

Have you noticed that everyone gives directions in different ways? Some people are like live versions of Google Maps – they know all the street names and exit numbers. Other people might know exactly how many turns to take but have no idea what any of the street names are. Still others prefer to rely on landmarks and other indicators. We know how to get there but conveying that information to another person can be a challenge, especially if they use directions differently than we do. Asking someone “How do I get there?” can result in myriad responses, but that doesn’t change where “there” is. This is the final week of the NEXT study guide. We have talked about where we are and how we got there. We have acknowledged that we cannot stay where we are and we have considered where we are going. But knowing that we need to leave “here” is not enough. It isn’t even enough to know where “there” is, unless we know how to get there. This is final week of NEXT and it may just be the most important.

SESSION 5: HOW DO WE GET THERE?

SMALL TALK

During each session, we will begin with a question or brief activity designed to get everyone on the same page for the session.

1 Go around the group and have each person share: Which week has had the most impact for you? Where has God directed your attention in particular?

2 Spend some time in your group reflecting on the last four weeks. What have you learned together? How has God been working in your group?

TEACHING

During each session in **NEXT**, we will be watching a teaching from Pastor Greg Surratt as he walks us through Luke 5:1-11. Peter's entire experience in these verses came down to a final question: How would he respond to Jesus? Jesus was calling Peter to something new but in order for Peter to get "there," he had to follow. Jesus presents each of us the same choice: Will we follow him, or not? Let's prepare for our final teaching from Pastor Greg:

SHOW DVD SESSION 5

REFLECT

In the questions that follow, your group will spend some time reflecting on the teaching you just experienced.

1 Do you sense God speaking to you about a particular part of this teaching? What do you think he is asking of you?

2 Fear can be paralyzing. It can keep us from moving forward at all. What is a source of fear for you? Is fear keeping you from practicing generosity? How might your life change if you surrendered this fear to God?

3 Luke 5:11 tells us that the disciples gave up whatever security they had in possessions or employment to follow Jesus. For us, surrendering our security might not mean giving away everything we have but it does mean practicing radical generosity. What role does generosity currently play in your life? What might God be asking of you in this area?

4 Probably none of us would identify ourselves as prideful. But pride tends to creep in where we least expect it and take root. Spend some time reflecting: Where in your life should you be on guard against pride? What would it look like for you to drop this “net?”

RESPOND

Now that we have spent some time reflecting on what God is saying to us, we want to consider some possible next steps.

1 Peter dropped his nets and followed Jesus. What “nets” do you need to drop in your own life? What is preventing you from following Jesus completely?

2 Do you have a sense where “there” is for you? What are your next steps? How can your group encourage you as you begin to move forward?

3 Why is generosity such an important part of our “there?” What steps can you take to begin to become a more generous person?

4 Before you leave, make sure that your group reaches a decision on whether you will continue with a new study. What are your next steps as a group?

Close the session in prayer.

GOING DEEPER

You can explore the following Bible passage as a group (if there is time) or on your own between sessions.

Read Luke 4:13-34. This passage contains a parable and Jesus's explanation of the story. It addresses the topics of anxiety, security, and what it means to follow God with our whole hearts.

1 What stands out to you in this passage? Where is God drawing your attention?

2 In Jesus's parable, he tells the story of a rich man who sought security in his possessions. Where are you looking for security in your own life? Does it sometimes become a substitute for trusting in God?

3 Jesus said that we should not worry or be anxious about anything. What are you worrying about today that you need to give up to God?

4 At the end of the passage Jesus says that wherever our treasure is, our heart will be. How can you see this truth illustrated in your own life?

DAILY REFLECTIONS

These are daily reviews of some key Bible verses that will help you think about and apply the insights from this session. The questions are meant to help you reflect on truths related to each week's topic.

Day 1 – Mark 4:39-40

Why Are You Afraid?

When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (NLT)

If Jesus is in our boat, why are we still afraid?

Day 2 – 1 Samuel 15:22b

Obedience

Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. (NLT)

Above all, God wants us to follow him. Are you trying to offer him anything else instead?

Day 3 – Hebrews 13:5

Be Satisfied

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you.

I will never abandon you."

(NLT)

When we drop our security, we can follow God with complete confidence and abandon.

Day 4 – Micah 6:8

What is Good

*No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.*
(NLT)

Of the three things mentioned in this verse, what is God telling you to focus on today?

Day 5 – Mark 12:42-44

More Than All the Others

Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."
(NLT)

Radical generosity is not necessarily tied to the size of our gifts. How can you practice this sort of generosity?

MEMORY VERSE

And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus. —Luke 5:11 [NLT]