

CROSSWALK GROUP GUIDE

BELONGING (S2) - WEEK 1

INTRODUCTION

The following is a guide to help facilitate discussion between you and the person you're studying with or with your Connect Group. Feel free to add, subtract, or change questions to fit the conversation, and pray for the Spirit to lead in all things.

OPEN QUESTIONS

As you gather with your group or study partner, take some time to reflect on how you experienced God this past week. Share both your ups and downs. Share as much as you are comfortable.

HEAD

1. Why do you think such a large crowd followed Jesus (v. 2)? What does this say about people's expectations of Him?
2. Why is it significant that the boy's lunch was used for the miracle? What stands out to you about this part of the story?
3. What does this passage reveal about Jesus' character, especially in how He responds to the needs of the crowd?
4. Why do you think the people wanted to make Jesus king after this miracle (v. 14–15), and why did Jesus withdraw?

HEART

1. Where in your life right now do you feel like you don't have "enough" — time, energy, resources, faith?
2. Have you ever felt like your contribution was too small to matter? How does this story speak into that feeling?
3. When have you seen Jesus take something small and do something unexpectedly meaningful with it?
4. What "miracles" or provisions in your own life are easy to overlook? What leftovers are you not paying attention to?

HANDS

We all want to serve God. Sometimes we feel we have nothing to offer. But we all have resources that God can use to do great things. Get with someone you trust and ask him or her to help you to identify what you have that God is asking for. When you discover it, prayerfully consider surrendering it to God.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NLT):

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen."

BELONGING (S2) - WEEK 2

INTRODUCTION

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OPENING QUESTION(S)

Have you ever been in a storm that caused you to be scared? What happened and was there anything you could do during that storm that gave you peace and a sense of calm?

HEAD

1. Read JOHN 6:16-21, MARK 4:35-41, together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading? What stands out?
2. On the Sea of Galilee, it was common for storms to come up quickly due to the landscape surrounding it. In the John story, as far as we know, it was a rough storm but not a storm that was going to overtake them like in Mark 4. So were they scared about the storm, or this figure walking towards them? How would you have felt seeing a man walking toward you while you were 3-4 miles out on the water?
3. Why do you think they left without Jesus? Why do you think Jesus walked to them on the water instead of heading on to his destination?
4. In the Mark passage, how do you think Jesus was able to sleep with all the commotion going on?
5. The contrast of the disciples screaming and bailing water, versus the sleeping Jesus, is stark. When Jesus stood up and said "Silence, Be still!" do you think he was saying that to the storm, the disciples, or both? Explain.

HEART

1. How do you think about the phrase, "Don't be afraid, I am here!" speaks to our belonging to Jesus? How does the story in John speak to us belonging to each other?
2. In the Mark story, the disciples were frantically trying to save themselves and forgot Jesus was in the boat with them. Is there a place in your life, in your heart, where there is a storm and you need to be reminded that Jesus is in the boat with you?
3. Both passages about storms speak to letting go of fear. What part does letting go of fear have to do with the idea of belonging?
4. Jesus did more than the disciples expected; he didn't just bail water, he quieted the storm both the storm happening around them, and the storm happening within them. What does it mean to you to have a God who is big enough to calm the storm and/or you as you continue through the storm?
5. How do you answer the question, "Who is this man?"

HANDS

List out the storms that are going on in your life right now; what's happening that seems out of control or bigger than what you're able to handle. Then close your eyes and imagine Jesus walking to you on the water, or standing up in the boat, and saying, "Don't be afraid. I am here." and "Silence! Be still!" Hear those words until you feel wrapped in His powerfully strong arms, then rip of the paper and hand your concerns over to the One who can handle them.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

20 Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. 21 Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

BELONGING (S2) - WEEK 3

INTRODUCTION

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OPENING QUESTION(S)

Share about a party you attended (wedding, birthday, anniversary, just because) that was extra memorable. What made it so memorable to you?

