

Pick a Path

Talking to Strangers



Reflection Guide | Week 1

Connect (5 to 10 minutes)

If in a group, come together for fellowship and sharing about your week together.

- Cliché question: If you could get to know better one person in history, who would it be? (You can't say Jesus... It's cheating)

Context (30 to 40 minutes)

Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion

Discuss Section 1 (Introduction and Chapters 1-2) of Talking to Strangers. As a group, share your thoughts and feelings about the stories themselves. Have you been reading the book or listening to the audiobook format?

- What section or story stood out to you most?
 - In reflection, what made it so impactful? Have you done any further research on that study yourself?
 - Were there any stories you had already been aware of before reading these chapters? If so, do you think Gladwell did an accurate job portraying the events? Did he add anything or omit anything of note for you?
- How many people in your life would you say truly know you?
 - What does a relationship look like between you and someone you are close with, versus you and someone you just met? What about someone you would consider a casual acquaintance?
 - How many relationships would you say you can maintain in a given time?
 - If your relationship with someone changes over time (say you drift apart), do you feel like you understand them in the same way?
- Have you ever judged someone incorrectly after an initial meeting?
 - Has someone ever surprised you with their actions after you felt you knew them well?
 - What did you learn about your own judgments and perceptions (rather than what you learned about them)?

- Read John 4:1-26. This passage shows how Jesus interacts with a woman whom he had not previously met. Yet he knows her completely. Pay special attention to the way he talks to her; the way he encourages her; the way he challenges her.
 - What does it mean for Jesus to know us each fully? How do you feel knowing that Christ knows you this deeply?
 - The woman in this passage is a Samaritan, which means she would have been discriminated against by the Jewish people. What was missed by the Jewish people who did not know her?
 - How can we go about truly knowing someone the way Christ knows them? How should we react once we have come to know them more deeply?
 - Are there any barriers that prevent us from truly knowing someone the way Christ does? How do we navigate those barriers if they can't be overcome?
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Closing (5 minutes)

- Share joys and concerns with one another.
- Close in prayer, either by inviting a group member to pray or by using the prayer provided below.

Closing Prayer

Knowing God, we confess that sometimes we misjudge others, and sometimes those misjudgments have consequences. All too often we do not work hard enough to come to know others the way you know us. Allow us to recognize the ways that our knowledge of others falls short. Let us not think too highly of ourselves, and instead, admit that we may not be able to see someone the way you do. However, assure us that we can love them the way you do, and empower us to go forth and do exactly that. Amen.