

WEEK 5: I AM MARKED... TO LOVE MY LIFE

SET IT UP

We all want to be known for something... whether it's for being successful, influential, or something else we deem impressive. We spend a lot of time and energy projecting an image of ourselves that we think could gain us acceptance from others. But this isn't who we really are, and if we aren't careful, we'll end up going through life without being truly known by anyone. That carries a high price, one that robs us of ever attaining true acceptance and prevents us from loving life.

CONNECT

1. Finish up with the last few who haven't shared yet about who they are and what their spiritual journey has looked like so far... (Continuing group option: Share where God has been "growing you" lately.)
2. What's something you did to fit in with a certain crowd or group while you were growing up?

GROUNDED IN THE WORD

This week we are looking at a number of Bible passages that we'll read throughout the discussion time. Go ahead and watch the final session of our study DVD now.

VIDEO NOTES

TALK IT OVER

3. What would you want to be known for or what kind of legacy would you want to leave for the generation that follows?
4. What qualities or character traits make someone a safe person to be yourself with?

5. Do you find yourself practicing “image management” sometimes? What form does that take?

TAKE IT DEEPER

Let's check out James 5:16:

¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

James 5:16 NIV

6. Do you let anyone know about your struggles? Is there anyone you would say truly knows you and can accurately pray for you?

7. If so, how has that impacted your life and your walk with Christ? If not, what do you think prevents that type of relationship from happening for you?

Galatians 6:1-2 says

¹Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself or you too may be tempted. ²Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:1-2 NIV

8. According to these verses, what is our responsibility to one another when it comes to dealing with our faults, sins or shortcomings (especially the ones we try to hide)?

9. The first verse encourages us to restore gently... What would it look like to be gentle with each other's shortcomings?

10. How can we carry each other's burdens remembering that we were never designed to carry them alone?

11. Read Romans 14:1 and Romans 15:7:

¹Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

Romans 14:1 NIV

⁷Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:7 NIV

How can we do a better job of accepting people where they are while still helping them grow into who God wants them to be?

12. Read Hebrews 10:14-25:

²⁴Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another— and all the more as we see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

Have there been any ways this group has encouraged you or “spurred you on toward love and good deeds” over the last five weeks? How can we continue to encourage each other?

DECIDE WHAT’S NEXT FOR THIS GROUP!

This does not have to be the end of your small group! If you want to continue there are lots of options - as a group decide what is in your future:

Continue Meeting Together

There are LOTS of great materials available to choose from and the Small Groups Staff can help! We will continue to have sermon based studies available, bible studies, and lots of topical small group materials as well. Contact the Small Groups office via e-mail at smallgroups@eastlakechurch.com or by phone during office hours at 619/421-4100.

Explore the Idea of Changing Hosts

Let someone else step forward and open his or her home for the next series so the joy of serving can be shared!

ACTION ITEM

SMALL GROUP COMMUNION

As a special part of this small group series you can celebrate communion together. You can play the DVD communion session on the Series disc and let it lead you through the process, or do it on your own.

Group Led Communion:

Read the following words of Jesus from the Last Supper:

...The Lord Jesus on the night He was betrayed took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’” In the same way, after supper, He took the cup, saying, “this cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 NIV

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

1 Corinthians 11:26 NIV

Distribute the elements and give people a moment of quiet personal prayer, then after a minute or so, receive the elements together. End in a closing prayer of thanks to God for what He has done for you and for the group.

PRAY

TAKE IT HOME

What if you could write your own eulogy or obituary today that would be read at your life's end? What would you want it to say? Take some time and write down some ideas... AND formulate your plan today to make sure you live the life you hoped to have had!