

Community Group Questions Guide

Ice Breaker (10min):

Help people to loosen up and share. Take one more week to go around and have people share their name, and what their plans are for the weekend.

Opening Prayer (5min):

- **Introduce time of prayer-** After the group welcomes one another, open in prayer. Let your group know what to expect during prayer time, something like: As we start our group time I will open with a word of prayer, there will be a minute or so of silent reflection and then I will read the scripture from Sunday and then close in prayer and we will enter into our discussion time.
 - **Open with a brief word of prayer-** God we thank you for this time together, we open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us, allow us to hear your voice and experience your spirit at work. Come Holy Spirit.
 - **Sit before the Lord in silent prayerful reflection for 1-2 minutes**
 - **Read the scripture listed below aloud for the group to reflect on.**
 - **Close in a word of prayer:** God thank you for your word, come holy spirit and allow us to understand what it means for our lives, lead us in our time of discussion together. In Christ's name, amen.

Main Scriptures from Sunday:

Romans 9:1-5 (NIV) *"I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit— 2 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, 4 the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. 5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen."*

Romans 10:1-15 (NIV) *"Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3 Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. 5 Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: "The person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? **"The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,"** that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, **"Everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone*

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preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Read this message overview to the group: (5min)

Hopefully you had a chance to hear the message from Sunday. In it Pastor Tim Coburn talked about "the beauty of the Gospel" as a part of our Good News for All People teaching series from Romans.

In this message there were three points taken from the text in Romans 9 & 10:

1. Feeling the Loss and the passionate pursuit of reconciliation. Romans 9:1-5
2. The beauty of a "faith in Christ, righteousness". Romans 10:1-13
3. The beautiful feet of those bringing good news. Romans 10:14-15

Work though these discussion questions together (30min):

- Is there one of these three points that stuck out to you the most? If so, share which one.

Read aloud for the group: *For Paul, his feelings of loss and his passionate pursuit of reconciliation (point 1) focussed on the Jews, his people, the majority of whom had rejected Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. They wanted the conquering, political king that would overthrow Rome and re-establish the power, resources and land back to the Jews. When the Messiah came as a suffering, servant king who would overthrow the power of death and hell for all people, not just the Jews, many rejected Jesus.*

- How might we and others be rejecting the suffering, servant king Jesus today? How might our expectations, theology and beliefs be confused with a cultural vision of faith, Jesus and the kingdom of God?
- In Romans 10:12-13 Paul clearly rejects the groupings the church in Rome was wanting to divide into. Instead he was teaching and encouraging unity around the essentials of the Gospel. What are some groupings you see in our cultural moment we like to divide into? What are some groupings in the church we tend to divide into? How might we more intentionality lean into unity around gospel essentials instead of cultural preference groupings?
- What does the word evangelism bring up for you? Do you have a positive, negative or neutral association with that term?
- Share as a group some of the past experiences with sharing your faith. How did it go? How did you do it? Are you still engaged in conversations, service opportunities and relationships where that is happening today?
- What might be some ways or approaches to consider for how to share your faith in a naturally, supernatural way in your family, at work and in the community?

Group Prayer (10min):

- Share personal prayer requests and spend some time praying for one another as a group. Ask someone to write down prayer requests and send them out to the group to

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pray for one another during the week. The hope is to get your group comfortable with sharing personal prayer needs and praying for one another regularly.