

Connecting Group Study Guide

Knowing, Growing, Going

Week of May 1-7, 2016

Follow-up

1. Start by sharing with each other about your previous week.
2. How were you surprised by God's grace last week?
3. Did you surprise someone last week by demonstrating grace? Share it with the group.

Knowing God

Read Genesis 1:1-31.

This week we were reminded that God loves culture (Revelation 7:9-10). God created everything and called it "very good" (Genesis 1:31). We also learned that many Christ-followers over the years have understood that "all truth is God's truth" because God stands behind all of creation, which includes all cultures.

1. How have Christians, in general, viewed "culture" throughout history? How do you think Christians in the 21st century Western culture currently view "culture"?
2. Since God called his creation "very good", how might this truth impact the way we currently view "culture"?
3. While creation is good, it is also marred and fallen due to humanity's rebellion (Genesis 3:1-7). Discuss some of the obvious ways we can see the fallen nature of both creation and culture?

Growing in Christ-likeness

The New Testament teaches that Jesus is the agent of creation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2). In light of this, when we read the creation account in Genesis 1 & 2, Jesus is doing this work. Perhaps Jesus also emphasizes God's love of culture through the incarnation—his taking on of human flesh and becoming like his creation.

1. God, according to Genesis 1:28, gave humanity a specific role. What is that role and how do you think it ties into our larger discussion of the Christian & culture? Is this command still applicable for Christians living today?
2. Think about Jesus' life and ministry as recorded in the four Gospels. Do you see Jesus exemplifying this command of God in any way?
3. Look at Acts 3:21. Is there anything in this verse that ties the ministry of Jesus to the Father's love of culture?

Going to Our Neighbors and the World

1. One area that is touched upon by this larger discussion is our work, job, our "9 to 5". Because God loves culture and humanity is called to the task of being "co-creators" with God, how could this larger discussion have a positive effect on the Christian's work?
2. If the Father, through the Son, is in the business of restoring all of creation, how can you join with God in this restoring at your current job?

Action Step: Begin each work day with a prayer for God to show you how your work makes a difference for others. Also, ask God to help you develop a better attitude at work, one that will be contagious and have a positive effect on your co-workers. Remember, while you are at work

you are also representing Jesus Christ through your words and actions. Ask God to work through you while you work so you may glorify Him.

Close in prayer together—ask God to open your eyes to begin to see his truth deposited within the surrounding culture.