

GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

JESUS' LAST NIGHT

SERIES THEME//

In the lead up to Easter Sunday, this sermon series will spend time learning from Jesus' final words to his disciples in John 13-20. Jesus, ever the creative and engaging teacher, uses several rich images to help his disciples understand who He is, how He gives life, and why He will never leave them. We will explore each of these images. This Lenten series will give us a chance to see what was most important to Jesus as he spent his final night on earth, culminating in Holy Week. Each image He calls us to behold reveals the kind of people He's helping us to become.

SERMON; VINE | John 15:1-7

SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2017

SERMON THEME//

Only Jesus can give us the life we need to love how we should.

LEADER// A note about this sermon

Remember, we are trying to move people to experience life transformation. What does it mean to be growing in the fruit of the Spirit? Last week, we focused on the POWER and GIFTS of the Spirit. This week, we are seeing the FRUIT of a Spirit-filled life. Keep your discussion coming back around to this idea!

OPENING UP// *Start with prayer*

1. This week's sermon is called "Vine." Can you remember the one-word titles from the previous three sermons from this sermon series?
 - a. *Water; Home; Adopted*
2. Christianity is sometimes characterized as a "free pass to heaven"--even if people don't say this out loud. In other words, Christianity can be viewed as a religion primarily concerned with where we go when we die. Do you agree that Christianity often is summarized in this way?
3. What are some ways this message is conveyed?
4. What is/are the danger/s of this message?

DIGGING DEEPER//

- o As we read this passage, consider this question for later discussion: How does Jesus show us that Christianity is about how we live while we're here?

LEADER//

While a fair amount of processing of the sermon maybe necessary and often helpful, remember that the point of this discussion it to take the word *preached* and consider how to make it the word *lived*.

Practically, this means taking the questions, discussion and ideas from "What do you think about this?" to "What does this mean for your life?"



John 15:1-7 (ESV)

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. **2** Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. **3** Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. **4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

- Take a moment to pray over this text, asking God to use this text to continue to fuel your life as you take the word preach and make it the word lived.
- Before we watch the sermon video, what would be one question you have for Pastor Adam following the sermon?

SERMON DISCUSSION VIDEO//

- As you watch the sermon discussion video, take note of what you found intriguing or insightful as you hear Pastor Adam discuss the sermon he preached.

THE WORD PREACHED//

- Pastor Adam is closing each sermon with a section called "Become." This past sermon, he had two points under this heading: Become Healthy and Become Connected.
- Under *Become Healthy*, Pastor Adam poised a 'healthy' challenge. He said that for fruit to grow, it must be pruned. He also challenged us to consider whether we are about the leaves or about the fruit.
 - Where do you, in your own personal walk, need to be pruned? How can this group pray and support you as you consider this question?
 - Where in your life are you focused on the leaves, instead of the fruit? Leaves are those things that come and go, but their sole purpose is to provide nutrients so the fruit can grow. What are the leaves in your life that are no longer contributing to the health of the fruit?



- Under *Become Connected*, Pastor Adam asked us to ask ourselves a simple, but profound question: Am I truly part of the Kingdom?
 - o How would you not only answer that, but defend your answer? Where is your proof?
 - o Are you connected, do you need to be reconnected; who in your life needs to be connected or reconnected?

THE WORD LIVED//

- How does Jesus show us that Christianity is about how we live while we're here? How does this perspective challenge the way we live?
- Jesus says that we must "prove to be his disciples." How do we prove that? Does that mean that our good works are required for salvation?
- What are ways we can "abide" in Jesus?
- What are the danger signs that show we're not abiding?
- How are we tempted to draw life from the "vine" of the World? Read Galatians 5:16 – 24 to see what sort of fruit the World produces:
 - o *Galatians 5:16-24 [16] But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. [17] For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. [18] But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. [19] Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, [21] envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. [22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. [24] And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (ESV)*
- What is the fruit mentioned in this passage (Galatians) that comes from being connected to the world?
- Looking back over the last three weeks, how has Jesus shown us what it really means to LOVE?
- How has he himself modeled for us what it means to abide?



#SHAREHOPE//

- Okay everyone – how are you doing with investing in the #ShareHope initiative that is leading up to Easter?
 - Have you been praying for your own heart?
 - Where and with whom have you shared hope?
- The call of #ShareHope is a challenge to us to pray for a deeper passion of the lost and to increase our awareness of their need for Jesus. During the #ShareHope initiative, we are going to close every growth group by spending time in prayer asking God to do just that: give us a deeper passion for the lost and increase our awareness of their need of Jesus.

CLOSE IN PRAYER//

LEADER//

As you close in prayer, take some time to receive prayer requests from your group.

1. But this week, in addition to the prayer request, spend time focusing your prayers on the #ShareHope campaign!

PRAYER REQUEST//

