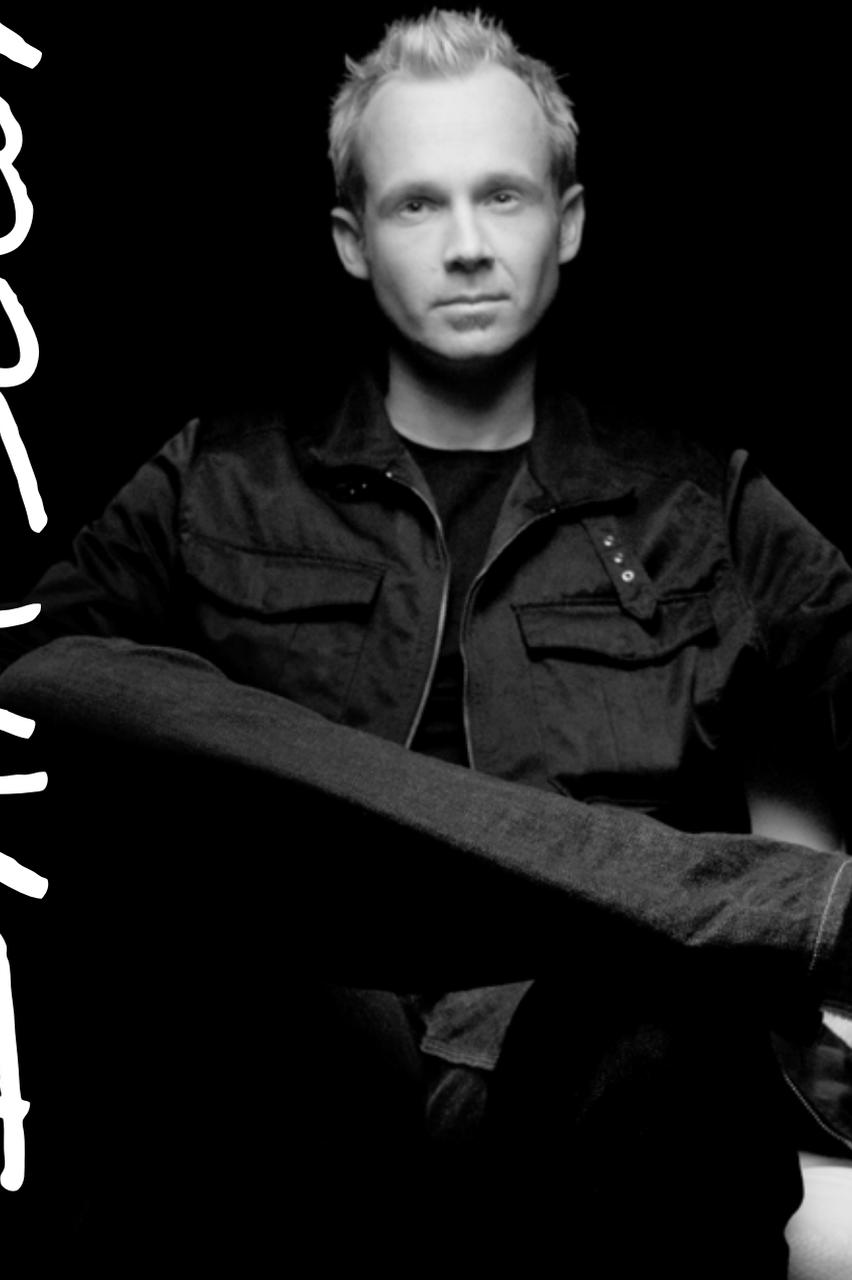


I AM SECOND[®]

identity &
truth



identity & truth

Being a student is exciting and challenging. We are figuring out who we are. Initially, our identity is in what we think will make us happy. If getting homework done was the only stressor in our lives, maybe we could breathe. The reality is things aren't the way they are supposed to be. Parents get divorced, relationships fall apart, and those who were supposed to be our best friends can betray us. It was never supposed to be this hard.

