

SCRIPTURE CARD GUIDE FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

"THEOLOGY MATTERS - THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS" JANUARY 7

SERIES OVERVIEW:

Biblical truth matters for a myriad of reasons... it is certainly for the power of the Gospel to save souls, but as well biblical doctrine reaches into the health of mind and spirit in faith communities. Mental spiritual health and Christian care and concern can be shaken and experience deep harm when biblical doctrines are erroneous. In this series we will address how often in American Christianity a buffet of doctrines suiting our desires are selected, resulting in confusion and pain, and can even distance us from Jesus Christ. However, true biblical teaching that takes in the whole counsel of God's Word comforts, strengthens, and reassures us of the goodness and faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

Follow the directions below for a guided group discussion with a friend, in a family, small group, etc. Grab a Scripture Card (printed or electronic) and simply follow steps from 1 to 6 on this page and the next.

1

PRAY

About 1 minute

Open in prayer.

2

BIG IDEA

A minute to read

God often achieves His purposes by doing the exact opposite of that which humans might expect. The supreme example of this is the cross itself: God triumphs over sin and evil by seemingly allowing sin and evil to triumph over Him. Jesus reveals the "upside-down" Kingdom of God. "For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

3

CONNECT

About 10 minutes

How have you seen the goodness of God this past week?

SUBJECT: WLC Message Series

That [redacted] is [redacted] **NOT** [redacted] what is [redacted] written.

January 7, 2024

¹⁸ The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. ²⁵ This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength. - 1 Corinthians 1:18 & 25

Reflect

Read the full passage in your Bible - 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

What is something that is catching your attention from the passage? Pause here, camp on this a bit, be curious.

What is something about God and his ways that has seemed crazy, maybe even foolishness, when compared to human power or reasoning?

Look back and notice how God has been working in your life. Have there been times in your life when you have experienced the power of the cross?

4

DISCIPLE LIFE DISCUSSION

About 45-50 minutes. Read the Scripture above and discuss the questions there. Additional questions below.

What was the expectation of the Jewish people for the Messiah and how would Christ crucified compare to their expectations? Describe verse 18 in your own words.

One danger of false doctrine is to assume God will do things the way humanity does things. But the theology of the cross demonstrates Jesus ushers in His Kingdom in very different ways. What situations in your life or our world today would you like to see resolved, repaired, or restored? Do you have a specific way you expect God to act in resolving this? Why or why not?

What do you need to consider in order to trust God... even when things don't look the way you had hoped or expected them to be?

Read Isaiah 53:1-9. What comfort does this passage give you as you consider Christ's work on the cross is complete.



DISCUSSION HELP:

Use follow-up questions to take the discussion deeper. Guide answers to be honest and real.

Can you say more about that?

How have you seen that play out in your life?

What does that stir up in you?

Has anyone else had a similar thought or experience?

What might God be inviting you to do?

5 PRAY:

About 15 minutes

Read the prayer prompts and allow for a time of reflection.

Pair up. Share prayer requests with your partner based on the prayer prompts below. Pray now for your partner and the prayer requests shared.

THE [DISCIPLE] LIFE

Pray

Thank God for any ways that you notice (from the Reflect question) him working in you, in your friends or family.

Invite God to show you where the thinking and ways of the world around you are at war with God's thoughts and ways.

Here's a prayer to pray this week...Father God, help! I surrender to your ways, which are often opposite of my thinking and my ways. I need you. Help me follow you today.

Live It Out

In Isaiah 55:9 God says, "For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."

INVITATION: read over this verse every day this week, asking God to show you how this truth plays out in your life and what it means to follow his ways.

CHALLENGE: in addition to this, memorize this verse this week.

**Jesus, thank you for inviting me
into this LIFE of following you today!**

6**LIVE IT OUT:**

About 2 minutes

Read the "Live It Out" section and invite the group to take the steps noted.