



September 29, 2019

Connection Resource

A Sojourner's Guide

1 Peter 1:14-15

Connection Leader: The passages of Scripture below are provided to expand on the concepts presented in the Pastor's message on Sunday. I encourage you to read them and familiarize yourself with the content prior to class. There are many ways to use these passages during your group time. Here's a suggestion:



BLUE LETTER BIBLE

The Blue Letter Bible is an online resource that provides powerful tools for an in-depth study of the Bible. It can be accessed online at blueletterbible.org, or through a convenient App that is free on the App Store. With Blue Letter Bible, you can dig deep into the Word using the Lexicon (to examine words in the original language), Concordance (to examine other related verses), encyclopedias, commentaries, maps, and much more. (See the BLB handout for specific instructions).

There are four topics to discover and discuss with your group. It will be difficult to cover all of them thoroughly, so I encourage you to focus on the areas that appeal or apply to your group in particular. Take a cursory look at some passages while going deeper into other's. Allow the Holy Spirit to be your guide in this matter and follow where He leads. Encourage your group to use the *Bible Study Resource* to continue pursuing God during the week.

Be Holy – Do Not Conform to the World

1 Peter 1:14, Romans 12:2a, 2 Corinthians 5:17

God created us with a mind and a character that can be molded and shaped to conform to the pattern of another. We see it in the lives of children who are molded and shaped by the pattern of parents and teachers. We also see it in the lives of adults who are molded and shaped by the pattern of the world.

1. Briefly share one or two real-life examples of a child conforming to the pattern of a parent.
2. Briefly share one or two real-life examples of an adult conforming to the pattern of the world.

God warns us of the danger of conforming to the world and commands us to resist; but more than that, He empowers us to do so. At the moment of new birth, we became a new creation, empowered by the Holy Spirit to resist conformity to the world's standard. Discuss together how we can accomplish this task of resistance.

1. What worldly patterns do you struggle with most?
2. What are your practical strategies for resisting the world's pattern?

Be Holy – Be Conformed to the Image of Jesus

Romans 8:29

God gives each of us a mind and character that desires conformity, and then provides us a perfect pattern in the person of Jesus Christ. Discuss together how we can practically apply the following passages to conform to the pattern of Jesus:

1. Philippians 2:5-8 – How do you go about emptying yourself of the world, and how do you practically fill the resulting void?
2. Philippians 3:7-11 – What has God asked you to lay aside and count as loss for the sake of Christ? How has your obedience affected your relationship with the Lord?
3. Ephesians 4:11-16 – How are you engaging with the Church to become mature and fully equipped to serve God? How do you measure your progress toward maturity?

Be Holy – Be Transformed by the Work of God

Romans 12:2

Conformity to Jesus Christ requires a great deal of obedience on our part, but genuine holiness involves the hand of God at work in us. Holiness is a transformative work, a true partnership with the Lord that produces lasting change. Consider and discuss these verses:

1. 2 Corinthians 3:18 – How do you practically apply this figurative instruction to behold the glory of God? How are you beholding God as you read the Bible and pray, and how is He transforming you as you gaze on His glory?
2. Ephesians 4:22-24 – How does your old self continue to be corrupted by the world's influence, and why is it necessary to lay it aside? How are you being renewed in the spirit of your mind? For clarity, consider the definition of "renew" in Webster 1828. In what ways might you practically put on the "new self" on a daily basis?

A Sojourner's Instruction

1 Peter 1:14 VS Romans 8:29

Use the Blue Letter Bible to investigate the word "conform" as it is used in 1 Peter 1:14 and Romans 8:29.

1. Consider and discuss Strong's definition of these two very different words.
2. 1 Peter 1:14 – The world has a pattern, a transitory, changeable, unstable pattern that demands conformity but rarely pays off with real satisfaction. Discuss together how the world's pattern has changed over the past 20 years. How is the world pressuring you to conform? Briefly share two or three examples of the personal effort involved in conforming to the pattern of the world.
3. Romans 8:29 – God has a pattern, a consistent, enduring, unchanging pattern that produces profound and lasting satisfaction. Consider the character of Jesus, our perfect example. Have each person briefly consider an area in their life where they clearly see transformation and lasting change. How does conforming to God's design produce satisfaction? Have each person consider an area where God is convicting them of need change. Discuss how God can transform their conviction into a desire for change, and then move them to action in the area of obedience.