



## Week Two

### Opening Prayer

God, thank you for giving us the gift of friendship. Help us to use our time today to connect with one another and to get a better sense of how you are leading us. Amen.

### Talk It Over

This weekend we continued our series centering on the fact that Jesus followers are called to live as sent people who serve others. During this series, we are focusing our attention on what it means to love our community well.

- Share a fun fact about your city.
- This week we talked about the idea that what makes a city great are the people who inhabit it. In what ways do you see this idea to be true in your city?

Last week talked about our desire to be a church that is **for** our city. This means being a church that actively blesses our city. This weekend's big idea builds on this idea further: To be a church for our city, we must be a church **with** our city. This means on an individual level, we each must be with the people of our city.

- Where are the main places in your city you spend most of your time? Is it your street? Where you work? Where you shop? Where you work out? Where your kids go to school? A coffee shop?

### Read Matthew 1:23 (NIV)

Core to our faith narrative — from the start of the Bible to the end — is the story about a God who desires to be with his people. We see this idea play out in the Jesus story and in the mission of Jesus. Jesus is the incarnation of God and the church, or God's people, is intended to be the incarnation of Jesus. This is a faith tradition built on being "with" — God with us and us with others. One way to sum up the Jesus way is that we are sent people, to bless people, where we work, live, work, and play.

- Generally speaking, when is it hardest for you to be with people? When is it easiest?
- Tell us about a time someone helped you see Jesus through the way they were with you.

### Read 1 John 2:6 (NCV)

People who represent Jesus, are good at being with others. Living as sent people means being people who live like Jesus. Living like Jesus means earnestly, but imperfectly exhibiting a posture of love and grace.

- What are some real-life ways real people living today can embody a posture of love and grace?

### Read Luke 10:38-42 (NIV) and Luke 14:1-24 (NIV)

The life of Jesus teaches us that a practical way to be with people is to begin with prayer, listen well to others, and take the time to eat with others. While eating with others, we see Jesus maximized his time with people by asking well thought out questions and sharing interesting stories (or parables). Our world is desperate to

connect; our society is craving to be with people. Plus, people won't know that Jesus wants to be with them until they know we want to be with them. Again, we are intended to be the incarnation of Jesus.

- Growing up, what were your family dinners like? Did your family talk? If so, what sorts of things were discussed?
- Think of the most meaningful meals you shared with others. What made this meal so meaningful?
- Core to the Jesus story is this idea that he welcomed and invited all sorts of people to his table. He invites us to do the same with others. In your own life, what does it mean to make room for all sorts of people at your table?

### **Read Philippians 2:4 (NLT ) and Galatians 6:2-3 (NLT)**

It is through being with people we can take a genuine interest in them and know the sorts of things that are weighing them down. It is through this process of being with others we best reflect, model, and extend God's love, grace, hope, peace, freedom, and kindness to others.

- Tell us about a recent and specific time someone was able to serve you well because they knew you well.
- After you tell us about this recent and specific time, share about how this situation made you feel.

### **Looking at your own life and what you sense you are being led towards,**

- In light of your week, who are you going to be with this week where you live, work, and play?
- With respect to who you will already be with this week, in what ways can you be more intentional with them?
- Is there anyone you can be even more intentional with by inviting out to coffee or a meal?

### **Closing Prayer**

God, you know the people in our life. Help us to see them the way you do. Soften our hearts and empower us to reflect your love and grace to those in our life. And along the way, let us know what relationships you most want us to lean into more this season. Help us to be people who know how to be with others. 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?

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### **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.