



Week One

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for being with us and for us. Help us to be aware of your presence and what you are leading us towards. Amen.

Talk It Over

This week we kicked off our new series “re-engage”. The hope of this series is to help each of us gain direction for living our best life. This series is intended for anyone who simply wants to start this new year off highly focused on living well, for those who may have gotten off track a little, for people searching for more of God this year, and for those who are walking into this year desperate for something new. No matter what our life may look like, each of us is invited to re-engage.

- Between the New Year and the new series, take some time sharing about any hopes, goals, plans, changes, or commitments you have for 2018. Tell us what the desired outcome is and why this outcome matters to you.

Read 1 John 4:9-10 (NIV) and 1 John 4:19 (NIV)

The primary invitation and the starting point of this series is this: We can re-engage upward, inward and outward by understanding we are loved. While this idea may be hard for some people to wholeheartedly buy into, there is incredible power in each of us committing to understand that God loves us. God’s love for all people is not dependent on us doing anything to earn God’s love, but rather God’s love is about us freely saying ‘yes’ to his ever-changing, radical love.

- In what ways has being loved — by God or another person — impacted your life?
- Have you ever felt you lacked loved? What did that lack of love do to you?
- God has designed love to be the foundation of our relationship with him.
 - What are some alternative foundations a relationship can be built off of?
 - How do these other foundations compare to a foundation of love?

Read Mark 12:30 (NIV)

It’s not uncommon for us to believe that the key to us living well or us living connected to God starts with ensuring there is excellence and order in our outward life (e.g. think finances, health, family, relationships, etc.) or inward life (e.g. think our emotional wellbeing; how we respond when feel stressed, tempted, or disappointed, etc.). But the invitation Jesus lays out to us is that living well flows best when we start with engaging upward with God. Its from that place, from our unconditional connection with God, that we then can best walk out the outward and inward aspects to life.

- How difficult or easy is it for you to sincerely buy into the idea that God deeply loves you and desires to be connected to you regardless of your outward life or inward life? Feel free to share a little about how your answer has evolved through the seasons.

(Content continued on the next page.)

- Give a specific example of a time you focused on connecting with God despite your outward or inward life not going well.
- Share about a specific time you had a hard time connecting with God because you felt you needed to get your outward or inward life in order first.

Read Psalm 96:1-4 (NIV) and 1 John 5 (NLT)

One way we can re-engage upward is by expressing our love to God through worship. We can worship by singing songs to God, like we see David do in the Psalm listed above, and we can worship God by the way we live.

- What are some of your favorite ways to worship? Your answer to this may be creative and off beat. There is no one right answer here.

Read Hebrews 12:28 (NIV)

The Bible teaches us that God desires to be our primary focus and the driving force of all that we do. His love is meant to capture our hearts, attention, and life. When we re-engage with God or engage with God for the first time the invitation is to build our lives on the firm foundation of God's love.

As a group, take three minutes to silently reflect on these questions. Start your time by letting God know your desires to say 'yes' his love.

- In what ways do you want to grow in your capacity to know God's love? Be specific.
- In what ways can you get better at engaging with God's love?

If you are comfortable, share whatever you'd like about your silent moments with God.

Closing Prayer

God, thank you for loving us. Help us to say 'yes' to your love in all areas of our life. We want to build your whole life on the firm foundation of your love. Amen.

How To Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group connect in friendship and grow faith.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith for your specific group.

Spend some time praying about your group, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance regarding your specific group.