



Sermon Discussion Guide: *The Story of WITH*

From the very beginning, the story of Scripture has been about one central reality: *God desires to be WITH His people*. We often reduce faith to belief, behavior, or activity—but Jesus shows us something deeper. Before He sent His disciples out, He called them in—to be **WITH Him**. This week, we explore what it means to move from simply being around God and others... to truly being **WITH** them.

1. WITH Is God’s Original Design (Creation)

Key Idea: We weren’t created just to do things *for* God—but to live **WITH** Him.

Scripture Connection: Genesis 1–2 (implied), John 3:22–35

Discuss:

- When you think about your relationship with God, does it feel more like *being WITH Him* or *reporting to Him*?
- What tends to pull you away from experiencing daily life WITH God?
- How would your faith look different if presence—not performance—was the priority?

Takeaway: Relationship isn’t one part of the Christian life—it’s the center of it.

2. WITH Comes Before Mission (Mark 3)

Key Scripture: Mark 3:13–19 - “He appointed twelve that they might be WITH Him... and that He might send them out.”

Key Idea: WITH is not the alternative to mission—it’s the source of it.

Discuss:

- Why do you think Jesus prioritized being WITH the disciples before sending them out?
- In your own life, do you tend to focus more on *doing for God* or *being with God*?
- What would it look like to reorder your priorities around being WITH Jesus first?

Takeaway: Before God works *through* you, He wants to be *with* you.

3. WITH Requires Presence, Not Just Proximity (John 3)

Key Scripture: John 3:22

Key Idea: Real WITH means intentional, unhurried presence.

April 19 – “WITH Jesus”— The Story of WITH – Lead Pastor Marc Riegel

John 3:22-36

Discuss:

- Where in your life are you physically present but relationally absent?
- Who in your life needs more of your attention—not just your availability?
- What distractions most often keep you from being fully present?

Takeaway: Being near someone is not the same as being WITH them.

4. WITH Is Persistent (Acts 14)

Key Scripture: Acts 14

Key Idea: Transformation doesn't happen through quick moments—but through **staying**.

Discuss:

- What stands out to you about Paul returning to places where he faced opposition?
- Where are you tempted to give up too quickly in relationships or spiritual growth?
- Why is persistence such an important part of real WITH?

Takeaway: WITH is not about quick results—it's about staying long enough for transformation.

5. WITH Leads to Transformation

Key Idea: Presence + persistence → real change (in us and others)

Discuss:

- Can you think of a relationship where consistent presence led to growth or change?
- How has someone else's presence impacted your life spiritually?
- How might God want to use your presence in someone else's life right now?

Takeaway: God often transforms people through proximity over time—not instant moments.

Personal Reflection

- Where is God inviting me to be more fully WITH Him?
- Who is God inviting me to be more intentionally WITH?
- What is one area where I need to choose persistence instead of withdrawal?

*Before anything God asks you to do... He invites you to be **WITH Him**.*