In this discussion guide we will walk through the ins and outs of the lives of those who have been there. We will meet stars and students alike who realized their dreams and were still empty inside until something happened. We will discuss how they encountered Jesus. We will read about Jesus and how he encountered people just like you.



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your spiritual journey

Opener

Question: Introduce yourself to the group. Who are you and what brought you to this group?

Hear

Watch: a film of your choice.

Question: What did you like about the film?

Live and Tell

Each of you now has the chance to share your own story with the group. If you were sitting in the white chair, what would you say? Answer some of these questions as you tell your story.

- A. What event or person has most affected your life?
- B. Where are you on your spiritual journey with God?
- C. Why did you decide to come to this group?



money or God?

Opener

Watch: the Stephen Baldwin film.

Question: What did you like about Stephen's film?

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'"

And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth."

And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

Mark 10:17-27 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading, how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



rejection and blessing

Opener

Watch: the Janine Turner film.

Question: What did you like about Janine's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together *money or God?* was the topic. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and [Jesus] began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Matthew 5:1-12 (NIV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading, how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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born this way

Opener

Watch: the Christine Petric film.

Question: What did you like about Christine's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *rejection and blessing*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

God, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand.

I'm an open book to you; even from a distance, you know what I'm thinking.

You know when I leave and when I get back; I'm never out of your sight.

You know everything I'm going to say before I start the first sentence.

I look behind me and you're there, then up ahead and you're there, too— your reassuring presence, coming and going.

This is too much, too wonderful— I can't take it all in!

Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit? to be out of your sight?

If I climb to the sky, you're there!
If I go underground, you're there!

If I flew on morning's wings to the far western horizon, You'd find me in a minute— you're already there waiting!

Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark! At night I'm immersed in the light!"

It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you; night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you.

Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb.

I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!

I worship in adoration—what a creation!
You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body;

You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something.

Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you,

The days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day

Psalms 139:1-16 (The Message)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading, how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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pride before the fall

Opener

Watch: the Josh Hamilton film.

Question: What did you like about Josh's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *born this way*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jeal-

ously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

James 4:1-10 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading, how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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rich toward God

Opener

Watch: the Wayne Huizenga film.

Question: What did you like about Wayne's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *pride before the fall*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'

And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'

But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Luke 12:13-21 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now?
Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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childlike faith

Opener

Watch: the Bailee Madison film.

Question: What did you like about Bailee's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *rich toward God*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you,

whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

Mark 10:13-16 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

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why do bad things happen?

Opener

Watch: the Bethany Hamilton film.

Questions: What did you like about Bethany's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *childlike faith*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

"How then were your eyes opened?" they asked.

He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

"Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

The man was then taken before a council of religious leaders where they questioned him about his healing. However, because they could not accept his testimony that his healing was of God and that Jesus was from God, they threw the man out of the synagogue.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

"Who is he, sir?" the man asked.

"Tell me so that I may believe in him."

Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

John 9:1-12, 35-41 (NIV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now?
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How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



born again

Opener

Watch: the Jim Munroe film.

Questions: What did you like about Jim's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together *why do bad things happen?* was the topic. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?"

Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.

If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in

order that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

John 3:1-18 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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dying for the enemy

Opener

Watch: the Chris Plekenpol film.

Questions: What did you like about Chris' film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *born again*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!

Christ arrives right on time to make this happen. He didn't, and doesn't, wait for us to get ready. He presented himself for this sacrificial death when we were far too weak and rebellious to do anything to get ourselves ready. And even if we hadn't been so weak, we wouldn't have known what to do anyway. We can understand someone dying for a person worth dying for, and we can understand

how someone good and noble could inspire us to selfless sacrifice. But God put his love on the line for us by offering his Son in sacrificial death while we were of no use whatever to him.

