

### **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 12:1-2 NIV-** *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

**Romans 12:3-8 NIV-** *“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your[a] faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,[b] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”*

**Romans 12:9-21 NIV-** *“9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

*14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[c] Do not be conceited.*

*17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,”[d] says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty,*

*give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”[e] 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”*

**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 Counter Kingdom of Jesus” 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. The Counter Formation of being formed through true and proper worship (Rom 12:1-2)
2. The Counter Formation of humble service for the sake of others (Rom 12:3-8)
3. The Counter Kingdom of Love- Paul’s lesser known definition of love. (Rom 12:9-21)

**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:** The pattern of this world is nothing new, it is a circular one that works through every generation with seductive force. If we are not aware that there is a pattern of the world that is seeking to conform us, or press us into its mold then we will be conformed through its powerful influence without even knowing it. However there is a counter formation to the conforming pressure of the world. This is being transformed, made into a new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) We can either be conformed by external pressures of culture. Or we can be transformed by the internal presence of Christ.

- Which seems to be creating the most change in you recently?
- What are some ways you have sought to “renew your mind”? What has been most helpful to you? (We have a list of resources listed at [societychurch.com/bible](http://societychurch.com/bible) and [societychurch.com/rhythm](http://societychurch.com/rhythm))
- Do you know what the gifting and grace God has on your life? How could you discover that more deeply? (HINT- take some gift/strength assessments: Strengths Finder, Spiritual Gifts Assessment, Personality Assessment, ask a friend or co-worker)
- Do you know how to give that grace and gift away for the benefit of others? What does that look like in this season of your life?
- What part of Paul’s Practicum (Rom 12:9-21) seems most applicable and important to your life as you read through it?
- How might that word get lived out in your life and relationships this week?

**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 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.