

The Elephant in the Dining Room

- Everyone is fighting a **battle** we can't **see**.
- Extend the **grace** you expect from others and have **received** from Jesus.
- What if people are **trying their best**?
- **Perspective** is key.

Life Group Study Questions

For the week of November 25, 2018

Because this is the last meeting of the Fall Quarter, the Life Group Study Guide is shorter than normal. As usual, your final meeting will include a look back on how God has worked this past quarter and doing communion as a group. You will also take some time to fill out an online Feedback Form about your group experience and your plans for the fall. The form will be emailed to you on Monday, November 26. The Winter Life Group Quarter will begin the week of January 13, 2019. Have a great few weeks off celebrating the birth of our Lord! Merry Christmas!

QUICK REVIEW

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

MY STORY

1 With Christmas just around the corner, it can be fun to reflect and hear others' thoughts and highlights on the Christmas season. Take turns in your group sharing your responses to the following questions.

- ❖ Favorite thing to do on Christmas Eve
- ❖ Favorite thing to do on Christmas Day
- ❖ Which Christmas movie would you most like to be part of?
- ❖ If you could become famous and wealthy for singing a Christmas song which song would it be?
- ❖ Favorite & least favorite food to eat at Christmas

2 God is continually at work in our lives as followers of Jesus (Philippians 1:6). As you look back on this quarter, what are some things you're thankful for in your own life and your Life Group experience?
(It can be a specific way God encouraged you, time spent together in your group, how your group has helped you to continue to live your life for Jesus, something new you learned, a service project, spiritual breakthrough, challenged you to grow or anything else.)

Philippians 1:6 New International Version (NIV)

⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

DIGGING DEEPER

It's no surprise we can find ourselves challenged on how to relate and show reasonable respect to others. This weekend we were reminded that to be able to do this, we need to remember we are all broken people in need of God's grace and forgiveness no matter who we are or where we come from. Can you think of any reasons why at times we can feel or think we have less of a need of God's grace than someone else?

How do these verses help us understand who we are and how to show others the same grace and love that we each need?

Genesis 1:27-28 *New International Version (NIV)*

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Romans 3:23 *New International Version (NIV)*

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 5:8 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:8-9 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 4:29 *New International Version (NIV)*

²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Proverbs 12:18-19 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁸ The words of the reckless pierce like swords,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

¹⁹ Truthful lips endure forever,
but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

As you look at these verses and this week’s teaching are there any new actions or attitudes you want to make sure you bring to the table throughout the coming holiday season?

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

As followers of Christ, we are able to celebrate the Christmas season because of the amazing gift God has given us – the gift of his son Jesus, born that we might have life through his death and resurrection! Jesus is always knocking on our door to remind us that he brings us grace and life. Communion is about remembering just that. Your time together this week will conclude by taking Communion and remembering this great gift God has given us through his son Jesus.

To prepare for Communion, read Luke 2:1-7, Luke 22:19-20 and John 15:12-17. What catches your attention in these verses as beneficial to remember as you take Communion in your group?

Luke 2:1-7 *New International Version (NIV)*

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 22:19-20 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

John 15:12-17 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.



Christmas Outreach Tree

You may have noticed Christmas has arrived at North Coast Church! Stop by the Christmas Outreach Tree on the Vista, Carlsbad, Fallbrook, San Marcos/Escondido and Ramona Campuses to choose an ornament.

We have needs from all of our Community Service Partners and we'd like to bless them in a big way this year!

- Presents listed on the ornaments include toys, sports equipment, diapers and baby blankets, along with items for parents in need and local homeless shelters.
- Bring the unwrapped gift back by the date stated on the ornament.

Be a part of this fun day and help make an amazing Christmas for many North County Families!

- Volunteers are still needed for our special sorting and distribution day. Monday, December 10, we'll take all the donated gifts and sort them for our organizations to pick up.
- Sign up at NorthCoastCommunityService.com, and search "Gift Sorting."



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

- The Life Group Team