Now that we are set right with God by means of this sacrificial death, the consummate blood sacrifice, there is no longer a question of being at odds with God in any way. If, when we were at our worst, we were put on friendly terms with God by the sacrificial death of his Son, now that we're at our best, just think of how our lives will expand and deepen by means of his resurrection life! Now that we have actually received this amazing friendship with God, we are no longer content to simply say it in plodding prose. We sing and shout our praises to God through Jesus, the Messiah!

Romans 5:5-11 (The Message)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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working for approval

Opener

Watch: the Ashley Rawls film.

Questions: What did you like about Ashley's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *dying for the enemy*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching.

But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me."

But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:38-42 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



God, don't forget about me

Opener

Watch: the Vitor Belfour film.

Questions: What did you like about Vitor's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *working for approval*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

A Psalm of David.

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death, lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken. But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Psalms 13:1-6 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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cutting to confidence

Opener

Watch: the Victoria Childress film.

Questions: What did you like about Victoria's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *God, don't forget about me*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.

And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them."

So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea. The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened.

And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.

And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs.

And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that

he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

Mark 5:2-19 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



the Father's love

Opener

Watch: the Shannon Culpepper film.

Questions: What did you like about Shannon's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *cutting to confidence*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

"The person who knows my commandments and keeps them, that's who loves me. And the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and make myself plain to him."

Judas (not Iscariot) said, "Master, why is it that you are about to make yourself plain to us but not to the world?"

"Because a loveless world," said Jesus, "is a sightless world. If anyone loves me, he will carefully keep my word and my Father will love him—we'll move right into the neighborhood! Not loving me means not keeping my words. The message you are hearing isn't mine. It's the message of the Father who sent me.

"I'm telling you these things while I'm still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have

told you. I'm leaving you well and whole. That's my parting gift to you. Peace. I don't leave you the way you're used to being left—feeling abandoned, bereft. So don't be upset. Don't be distraught."

"You've heard me tell you, 'I'm going away, and I'm coming back.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I'm on my way to the Father because the Father is the goal and purpose of my life.

"I've told you this ahead of time, before it happens, so that when it does happen, the confirmation will deepen your belief in me. I'll not be talking with you much more like this because the chief of this godless world is about to attack. But don't worry—he has nothing on me, no claim on me. But so the world might know how thoroughly I love the Father, I am carrying out my Father's instructions right down to the last detail.

John 14:21-31 (The Message)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
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no secrets

Opener

Watch: the Tim Ross film.

Questions: What did you like about Tim's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *the Father's love*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me

not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalms 51:1-17 (ESV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



at His word

Opener

Watch: the Whispering Danny film.

Questions: What did you like about Whispering Danny's film?

Check-up

Live and tell. The last time you were together you talked about *no secrets*. Share with the group how you lived out the things you learned and with whom you shared some of your insights from that discussion.

Hear God's Word *Read this as a Group*

Once more Jesus visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

"Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

"Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live."

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him." Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed.

John 4:46-53 (NIV)

Talk about the Bible

What it says

1. What did you like about this reading?
2. What did you not like or find confusing about this reading?

What it means

3. What does this reading teach about people?
4. What does this reading teach about God?

Live and Tell

5. What will you do now? Based on today's reading how will your life change? How, specifically, are you going to live out today's discussion?
6. Who will you tell? With whom will you have a spiritual conversation about what you learned today?



let's get started!

How to Start Your Own Group:

Getting a group started may be the most frightening, yet exciting, idea you have had in a long time. But you are not alone. Groups like this have been started all over the world. You can start one, too. Below are simple steps to help get your group started.

