

## GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Spring 2024 - Acts Sermon Series - "Witness"  
Monday, March 4 - Sunday, March 10 (Week 2)

**ICE BREAKER:** If you could have dinner with any fictional character, who would it be and why?

(OR [click here](#) for a helpful list of ideas for this time or create / do your own!)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. We hope you will join us at our Good Friday service on Friday, March 29 at 5:30 PM.
2. We invite you to join us at one of our two services on Easter Sunday, March 31, as we celebrate the resurrection of King Jesus! Our two services will be at 8:45 and 10:30 AM.
3. Join us on Saturday, March 23 from 10-11:30 AM for games, crafts, food, stories about the gospel and resurrection, and an easter egg hunt! This event is geared towards children 2 yrs old through 5th grade. Email [barbara.krieger@churchatbergen.org](mailto:barbara.krieger@churchatbergen.org) here to sign up!
4. Women's Prayer // Every Wednesday morning at 6:30 AM a group of women meet for prayer at the church! Reach out to covenant members Danielle Hoitsma ([daniellehoitsma@gmail.com](mailto:daniellehoitsma@gmail.com)) and Al Cimino ([alexandra.m.cimino@gmail.com](mailto:alexandra.m.cimino@gmail.com)) for more information.
5. Youth Group // Our youth group (6th-12th grade) meets every Wednesday night from 7-9 PM at church. Please reach out to Darryl Rosete ([students@churchatbergen.org](mailto:students@churchatbergen.org)) if you would like more information!
6. Sunday Prayer // Join us for prayer every Sunday morning from 9-9:30 AM. We meet in the classroom behind the Guest Services desk.
7. Men's Breakfast // Our Men's Breakfast meets the first Saturday of every month at 9 AM at the church. No sign-up required! Contact Mike Savino ([mjsavinos@gmail.com](mailto:mjsavinos@gmail.com)) for more information.

**(IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY) - EXPECTATIONS:** Please watch [THIS VIDEO](#) together as a group, followed up by your group's particular expectations (start & end time, food/no food, etc...)

**PRAYER FOR DISCUSSION:** Leader or Co-Leader prays for the discussion time. Pray that the The Holy Spirit would assist in the conversing, processing, and listening of the discussion.

**SERMON DISCUSSION TIME:** Have someone read the passage: Acts 20:17-38, and then read this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:

*The sermon by Pastor Mike focuses on Acts 20:17-38, revolving around the apostle Paul's final speech to the church elders in Ephesus. The sermon underlines three integral focal points for the health and future growth of the church, which include the church's mission to GO, GUARD, and GIVE. Within the church must GO section, Paul highlights evangelism and mission. He presses the importance of reaching out to those who are yet to embrace the word of God and the gospel, urging the church not to become self-centered. In the church must GUARD section, it's emphasized that the church should guard itself from internal and external crucial influences. Church leaders should pay keen attention to themselves and the flock, guiding and guarding the people with the Word of God and shielding them from false teachings. In the Church must GIVE section, Paul*



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*exhorts the elders in Ephesus to concentrate on stewardship and generosity. As the grace received through Jesus is liberating, Paul exhorts the elders to reciprocate with their own resources generously. This act of giving is in fact an act of worship to God, combating selfishness, and the love of money. Paul himself is taken as an example as he worked diligently to cater to other's needs and aid the weak. As the sermon concludes, Pastor Mike brings these three main points to us as Church at Bergen, emphasizing an outward and others-focused community which guards itself against harmful teachings and fosters a culture of generosity. He also emphasized the role of parents in securing future generations by leading a life of generosity and by looking for assistance in their areas of selfishness. The sermon is then brought home by reminding us of Christ's grace and sacrifice and how God's perfect generosity towards us should fuel our generosity with His Church and with others.*

**QUESTION #1:** Discuss the idea of generosity and giving in the context of the sermon. How does our attitude towards money impact our spiritual growth and the health of our church?

**QUESTION #2:** Reflect on the statement, *"Few things will choke out the blessing of God on a church and on your life than being selfish with your money."* What did/does this statement bring to your mind? What thoughts do you have after hearing that? What practical steps can we take to cultivate a generous heart and mindset?

**QUESTION #3:** Share your personal experiences of witnessing the effects of grace in your own life and/or in other's lives when generosity and giving are practiced. How has generosity impacted your relationship with God and with others?

**QUESTION #4:** Think about the statement, *"It is better to lose your life than to waste it."* How can we apply this principle in our daily lives as followers of Jesus? What sacrifices might we need to make in order to fully live out our faith?

**QUESTION #5:** Discuss the significance of the phrase, *"His wounds have paid my ransom."* How does understanding and accepting God's grace through Jesus Christ impact our perspective on giving and generosity?

**PRAY TOGETHER:** Spend time taking **and recording** prayer requests and then pray together as a group. (*You may want to consider sending out the prayer requests weekly to your group to keep everyone informed and in the loop on how to pray for one another throughout the week. This also makes it easier to check-in with people who have shared requests to see how the Lord has been working in their lives.*)



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