

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

GROUP GUIDE: WEEK 16

CONVERSATION STARTER

Which fictional family would you most want to be a member of and why?

ABIDING IN JESUS

Jesus is talking to a group of believers when he says, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” In Greek, “abide” means to *remain* or *stay*. Jesus reminds these believers that discipleship is not a one-time decision but a way of life. Abiding means living each day committed to bearing out Jesus’ teachings, his word, in every corner of your life.

Jesus says abiding in his word is what leads to truth. But that’s not the end goal. Being a disciple of Jesus is not just about having the truth, it’s about allowing that truth to set us free. In other words, it’s not enough to just *know* what Jesus knows, we ought to also *do* what Jesus did so we can be set free. Set free from harmful patterns of behavior or ways of thinking, or our skewed ways of perceiving the world. Ultimately, Jesus wants to set us free from the influences of sin and death.

But it all starts with us *abiding* in him—choosing to remain in the way of Jesus and allowing him to transform every aspect of our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stuck out to you about the reading from this week? Was there a verse or idea that was particularly meaningful or challenging for you?
2. What does it mean to *abide* in Jesus? If you were to look at how you spend your time or mental energy, what might it suggest you actually *abide* in?
3. Is Jesus something you build into your life or something you build your life around? How do you know the difference?

4. Read Genesis 12:1-8 together. How was Abraham's family called to be a blessing to the whole world?
5. In the same way, God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to those around us. What might that look like for you this week on a super practical level, especially as we prepare to celebrate Christmas?

WEEKLY PRACTICE

Just like last week, the practice for this week is to continue the tradition of Being the Light in the midst of a dark world. This holiday season, we want to challenge you to bring light through doing random acts of kindness without expecting anything in return. This could be anything from paying for someone's coffee to buying a stranger a meal or volunteering with your favorite non-profit.

We encourage you to pick up a stack of "Be The Light" cards at HPUMC or [download them online](#). You can give one away with each act of kindness or use them to write encouraging notes to others. Here are a few ideas to help get you started this week.

1. Write a note of gratitude to a friend or coworker.
2. Leave an encouraging note on someone's car.
3. Give an unexpected compliment to someone - be specific!
4. Help someone who looks like they are struggling in a store or other public place.
5. Keep goody bags in your car to give out to our homeless neighbors.
6. Leave a server the biggest tip you can afford.
7. Get creative! There is no end to the ways you could brighten someone's day with just a small act of kindness.

Finally, as you #bethelight this holiday season, keep this in mind: Being the light for others is not just a one-time endeavor but a rhythm of living that starts first within ourselves. What is one thing you could do to make more room for God's light to flood in?