- 1. Talk to God.** God cares about what you are about to begin. He wants to work through you. He wants to change lives. Through this whole process, continue to ask God to help you and your group.
- 2. Find a Time and Place.** Open up your calendar and see when you typically have time. Are you usually open during lunch, in the evenings, or on weekends? Find a time that you can commit to on a regular basis. Meetings should be held where the people are. If you are inviting your work friends, find a place at or near work. If you are inviting neighbors, then meet at your home or one of theirs.
- 3. Talk to Friends.** Begin introducing your friends, co-workers, family, and/or neighbors to iamsecond.com. Talk to at least 10 or 15 people. Ask them what they think of the videos, and tell them what they mean to you. Be sure to keep it natural – the goal is simply to get the conversation started. Share with them the time and place of your meeting and extend a personal invitation.
- 4. Remind your Friends.** A week or so before your group begins, remind everyone about the meeting time and place. Talk to them personally, call them, send out letters, or do an e-vite. Think about providing some food or snacks and decide whether people need babysitting.
- 5. Meet.** That's it. Simple as that. Not everyone will come, but you may be surprised by how many people are interested in discussing spiritual things. They probably are not interested in hearing you preach, but many are interested in discussing things.
- 6. Meet Often.** If you can meet more than once a week, do it! That will accelerate everyone's learning. Just leave enough time to do your "live and tell" commitments.

How to Lead Your Group:

God is against hatred, materialism, oppression, addiction, and meaninglessness. As you start your group, keep in mind that I am Second is about much more than knowledge. It is about changed lives. It is about finding the truth. It is about people becoming free. It is about being Second. Keep in mind the following tips:

- 1. Keep Talking to God.** You have a big job in front of you, so continue to ask God to help you. It is a simple step that is often overlooked, but you will be glad you did it. You are on your own only if you forget to ask for God's help.
- 2. Be Authentic.** Do not be fake or shallow or use churchy words. Be your real self as you lead. Model to your group that this is a place where honesty and acceptance are normal and expected. As a leader you will need to open up about your own pains and be vulnerable. Ask tough questions that will help the group to do the same.
- 3. Keep it a Discussion.** This is a discussion group – not a time to practice your public speaking skills. Make sure discussion happens by asking good questions, bringing short but challenging thoughts, and keeping the discussion on point. Allow people time to truly wrestle with what the Bible says without forcing an answer. Each lesson has a core idea and following the lesson helps bring out that idea. Before you start, make sure you as the leader are familiar with this material. And as the group discusses, ask yourself, "Have we talked about the main things?"
- 4. Don't Skip Parts.** Each part of each unit is important. It is especially important to do the "live and tell" and "check-up" discussions. Learning how to be Second is good. Doing it in real life is even better.
- 5. OK Not to Know Answers.** Sometimes the discussion will raise questions to which you do not know the answer. When this happens, remember that you, as the facilitator, are not expected to know all the answers. It is perfectly acceptable to tell your group that you just do not know the answer. Volunteer to research the question further, or ask someone in the group to find the answer. Sometimes postponing certain questions like this until a later time is the best way to go.
- 6. Register.** Connect with I am Second by registering your group at iamsecond.com/join.

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Use these helps not as a checklist to which your group is tied, but rather as a guide that sheds some light on where your discussion should lead. The answers are not meant to be read to your group. But rather these answers provide focus for your discussion and insights for you as the leader.

our spiritual journey

Summary: The main goal of this lesson is for everyone to openly share with the group where they are in life and in their spiritual walk with God. At this point, there are no right or wrong answers. There are no good stories or bad stories. And there is no room for judgment and criticism. Each person should be accepted and welcomed into the group from wherever they are in life.

As leader, you must model the kind of openness and acceptance that this group needs. When you tell the story of your spiritual journey, make sure you do not appear to be the perfect saint. Be honest, raw, and a bit vulnerable so that the group sees that you too have not arrived at perfection and need to continue to grow spiritually. This also means that when you hear the stories of others you do not judge or criticize. In fact, thank each person as they share their story.

The time to provide answers, spiritual guidance, and the truth of the gospel will come. But this meeting is not it. This meeting is a time to get

to know each other and to see where everyone is spiritually.

money or God?

