

Facilitator:

1. Open with prayer.
2. Welcome any newcomers.
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour at the most.

Facilitator: Encourage your members to **BRING THEIR BIBLES** and use them during Connect Group.

CONNECT Group study questions for Aug 8, 2018

Title: “The Way of Salvation”

Read Romans 10:5-10.

1. What do we affirm when we proclaim that Jesus is Lord? Take some time to consider where in your life Jesus is not Lord. Share that with the group if you feel comfortable. What are some practical steps we can take to be sure that we live according to what we proclaim?

Facilitator: To say, “Jesus is Lord,” implies several things: 1. It acknowledges Jesus’ unique position as God in human form. 2. It acknowledges Jesus as Savior. 3. It acknowledges that Jesus has the right and authority to be ruler in our lives. 4. It centers our belief on the fact that the Father raised Jesus from the dead.

Give your group a chance to share where we all commonly fall short of living as if Jesus is Lord. If they need help, help them think through the issue. What does it mean for Jesus to be Lord of my sex life? My marriage? My anger? My money? My mission? (Don’t miss the opportunity to talk to them about the fact that Jesus put them around the people that are in their lives, so they can share the gospel. That is what their Lord wants. That is their mission. Are they obeying?)

Also give your group ample time to discuss what it means to live under the lordship of Jesus. Focus on things like daily Scripture reading, prayer, church attendance, as well as gospel proclamation, sacrifice, generosity. Push them to be specific.

2. If someone asked you what it means to have faith, what would you say? Romans 10 is Paul’s description of biblical faith. What does he say faith requires?

Facilitator: This discussion could get very philosophical, and it is your job to keep your group grounded and on track. In Romans 10 Paul says that faith, believing in Jesus, requires three components: 1) Knowledge of Jesus (Rm 10:14-17 - you cannot believe in a Jesus you don’t know about); 2) A response to Jesus (Rm 10:9-10 - simply knowing about Jesus is not enough; you must receive him as Lord by faith); and 3) Jesus must be a sufficient savior (Rm 10:1-4 - no amount of believing in the wrong thing will save anyone).

Give your group plenty of time to discuss the meaning of faith and give examples, but keep pointing them back to Paul’s argument in Romans 10 by asking pointed questions: “Can you have faith in Jesus if you’ve never heard of him?” “Will believing in a false God, even if you believe a lot, do you any good?” “Is it enough to know about Jesus or is something else required for faith to be genuine?” Etc.

Read Romans 10:11.

3. Has there ever been a time when you regretted that you became a Christian? Has there ever been a time in which you were ashamed to be a Christian? Take a moment to think about the things people believe they have to give up to follow Christ. Has Christ ever disappointed you in those areas? Be as specific to your personal life as you like.

Facilitator: Give everyone who wants to share the time to share. Your job is to listen, give everyone a chance to be honest, and then to point your group to the goodness of Christ. In poverty Christ has given us the hope of eternal riches. In death Christ has given us the hope of eternal life. In suffering Christ has given us the hope of eternal bliss. In distress Christ has given us the hope of an eternal mission. As Paul says in Romans 8: “31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

Read Romans 10:12-13.

4. Verse 12 tells us that God doesn't play favorites. This can be incredibly encouraging to a person who has felt that they weren't good enough for God. Have you ever personally felt as if you weren't good enough? How does the biblical truth, "God doesn't play favorites," help free you of these thoughts? Can you think of other verses that could provide encouragement when you were feeling undeserving of God's love?

Facilitator: The goal of this discussion is to keep the focus on the love of God and how he loves all of us no matter what we have done. He does not play favorites. His love is for us all. This provides great comfort when we feel like we have done some terrible things and think God "can't love me". This, of course, is not to say that there aren't consequences or that we should just sin with the promise of grace. People who believe in Jesus don't live that way. Encourage your group to consider some verses that teach this promise.

5. In the previous question we examined the truth that God does not play favorites, and we applied it inward to our personal lives. Now consider how this truth works outwardly and how it flows nicely into the final point of the passage: Salvation is available to everyone. How do these two truths affect the way we treat those around us? What impact do they have on our mission to share the gospel? Is there someone in your life that you would like the group to pray for or help you minister to?

Facilitator: These truths go beyond that we should be kind to each other. We should also keep in mind that Christ died for them as well. Salvation is available to all, and each person we encounter is an eternal creature with an eternal future. Make a list of the people that your group lists for the last question. Be sure to pray specifically for these people and keep them on your list each week. Check in on those needs regularly (this is very important!).