

Small Groups – Learning to grow in Christ
by Pastor Richard Braun

Date: _____
Week _____

Icebreaker

Where in your life are you growing the most? Is it knowledge, is it patience, is it being a parent, learning to be single, is it learning how to be independent, is it learning how to love? Be open, and share what God has been doing to make you grow.

Opening Prayer

God of all life, thank you for creating this world and all that exists. Thank you for stretching, pruning, and molding me in your image. I pray, Lord, as we gather together, we may find strength in you as we share our stories. Amen

Open It

1. What triggered or forced your growth? Refer to the same area you discussed earlier.
2. When you talk about growth in your life, how is that growth affecting your mate, your children, your significant other, or any close relationship you maintain?
3. Is God involved in the area of growth in your life? If so, how? If not, why not?
4. Think about a recent major struggle or achievement in your life. What did you learn from it? How did the specific situation force you to grow?

When we think of growing in Christ, we need to know who Christ is and his message to remain in His love and relate to him. Our growth will spill over into loving others as we love Him and follow his commands. “Love others as I have loved you,” Jesus says

Read [John 15:9-17](#) Jesus was talking to his disciples and is also talking to us today.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. [10] If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. [11] I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. [12] My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. [13] Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his 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 I learned from my Father I have made known to you. [16] You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. [17] This is my command: Love each other.

Explore It

1. Can you relate to Christ in terms of his humanity? What examples or stories from scripture help you see Christ as human? What helps you see him as God?
2. Why do you think God made himself a man? Was that necessary?

3. Why did Jesus have to die? (for extra credit) Please don't spend the whole time on this question because it's somewhat unrelated to the rest of the study.

Growth in Christ means we need to make him a high-priority relationship in our life.

4. What are the critical elements of a high-priority relationship with Christ?

Get It

1. Jesus supplied us with a simple formula for remaining in his love and continuing a relationship with Him. What is that formula in John 15:10? How do we apply it?

2. When Jesus talked about our joy being complete in John 15:11, what did he mean? Joy means gladness, satisfaction, delight, and rapture. How is our joy ever complete? Do we control our joy in life? Explain

3. God pursues a relationship with each one of us. In John 15:16, Jesus said, "You did not choose me, but I chose you." He further says, "bear fruit--fruit that will last." (Ans. either)

a: How did God choose you, and what has that knowledge done for you?

b: Bearing fruit - what does that mean to you? Is this related to [Gal 5:16-21](#)? How?

4. Growing in Christ - Jesus gives us in John 15:17 a simple command "Love each other" In your walk of faith, what does it mean for you to love each other? How can you force yourself to love anyone? Can you? Why / why not? Explain

Getting to know Christ, understanding his message, and then walking in faith to follow him daily seems to be what Jesus is telling his disciples.

Apply It

1. How can we put Jesus' command to "remain in my love" into an action plan? What is one action you will take this next week that will stretch you, force you to grow, and help you remain in His love?

2. Obeying Jesus' command to "Love each other as I have loved you" is challenging for most of us. The love Jesus is talking about here is agape, a selfless giving with no thought of reward. ***Make this into a fun project.*** Focus on one person over the next two weeks, a person who may even be hard to love. Plan 2-3 little things for this person. Do it discreetly so that no one will find out it's you doing it. Demonstrate agape love for each other. [Matt 6:1-5](#)

3. Being led by the Spirit is sometimes confusing. Look up the following passages this next week and discover what this means. [Gal 5:16-21](#), [Rom 8:12-14](#), [Luke 11:11-13](#), [Acts 9:31](#), and [Acts 2:38-39](#) Find out how to receive the Holy Spirit and live by the Spirit.

Closing Prayer

Seek input from the group - Allow the Holy Spirit to encourage and strengthen each member in your group prayer.