Summary: Everyone has their own ideas about what is really important. Stephen and the rich man thought they had arrived by their personal success. However, Jesus required more of each man. Satisfaction in life comes from a relationship with Jesus.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus went against the cultural norms of His day and did not validate a man based on his personal wealth or outward performance.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? Jesus asks us to do hard things to reveal what or who our own personal God really is. Giving up something that we have relied on all our lives is hard and we may not like it. But it will be for our ultimate good.

3. What does this teach about people? People have a serious attachment to earthly possessions.

4. What does this teach about God? God wants more than just our stuff. He wants to be first in our lives.

rejection and blessing

Summary: Everyone hates rejection. But God is there when we are sad, mourning, or even persecuted. What we find out is that he has our best interest in mind no matter what our circumstances. But God is not unemotional. He cares for you even when the rest of world rejects you.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus comforts us to let us know that he is with us in all the circumstances when it feels like we are all alone. We can trust him.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? It seems that God is with us in all the situations where there is loss or pain.

3. What does this teach about people? People will go through hard times. Everyone will experience hurt, heartache, and struggle.

4. What does this teach about God? God cares about all the hurts, hang-ups, and struggles. He is very close to all those that hurt.

born this way

Summary: God put you together. He made you while you were still in your mother's womb. Because he made you, he knows what your struggles are and knows exactly what you need. When you feel sad and depressed, he is there to comfort you. No matter the circumstance, God is near.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? God is intimately aware of who we are and how we are made and every problem we might encounter.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? God does not always feel close. Sometimes he feels far away. This passage helps us understand that regardless of our feelings, God is right there with us even in the darkest of times.

3. What does this teach about people? No one can hide from God. He is always present. His presence can provide comfort and strength.

4. What does this teach about God? God knows everything about us. He knows our hearts. He knows our thoughts. He knows where we are. We are an open book to God.

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pride before the fall

Summary: Christians battle one another because of their inability to be humble. When we try to one-up one another, God sends his word to intervene. He then brings humbling circumstances or perhaps humbling people into our lives to bring us back to a place where God is first and we are second.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? You are as close to God as you choose to be. When you come close to God, he comes close to you.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? God is not looking for everyone to throw a pity party when he tells everyone to be wretched, mourn, and weep, but rather is asking us to take a good look at the inside of our heart. The state of our hearts should cause us to cry when we look at how far from God we actually are. God's jealousy is not like an envy for us, but rather how a parent is jealous for their child and wants what is best for them.

3. What does this teach about people? People usually look out for themselves far before they look after others.

4. What does this teach about God?

God's love for us is as a father who is tender yet firm. Able to forgive and be loving, but at the same time not winking at sin in our lives.

rich toward God

Summary: A man asked Jesus to help him get his brother to deal fairly. Jesus was not into family squabbles. He would have rather the man had peace with his brother, than be worried about possessions. He then told a parable that warned the people not to lay up treasure on earth but instead to be rich toward God.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus explained what the man's squabble over money was really about. Covetousness or desiring something that is not yours or envying something you do not have is the real issue and Jesus looked past the family unfairness to the man's heart.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? Jesus was not involved in the family squabble, because he did not want love of money to define human relationships. He wanted them to have a love for God and a love for people that was greater than money.

3. What does this teach about people?

People usually look out for themselves far before they look after others.

4. What does this teach about God?

God is not as concerned with who is right in a family matter as he is concerned about where a person's heart is. He wants people rich toward him as opposed to wealthy in this world.

childlike faith

Summary: Children had no value in the society in which Jesus lived. However, he rebuked the disciples who wanted to prevent them from coming to him. He then explained that to enter heaven, a person must have childlike faith.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus wants everyone to have childlike faith. Childlike faith does not take a lot of learning, it takes a lot of trust.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? In our society childlike faith is looked down upon as naïve, so it may be a barrier for those who feel that there must be something very difficult that a person must do to enter heaven.

3. What does this teach about people?

People look down on those who are young. People have a hard time accepting simple teaching.

