

For the week of December 10-16, 2017

Based on Pastor Tucker's message from December 10

Emmanuel: God With Us

Best Way to Prepare for Your Group? Listen to the teaching and read the appropriate scripture. Please give emphasis to the latter. These notes are prepared on Fridays. Sometimes, the sermon gets modified right before service. So, allow for flexibility. Remember, your time together isn't meant to be a re-teaching of the most recent lesson. Instead, the discussion points and questions are designed to encourage group members to share insight and application of what they've learned from God's Word—and thereby grow closer to the Lord and each other.

[Format for the Evening]

WELCOME:

Get to know each other. Re-introduce yourselves if need be and welcome any newcomers. Invite those new to the group to share a little about their lives and Christian experience. Spend some time talking about real-life issues that may have come up during prayer or fellowship time the previous week. These Community Groups are more than Bible studies. They are designed to help believers form deep and lasting relationships.

KEY PASSAGE:

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." –Isaiah 7:14

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.'" –Matthew 1:23

THINK ABOUT THE TEACHING: "God With Us" reveals God's plan for us to be restored and fulfilled.

Jesus, our Emmanuel, fulfills the great longing we have, as image bearers of God, to be in union with Him. We were made to be with God—to dwell with him. The story of the Bible starts so beautifully, with man and God together in perfect harmony, until man separates himself from God. The reason we are separated from God is sin, so sin must be dealt with for Emmanuel to be a reality. God with us solves the separation problem between us and helps us achieve God's plan for our lives.

TALK ABOUT THE TEACHING:

1. Have you ever felt that God isn't with you? Why do you think you feel that way?
2. What did you learn about God from this message that helped you overcome those feelings of separation?
3. Have you ever felt as if you didn't want to be with God in good or bad times?
4. What did you learn about "God with us" this week that made you want to be with Him?
5. What is it about the way God designed humanity that makes it important for God to be with us?

THINK ABOUT THE TEACHING: Jesus is “God with Us” always and wherever, no matter what.

It’s easy to think about Jesus being with us when things are going well. However, God is with us forever, wherever, whenever—even in our hardships. And we cannot really see the victory in hardship unless we understand that He is walking through them with us, hand-in-hand, face-to-face. He is close to us. He possesses a deep intimate relationship with us. He sympathizes and empathizes and has great compassion for us.

When the Bible says the Son of Man has no place to lay His head, it means He is with us in our poverty. When He cries out to the Father, “is there any way to avoid betrayal and an excruciatingly painful death?” it means Jesus knows how to be with us in our greatest fear.

When Jesus hangs on the cross and cries out, “My God why have you forsaken me?”, the point is that He is with us in our greatest darkness.

When Jesus says leave all to follow me He is saying, to what extent will you be with Me? Are you with Me in poverty? Are you with Me in fear? Are you with Me beyond the comforts and blessings a easy and safe life have given you? Are you with Me in danger? Are you with Me in heartache?

Because I am with YOU in all those things. The relationship Jesus invites you to is one of unbreakable unity. It’s a mutual relationship that means we go to great lengths to be with each other at all costs, at all times, and in all circumstances. No fear, no death, no rejection, no betrayal will ever stop Him from being with you. To follow Him means *you* have such intense relationship with Him that no fear or rejection or betrayal will ever stop *you* from following Him either.

TALK ABOUT THE TEACHING:

1. How can the knowledge that Jesus is our Emmanuel help you minister to others this Christmas?
2. How does knowing Jesus is our Emmanuel help you see your own personal mission field?
3. How can the hazards of our increasingly impersonal world be resolved by knowing Jesus is “God with us”?
4. How does knowing Jesus is our Emmanuel change the way you interact with those around you?
5. What, if anything, stands in your way of a joyful Christmas this year? How can the knowledge of Jesus as Emmanuel resolve those issues?

TAKE TIME TO PRAY:

Please pray that God would show believers how to live with the awareness that Jesus is always with them, empowering them by the leading of the Holy Spirit so that their divinely inspired and life-changing love reveals God to the world around them. Pray that the lives of the family members at Calvary Boise glorify God and draw others into His Kingdom. Pray that we will be actively engaged in pursuing revival through lives of prayer.

TRANSITION TO REAL LIFE:

Before you head home take some time to talk about the week ahead, make note of any needs and prayer requests, and enjoy each other’s company. That’s what family does.

Note: Pastor Tucker welcomes your feedback. Please email him at tucker@calvaryboise.com with your insight.

WEEKLY PRAYER REQUESTS

“Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of the meeting to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim: and He spoke to him.” –Numbers 7:89

To keep in close touch with God in the secret chamber of His presence, is the great underlying purpose of prayer. To speak with God is a priceless privilege; but what shall be said of having and hearing Him speak with us! We can tell Him nothing He does not know; but He can tell us what no imagination has ever conceived, no research ever unveiled. The highest of all possible attainments is the knowledge of God, and this is the practical mode of His revelation of Himself. Even His holy word needs to be read in the light of the closet if it is to be understood. –A.T. Pierson

About the Author: Arthur Tappan Pierson was an American Presbyterian pastor who gained a following in England and Scotland for his fundamentalist writings. A consulting editor for the original *Scofield Reference Bible*, he was friends with C.I. Scofield, D.L. Moody and George Muller. His biography of Muller, *George Muller of Bristol* was among his 50 published books. He also preached over 13,000 sermons and was a pioneer in foreign missions. He lived from 1837 until 1911.

Our Community Life Group:

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Our International Missions: Awake Vancouver

As many of you know Becca Brown, who with her husband Marlon heads the outreach to Vancouver, was seriously injured by a hit-and-run driver several years ago. She was left with chronic nerve damage that causes incessant and severe headaches. Several operations have failed to correct the problem. She is a busy mom of five and very active in the ministry and prays that the Lord will heal her according to His plan and purpose. Right now she is in the States seeing doctors and preparing for another procedure. Please pray that it will be successful. Pray for her mom Patty who is heading to Medford, Oregon to be with Becca and for Marlon, the children, and the ministry that she leaves behind in Vancouver whenever she seeks treatment. Pray that the procedure would be successful and that this experience would add to a strong testimony of God's love, faithfulness and provision.

Prayer Requests for Calvary Christian School

“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” –Proverbs 22:6

Please pray for:

- Pray for the upcoming Christmas Programs to bring glory to Jesus' name. Pray for family members in attendance who don't know Jesus to be drawn in by His Spirit. Pray that they will have an understanding of Who God is and how deeply He loves them.
- Pray for our staff to be encouraged and built up in Him and to feel appreciated.
- Pray for staff and students to not let unkind words define them or rob them of His joy.
- Pray for principal Mindy Tiber to be led in His wisdom and love. Pray for her to be able to discern the root of people's concerns so she best knows how to respond and help them.
- Pray for God's love and grace to permeate this place. Pray that others would see His love in us and that they would know we are Christians by our love for one another.