



Small Group Study Guide for September 20, 2020

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Heart issues are hard issues. As our world wrestles over issues of race and justice, Christians have a unique approach from a Biblical perspective, and as always, it all points back to Jesus as the Savior of all nations. Let's continue to pray and seek the Lord as we have conversations within our congregation and without of how we can work towards unity and peace.

Getting Started:

1. What is the farthest from home that you have traveled, and what did it feel like to be so far away?
2. Have you ever been somewhere where you were the racial minority? What was that like?

In the Word: Philippians 1:12-14, and 19-30

3. Paul says that the bad things that had happened to him (arrest, beating, imprisonment, an end to his missionary journeys) actually helped to advance the Gospel. We see a number of bad things happening in our world today. Name a few of them, and think of how God might possibly use them to advance the Gospel.
4. Paul writes in verse 14 that the brothers were emboldened to proclaim the word of Christ fearlessly. That we could pray this for ourselves! What hinders us from proclaiming the word of Christ in our world with greater boldness?
5. Verse 21 is a key verse in Paul's Christian outlook. What is his attitude towards life, and what is his attitude towards death?
6. Paul admonishes the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel (v. 27). Look carefully at the following words and zero in on what Paul says that actually entails. What specific behaviors does Paul describe when he says to conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the Gospel? Would you add anything else to these?

Putting it Together

7. When Christians have hard conversations with friends and neighbors, how can our faith and our life in the Gospel be shown in the way that we talk about difficult topics?

8. We live today in an “outrage society” and all far sides off the spectrum promote and live off of anger and outrage. Do you feel those emotions welling up in you as you hear the news or read things online? How do those emotions make it difficult for everyone to have a helpful conversation or work together as a society? (try to avoid political axe grinding here, and talk about it in a way that would apply to both sides of the spectrum).

9. The United States has struggled with racism in our society since its founding. It even led to a Civil War. Where have you seen progress over the years in helping overcome racism, and where do you see us still having work to do?

10. How does the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and God’s love for the whole world (John 3:16) give Christians an added edge in helping work towards reconciliation and valuing all people?

11. Ultimately, God has us here to love our neighbor, and to love the people that God has placed within our orbit, within our circle of influence, especially those who are in relationship with us. What might you be able to do in the coming weeks to be a person of peace, and promote and foster a spirit of unity and of racial reconciliation in the name of Christ?

Prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith and witness to Christ during these days of pandemic, and to reveal God’s Word to us through the Scriptures. Ask that we might all repent of our own sins, admit our prejudice, and work towards reconciliation and peace among people of different ethnicities and backgrounds.

Check out our Wednesday Bible Study on Revelation in person or on Live Stream at www.oursaviorlansing.org/livestream at 11 a.m. each Wednesday!