

UNDER CONSTRUCTION: DISCUSSION GUIDE 2

ABOUT THIS SERIES

As St. Mark enters into our first phase of construction, it's a chance to consider how it's a fitting metaphor for what God is doing in your life. Conversion happens in a moment, but becoming like Jesus is a process. In our series *Under Construction*, you'll learn how discipleship, like construction, requires a plan, demolition, setbacks, and consistency. But in the middle of all the dust and debris, God is building something beautiful!

ITEMS NEEDED

☐ Bibles

CHECKLIST BEFORE YOUR GROUP ARRIVES

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pray for your group | <input type="checkbox"/> Read through the Discussion Guide | <input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean meeting area | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Crack front door |

OPENING (5 MIN)

After a general welcome, say: Okay friends, to get our heads wrapped around today's discussion let's start with an icebreaker—

QUICK ANSWER—WHICH SETBACK IS A BIGGER PET PEEVE FOR YOU—SHIPMENT DELAYS, FLIGHT DELAYS, OR TRAFFIC DELAYS?

ONE MORE QUESTION—WHEN I SAY THE WORD “CONSISTENCY”, WHAT COMPANY COMES TO MIND?

After a brief discussion, say: We can all agree setbacks are a bad thing and consistency is a good thing. Both of those ideas—setbacks and consistency—are a part of every construction project. As we wrap up our series called *Under Construction* looking at the process of becoming like Christ, we're going to see how principles of setbacks and consistency can help us become better disciples.

OPENING PRAYER (1 MIN)

But first, let's pray.

Host, lead the group in prayer.

SETBACKS (10-15 MIN)

After a prayer, say: When it comes to setbacks in discipleship, there's a specific term the Bible uses.

CAN SOMEONE READ ROMANS 7:15-20 FOR US? (WARNING, IT'S A TONGUE-TWISTER!)

After a discussion, say: The Apostle Paul here says when we stumble in our efforts to be Christ-like, it's not just a mistake. It's sin. Sin in us, and sin in what we do.

HOW DOES THE IDEA OF SIN CHANGE THE WAY YOU RESPOND TO THE TIMES YOU FAIL TO BE CHRIST-LIKE?

After a discussion, say: In this reading, Paul talks about the sin we “keep on doing”. Another word we would use for this is “habits”, the thing we keep on doing again and again. On Sunday, we talked about how we can increase the friction for bad habits and reduce the friction for good habits. For instance, raise the friction to eating Oreo cookies by putting them inconveniently in the basement. We’re only limited by our creativity!

IN GENERAL, IS THERE A BAD HABIT YOU’RE TRYING TO STOP (IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE A SIN) OR A GOOD HABIT YOU’RE TRYING TO START?**NOW, LET’S BRAINSTORM FOR EACH OTHER—HOW CAN WE RAISE THE FRICTION OR LOWER THE FRICTION TO MAKE THESE SPECIFIC HABITS MORE LIKELY?****HOW DOES THE IDEA OF FRICTION CHANGE THE WAY YOU TRY TO BE CHRISTLIKE AND THE WAY YOU RESPOND TO THE TIMES YOU FAIL TO BE CHRISTLIKE?****CONSISTENCY (10-15 MIN)**

After a discussion, say: In week 4 of our series, we continued the conversation on habits by talking about becoming more consistent in our habits and in our Christ-likeness. We’re more likely to be consistent when we 1) make it small, 2) make it convenient, and 3) measure consistency instead of results.

GOING BACK TO THE HABITS WE’RE TRYING TO START, LET’S BRAINSTORM AGAIN—HOW CAN WE MAKE IT SMALL, CONVENIENT, OR MEASURE CONSISTENCY?

After a discussion, say: Week 4 concluded with a conversation that the Bible most-often describes consistency in being Christ-like with the word *faithfulness*, and that faithfulness is a term of relationship; we’ve promised to do what the Lord has asked of us.

God has asked us to take on a habit of receiving: daily Scripture and weekly worship. And God has asked us to take on a habit of giving: daily prayer and weekly tithing. To help with this, we passed out a “Faithfulness Tracker” to see how well we do with these items.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DID THE FAITHFULNESS TRACKER, HOW DID YOU DO? WHAT DID IT REVEAL?**IF YOU COULD PICK ONE FAITHFULNESS HABIT TO GET BETTER AT DOING CONSISTENTLY, (SCRIPTURE, WORSHIP, PRAYER, GIVING) WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK WOULD BENEFIT YOUR FAITH THE MOST?****HIS FAITHFULNESS (5 MIN)**

After a discussion, say: Any conversation on faithfulness needs to end with a look at God’s faithfulness. The Law is what we do, the Gospel is what God does.

CAN I GET SOME VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES?

1 COR. 1:9**2 TIMOTHY 2:13****PSALM 145:13****LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23**

After the readings, ask:

HOW DOES GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU ATTEMPT TO BE FAITHFUL LIKE CHRIST?

After a discussion, say: May our efforts to be like Christ be ever in response to his great faithfulness to us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (1 MIN)

Before we end today, one quick announcement—

HAPPY THANKS GIVEAWAY

Small Groups are being given the first chance to sign up to help with our Happy Thanks Giveaway to help put 100 turkeys and meals on the table of Battle Creek families in need. If you go to the Hub on our website (www.stmark.net) you'll find a link to the Sign Up Genius form.

It's the morning of Saturday, November 22nd and it'd be a lot of fun if our Small Group could serve together! There are two shifts and different roles—from 7:30 AM to 10:00 AM or another shift from 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM.`

CLOSING PRAYER (5 – 7 MIN)

We'll pray about becoming like Christ but, before we do—

ARE THERE ANY OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS TODAY?

Host, after taking prayer requests. Then, close the group in prayer.