



## Week 5 Small Group: The Power of a Fresh Start: I meet new People!

### OPENING PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for the people around us. You created us as people to be with people. While there are many people we will never meet, we trust you orchestrate the meetings we have for the sake of your Gospel. Lead us to see people as you do and leverage each interaction in some way to better share and show your Gospel, AMEN.

### BREAKING THE ICE:

All around us are people. Each has unique personalities, interests and stories. Some we don't know. Some we are very close to. Read the following blog post and

*Do you enjoy hanging out in crowds, or do you prefer to be alone? Maybe you like both depending on the day and your mood.*

*According to psychoanalyst Carl Jung, there are two extremes on the spectrum of personalities: extroverts and introverts.*

*Extroverts tend to feel at home in social situations. They tend to be outgoing and talkative. People often describe them as friendly and easygoing. If you're an extrovert, you tend to:*

- *be willing to take risks and try new things*
- *feel energized when interacting with others*
- *find it draining to be alone*
- *be enthusiastic about social events and gatherings*
- *speak up in crowds or group settings*
- *make friends easily*

*But contrary to stereotypes that extroverts are loud and overbearing, they still enjoy their alone time, too.*

*Similarly, introverts don't always want to be alone. Yes, they may prefer their solitude, but they also enjoy social interactions, too. If you're an introvert, you may:*

- *prefer intimate gatherings with a small group of close friends*
- *feel recharged after spending time alone*
- *avoid conflict when possible*
- *listen to and observe others closely*
- *consider all decisions carefully before acting*

Jung believed that most people fall somewhere in between these two extremes. If you have qualities of both an introvert and an extrovert, you may be an ambivert.

If you're an ambivert, you may:

- feel comfortable spending time in social situations and alone
  - be more cautious when trying new things and taking risks
  - adapt and problem solve easily
  - be either an introvert or extrovert depending on the situation<sup>1</sup>
- a. Discuss if you are an introvert, extrovert, or ambivert.
  - b. How does your self-diagnosis affect how you interact with people?
  - c. What energizes you about the people around you? What drains you?

### **WRESTLING WITH THE WORD: What can we learn about Jesus from his interactions with people?**

**Read** Mark 1:29-34

**29** As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. **30** Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. **31** So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. **32** That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. **33** The whole town gathered at the door, **34** and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

1. If you were Jesus and this was your day, how would you feel at the end of it?
2. Which of these interactions would have been most draining for you? Most energizing? Explain why.
3. What do you learn about Jesus and his heart and love for people?

**Read** the following "One another passages"

**Galatians 6:2** Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** ... encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

**1 John 4:11** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

**Ephesians 4:2** Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

4. The Bible has about 100 passages that speak of our interaction with one another. Above are four of those. Obviously our interactions with others are a real and regular part of our Christian life. Which of the above four do you find most challenging to practice consistently? Share why.
5. On the recipient side of these passages, one realizes the blessing of having people around us. Someone to carry your burdens with you; someone to encourage you, someone who loves you, and someone who is patient with you, and more. How have you been blessed by the people around you? What would you do if they weren't around?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://psychcentral.com/quizzes/introvert-vs-extrovert-test>

6. Perhaps this is a touchy subject, but CoVid drove many either away from church or to view church online.
  - a. If someone asked you why they needed to be part of a church when they can worship online, how would your respond?
  - b. Agree or Disagree: If you say you are a Christian, it is weird to not be part of a local church. Defend your position.

Read Exodus 20:8-11

• **“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

Read Psalm 23:1

• **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.**

7. Whether an introvert or extrovert, we know that interacting, caring, loving people takes effort and wears us down. Even Jesus in Mark 1:35 got up in the morning and found a quiet place to pray to his heavenly Father. Our 24/7 “go, go, go” society makes taking a break, resting with Jesus, or spending time in prayer challenging.
  - a. Why do you think God set up a pattern of rest for people?
  - b. What have you noticed about your interaction with people when you a) regularly take a rest physically and spiritually or b) when you fail to take physical and spiritual breaks.
8. What ways have you found to best take a break from people and spend time with your heavenly Father?

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Journal (or discussion) questions:

- a. Note the people God puts in your life. What are the blessings and challenges that come from these relationships?
- b. Spend 5 minutes a day in quiet prayer with your heavenly Father this week. Do you notice any difference in yourself? In your interactions with others?

#### **CLOSING PRAYER: (Invite all participants to share a prayer)**

Father, thank you for putting people around me that share your love with me and give me opportunity to share your love with them. Open my heart to the people around me to invest in them to impact their lives with the power of your love and the message of your grace. AMEN.