

Small Group Guide: “EKKLESIA: Motivated By His Love”

Opening Question: Have you ever lost something valuable and found it in a surprising (or funny) place? Share your story.

Opening Prayer: *Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us together today to study your Word and explore the teachings from Pastor Dan’s sermon. Open our hearts and minds to your message, and guide our conversation as we seek to grow closer to you and to each other. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.*

Key Takeaways:

1. **People far from God lack three things:**
 - Spiritual insight and strength (like sheep)
 - Purpose (like a lost coin out of circulation)
 - Fulfillment and Connection (like the prodigal son)
2. **Each person of the God-head (the Trinity) actively pursues the lost:**
 - Jesus (the shepherd) seeks and rescues
 - The Holy Spirit (the woman) illuminates and reveals truth
 - The Father (the prodigal son’s father) receives with complete restoration and grace
3. **The church’s calling is to:**
 - Rescue people far from God
 - Reveal truth in love
 - Receive them with grace

Discussion Questions:

1. **The Sheep, Coin, and Son:** Which of the three metaphors (sheep, coin, son) resonates most with your own story before knowing Christ? Why?
2. **Read Luke 15:4-7** (The Parable of the Lost Sheep). What does this parable teach us about God’s love for the lost?
3. **Read Luke 15:8-10.** What does the parable of the lost coin reveal about the value God places on each individual, and how does it demonstrate the diligence and urgency with which we should seek those who are lost?
4. **Read Luke 15:11-24** (The Parable of the Lost Son). The father ran to his son, kissed him repeatedly, and fully restored him. What does this reveal about God’s heart toward those who have rejected Him?
 - In verse 14, the prodigal son “began to be in need.” Why is it important to recognize that sometimes God uses need to get people’s attention? How should this affect how quickly we rush in to “fix” people’s problems?
5. **The Three R’s:** Pastor Dan shared three responsibilities of the Church (Rescue, Reveal, Receive). Which one is most challenging for you personally? Why?
6. Pastor Dan said we can’t expect unbelievers to see things spiritually. How does this change the way you approach conversations with non-believing friends or family?

7. Many believers primarily hang out with other believers. How can you intentionally build relationships with people far from God while maintaining your spiritual health?

Practical Applications:

Choose at least ONE of the following to put into practice this week:

Option 1 - RESCUE:

- Identify one person in your life who is far from God
- Pray daily for them this week
- Look for one opportunity to serve them or meet a need (with spiritual discernment)

Option 2 - REVEAL:

- Think of someone you've been harsh with in the past about spiritual matters
- Pray for wisdom to approach them with truth *AND* love
- If appropriate, have a conversation that leads with grace

Option 3 - RECEIVE:

- Intentionally welcome someone new at church next week
- Invite someone who doesn't fit your "normal" circle to coffee or lunch
- Practice receiving them with grace, not expecting them to "clean up" first

Closing Prayer: *Dear Lord, thank you for the insights we've gained and the fellowship we've shared today. As we leave this place, help us to carry your message of love, grace, and compassion into the world. Guide our steps this week, and empower us to be a light for those who are far from you. In Jesus' name, Amen.*