

"Joy In The Everyday: The Company You Keep"

Growth Group Guide

September 6, 2026

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

How would you define what the phrase "you become like the company you keep" means? What other catch phrases did you grow up hearing your parents or teachers say to you? Did those phrases help? Why or why not?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Open in prayer giving praise to God for His loving wisdom in uniting us with Jesus, so we know Him deeply in ways never imagined, enjoy His company as our source for living, and find Him as our eternal joy.

1 Corinthians 13:11 ESV When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

Romans 6:5 ESV For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall be certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Psalms 92:4-5 ESV For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. How great are your works, O LORD! Your thoughts are very deep!

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. Over the past couple of weeks what kinds of modern day good flesh have you discovered? Why are these appealing and dangerous to us?
2. **Read Romans 6:3-8, Galatians 2:20, 2 Corinthians 5:17, and Ephesians 2:6.** What things happened to us when we were saved? (Think about the envelopes illustration and pay attention to phrases that talk about being in or with Jesus. Also, remember that baptize in the Greek literally means "to be placed into." Try reading the verses with the word baptize using "placed into" and see what you discover.)
3. How does what we discovered in the previous question give us hope that we can cut from the flesh and not live out of it?
4. **Read Philippians 3:10-11.** In Paul's example, we see that what we discovered in question #2 isn't just an intellectual exercise, but it's something to experience. Why do you think it's important that we have experiential understanding of our spiritual death, burial, resurrection, ascension, seating, and whole new life with Jesus?
5. Had you ever considered that one of the reasons the events of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection were recorded was so we would know key elements we would share in being identified with Him? How does knowing that expand your view of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection? How does it make it more personal?
6. **Read Romans 8:6.** What is death; what is life and peace?

7. A good way to read Philippians 3:11 is, "if there is any way I can share in Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, that is experience his resurrection power from what's of death to me, I will do it." Put this with Romans 8:6. How can we be encouraged to join Paul?
8. Based on the last two questions, what keeps us of from knowing Jesus and His powerful resurrection life (the Spirit) in us?
9. What freed Jesus from His suffering on the cross? If we are to be like Jesus in this way too, why must we be "all in" just like He was in the Garden of Gethsemane? If we're not "all in," what issues could arise?
10. **Read Hebrews 12:2.** What helped Jesus endure His cross experience and it's shame? How can we welcome the type of suffering that shows us our flesh is a failure but causes us to identify with Jesus's cross?
11. **Read Philippians 3:10, Romans 8:11, and Romans 6:4.** From these verses, what kind of living awaits us on the other side of sharing in the type of suffering that allows us to become like Jesus in His suffering, death, and resurrection? What other things might you add to this list?

WALK *(Living out God's purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: Being identified with Jesus in His suffering, death, and resurrection is essential to knowing Him.** Jesus is good company in any season or circumstance. And the Father has good things for us IN Him and through our deep, experiential sharing in all aspects of His life. You may be contemplating whether your current circumstances or season of life contain the kind of identification suffering we've talked about today. It's a good time to get a piece of paper, make a Profit column and Loss column. Put Jesus in the Profit column and all you're learning about Him. Put everything else in the Loss column. Talk to God about what strikes you (good, bad, confusing, etc.). He is here to comfort, encourage, support, and sustain you in all you are facing.

WORLD *(Embracing God's heart for others)*

Evergreen Network, Thurston's church-planting missionary partner, is committed not only to planting healthy churches, but also to developing the leaders who lead. Their Internship and Residency opportunities give emerging leaders meaningful, hands-on ministry experience while providing new churches with additional leadership during critical seasons of growth. Internships last around 3 months to 1 year. Residencies range from 18 months to 3 years. Their goal is deployment whether some participants eventually join the staff of the church where they serve, join another church in the Evergreen Network, or are sent to plant a new church of their own. A newly married couple from Kentucky is about to begin a 3-year residency with Society Church in Portland (planted in 2025). Please join in praying for this young couple and the new projects about to be launched: Salt Co Corvallis is launching this fall at Oregon State and their church launches in January; also Kamloops, BC; E Portland, OR; S Salem, OR; and Roseburg, OR. (August 2026 Email Update.)

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