusing on His own fear or stress. What does this reveal about Jesus' priorities, and how might that reshape how we approach our own difficult circumstances?

- Jesus prays that His followers would be 'one as we are one,' emphasizing unity among believers. What are the greatest threats to unity in the church today, and how can we actively work to preserve it?

Reflect and Discuss the Practice and Prayer.

This is an opportunity for accountability and formation in your group. Accountability to ensure people are practicing the practices and formation because we believe that these practices will shape and form us into the people that God intended us to be. Take time to practice this together and reflect on each person's experience of these practices.

Practice: Take time this week to practice confession and reconciliation this week.

- Pastor Mike mentioned in his sermon that in order to protect the unity of the church, we need to practice forgiveness and reconciliation with other brothers and sisters in Christ.
- In pairs or triads, take time to pray and confess any bitterness, resentment or lingering anger with another follower of Jesus.
- You may feel prompted after confession to pursue reconciliation which we encourage. It may also not be the right timing for a variety of reasons which is okay as well.

Prayer: Jesus, we thank you and praise you that you came to save us and lead us into a relationship with God. We pray that we would be aware of the areas in our life that need to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, we ask that you would come and mold us to be more like Jesus. We pray this in your name Jesus, Amen.

Prayer Together.

Take some time to pray with each other. This is not a time for gossip or to be cynical, this is an opportunity to share with each other our burdens, to celebrate and praise God together, and to pray expectantly that God would move.