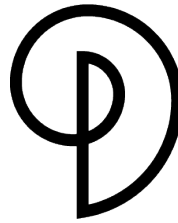
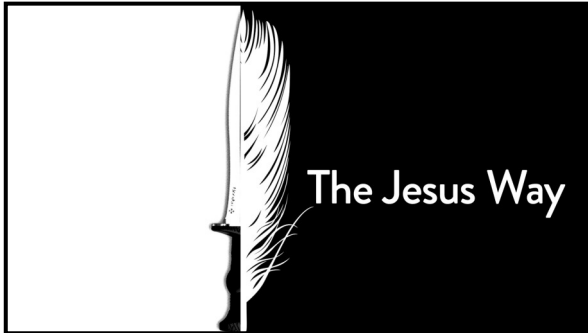


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



PRINCE
OF PEACE
Called to Connect



The Jesus Way | Gather

June 22 & 23, 2024

The writer of Ephesians stresses that it is God's pleasure through Christ to gather all things in the universe together by redeeming, reclaiming, and reconciling. In doing so, God bestows lavish forgiveness and grace. How do we live with gifts like these?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: EPHESIANS 1:1-10

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

There is a letter in the bible titled Ephesians. This letter spends a lot of time encouraging the church to remember who it is, where its identity comes from, and God's overall purpose for all of creation. It describes a beautiful vision of God, who is well pleased by the redemption of all things.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ***We all have stories of the effects of neglect, accidents, mistakes or just basic wear and tear in our lives. And in each of those stories we pray and hope for a way back – redemption.*** Share one of your stories. Has your story been redeemed? If so, share about that. If not, what would redemption look like? Take time as a group to pray together for the redemption of stories still hoping for restoration.
- ***Sometimes it is not up to us to redeem our own story. Sometimes – and maybe often – God uses others to redeem our story. And maybe that is even more powerful.*** Has God ever worked through somebody in your life to restore you to a place of hope and wholeness? Has God ever worked through YOU to redeem somebody else's story? Share about those powerful experiences.
- ***In reading the rest of this love letter to the Ephesians, we hear time and time again images of the church as the body and Christ as the head. And the body goes wherever the head goes.*** Read Matthew 25:35-40. What do these verses tell us about where the church needs to go if it wants to stay connected to Christ? Read Luke 10:29-37. What is Jesus telling us through this parable? What other stories about or teachings of Jesus reveal God's gathering vision?

CHALLENGE: *God is calling us - gathering us up into Christ - for the specific purpose of entering into other people's stories. As a member of the body – in step with Christ the head - pray for opportunities to be a conduit of God's redemptive and reconciling vision in the world around you.*