



WELCOME TO GROW GROUPS AT PLATTE WOODS!

You have made a courageous decision to dive deeper into your faith and GROW closer to God. These materials are designed to help guide you either for personal devotion or, ideally, in conversation with others. It is our hope that you can invite friends, family, or neighbors so that you can GROW together!

These materials were created to be adapted and shared. What does that mean? They should be used to fit your personal needs and the needs of the group. This isn't a task to be completed; rather, this is a guide to bring additional insight into your life. It's another voice to encourage you as you learn and grow as a follower of Jesus.

This journey, and these resources, are not meant to be kept private. In fact, we want you to share them with others! Matthew 5:16 tells us to "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." With you, we believe that sharing these resources will reach people we never dreamed of reaching. We hope that everyone would know the comfort of community and the fullness of God's love!

– The Pastors at Platte Woods Church

TIPS FOR YOUR GROW GROUP

As a host, you want everyone to have the best possible experience in a Grow Group and we realize when people get together it can be a bit messy. Everyone has different experiences, backgrounds, and understandings of God and the world around us. Here are some helpful tips for your group!

1. **Check in with each other.** Make time each session to check in as a group. Lead this by sharing "highs" and "lows", using a scale of 1 to 10, or another fun method. It is suggested to do this before your group dives into the material.
2. **Pray for one another.** The group that prays together grows together! Prayer opens our hearts and expands our world. When we pray, we increase our compassion and empathy for one another; groups will have disagreements along the way and prayer helps us overcome those barriers.
3. **Be concise.** Healthy groups create space for one another. One of the best things you can do is listen. Make sure not to overshare which may cause others to feel they don't belong.
4. **Communicate regularly.** A simple message of, "I hope you have a great week!" goes a long way. Think about how your group would like to communicate. You can use a group text messaging app, email, or create a Facebook group. Regular communication has a big impact.
5. **Meet regularly.** Our recommendation is to meet weekly or bi-weekly. Don't worry if your group needs to take a break. Schedule it in and come back when the group is ready!
6. **Share your needs.** The pastors and staff at Platte Woods Church are here to serve you. If there are questions that need further exploration or a major need comes up, we want to know about it!

Week 1 – Curious Jesus
What is it that you want?

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OPENER

See how long you can go with questions back and forth without answering. Share together how that exercise felt!

FOCUS TEXT – Mark 10:36; 51 (CEB)

³⁶“What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

⁵¹Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

- Mark 10:35-52
- Matthew 20:20-28

GROUP DISCUSSION

- What is your relationship with questions? Do you ask many or few? Do you know why?
- Has somebody ever answered for you, only to be incorrect? What was that like?
- Has an answer from another person ever surprised you?

TAKEAWAY

Jesus knew the value of questions as more than just a way to gather information. Where in your life do you need to be more curious? Who do you need to ask more questions to? The more questions we ask, the more we discover. The more questions we ask, the more we empower others to answer.

PRAYER

Holy Spirit, what is it that you want? I long to be more like you. Guide my eyes and direct my attention to be more curious like Jesus. Teach me your inquisitive nature. Help me to be slower to make assumptions and quicker to ask others for understanding. Thank you for empowering me to give my own answers, help me to empower others with questions. Amen.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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**Week 2 – Curious Jesus
Do you love me?**

OPENER

We've all been asked countless icebreaker questions. What is your favorite to ask? What is your favorite to answer?

FOCUS TEXT – John 21:15 (CEB)

¹⁵When they finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

- John 21

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Have you ever asked a question to which you already knew the answer? Why did you still choose to ask?
- How many times do you think Jesus would ask you, “Do you love me?” Is there a different question you think that he would ask you instead?
- Imagine: What do you think is the first question that Jesus will ask you when you meet?

TAKEAWAY

Jesus loves Peter. Here, on this beach, Jesus uses his questions to restore a relationship that he greatly valued, offering grace to Peter and affirming the connection that they have. Where do you need to ask questions to restore relationship like Jesus? Where do you need to use your words to affirm relationship with others like Peter?

