Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments, as you feel necessary, to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

The Growing Hostility – Nov. 22, 2026

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

3 Points

- **The Question**
- **The Response**
- **The Analogies**

The Question

- Look back at the three confrontations in Matthew 9 (vv. 2-8 with the scribes, vv. 10-13 with the Pharisees, and vv. 14-17 with John’s disciples). How do these interactions show growing tension toward Jesus?

- Why is it surprising that John’s disciples are the ones asking this question? What might they have been feeling or assuming as they watched Jesus feast with sinners while their own leader sat in prison?

- Fasting was only commanded once a year in the Old Testament (Day of Atonement), yet by Jesus’ day it had become a twice-weekly mark of religious seriousness. How does that background help us understand both the question and Jesus’ answer?

- What are some legalistic traditions in our culture that we may be blinded to?

The Response

- Jesus answers with a wedding image: “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?” How does this image (and John’s own words in John 3:29) reframe the whole discussion about fasting?

- Jesus adds, “The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.” What does this both promise and prepare His disciples (and us) for?

The Analogies

- In your own words, what is Jesus saying with the unshrunk cloth and the new wine in old wineskins? Why couldn’t His ministry simply be patched onto the existing religious system of His day?

- The sermon notes that Jesus both elevated God’s law to its proper place and deliberately broke man-made religious traditions. Where do you see both of those things happening in this passage (or in the surrounding chapters)?

- Where do we still feel the pressure today to fit the “new wine” of the gospel into old religious forms, expectations, or performance-based spirituality?

- Jesus’ presence brought joy and feasting for those who recognized Him as the Bridegroom. How can our small group (or our personal walk) better reflect the joy of being with the Bridegroom rather than a spirit of religious duty or comparison?

Announcements

Christmas Decorating

11/30 | 6pm | Worship Center

Please join us on Monday the 30th to decorate the Worship Center for Christmas! You don't need to be creative, just available. There's plenty for everyone to do. We would love for everyone to participate, even if you’re only able to come for a little while!

Pre-Annual Business Meeting

11/29 | 6pm | Worship Center

During our Sunday night service, we will have our “Pre-Annual Business Meeting.” Join us to hear from our leadership team about where our church is headed in the coming year!