

Small Group Study Guide



January 19, 2020

Making a Difference

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for the life and teachings of Jesus. Today we ask that you would teach us how to say ‘no’ to ourselves and ‘yes’ to something bigger. Help us to discover a life of purpose. So give us wisdom to know what to do with what we hear and give us the courage to do it. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

Luke 14:25-27

25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus. Turning to them, he said, 26 “Whoever comes to me and doesn’t hate father and mother, spouse and children, and brothers and sisters—yes, even one’s own life—cannot be my disciple. 27 Whoever doesn’t carry their own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Mark 8:34-35

34 After calling the crowd together with his disciples, Jesus said to them, “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. 35 All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them.



INTRODUCTION

This is the time of year when we become painfully aware of where we are not, who we are not, and what we need to do differently. Traditionally, it's a season of self-absorption. We wonder how to get slimmer, stronger, and smarter. We wonder how to get out of debt. We wonder how to become better people. If you really want to become a better person, do something this year to make the world a better place. But how do you determine what you should do?

What breaks your heart? What needs to change in your community? What can you do? Who can you partner with? Jesus invites you to a life of purpose. Devote yourself to more than yourself so you will have more than yourself to show for yourself.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Over the last week as you wrestled with the question, "What breaks my heart?", what came to mind?
- 2) In what ways have you pursued significance throughout your life? How successful were those approaches?
- 3) Read Luke 14:25–27 on page 1. Respond to what Jesus said in the passage. In what ways does it challenge your assumptions about your purpose in life? In what ways is it comforting?
- 4) How would you answer this question: "At the end of my life I would like people to line up and thank me for...?"
- 5) Based on your answer to the previous question, what might it cost you in terms of time, money, missed opportunity, or family time to pursue that desired future?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do to begin to move toward that desired future? How can this group help you?