

Community Group Study Guide
For the week of September 1, 2019

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Other than at church, can you think of any other small groups you've been a part of in your life (i.e. Boy Scouts, a sports team, a book club, etc)? How have those small group experiences been similar to or different from your Community Group experience?

2. If you have participated in any of our previous Day of Service, what has been a highlight of your experience? If you haven't participated in a previous Day of Service, what has been a highlight of serving others?

3. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We will all bring our own unique expectations into serving. Regardless of how our experience matches up with those expectations, it will be our attitudes and actions that will make the difference. How can the following verses shape your attitude and actions regarding serving?

Philippians 2:5-8

Colossians 3:12

Colossians 3:17

1 Peter 3:15

Why would it be important to keep these verses in mind while you serve?

2. Throughout history, the influence of God's people on the world around them has been directly related to their love of God and others. Sociologist Rodney Stark researched and wrote about how the early Christians had such an impact on the world around them. A fellow author summarized Stark's findings like this:

"Stark was puzzled at how a marginalized, persecuted, often uneducated group of people were able not only to survive, but thrive....He concludes that a key reason was their willingness to sacrifice themselves out of love for each other and for their world. This sacrifice released an explosion of light and heat the world had never known." - Shaunti Feldhahn

What's your initial reaction to this quote?

What guidelines or tips do you see in Colossians 3:23-24 and 1 Peter 2:12 that could influence our effectiveness in serving others?

What difference can it make when a community of believers shows love for their neighbors?

TAKING IT HOME

1. From the MissionsConnect Fair this past Sunday, more than 30 of our mission partners met together to offer you a great opportunity to get details about exactly what those ministries do and how you could be involved with them. Which opportunity captured your curiosity or excited you the most?

2. As a church, we will soon be serving a local elementary that is in dire need. How can we as a group pray for ourselves and our church as that Serve Day approaches?

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Community Group. Group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines:

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused, and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.

PRAYER REQUEST