



KNOWING GOD | Connection Group Discussion Guide | Week 7

Connect (5 to 10 minutes)

Come together to build relationships through fellowship and sharing about this week's worship.

- Take a few minutes to share your thoughts about worship this week.
 - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you?
 - What story or illustration made an impact on you?
- What is the most embarrassing fashion trend you proudly rocked when you were younger? Would you ever wear that look again?

Context (30 to 40 minutes)

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

- Before diving into the scriptures of the videos, how would you define patience in your spiritual life? What about your personal life?

Read Exodus 40:34-38. This is the end of a long section about the temple that the Israelites made to worship God. But make note of the fact that it says that God would remain with the people at all times. When God moved, the people would move. Discuss the form that God appears to the Israelite people as, and the idea that the glory of the Lord was too much for Moses to be in the presence of.

- Do you think God, and God's love, is unchanging, or does it shift and change over time?

Watch Part 1 of the Connection Group video.

- Have you ever given thought to the idea that God is steadfast in God's ways?
 - What does it mean for God to be with the Israelites in all their travels?
 - Would you rather have a God that changed as you changed? Or would you rather have a God whose love and actions remain consistent?
- How do you see the previous weeks' lessons coincide with this idea of steadfastness? Do you see God's steadfast love in God's patience, faithfulness, graciousness, creativity, peacefulness, and forgiveness?
 - Would you say you have a better understanding of God now than you did at the beginning of the series? Has your understanding of God changed?
 - The Israelites, and all of humanity, would continue to falter. Yet God remains unchanged in devotion to us. Can you relate to this idea of devotion to someone or something even if you know they won't be perfect?
- The most obvious place we see the steadfast love of God in the New Testament is Jesus on the cross. Jesus could have chosen to get off the cross but didn't and remained in the pain and suffering of humanity. Have you ever thought about what Jesus on the cross meant for you personally?

- What does it mean that God became fully human through Jesus Christ? How does this shape our understanding of God's love for us?
- We often talk about Jesus offering redemption on the cross. What does redemption mean for you and your life?
- Why is it important for us to have a God who is patient?
 - How would things look differently if God were more rash?
 - Would there be any benefits? Would there be any disadvantages?

Watch Part 2 of the Connection Group video for this session.

John Wesley was famously not perfect. He once refused to offer a woman communion because he was in love with her, but she married another man (her name was Sophia Hopkey). He regularly had to grow in his discipleship, and sometimes he doubted his faith. Yet the story of how he stayed firm to what he knew to be true is important for us today. John Wesley was born and raised in the faith, and knew all of the right answers, yet committed wrongs and had doubts. It is okay to not be perfect. It is okay to waver. Yet, staying true to God as an anchor amidst it all is what will pull us through to stronger faith and devotion on the other side.

- Is there someone in your life who is a beacon of steadfastness? Would you like to be more like that?
- Is there a time that you changed who you were or what you believed? What were the circumstances of that change?
 - Are you happy with the change that you made?
 - Are there ways that you would still like to change and grow in areas or topics?
- What does it mean for us to stay true in our faith in the face of adversity in the world?
 - What would it mean for our relationship with God to stay firm? What about our relationship with others?
 - What makes it hard to stay true to our faith when the world encourages us to change or not hold onto what we believe? What are some ways to overcome this?
- What is the most important part about being a Christian for you? How are those around you impacted by that aspect of your faith?

Call (10 minutes)

We believe that God not only shows us who God is but invites us to participate in God's ministry by answering unique calls in our own lives. Join together in discovering how we can actively respond to scripture and God's presence.

- This week, take three different opportunities to pray to God. Talk with God about what makes your faith important, and the things that you feel make faith an essential part of who you are. Ask God to embolden you in those areas and let you stay firm in them.
- Take time this week to reflect on the seven attributes of this series (patience, faithfulness, graciousness, creativity, peacefulness, forgiveness, steadfastness). Commit yourself to God to grow in at least one of those areas over the next two weeks.

Closing (5 minutes)

God calls us into community by sharing our joys and concerns together in prayer and supporting one another in our walks with Christ. As we share testimony and stories of our lives, let us listen to where God is working within our community and how we can build each other up in Christian love.

- 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

Steadfast God, you are unchanging in a world that is ever changing. You have been with us since the beginning through our highs and our lows. We are grateful and fortunate to worship a God who remains true to promises and true to us. Let us become more like you in this way. Let us know who we are, what makes us uniquely your children, and be unashamed in how that encourages us to live in this world. Let our unwavering faith and actions be a beacon and an inspiration to those around us. Let this series be the start of a newfound commitment to our faith and the people you made us to be.

Amen.