4. What does this teach about God?

God loves the world and that includes children. God will never reject anyone from coming to him.

why do bad things happen?

Summary: Jesus and the disciples find a blind man as they walk along the road. This prompts the question, "Whose sin is responsible for this man's blindness?" Jesus responded that this man's blindness happened so that God's Glory might be displayed in him. Although Bethany did not have her arm healed, God displayed his glory in her life.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? God used a man's blindness to bring God glory. The man wanted to see bad enough that he accepted Jesus spitting in his eye.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The religious leaders could not understand how the man could have been healed. They did not grasp who Jesus was and the man was frustrated by it. The man received the

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gift of sight, both physical and spiritual; but his faith would require him to leave the main social gathering of the area: the synagogue.

3. What does this teach about people? People have a hard time believing in miracles even when they have a lot of evidence. People will do just about anything to receive a healing. The stubbornness of people prevents them from being able to see what God is trying to display. People pay a price for sharing what God has done for them.

4. What does this teach about God? God wants people to see his glory more than he wants them to physically see.

born again

Summary: Jesus was very cryptic about who he was. Those who were religious could not understand what Jesus was talking about when He declared that one could have a new life in him. Jesus spent time with a Jewish religious leader and confronted him on his old way of thinking and explained to him that he must be born again. The writer of the narrative then declared why God gave his son to the world: to give eternal life to any who believed in Jesus.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Nicodemus came with real questions and not to show Jesus up.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The Holy Spirit is compared to a wind. No one can tell where it is coming from and no one can tell where it is going in the lives of people. To be born again means to become a follower of Jesus and realize that his Spirit now lives within us.

3. What does this teach about people? People do not get why Christians are the way they are. The “born again” terminology was one that Nicodemus did not understand and people who are not “born again” do not understand today.

4. What does this teach about God? God really does love the whole world and wants all to come into a relationship with him, by believing that Jesus is who he claimed to be, the Son of God. When it says that God gave his only son, it means that he gave his son to be killed on a cross. But it is his Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead and that now lives in those who believe.

dying for the enemy

Summary: The Bible explains that Jesus died for his enemies. Jesus went willingly to the cross and died so that

whoever believed that his death was a substitution for theirs would encounter an eternal and amazing friendship with God.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus did not die for good people. He died for those who were his enemies.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The word Messiah is a Jewish word that means “anointed one.” The Jews had been waiting for a deliverer to take away the oppression and hurt of their people. Instead of sending physical deliverer, God sent a Spiritual one. However, in time, he will send Jesus again as a physical deliverer.

3. What does this teach about people? People will die for noble causes, but not for the enemy. People need a savior. When people recognize what Jesus did for them, there is usually an emotional response.

4. What does this teach about God? God loved the world so much, that he sacrificed his only son so that our sins would be forgiven if we accept that sacrifice. God has power over death, and because of the resurrection of Jesus God will bring back to life with him those who died believing in Jesus.

working for approval

Summary: Martha strived for perfection. She wanted her service to be the best, but she made serving Jesus more important than listening and obeying Jesus. Jesus rebuked her and explained that her sister Mary had chosen what was better, spending time with Jesus.

Some Help with the Discussion
Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Mary was praised for simply spending time with Jesus

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The very person who invited Jesus into her house, is also the one complaining to the guest of the house that she needed more help. Martha was distracted from obeying Jesus by overly focusing on doing another good thing. The best thing would have been for her to enjoy Jesus.

3. What does this teach about people? People have a tendency to work for Jesus, but not to listen to him.

4. What does this teach about God? God is more interested in people spending time with Jesus than people working for Jesus.

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God, don't forget about me

Summary: David first was a shepherd boy, then he was a hunted man, and finally he was a king. So he experienced every emotion of the human heart. Here he shares that a follower of God may go through times where it feels like God is not there. The follower of God may feel defeated and have deep sorrow, but this prayer is a reminder that God hears when his people call out to him.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? A follower of God does not have to put on a happy face when times are sad. Christians do not have to “fake it.”

