

this changes **EVERYTHING**



WEEK OF 09/21/25

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

GENESIS 2, 3 & JOHN 3

Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently together as a group for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit into this week's small group devotional.

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Scriptures: Genesis 2:8-25, Genesis 3:3-13, John 3:11-21

Group Devotional

What's your favorite season of the year and what memory came up when you thought about that?

Read through Genesis 2:8-25 and Genesis 3:3-13

Often, we think of the story of Adam and Eve and imagine what they had—perhaps perpetual, beautiful Spring weather, with rewarding work and important responsibility. Adam and Eve had it all.

- What kind of "perks," listed in the 2 scriptures, did Adam and Eve have in the garden?
- Why do you think the forbidden fruit seemed more compelling than the perks in the garden?

Read John 3:11-21

In this part of John, Nicodemus, a pharisee and a ruler among the Jews, meets with Jesus for a discussion in the dark of night. We don't know Nicodemus's mindset but coming from pharisaical tradition, Nicodemus believed that being in the lineage of Abraham was enough to get him to heaven (Luke 3:8) and that strict adherence to the law was absolutely essential. (Matthew 23:1-35)

- What are the main concepts Jesus was trying to get across to Nicodemus? How did it differ from what Nicodemus had always believed?
- If you were Nicodemus with all of his history, how would you react to Jesus's words? Would you be confused, shocked, angry, frustrated, or perhaps another emotion?

The word “*euangelizo*” in the New Testament is used primarily by Luke to describe the act of telling people about Jesus. We can translate that “preaching,” but it’s more like telling an exciting story to someone. Luke 3:18, 4:18, 4:43 bring out this idea. David Martin-Lloyd Jones once said that the Gospel is “Good News, not good advice.” Or in the words of Tim Keller, “Advice is counsel about something to do that hasn’t happened yet, but you can do it. News is a report about something that *has* happened. Yet, you can’t do anything about it. It’s been done for you. All you can do is respond to it.”

- How would you describe the difference between good news and good advice?

In his book, *After Virtue*, Alasdair MacIntyre illustrates how stories are necessary if we are to assign meaning to anything. Your story is important because people can see the direct connection between the Good News and what it means to you.

- If you were to write down your story about the Good News, what event in your life would you start with?
- Where are you today? On fire about the Good News, tired and discouraged or maybe even wondering what’s all the fuss?

Pray Together

Father God, I come before you knowing that I should be excited but some days, I am not. Sometimes I should reach out, but I don’t always. Please create in me a clean heart so that people can hear Your story. Please renew the Joy in serving you and please give me stamina to finish strong. In Your Name, Amen.

Share Prayer Requests (10-15 minutes)