



Week Two

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for safe spaces to process difficult topics. Help us to honor each other and you as we share today. May you be at the center of our time together. Amen.

Ice Breaker [For New Groups or Groups with New Members]

- If you had a completely free day, what would it look like? What would you do?

Talk It Over

This week we entered the second week of our new series, Isms. Isms aims at helping us lean into a Christlike response to topics like racism, politicism, sexism, and pluralism. As we move through our discussion today, let's be mindful of the fact that our group is full of diverse stories and opinions. We are not here to force our ways or opinions on others, but in hopes of having a life-giving discussion that empowers all of us to grow, heal, and learn. In fact, even if you are here today and you aren't a follower of Jesus, know this is a safe community to explore matters of faith.

If your group is meeting for the first time, please see “Week One Talk It Over Questions”. If your group is meeting for the second time during this series, see “Week Two Talk It Over Questions”.

Week One Talk It Over Questions:

- By nature, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you talking about potentially touchy, heated, or polarizing topics? Have you always been this way? How did you become this way? Explain your answer.
- In order for us to have a life-giving discussion on topics like racism, sexism, pluralism, and politicism, what are some ground rules, values, or guidelines that might help our conversation?
- Jumping into this week's topic specifically, in what ways have you personally experienced or witnessed sexism? Your answer can involve gender microaggressions or news headlines.

Week Two Talk It Over Questions:

- What attitudes or values made last week's group discussion safe and life-giving?
- Jumping into this week's topic specifically, in what ways have you personally experienced or witnessed sexism? Your answer can involve gender microaggressions or news headlines.

This weekend we talked about our next ISM — Sexism. Before we get too far we want to look at our Big Idea from last week that starts us off this week: *Jesus breaks down all barriers of inequality and discrimination.*

- Where have you seen barriers come down through following Jesus or through being a part of a church community?

Read Galatians 3:28 (NIV) and Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

These passages do not mean that Jesus removes our distinctiveness. Instead, they explain that there is not an

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inferior or superior race or gender. We all have equality and we all bear the image of God. In fact, to see the fullness of God we need both men and women. It is through both genders that God is fully expressed.

- What is your experience with equality?
- Growing up were you taught that one gender was superior to the other? What ways did you see this play out in your different family members?
- Have you changed your thoughts on equality over time? What inspired the change?

Read Genesis 3:16-19 (NLT)

Both Adam and Eve entered a rebellion against God's plan. This verse highlights less of a punishment and more of a shift in the plan based on the decision they both made. We see things change for both of them. We see a hierarchy develop as a result of the rebellion. What we can conclude from this is that the original plan of equality was broken back in the garden through the rebellion. This led to many different discriminations against gender and a long history of sexism that has continued into our current day in varying ways.

- Can you recall one of the stats offered this weekend that showed inequality in our recent history?
- How has the history of inequality impacted you or someone you love?
- Do you have a story or experience of sexism in your own life? Could you identify with some of the stories shared this weekend?
- How have you navigated the subtle ways of sexism?

Read Galatians 3:13 (NLT)

Everything begins to change when God restores everything through Jesus and the cross. The Jesus message is all about breaking the curse and the curse of sexism is no exception. We see many examples in the gospel narrative of Jesus interacting, healing, and restoring women. Take a look at the examples below:

In a culture that treated women as second class citizens, Jesus talked to women in public on multiple occasions.

Jesus invited Martha to sit at his feet and learn — alongside Mary — the way any male student or disciple would with their teacher and Rabbi.

Jesus healed women. He restored them physically and back into society.

After Jesus' death the first person to see the risen Christ was a woman — Mary Magdalene. She was the first witness to the resurrection. It was her job to go and tell the others that he was not dead. She is often called an 'apostle of the apostles' because she was the first one sent with the good news message. This was in a cultural time when women couldn't even testify in court as a witness.

- What do you see in the stories of Jesus when it comes to women?
- How do you think these encounters landed back then?
- How does it land for you right now? How does looking at the stories of Jesus impact you as a woman or for the women in your life today?

Bottom Line: Let's be a community that encourages, empowers, and respects women into their calling.

- Is there a way you can intentionally do this for other women (whether you are male or female) that has come to mind during our discussion?
- What can you do this week to be one who encourages, empowers, and respects?

Closing Prayer

God, we are so grateful for your gift of the cross and restoration. Continue to show us ways you want to heal our land and restore all of us into your fullness. Amen

Group Logistics [A Reminder for New Groups]

Are there are details or questions we need to cover for next week? Are we meeting at the same time and place? Who is owning snacks? Are there childcare questions to cover?

How To Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressured to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.