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The fact that once people start following God their lives do not automatically lose the pain and struggle is sometimes difficult to deal with and can sometimes challenge faith.

3. What does this teach about people? People will endure difficult times. Their only hope is that God might hear them.

4. What does this teach about God? God does not reject hurting prayers. He wants his children to share

the bad times as well as the good times with Him. He hears the prayers of those who are hurting.

cutting to confidence

Summary: Jesus met a man who had many demons. The term Legion was a name for about 4500-6000 soldiers who were part of a Roman army legion. Jesus told the demons to leave the man and enter the pigs who all killed themselves. The farmers, seeing the loss of profit but the salvation of a possessed man, became afraid and asked Jesus to leave.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus did not fear the man or the demons when the man ran up to him. Jesus had complete power over the demons and over the life of the possessed man.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? Jesus chose to send the demons into the pigs, because Jesus wanted to show the destructive power of the pigs and what the man had been freed from.

3. What does this teach about people? People may be afraid of what God is doing, because it may cause them economic loss or a loss of something that they greatly value.

4. What does this teach about God? God would rather free one man than have acceptance from many. God is concerned with the one in desperate need of Him, as opposed to the many who are apathetic towards him.

the Father's love

Summary: Jesus explained that the person who claimed to love him would obey him. He told his disciples that to help them obey him, he would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit into their lives. They could always depend on the Father's love to be there for them to protect them even when the enemy attacks.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? Jesus is concerned about the well-being of his followers. He is preparing a place in heaven for them.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? The very thing that Jesus asked his followers to do is very difficult. He wanted them to obey him, even when they could not see him.

3. What does this teach about people? People need help in obeying Jesus. People need encouragement and connection with God to ultimately follow him.

4. What does this teach about God? God knows the difficulty involved in following him. However, he gives his perfect father love to all who would accept him. That is what gives people the ability to do what he has commanded.

no secrets

Summary: David, the King of Israel, committed adultery with another man's wife, Bathsheba. To cover it up, he had the man killed. When he was confronted by a prophet, David prayed this prayer. He asked God to forgive him so that he might tell others of God's mercy and salvation.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? David did not try and hide his sin. He publicly cried out to God that he had sinned terribly.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? David sinned against God alone, in that ultimately adultery and murder are offenses against a perfect God. We show our love for God by the way we love people and David's failure to love people showed his lack of love for God who had delivered him time and time again from the enemy.

3. What does this teach about people? Even the most spiritual of people will sin. Everyone needs God's forgiveness.

4. What does this teach about God? When people sin, he does not want a ritual. He wants a genuine change of heart where a person is heartbroken over their sin and wants more than anything for God to forgive them.

at His word

Summary: A royal official desperately came to Jesus and asked for Jesus to heal his son. Jesus responded by telling him to go home, his son would live. The man believed Jesus at his word, went home and found his son alive, and then had his whole household believe in Jesus.

Some Help with the Discussion

Have you talked about the main things?

1. What did you like? The man came boldly to Jesus asking for his son. The man pleaded with Jesus twice.

2. What did you not like or find confusing? Jesus seems to criticize the man for wanting to see signs and miracles. Jesus wanted them to believe in him not because of signs and miracles, but because of who he was.

3. What does this teach about people? Most people will not believe in spiritual things until they have seen something physical that proves power in the spiritual world. However, once someone has seen God do amazing things in their life that cannot be denied, the entire household will believe.

4. What does this teach about God? God is more interested in people's hearts changing than in performing miracles for people.

