

# one groups

*Conversation Guide*

## I WITNESS

STORIES OF THE RISEN JESUS



# BRENTVIEW

*Est. 1962*

## SUGGESTED MEETING FLOW

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

Time	Activity	Purpose
<b>20 Mins</b> 6pm - 6:20pm	Hang out, serve food, settle kids in [if relevant]	Enjoy time together!
<b>5 Mins</b> 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.
<b>10 Mins</b> 6:25pm - 6:35pm	Question for conversation: What are you looking forward to most this summer? (Have fun!)	This helps us to remember the value of having fun together!
<b>35 Mins</b> 6:35pm - 7:10pm	Sermon-Based Conversation <i>See Guide Below</i>	Each week we will explore core ideas from the previous sermon.
<b>20 Mins</b> 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.
<b>15 Mins</b> 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

## I Witness #3 - Ascension

### 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:** "Jesus invites us to centre around his story."

- **Summary:** What story are you telling? Are you living a life that is consistent with the story you want to tell? Jesus is the most influential person in human history. He didn't walk alone but lived in perfect community with his Father and the Holy Spirit. He invites us to join his story, not simply to listen but to place it at the centre.

#### Sub Points (.)

- My connection to God's story changes my perspective.
  - ➔ Jesus' prayer in John 17 demonstrates his intimacy with his father. Jesus invites us into that space (John 17:20-21). When we are connected to God's story we see him as father versus master. We are sons and daughters versus servants. From a place of relational security my connection to God changes how I express love, how I pursue purity, how I serve, and how I handle the faults of others.
- Jesus sending the Holy Spirit is a step towards more fullness of God.
  - ➔ Jesus challenged his followers to take their lead from the Holy Spirit. He knew the Holy Spirit would bring power for God's people to recognize the work of Jesus and empower the church to proclaim the Kingdom of Jesus.
- Jesus calls us to be witnesses of his kingdom.
  - ➔ Jesus' followers were expecting an earthly kingdom. Jesus had something greater in mind. He was preparing them for a kingdom that will last forever. As the true King of Kings, Jesus challenges us to proclaim him as king and extend his invitation to everyone.
  - ➔ "God's kingdom is coming in and through the work of Jesus, not by taking people away from this world but by transforming things within this world, bringing the sphere of earth into the presence, and under the rule, of heaven itself." Tom Wright, Acts for Everyone
- **Application:** We are invited to walk in step with the Holy Spirit as we centre our story around Jesus.
  - ➔ Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where Jesus is actively working...in you...in your family...at school...at work. Take time to wait. Listen. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead.
  - ➔ When you are connected to God's story you can find comfort through times of rest and solitude versus compulsions, busyness, and hyper-religious activity.

## 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.***

20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **(John 17:20-21, NIV)**

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized

with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” **(Acts 1:1-11, NIV)**

## 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** Consider the kind of intimacy Jesus has with his Father. When do you feel closest to God?

**#3** The journey of moving from a servant of God to a child of God can take some time. In what areas do you find it easier to consider yourself a son or daughter versus a servant.

**#4** Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit speaking to you about the activity of Jesus? 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 passage. Read it slowly and prayerfully.

**1** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. **5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, [b] **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:1-12, NIV)

**22** "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. **23** This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. **24** But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. (Acts 2:22-24, NIV)

**42** They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47, NIV)

## **Prompts for Reflection:**

What phrase makes an immediate impact on you? Meditate on it with Jesus.

Are you comfortable talking with the Holy Spirit? Do you sense the Holy Spirit wanting to say anything to you?

What is God inviting you to notice about your life? Pray and journal about this.

[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.