PRAYER

Spirit of Restoration, you call us into relationship. You invite us into relationship with you and you have given us a spirit to be in relationship with one another. Give me courage to ask loving questions to restore when I cannot sense the heart of others. Give me strength to answer in love when others do not feel my heart. I love you, Lord. Embolden me to express my love boundlessly to you and all your beautiful children. Amen.

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Week 3 – Curious Jesus
Why are you thinking about *these things*?

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OPENER

Have someone share a mundane story, perhaps about their day. As a group, ask all kinds of questions! See what you could discover about the setting, seemingly unimportant details, or motives. Here’s the catch: the storyteller cannot answer the questions!

FOCUS TEXT – Luke 5:22 (CEB)

²²Jesus recognized what they were discussing and responded, “Why do you fill your minds with these questions?”

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

- Luke 5:17-26

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Have a volunteer from your group read Luke 5:17-20. Listen closely, picturing the scene in front of you. What questions would you ask?
- If you could ask Jesus one question, what would that be? What might that reveal about you?

TAKEAWAY

The questions that we ask can be revealing of the things that we are thinking about or are focused on. Consider keeping a journal or a note in your phone this week of the questions that you ask. Take some time to reflect on where these questions might be coming from. What could these reveal about your priorities? Your values? Your insecurities? Your stressors? Your favorite things?

PRAYER

Giver of Wisdom, you know my heart. You know what consumes my thoughts, my insecurities, and my values more than even I do. I want to ask better questions. I want to seek out and focus on the things that matter most to you. Set my eyes and my curiosities after your heart, Lord. Amen.



Week 4 – Curious Jesus
Do you not perceive? Do you not remember?

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OPENER

Can you think of any common questions in English that could be taken both figurative and literal? (ex: What’s up?)

FOCUS TEXT – Matthew 16:9a (CEB)

⁹Don’t you understand yet? Don’t you remember[?]

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

- Matthew 16:5-12
- Mark 8:14-21

GROUP DISCUSSION

- What keeps you from asking follow up or clarifying questions in a moment of potential misunderstanding?
- What produces yeast in your life?
- What practices are built into our tradition to help us remember? What ways can you personally practice remembrance? Work as a group to create a way to remember God’s goodness and faithfulness together.

TAKEAWAY

Sometimes our ability to understand or remember is clouded by our state of being, even in our hunger. Sometimes we move too fast to catch important nuances or valuable symbolism in conversations, in learning, and even in the Bible! Intentionally slow down this week, listen close, and ask intentional questions.

PRAYER

Everlasting God, you remember all. You understand all. Give me courage to seek deeper understanding and the depth of your call. Thank you for your provisions. Thank you for your patience with me. Thank you for sharing your curiosity and giving me an inquisitive nature. Amen.

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PRAYER REQUESTS

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Week 5 – Curious Jesus

Why are you afraid? Where is your faith?

OPENER

Did you ever watch the show Fear Factor? Would you be willing to face your biggest fears for a large cash prize?

FOCUS TEXT – Mark 4:40 (CEB)

⁴⁰Jesus asked them, "Why are you frightened? Don't you have faith yet?"

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

- Matthew 8:23-27
- Mark 4:35-41
- Luke 8: 22-25

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Share some of your fears, big and small. How do you face or overcome them?
- What tends to be your reaction when things get too far beyond control?
- How do you remind yourself of the love and promises of Jesus?

TAKEAWAY

The truth that Jesus offers us does not change in the middle of the storm. Yet, this type of doubt, doubt that someone cares about us, can end relationships. In this season you're in, in every season, Jesus cares about you. Ask the questions that you need to ask. Have faith that Jesus cares about you!

PRAYER

God of Grace, you are stronger than the most powerful storm, yet you offer me your gentle embrace. You are bigger than all my doubts and fears; you call me into a life of faith by your side. I long to let go of my fears and to be near you. Amen.

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PRAYER REQUESTS

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