

4 WEEKS



**IN GOD WE
TRUST**

Do you ever feel as though you truly want to trust God, but you find it difficult to do so, particularly in these uncertain times? This series is designed to help you build your trust in Him; to be able to trust in His goodness, His character and His nature, even when you can't see or feel Him.

TRUST GOD

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEEK 1

Can You Trust God?4

WEEK 2

The Good News No One is Reporting.....6

WEEK 3

Under the Influence.....8

WEEK 4

When Christians Get it Wrong 11

**Top 10 Tips for
Leading a Small Group 14
Group Agreement..... 15**

Can You Trust God?

WEEK 1

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

What was your biggest worry when you were a kid?

Big Idea:

No matter what comes your way, you can trust God.

Key Scriptures:

Luke 5:4-7

"When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink."

Luke 5:10-11

"...Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him."

Psalm 20:7

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God."

Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

Discussion:

1. Do you think a lot about what might happen in the future, or do you tend to stay in the present moment?
2. Read Luke 5:4-7 What was the result of the disciples obeying Jesus, even though they couldn't possibly see the benefit from doing what

He said?

3. Have you ever obeyed God, even though you didn't understand what He was doing? What was that like? What did you learn from that experience?
4. Read Luke 5:10-11. When Jesus called His disciples, he essentially asked them to leave everything behind and follow Him. What did they gain by doing so?
5. What is something you need to let go of so you can cling to God and His promises?
6. What might you possibly gain by doing so?
7. Read Psalm 20:7. What things, other than God, do you tend to trust in?
8. How might you put your trust more and more in Him?
9. Read Proverbs 3:5-6. God is in total control, and He will one day right every wrong and restore the whole earth. How might your life be different if you lived with that truth in mind?
10. How can you obey God and surrender what you can't control this week?

Wrapping It Up:

Father, thank You for being totally trustworthy. No matter how chaotic the world may

seem around us, You are always in control. Help us to trust in You at all times, knowing that one day You will make all wrongs right. In Jesus' name, amen.

Prayer Focus:

It's a New Year! Pray for God's work in and through our church as we continue to show our community we are FOR them, showing them His love, as we give, serve and love.

Memory Verse:

**“Trust in the
LORD with all your
heart and lean
not on your own
understanding;
in all your ways
acknowledge
him, and he
will make your
paths straight.”**

Proverbs 3:5-6

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

What's one good thing God has done in your life this week?

Big Idea:

In times of trouble, God overflows with His exceedingly abundant protection, provision, and strength.

Key Scriptures:

Psalm 46:1-10

*"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."*

Discussion:

Read Psalm 46:1-10 and discuss the following:

1. Do you like to be still, or would you rather always be on the move?
2. In what ways is the psalmist experiencing God?
3. When was the last time you experienced God as a refuge and hiding place?
4. What was that like?
5. What troubles are you facing right now?
6. How might the good news that no one's reporting right now- that God is our peace, comforter, provider, righteousness, strength, hope, and light- be an encouragement to you?
7. Which of those qualities means the most to you right now?
Why?
8. How would your life be different if you were still and took time to experience God more often?
9. How can you slow down and quiet your soul so you can better connect with God this week?

Wrapping It Up:

Father, thank You that, when the world seems loud, chaotic, and out of control, we can find

rest and refuge with You. Help us to slow down and trust that You alone are God, and You are in control of everything that's happening around us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for our Celebrate Recovery ministry; especially for those who need the peace and refuge that God provides.

Memory Verse:

**“Be still and
know that I
am God.”**

Psalm 46:10

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

What's your most controversial food opinion?

Big Idea:

We're all under the influence of something/someone. Why not live under the influence of God?

Key Scriptures:

Daniel 1:3-5,8, 11-20

"Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service... But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine... Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to

drink and gave them vegetables instead. To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom."

1 Peter 5:6

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."

Discussion:

Read the Daniel passages above and discuss the following:

1. On a scale of one to 10, with one being completely influenced by culture and 10 being completely influenced by God, where would you rank yourself? Why?
2. What is something in our culture that influences you

more than you'd like?

3. How did Daniel resolve to go against the culture in which he found himself?
4. What was the result?
5. Have you ever made a predetermined resolution in order to live under God? How did that resolution affect your life?
6. Read 1 Peter 5:6. Rather than being influenced by the culture, how can you humble yourself, flip the script, and be an influence to the culture around you this week?
7. Complete the following sentence: To live under God, I've decided to _____.
8. Spend time in prayer, asking God to show you a predetermined resolution you could make this week to submit to His influence.

Wrapping It Up:

Father, thank You for being a loving, trustworthy King. No matter how chaotic the world may seem around us, we can trust that You are in control and that You're working everything together for our good. Help us to influence the culture around us as Your ambassadors. In Jesus' name, amen.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for our groups launching next week, including Rooted and Starting Point. Pray that many will engage in the authentic biblical community that groups at Sunnybrook offer.

Memory Verse:

**“But Daniel
resolved
not to defile
himself with
the royal food
and wine...”**

Daniel 1:8

When Christians Get it Wrong

WEEK 4

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Where did you grow up? How would you describe the culture of your hometown?

Big Idea:

We faithfully represent Jesus in a post-Christian culture when we live with both grace and truth.

Key Scriptures:

John 1:1-5, 14

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Discussion:

1. How do you go about deciding what you believe is truth?
2. How did you come to think this way?
3. How have you seen people repelled by Christians who present truth without grace?
4. Read John 1:1-5, 14. This passage reflects the deity of Christ; His presence in the work of creation, and his nature and character. Discuss what this passage reveals about Him.
5. What do you think it means that Jesus is full of both grace and truth?
6. How do you see that demonstrated in His life here on earth?
7. Do you tend to extend more grace or proclaim more truth to others?

8. How about to yourself?
9. Share about a situation where you presented the truth without grace to someone. How do you think it made that person feel?
10. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Why do you think so many people fail to understand the truth that we are saved by grace alone?
11. Why do you think grace is something that we sometimes struggle to extend?
12. Identify a person or persons to whom you'd like to improve in extending grace. How could that play out this week?
13. Pray together as a group that you each would be able to reflect Jesus' character of being full of both grace and truth.

Wrapping It Up:

Reach out with grace to at least one person in your life who may feel judged, excluded, or hurt by your expressions of belief. Ask them how you can get better at showing them Jesus' love.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for our Street Medicine ministry as they extend God's

grace and physical care to those who need it most.

Memory Verse:

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:14

Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
 - Take time to prepare.
 - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
 - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
 - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
 - What is the purpose of our group?
 - What is the vision for our group?
 - What are your expectations?
 - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
 - What are some things we value as a group?
 - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?
Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
 - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
 - Encouraging and challenging one another
 - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
- Childcare _____
- When we will meet (day of week) _____
- Where we will meet (place) _____
- We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be _____
- Date of this agreement _____
- Date we will review this agreement again _____
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____



SUNNYBROOK
community church

5601 Sunnybrook Drive
Sioux City, Iowa 51106
www.sunnybrookchurch.org