

Our new mission statement is: *Building Bridges to Connect Everyone to the Dynamic Life in Christ*. But what does being connected and living that life look like and feel like? This spring we will be going through the Book of Mark to discover what it means to **live the Dynamic Life in Christ**. These discussion guides will follow along with the sermon series by using passages from the book of Mark.

These guides will be organized using the acronym HEAR as a way to teach people to read the Bible. HEAR stands for **H**ighlight the passage, **E**xplain the passage, **A**pply the passage, and **R**espond to the passage.

Each week, there will be a page to print off for each member of your group. The printed sheet will have the Bible passage you'll discuss and some questions in the margins to guide them in examining those verses.

Additionally, there will be a leader's guide that will give you helpful notes on the passage (i.e. background information and definitions) as well as discussion questions to lead your group. These don't need to be printed for each member of your group.

These guides are designed to be discussed BEFORE the sermon, so the group can discuss the passage before the pastor shares his insights. However, they can just as easily be used after the weekend message.

Our hope is these tools will (a) help your group members learn to study/read their Bibles outside of the group and (b) give you a helpful outline for facilitating the group discussion. If you have comments or questions about the discussion guides, we'd love to hear your constructive feedback. Send your feedback to us at groups@foresthill.org.

How to Use This Discussion Guide

- Print off the "Life Group Member Guide" for each member of your group – or email it to them in advance.
- Use the summary statement for each week to quickly understand the text's theme. You can use that as a reference point to help guide your discussion or bring it back if your group begins to get off topic.
- Use the prayer prompt at the end of each guide to help you close in prayer.

Additionally, here are some tips and guidelines to help you lead these discussions:

1. **Choose the questions that best fit your group and your time constraints.** There are a lot of questions in this guide and your group may not be able to discuss them all. That's okay! You don't have to ask all of them. Before your group begins, choose the questions that are most likely to help your group understand what God is saying in the text and how to apply it to their lives.
2. **Prepare for your group time by reading the passages and the notes in a study Bible.** A good study Bible can give you some insights into the passages and how they connect to the whole book or the whole story of the Bible.
3. **Begin every group meeting with prayer.** We can only understand and apply God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit. So, invite the Spirit to open your hearts and minds to what He says to His people.
4. **Keep the conversation focused on Scripture as much as possible.** Some people may want to bring in their opinions or continually refer to what the teaching pastor said during his message. This is helpful in small doses, but the goal of this discussion guide is to help you determine what God is saying in His Word. Encourage the group to continue to return to the Scripture. One way to do that is by saying, "That's a great insight! Where do you see that in the Scripture we're studying?"
5. **Encourage participation, but don't let anyone dominate.** Encourage everyone to share insights, ask questions, and read aloud. But don't allow any one person – even yourself, the leader – to monopolize the time. Some people are just unaware of themselves and how much they speak, so gently encourage them to listen and make space for others to talk.
6. **Help your group members to be specific in the application of Scripture.** It is easy to generalize when we talk about the Bible and how to apply it. So ask your group members specific questions – for example, "What part of the world do you sense God wants you to pray for? How will you do that? How will you make that a habit?"

We pray that you will hear God speak through Scripture and that His Spirit will move you to obey Him. The Word of God – the Bible – lets us know the God who loves us and saves us. May this discussion guide help you and your Life Group to become more immersed in His Word.

Date of Sermon: June 21

Topic of Sermon: The Last Supper

Main Passage: Mark 14:22-25

BEFORE your group meeting:

- Look up the main passage in a study Bible and read the study notes
- Print off or send the “Group Member Guide” (page 4) for your group members
- Review the “Group Member Guide” for yourself
- Have enough pens for each group member.

Topic of Life Group Meeting:

Icebreakers (optional)

- If it was your last night on earth where would you want to be? What would you want to do? Who would you want with you?

Leader’s Note: Introduce the next part of the group meeting. You can read this introduction or put it in your own words:

“Today, we’re going to spend a few minutes studying the focal passage on our own before we discuss it as a group. I’ve printed out a copy of the Bible passage for you. There are some questions in the margins to help you. Spend most of your time on the Highlight and Explain questions. Feel free to mark up, underline or highlight the passage. I’m going to give us about 5 minutes to do this. Let me begin by praying that God will open our minds and hearts to His Word.”

When you come back together, use the questions below to guide the discussion.

HIGHLIGHT the Passage

- What key ideas, words or phrases stood out to you from the passage today? What is the significance of those?
- Did this passage raise any questions for you?
- How would you summarize this passage in your own words? Would anyone else add or emphasize something to that summary?

EXPLAIN the Passage

- What is Passover and why is it important to the Jewish? (Consider Exodus 12:1-32)
- Read Mark 14:12-21 & 22-25. How do verses 12-21 relate to 22-25?
- What do you imagine Jesus and the disciples are thinking & feeling in this passage?
- Share in your own words what you think Jesus means when he says (v22) “take this is my body,” (Consider John 6:32-35; 6:47-51)
- Share in your own words what you think Jesus means when he says (v24) “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many?” (Consider John 6:52-59)
- How did some of the “disciples” respond to what Jesus was saying? (John 6:60-71)
- Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.
- How does Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 11 relate to the last Supper in Mark 14?
- What are some things these passages reveal about people?
- What are some things these passages reveal about God? His nature, His work, or His character?

