

Celebrate New Life

2/9/2020

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- As a leader you **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-5 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank the Lord for making the first move to find us when we are lost! Pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal to us where we are in our faith journey and consistently bring us closer and closer to Him.

Finally, thank our heavenly Father for making the ultimate first move by sending Jesus to come to this earth and die for our sins in order that we may be saved!

Discussion: (30 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Miguel Ramirez of our 3Crosses Español community led us into our *Celebrate New Life Sunday*. Pastor Miguel pointed us to the “trilogy” of parables in Luke 15 that describe the lost coin, the lost son, and the lost sheep. Pastor Miguel highlights the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:1-7 in order to highlight the feeling of being lost when you wander away from God. However, Pastor Miguel points out that our Good Shepherd is the one that takes the initiative to come find us, carry us on His shoulders, and celebrates the repentance of the lost sheep.

“In the parable of the lost sheep, it's the Good Shepherd that goes after the sheep, the sheep was not even thinking about where it was.” – Miguel Ramirez (Pastor of 3Crosses Español)

Suggested Questions

Check-In: Read *Luke 15:7* – This week at 3Crosses, we celebrated new life by witnessing physical new life through baby dedications and spiritual new life with baptisms and stories of repentance! Before you dive into the study guide, celebrate the ways in which God is actively renewing your life!

Study Tip: One of the key aspects of the gospel according to Luke is his emphasis on the message of Jesus being accepted by the outcasts. The Parables in Luke 15 illustrate how Jesus actively pursued the downtrodden and the lower echelon of society, a theme that is echoed throughout the Old Testament (Lev. 19:15; Deut. 10:18, 15:7-11). Interestingly enough, when the Israelites drifted away from the Lord, one of the most prominent characteristics of their broken society became the neglect of the outcasts (Is. 1:16-17, 10:1-3, Amos 5:11-12, Mal. 3:5). Specifically, the prophet Ezekiel longs for the day when the Good Shepherd will come and lead the Israelites out of their idolatry and back to the Lord (Ezk. 34). When you read about the parable of the lost sheep in the context of Luke, remember that the forgiveness of Jesus has been extended to anyone as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12).

- **Objective #1: Identify the lost feeling in your group's faith story.**

Primary Texts: Genesis 3:1-24, Luke 15:1-4 – Pastor Miguel begins his discussion by eliciting the human emotion of feeling lost. Miguel points to the story of Adam and Eve, the parable of the lost sheep, and his personal experiences of being lost as a Spanish speaking kid in America to point out that human beings in their sin nature are prone to wander from their safety in the Lord. In what ways do you relate with the lost sheep in this parable and tend to wander? Which of Adam and Eve's responses are familiar to you when you realize you are hiding or apart from God?

Supporting Texts: (Lost in sin) Romans 3:9-20; Ephesians 2:1-2; Colossians 2:13

- **Objective #2: Rejoice over God's saving grace in your story / hope for future deliverance.**

Primary Texts: John 10:1-30; Luke 15:4-6 – Pastor Miguel emphasizes the fact that when the sheep are lost, it is the Shepherd who takes the active role of finding the sheep until it is ultimately found. He then points to John 10 to proclaim that God is our good shepherd! As you think about your response about being lost in question #1, in what way has the Good Shepherd sought after you and found you in the past? How do you hope to see God do the same in the present or the future?

Supporting Texts: (God is with the lost) Joshua 1:1-9; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 19:10; John 14:26; Romans 5:8

- **Objective #3: Celebrate NEW LIFE through repentance!**

Primary Texts: Revelation 3:14-22, Luke 15:7, 10 – Pastor Miguel concludes by pointing out that whenever someone returns to the good shepherd and repents of their ways, there is a celebration in heaven over that one person! How can we pray that you repent today so that there will be a celebration in heaven after this meeting tonight?

Supporting Texts: (Repent) Joel 2:13, Luke 5:32, Acts 2:38

Closing Prayer: (5-15 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross for our sins and defeating sin in order to bring us back home to Him! Thank God for pursuing us while we were lost and sending the Holy Spirit to us so that He can remind us when we begin to wander. Finally, pray that the eyes of our hearts would be open to sharing the good news of Jesus to those who need the hope and power of new life that the gospel brings!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Further Reading and Exploration! *Read Ezekiel 34-37:* This specific section of scripture is vitally important to the idea of God being the Good Shepherd that Israel was waiting for. As you read this scripture along with the study guide, recognize that Ezekiel was written during the Babylonian Captivity of Judah and was awaiting someone who would lead Israel away from their rampant idolatry and back to YHWH.

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that they would learn how to reflect on their lives and celebrate that they are being sought after by the Good Shepherd!

- Our 8-Week Community Group Series will begin February 16th, 2020! If you have any questions, feel free to email AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org