



ENGAGE

(A key part of healthy group life is to make sure your group gets to know each other and builds good relationships. The purpose of these first questions is to help your group open up. Please don't feel like you have to ask each question. Once you feel like the group is ready, move onto the "Inspire" section.)

- If you competed in the Winter Olympics—and you had the skill—which event would you choose?
- What did God teach you during the message this weekend? Did anything in particular stand out?

Prayer:

Take some time to pray for God to speak to your group through this week's study.

INSPIRE

(Each question has a lot to unpack. Since the group may need time to process each question, don't let silence scare you. Try to avoid filling the space with unnecessary explanation or moving on from the question too quickly.)

1. From your understanding, what is "the church?" What is the mission of the church? What are each of our roles in all of this?
Discuss.
2. Read John 13:34 and Matthew 28:18-20. Phil said, "The Gospel is the centerpiece of the church. Everything that the church does and is about has to be centered on and flowing from the Gospel."
 - Do you agree? Why or why not? Why is it so important to make sure that the Gospel is the centerpiece of church?
3. Phil stated that, "The Gospel will never be comforting, unless it is, first, confronting." Meaning that before the Gospel comforts us and brings us peace, we first have to be confronted with the things in us that are sinful.
 - How does the Gospel confront today's world? What area(s) of your life does the Gospel confront?
 - How does the Gospel bring comfort to you?
4. Read Ephesians 2:1-3. At some point, all of us have lived a life that gratified our sinful desires, only seeking to please ourselves.
 - How is sin connected to selfishness? Pride?
 - If you have accepted Jesus and chosen to follow Him, what differences do you see between the life you once lived and the life you live now?
5. Read Ephesians 2:4-9.
 - Is the grace that God offers easy or hard for you to understand? Explain. How should this undeserved grace change our lives (and actions)?
 - Paul firmly excludes *every* possibility of self-achieved salvation by adding to his emphasis in v.8, "not by works" (v.9). In what ways do people uselessly try to *earn* their salvation? How easy is it for us to slip back into a self-saving works mentality?
6. Read Acts 2:37-38.
 - Phil said, "Any time repentance of sin is not present, neither is genuine saving grace. Authentic faith and repentance go hand in hand." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
 - Repentance involves three things: Confession—confessing sin to God and those you have sinned against; Contrition—being broken by your sin; and Change—turning from sin to righteousness. Do we emphasize repentance too much or not enough? Why?
 - Is repentance easy or hard for you? Discuss and explain why.
 - Read Romans 6:1-4, Galatians 3:26-28, and 1 Peter 3:20-21. According to these passages, what does baptism symbolize?



EQUIP

Application:

(These questions will challenge your group members to apply the study to their daily lives. How can they live out what they take in? It is highly important that you go over this section with your group each week for the group study to be a success.)

Read Ephesians 2:10.

We're not saved by our good works; we were created for them. Since we as Christians were dead in sin, but now alive in Christ, the Gospel becomes our directive for good works, individually and corporately, as the church. Since we have been so greatly served and saved, we want to serve others greatly and proclaim the Gospel so that they may be saved. The Gospel of Christ should affect every aspect of the church. It is the centerpiece of the church's existence and purpose—it is the fuel for the mission of the church. The promise of an inheritance in paradise is worth more than any pain we might suffer or trial we might endure in this life.

Jesus didn't compromise his mission even as he faced and endured the cross. As the church, let us not compromise the Gospel. May we allow it to confront us and comfort us.

- What area of your life needs to change for God's glory? How will you go about making that change?

Prayer:

Take some time to pray over each group member's identified action steps and life issues.

Equip Your Mind:

"For by grace you have been saved by faith. And this is not by your own doing; it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV)