

one groups

Conversation Guide

THE FINAL WORDS
OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

Last
Words



BRENTVIEW

Est. 1962

SUGGESTED MEETING FLOW

Total Meeting Time: 1hr 45mins (*Times included below as an example*)

Time	Activity	Purpose
20 Mins 6pm - 6:20pm	Hang out, serve food, settle kids in [if relevant]	Enjoy time together!
5 Mins 6:20pm - 6:25pm	While still eating, gather together. Open with a brief welcome from the One Group Leader and spend time opening in prayer. <i>[If anyone is new, make sure everyone says their name, etc.]</i>	An important transition. Prayer and choosing an intentional posture to step into the “formal” part of the meeting is going to make the time meaningful.
10 Mins 6:25pm - 6:35pm	Question for conversation: What is something that takes up waaaayyy too much of your time?	This helps us to remember the value of having fun together!
35 Mins 6:35pm - 7:10pm	Sermon-Based Conversation <i>See Guide Below</i>	Each week we will explore core ideas from the previous sermon.
20 Mins 7:10pm - 7:30pm	The Prayer Practice of Examen (see guide) Pray together: Invite one or two people to pray over what was named in the discussion, for the group as a whole, and for the broader Brentview family.	This helps us set a tone for our group. We are stepping into brave spaces of authenticity together. Prayer is a key element to what makes a One Group more than a socializing event.
15 Mins 7:30pm - 7:45pm	Hang out, eat left over food and/or dessert. Make sure to help with clean-up!	Fun matters. Enjoy time together.



SERMON-BASED CONVERSATION & FORMATION

Last Words #1 - Forgive

Briefly Debrief the Spiritual Practice (5 mins)

Take a brief moment to allow people to share about their experiences with the previous week's practice. If you didn't engage, no reason to feel bad. This is an optional practice for those wanting something to incorporate into their devotional lives each week.

Review (5 mins)

Take a moment to remember the main ideas from the message. Use the notes as a refresher.

Main Idea: "The art of forgiving is more powerful than fighting."

- **Summary:** We are invited to place our care into the hands of a loving God. This enables us to be people who forgive, after the model of Jesus. And sometimes this also means that we will need to say "I'm sorry" when we have wronged someone in our lives (this Someone might even be God). Fighting back isn't the way of Jesus, choosing to forgive is—to name the wrong done against us but choosing to release the desire for retribution. God can fill us with grace and mercy so that we grow in our capacity to be people of forgiveness in all aspects of our lives.

Sub Points (The art of forgiveness is more powerful than fighting.)

- *Jesus shows us the art of refusing vengeance.*
 - *(Getting even isn't an option.)*
 - *See 1 Peter 2, below.*
- *Jesus shows us the art of refusing to let humiliation control our reactions.*
 - *(Pride isn't a reason to withhold forgiveness.)*
 - *See Luke 23, below.*

Application: Utilize two phrases in your everyday conflicts.

- **"I forgive you."**
 - Jesus modelled this directly in his words from the cross. We can become people of preemptive forgiveness and love.
- **"I'm sorry."**
 - This is implied by Jesus' words on the cross. We all need to say "I'm sorry" (repentance, turning from one direction to the other in your life or situation) to God and to those we hurt (see Ephesians 4:32 below on this point).

Read the Scriptures Together (10 mins)

Read each passage aloud as a group in a posture of prayer. Then, read them twice more. ***As you hear the passages, notice a word or phrase that makes an impact on you.***

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

(Ephesians 4:32, New International Version)

32 They also led two other criminals to be executed with Jesus. 33 When they arrived at the place called The Skull, they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing."

They drew lots as a way of dividing up his clothing. 35 The people were standing around watching, but the leaders sneered at him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save himself if he really is the Christ sent from God, the chosen one."

36 The soldiers also mocked him. They came up to him, offering him sour wine 37 and saying, "If you really are the king of the Jews, save yourself." 38 Above his head was a notice of the formal charge against him. It read "This is the king of the Jews."

(Luke 23:32-38, Common English Bible)

20[b] But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. 21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.... 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

(1 Peter 2:20b-21, 23, New International Version)

Conversation (15 mins)

(It's okay if you only make it through one or two of these questions. The point is that we want to have spiritual conversations that both challenge and invite us to follow Jesus, seek the Spirit, and experience the Father's compassion.)

#1 Invite a couple of people to share about a word, phrase, or idea that made an impact on them. What might God be inviting you to notice about your own life, in light of this?

#2 Talk about the phrase "I'm sorry." Have those words ever made a profound impact on your life? How might they apply or matter right now?

#3 Talk about the phrase "I forgive you." Are those words challenging for you at times? Why or why not? What added weight might the words "I forgive you" bring to a relational conflict that "I accept your apology" might not?

#4 What do you sense Jesus is inviting you to consider when it comes to our conversation so far? (In our prayer time, we will have a chance to listen to God even more.)

The Practice of Examen and Prayer (20 mins)

Take 5 mins of silence together. Reflect on the past several days and/or week.

- * Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you in the silence, as you reflect back on your week.
- * Offer gratitude to Jesus for whatever has brought you joy recently. Can you think of 3 things you are grateful for in this moment?
- * Review the past week. What has been “life-draining?” What has been “life-giving?”
- * Ask Jesus to help you see him at work in the highs and lows you encounter.

Helpful Things to Note:

- * *Life-giving: I sense that God has been at work in my family....*
- * *Life-draining: I have a friend at work who just lost her husband....)*
- * A solid group response when real needs arise: “How can we help?”

Dialogue

What is one thing Jesus is inviting you to notice based on our conversation today?
Is there a “life-draining” or “life-giving” area of your life that you’d like to share with the group?

Remember: “How can we help?” is a great question when appropriate.

Pray Together

Invite one or two people to pray over what was named in the discussion, for the group as a whole, and for the broader Brentview family.

TAKE-HOME FORMATION EXERCISE

Meditate on the following verse.
Read it slowly and prayerfully. Notice if God brings anything to mind.

But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.... When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

1 Peter 20b-21, 23
New International Version

Prompts for Reflection:

What phrase in the passage makes an immediate impact on you?
Meditate on this phrase with Jesus.

Jesus doesn't retaliate. Are you tempted to 'fight back' when someone wrongs you? Can you think of a recent situation?
Ask Jesus to show you what you need to notice.

Jesus trusted God the Father. This gave him the power to persevere and forgive. How might God invite you into a fresh posture of trust?
Invite Jesus to help you to trust God more so you can become more like him.

[Space for Journaling and/or Notes]

WHERE ARE WE IN THE CURRENT GROUPS RHYTHM?

- Summer Quarter: this is a season of rest for our groups.
- At the start of each quarter, we all gather at the church for a Groups Launch Party!
- Each quarter is about 11 weeks long
- Each Group meets once per week. While Wednesday is a great choice for a weekly Group, we know that some will choose to meet on other days.

WHAT HAPPENS WEEK-BY-WEEK (BIG PICTURE)?

- **WEEK 1:** Church-wide Groups Launch Party! (Wednesday night, 7pm)
- **WEEK 2:** First meeting as a group, likely in a home (but not limited to this). Review shared commitments which will be finalized in week 3. This includes, but isn't limited to, your group's involvement in the current FOR Calgary initiative.
- **WEEK 3:** Finalize Shared Commitments. (See Attached)
- **WEEKS 4-10:** Do life together! Meet weekly, utilizing the materials provided—for One Groups, this is sermon-based discussion, etc.
- **WEEK 11:** Reflect on the last 10 weeks. Engage in sermon-based conversation. Fill out One Group reflection sheets. Put the following Quarter on the calendar!
- **BETWEEN QUARTERS:** At Brentview, we highly value margin in the calendar. We create clear and predictable rhythms for our Groups so that they are highly accessible and deeply intentional. Also, more margin means that your group can “organically” create times for having fun together. How will you all continue to be in relationship during the gaps in Quarters? Meals, parties, outings, movies, kids play-dates, etc. are some ideas to start with! The December break, for instance, creates a great opportunity for Christmas parties, walking with a hot drink to look at lights, etc.