

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,  
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,  
To GROW as followers of Jesus.  
- CG Mission Statement

## Worship: Jeremiah 9:23-24

*(Here is a passage to help your group as you worship. You can go through it together or in groups in meditation and/or in prayer)*

Read Jeremiah 9:23-24 using the prayer practice of Lectio Divina. Read the passage aloud 3 times. After each reading, spend a few minutes reflecting. After the first reading, open yourself to the presence of God. On the second reading, listen for a certain word or phrase that stands out to you. On the third reading, listen to what God's invitation might be for you.

## Icebreaker

What's the difference in being happy with something and "boasting" in it?

## Text for Discussion: I Corinthians 1:26-2:5

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

## Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

1 Corinthians 1 is a passage of upheaval, meant to completely alter how we see and live in the world. We are called to the cruciform life – to endeavor to live as Jesus lived. It is a life of self-sacrifice, generosity, obedience, and humility. This may not sound desirable, but God's ways are not our ways. It is His way to save us and to give us the freedom we've always looked for.

God reverses our natural assumptions about who is first and who is last (Mark 10:31). This might disturb or frighten us, since we so naturally yearn for respect and admiration. But this is a theme throughout the Bible. God rarely chooses the powerful or brilliant, for they already delight in their own strengths. Instead, it is the lowly and despised who receive the Gospel gladly, for their need is great. This *is* Good News, because it frees us from the imprisonment of our own ego and pursuit of personal success. We are truly liberated by Jesus Christ who justifies our lives.

God confounds our expectations about who is blessed. (1 Cor 1:27-28.) In a world that prefers what is strong and wise, God chooses the foolish, weak, low and despised. Why would God want to shame the wise and the strong? Because in doing so, God exposes the truth that no amount of achievement, wealth or other measure of success will ever give us the freedom, comfort, safety or peace we desire. It is only in Christ where we will ultimately find these things.

God wants us to boast, but in Him alone. We boast in what we have placed our confidence and security as well as what we revere. We can't help but do this. So we must honestly ask what we want other people to see when they think of us. Boasting in the Lord is truly freeing as it means we no longer care about what others think of us. Christ is the source of our confidence and strength (Gal 2:20). Everything that is good in us is because of Him.

God gives us what we most need (Phil 4:19).

**Righteousness.** This is God's legal declaration of innocence over us. It is an undeserved pardon, which justifies our lives completely.

**Sanctification.** Christ is our holiness, our beauty, and our moral perfection. We do not need to add anything to Christ's work. We are complete and full before God because of Jesus. In this, our souls can rest.

**Redemption.** God has liberated us from our slavery to sin, paid for with Christ's own life. We are free, no longer a pawn of the powers of this world.

God gives us what we most need... but in God's own strange way.

Only the crucified Christ can bring the freedom that changes our world, releasing us from our fear of loss and death. Jesus guarantees there is new life on the other side of these fears because there is life on the other side of the cross. For as Jesus said, "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it," (Luke 9:24).

## Guiding Question of the Week

*(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)*

---

**How/Where do you boast in various parts of life?**

## Questions for Discussion

*(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)*

---

- 1) Read I Corinthians 1:18-31-2:5 What stands out to you?
  - What are some examples of "foolish" things that God has used to shame the wise?
- 2) What would it look like to lay down our life for others? Does that command encourage you or discourage you? Why or Why not?
  - What is the benefit to living a life in the power of God? Why is this hard? Why is it so natural for us to rely so heavily on ourselves rather than on God's power?
  - How has this fear of not being enough kept you on the sidelines of God's Kingdom?
- 3) **Guiding Question:** How/Where do you boast in various parts of your life (at work, your abilities, your achievements, your stuff/belongings, your independence/autonomy, your freedom)?
  - What do you reach for to feel safe? What do you lean on to feel comfort or find escape in?
- 4) How can we-even in little ways- work to "die to" one of these things this week? What would that look like?
  - How can we best be supportive and assist one another through this?
- 5) What is one thing we can do between now and our next meeting to act on the reality of what we explored today?

## Praying for One Another

*(Here are some ideas from the study to help focus your time in prayer as a group. Use by themselves or along with other prayer requests.)*

---

- Thank God that He has liberated us from having to rely on ourselves for success and contentment.
- Pray that we would see the world through God's eyes instead of our own.
- Pray that we would be able to help each other die to ourselves and put others first.