I am Second group Basics

- S Stories and small.** Encourage people to tell their story. Listen to the stories of others. Then discuss stories from the Bible. Keep your group small (between 2 and 8 people) to maximize impact and allow everyone to discuss these stories.
- E Everyone contributes.** Help people learn how to grow by doing these things themselves: a) tell others about Jesus, b) learn the Bible, c) talk with God, d) help and encourage others, and e) endure hard times.
- C Consider everyone a potential leader.** View everyone as a potential leader, both before and after they trust Christ. Give people opportunities to lead if they continue to obey and progress. Leaders are unpaid and without formal training.
- O Obedience based, not just knowledge-focused.** Allow the Holy Spirit to guide people in the life changes they need to make as you do the "Live and Tell" questions. At the beginning of each meeting, review the previous meeting's commitments. Consider not moving on if people did not complete them. This creates an environment in which loving Jesus means obeying Jesus.
- N New groups rather than big groups.** As people share with others, encourage them not to invite the new people to your group, but instead to start a new group. Meet in homes or neutral places. Meet with new leaders in their groups as a coach, and encourage them to do the same for others. Stay connected for ongoing training and accountability.
- D Discuss and discover.** Focus on the Bible. Trust the Holy Spirit to help each person discover the meaning of Scripture as your group discusses it. Lead through asking questions rather than lecturing.

where next?

1. Follow and trust Jesus. You want to follow Jesus. Tell him you know you do wrong. Tell Jesus you believe that he died to pay the penalty for your sins, and then rose from the dead. Ask him to forgive you. Tell him you trust only in him for eternal life. Commit to follow him today.

2. Keep meeting. Download the next discussion guide and keep meeting.

3. Talk with God. God cares about what you are doing. He wants to work through you. He wants to change lives. Through this whole process, continue to ask God to give you his plan. Listen for his voice. You are only on your own if you forget to ask for God's help.

Need help about how to talk with God? Download the free *I am Second Prayer Journal* at iamsecond.com/getinvolved or purchase a printed copy through the I am Second store.

4. Keep it simple. In your I am Second group, forget big church models where a skilled musician leads worship and a highly trained teacher preaches a sermon. Teach new believers how to hear and respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit through His Word and in their hearts. Encourage everyone to take part.

5. Keep it biblical. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42) “When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.” (1 Corinthians 14:26)

Perhaps share a meal when you meet. Ask what the Lord has done in each person's life during the week. Make time to study God's Word. Discuss its meaning and specific applications. Do not answer questions yourself; point people back to Scripture. This helps to establish that the authority is God's Word, not a person. Take time to pray for one another and for those who have not put Jesus First.

6. Choose a Discussion Guide. Below is the I am Second core curriculum. We recommend going in sequence, for each guide builds on the ones before it. Download at iamsecond.com/groups. Or order printed copies from iamsecondstore.com. A good next step is highlighted below.

Prayer Journal

How to Start Second Group

Film Discussion Guide (stories of Jesus relating to people)



1.0 What's First (how to tell others about Jesus)

2.0 Second Start (four steps to feed yourself spiritually)

3.0 Jesus Says (Part 1: how to live the seven basic commands of Jesus)

4.0 Jesus Also Says (Part 2: how to live the seven basic commands of Jesus)

5.0 Follow as I Follow (how to make disciples)

6.0 Multiply your Group (how your group can start new groups)

7.0 Lead (help others start to lead)

8.0 Go: Local (develop an Acts 1:8 strategy locally)

9.0 Go: Global (develop an Acts 1:8 strategy internationally)

10.0 Where to Go from Here (continue strong as a group)

11.0 Commit (commit to continue to obey Jesus)

7. Multiply. Do not let your group grow too big. As additional people become followers of Jesus, start new groups in their homes or work places. Teach those who lead people to Christ how to lead their own groups. Show them how to identify persons of peace through whom they can make more followers of Jesus and start more groups.

8. More I Am Second tools. Check out iamsecond.com/getinvolved for other leadership kits, small group material, t-shirts and everything else you need to start your Second group. Lots of good stuff to help start spiritual conversations.

9. Register. Connect with I am Second by registering your group at iamsecond.com/join.

10. Questions? Do you need help or have questions? Email us at coach@iamsecond.com.

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