

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

## **CONNECT Group study questions for March 12, 2017**

**Title: Concentric Circles of Concern—** John 3:16; Acts 1:8

**Review:** A mature disciple of Jesus Christ does four things consistently:

Loves God

Loves Others

Loves Ministry

Loves the Lost

### **Children:**

Witnesses tell what they have seen or experienced. How would you describe your experience of Jesus in just a few sentences?

What has God asked you to do with His power? (be His witness!)

What are some reasons that sharing about Jesus can be hard? How does it make you feel to know that God gives us His Holy Spirit to help us?

Think of people that God might want you to share your experience of Jesus with. Can you think of someone close to you (family or a close friend), a neighbor or classmate, someone in your town, and someone far away?

**Read:** John 3:16

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

**Read:** Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

**Question:** Pastor Peppy based his lesson on three foundational truths: 1) Jesus Christ was who he said he was, 2) Jesus Christ did what he said he would do, and 3) Heaven and hell are real and people can only go to heav-

en by turning from their sin and receiving Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Describe the struggles you may have had coming to grips with these basic truths. What obstacles did you overcome to believe who Jesus was and that he did what the Bible reveals to us he did? In your walk with the Lord and as you grow in spiritual maturity, what obstacles remain? **Facilitator:** Many struggle with faith and how it works both with and contrary to our human senses and life experiences. Others may question grace or the sovereignty of God in the believer's everyday life.

**Question:** Pastor Peppy asked us: "Do you believe that Jesus Christ can radically change and transform a person's life?" Most of us can probably answer, "Yes, he changed me."

What about the people you know who need changing? Are you trying to change them, or do you look to Jesus Christ to bring about radical change and transformation through the power of the Holy Spirit? How does that work? What do you do? What does God do?

**Read:** Acts 5:32

*And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."*

**Question:** Pastor Peppy taught us that to be an effective missionary witness, we must confess that we cannot do it without the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, why can't we just walk away from this missionary witness idea and leave it to the Holy Spirit to draw people to Jesus Christ? **Facilitator:** First, Jesus commands us (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18-20), and the Apostle Paul explains it in Romans 10:14-17—*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

**Question:** Pastor Peppy told us that an effective missionary operates with Holy Spirit power.

What evidence can we find in Scripture for this power? **Facilitator:** Every event in the book of Acts is evidence of the Holy Spirit working through Spirit-filled individuals to draw men and women to Jesus Christ, limited only by our ability to recognize it. The physical Bible you hold in your hands is evidence.

**Question:** Let's talk about your personal mission field—your family and those closest to you, your neighbors and co-workers, and people in Summerville and in the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester area.

Do you know people who fall into these categories? Who are they? Are there people you see regularly whom you don't know, but should get to know? Who are they? How can you reach them with your witness for Christ? What tools do we find in Scripture to facilitate such a conversation?

**Facilitator:** Ask a member in the group to find and read: Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 2:15; and 1 Peter 3:15.

Not all of us can go to "the end of the earth" to be missionary witnesses. But, now more than ever before, people from the end of the earth come to us. Discuss ways we can welcome them into our community of believers through faith in Christ. Should we ask ourselves: Are we so caught up in immigration issues that we might withhold our witness for fear of getting involved?

**Prayer:** Take time to pray specifically for the individuals and the concerns just expressed in your answers to the previous questions. Pray also for a boldness to present your witness, by faith knowing the Holy Spirit will use it effectively.