APPLY the Passage

- What truth from this passage do you need to cling to? What makes that truth significant to you?
- By God’s power, what is God calling you to change in how you think, speak, or act?
- If you were at the Passover with Jesus and the disciples how might you have been impacted?
- How can you relate to the different ways the disciples responded to Jesus in John 6:60-71?
- How can what you’ve explored here impact your next experience with the Lord’s Supper/ Communion?

RESPOND to the Passage

- Finish your time by thanking Jesus that His love & obedience to the Father in the sacrifice of his “body” and “blood” for you was sufficient and complete. Consider listening to the worship song “How Deep The Father’s Love For Us”.

COMMENTARY NOTES ON THE MAIN PASSAGE

(Mark 14:23-24) he took a cup. “The communion wine corresponds to the covenant establishing, once and for all shed blood of Jesus as atonement **for many** (Mark 10:45; Isaiah 53:12; Jeremiah 31:31-34) (ESV Study Bible notes)

(Mark 14:25) that day when I drink it new. Jesus is confident that his impending death does not jeopardize his celebration (as exalted Lord of David; Ps. 110:1, 5) in the future **kingdom of God.** (ESV Study Bible notes)

(John 6:53) Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood cannot be intended literally, for no one ever did that. As Jesus has done frequently in this Gospel, he is speaking in terms of physical items in this world to teach about spiritual realities. Here, to “eat” Jesus’ flesh has the spiritual meaning of trusting or believing in him, especially in his death for the sins of mankind. Similarly, to “drink his blood” means to trust in his atoning death, which is represented by the shedding of his blood. Although Jesus is not speaking specifically about the Lord’s supper here, there is a parallel theme, because the receiving of eternal life through being united with “the Son of Man” is represented in the Lord’s Supper. (ESV Study Bible notes)

(1 Corinthians 11:27) Unworthy manner probably refers to the incompatibility of the Corinthians’ divisive arrogance as compared to the sacrificial, others-oriented nature of Jesus’ death. A broader application of this principle would encourage believers to examine their own lives (v.28) and to repent and ask forgiveness for any unconfessed sin before partaking in the Lord’s Supper. **Guilty concerning the body and blood.** Jesus’ body was broken and his blood shed for others. Thus the selfish behavior of the Corinthians is a sin against others, but it also represents a profaning disrespect for Jesus himself. (ESV Study Bible notes)

(1 Corinthians 11:29) Without discerning the body is usually understood in one of two ways. Some hold that it means “not understanding that the bread represents the body of Christ that was sacrificed for us,” with the result that such people do not act in a Christlike, self-sacrificial way. Others note that Paul does not mention the blood, and because of this they conclude that Paul has moved beyond the meaning of the bread to the idea of the church as a gathering of the Body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). According to the second view, “without discerning the body” would mean “not understanding that Christians, since they are the body of Christ, should act like Jesus when they assemble.” On either view these people do not recognize the spiritual reality of what is happening at the Lord’s Supper, and therefore they are acting in a way that dishonors Christ. **Eats and drinks judgement on himself** is a sober warning that the Lord will discipline those who dishonor the Lord’s Supper, and therefore it should not be entered into lightly. (ESV Study Bible Notes)

A word “often used of the Lord’s Supper (Communion) is *eucharist*. This term has been more common in Episcopal and Catholic circles than among Presbyterians. But it is utterly biblical. Its use in connection with the Lord’s Supper (Communion) goes back to the fact that on the night of His betrayal Jesus ‘took bread and, giving thanks (*eucharistesas*), broke it’ (1 Corinthians 11:24). The Supper becomes an occasion for saying, ‘Thank You, Lord, for Jesus. Thank You for the broken body, for the incarnation and for the death of Christ on the cross of Calvary.’ But it is important to widen the scope of the thanksgiving to embrace not only the unique gift of Christ, but all of God’s benefits. The bread symbolizes the daily bread God gives us and, within that, all those ways in which God supplies our needs.” (pg. 273-374; “A Faith to Live By”, Donald Macleod)

Life Group Member Guide

Focal Passage: Mark 14:22-25 (CSB)

Passage in Context: Mark 14:12-25 (CSB)



Bible-Reading Tip: As you read through the passage use your imagination to enter into this story and see, think and feel what Jesus and the disciples might have seen, thought and felt. Imagine you're watching a Youtube clip of this scene unfolding. Consider that this narrative isn't simply a story but it actually happened in real time.

²² As they were eating, he took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant,^[a] which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new^[a] in the kingdom of God."

HEAR Bible Reading Method

HIGHLIGHT the passage

- Underline any repeated words or key ideas you see.
- Note any questions you have about what you read.
- In 2-3 sentences, summarize what was said or what happened.

EXPLAIN the passage

- What was revealed about God? His character, desires, and/or actions?
- What was revealed about people? What we are/do or what we should be/do?

APPLY the passage

- From this reading, what truth do you need to embrace?
- By God's power, how will you THINK, SPEAK, or ACT differently based on what you read?

RESPOND to the passage

- Talk to God about what you've seen and learned in this passage.
- Ask Him to help you apply the truth to your life.