

JESUS = GOOD NEWS – Week 1

Life Group Notes



CONNECT QUESTIONS

What is the best news that you heard this week?

Use three words to sum up who you are – give a prize to the most creative (and credible)!

Matthew 11:28 ^(NLT) **Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”** What weight are you carrying right now – (not a weight of worry or cares – we are told to give these to Jesus) – but the weight of responsibility or pressure?

- You may be a solo parent, or a parent with full on kids
- You may be a husband or father... called to be the head, provide, protect
- You may be still at school... things are tough, your friends are all doing and reading this stuff... it feels like it might be easier to give in and go with the flow
- You may carry a huge work/study load... staff, wages, studies, assignments, people depending on you...

We are not meant to carry this weight alone. Take some time to share with your group the weight you carry in your day to day life – maybe give each person 2 minutes’ maximum to share – there will be time at the end to pray for one another and to look at how we should walk with the weight God has given us.

Our human abilities and strengths can often mean that we do things in our own strength – there are times when God will take us to the end of ourselves, so that we then push into Him, and lean on His strength! The more we have revelation of who Jesus is, the differently we will live. How do you think we can learn to lean on God’s strength rather than relying on our own abilities?

Check out **Mark 1: 21-38**. In this account, we learn that Jesus did several miracles, and as a result the whole town came to check him out. The paralyzed man probably was one of these people, and at that time missed out on his healing – however Jesus came back! This time, with the help of his friends, he encountered Jesus, and was healed. What stands out to you from this story? Do you ask others for help when you need it? Why, why not?

Think about the friends in this story – the ones who lowered the paralyzed man down to Jesus. They went above and beyond (literally) to ensure that their friend met Jesus, and believed with him together for his healing. Jesus looked at them all and the Bible says that He saw THEIR faith! Who are you being a friend to right now? Are there people around you that need to encounter Jesus – how will you help?

Check out **Mark 2:5 and Luke 22:42**. Jesus said to the paralytic man that his sins were forgiven! The man was probably wondering where his healing was – but first and foremost Jesus was concerned with the state of his heart. We also may want Jesus to fix our needs, but He wants to fix our hearts. The greatest gift we can receive is eternal life through Jesus - his life, death and glorious resurrection! In response to this, can we pray the prayer that Jesus prayed – “not my will but yours be done!” What does this mean for your life?

Check out **Hebrews 6:1**. We can get stuck in a repetitive cycle of sin and repentance – staying in the outer courts of God’s presence. However, God wants us to move forward, to press in, to go right into the Holy of Holies and to encounter his presence in a powerful way. Have you had a personal encounter with God this last week – has God spoken to you?

Consider the role of the priests in Israel in old testament times. Check out Joshua 3 & 4. The priests went ahead of the people, carrying the weight of the ark of the covenant, which represented God’s presence. They carried this weight on their shoulders – stepping into the river Jordan so that the nation of Israel could pass through on dry land. They had to wait until everyone (over 40,000 soldiers) had passed by. In the same way today, God wants us to be carriers of His presence. It might seem like everyone else has moved on and passed you by, but if we stand firm, we can bring breakthrough and God’s presence to others! Are we willing to bear the weight of a life sold out for Jesus? Can we honestly say:

- Wherever you tell me go Lord I will go!
- Whatever you want me to do Lord I will do
- I give you everything!!

How will you respond to this?

PRAYER

Pray for one another and encourage one another in relation to your personal circumstances/weight/pressure. Pray that we would be carriers of His presence – making a difference to those around us.