HEAD

1. Read John 2:1-11, together and share any wisdom, insights, or thoughts that come to you from the reading? What stands out?
2. Read verse 2 and share why Jesus and His disciples went to the party. What kind of people do you invite to a party?
3. Why do you think Jesus said to his mother, "My time has not yet come." but then performed the miracle anyway?
4. As Jesus' first reported miracle, why do you think this particular miracle comes first and what, if anything, do you think it has to say to the idea of belonging?
5. The equivalent of the amount of wine in the thirty gallon water jars comes to over 700 bottles of wine. That seems excessive especially towards the end of the celebration. What do you think this show of abundance says about the kind of community God invites us into, and the type of God we serve?

HEART

1. Jesus gifted the wedding guests the absolute best wine and exceeded their expectations when he could have taken advantage of the moment and only given them second best, or even mediocre. What does this story teach us about giving our best in our churches and communities every week as we show hospitality to our guests?
2. If Jesus' time had not yet come, why do you think he chose to bless the guests of this wedding in such a way? Again, might this teach us about creating communities of belonging?
3. There would have been loads of leftover wine. When you spend time in Scripture, Prayer, Meditation, Worship, Community, what kind of leftovers do you hope to have when you're finished? Apply this to gathering as a community of faith each weekend as well.
4. Do you think Jesus went to this wedding to perform this miracle, or do you think he went to this wedding to enjoy the people there and the blessing of community? Explain your answer.

HANDS

Spend some time this week thinking of someone who could use a blessing of abundance this week. Maybe it's words of encouragement, maybe it's time with friends, maybe it's prayer. Rally some friends together to help pour out blessings on that person, then get together and talk about how it felt to bless

another in such a way. Take some extra time abiding in the vine of Jesus this week, that you may be filled to overflowing in order to bless another.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

5 *“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5, NLT*

BELONGING (S2) - WEEK 4

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

As you gather with your group or study partner, take some time to reflect on how you experienced God this past week. Share both your ups and downs. Share as much as you are comfortable.

HEAD

1. The fig tree had leaves but no fruit. What might that symbolize in the spiritual life?
2. What do the disciples seem most amazed by — the withered tree or what Jesus says about faith?
3. How does Jesus connect faith, prayer, and action in verses 21–22?
4. What do you think “moving a mountain” meant to the disciples when they first heard it? How might it speak to us today?

HEART

1. Are there areas of your life where there are “leaves” but no “fruit” — where there's the appearance of life but not much actual growth?
2. How do you tend to respond when prayers don't seem to be answered?
3. Have you ever experienced God answering a prayer in a way that amazed you or built your faith?
4. In what area of your life do you feel God might be calling you to trust Him more boldly?

HANDS

It can be challenging to live boldly for God, especially when life becomes overwhelming. Doubt creeps in and it becomes harder to pray and believe. Make it an intentional goal this week to check in on each other and encourage one another to boldly come to God with all our requests, and believe that He will answer each one according to His will.

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

Hebrews 10:23 (NLT) “Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.”

BELONGING (S2) - WEEK 5

INTRODUCTION

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OPEN QUESTIONS

As you gather with your group or study partner, take some time to reflect on what you learned about Jesus as our high priest. What insights did you come away with? Share as much as you are comfortable.

HEAD

1. What does Psalm 68:6 tell us about God's heart for the lonely and disconnected?
2. In Luke 2:1–5, why do you think it matters that Joseph was identified by his family line? What does that show about identity and belonging?
3. In Acts 9:1–2, how do you see Saul seeking belonging in the wrong way? What does this reveal about misplaced zeal?
4. According to Romans 12:4–5, how does the image of the body help us understand true belonging in the church?

HEART

1. When have you felt like an outsider — lonely, displaced, or disconnected? How did God meet you in that place?
2. Who in your life has made you feel like you truly belong? What impact did that have on you?
3. Are there ways you, like Saul before his conversion, have sought belonging in places or groups that weren't healthy?
4. Which part of the "body of Christ" metaphor resonates with you most right now — feeling like a vital part, or maybe struggling to see where you fit?

HANDS

This week we are trying to understand belonging on a very practical level. In the end, what we want is to feel like we belong and help others do the same. Identify someone in your circle of influence that you think feels disconnected. Start praying for an opportunity to reach out and be that first connection. And when the opportunity arises, go for it!

LIVING WORDS FOR YOUR WEEK

Ephesians 2:19 (NLT) "So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family."