



CHURCH | AT | BERGEN

GROUP LEADER RESOURCES

Fall Semester 2026 (10/4 – 12/13)

WEEK ONE: October 4-11

The focus of the first 2-3 weeks should be **fellowship and growing in relationships**.

What this means...

- Take time to get to know each other.
- Spend less time discussing the sermon, unless your group is comfortable with each other.
- Leaders and co-leaders alternate sharing their brief testimony.
- Ending a little early so people can “just hangout.”

Potential structure for your first meeting:

The **first 15-20 minutes** should be “built in buffer time” for people to arrive, socialize, and get to know each other.

What this means...

- No one is “late” who shows up within this timeframe.
- Have food, drinks, and snacks. This helps people feel interact.
- Have light music playing in the background if possible.

The **next 20-30 minutes** should be lighthearted easy-going conversation to just get to know each other a little more intentionally.

What this means...

- Have a list of questions people can easily answer
- Consider printing out the questions so everyone can see the questions.
- **CREATIVE IDEA:** have couples answer questions for each other! Or have people “interview” each other, then introduce them to the group.
- Attached below is a list of questions.

The **next 20-30 minutes** spend time discussing the sermon. **There are two options:**

OPTION #1: LAST WEEK’S SERMON

Series: “Tear Off the Roof: Making Room for One More” (final sermon)

Title: “Jesus blesses the mess.” (Mark 2:1-12)

Summary: The purpose of the sermon series was to give us courage and faith to believe God can and will use us to help bring our “one” to Jesus. **Who’s your one?** Your one is someone who is close to you, but far from God. The point of **last week’s sermon** was to help you understand the **risks and rewards** of becoming a church that takes steps of faith to bring their one to Jesus.

There are three risks: 1) you risk disruption (e.g. the four men disrupted Jesus preaching to the crowd), 2) you risk disappointment (e.g. the four men didn't know how Jesus would respond), and 3) you risk dissension (e.g. the scribes criticized Jesus for forgiving the man's sins).

There are multiple rewards, but one main reward: 1) they witnessed a miracle, which they wouldn't have if they didn't take a risk, 2) they got to be a part of this man's testimony with Jesus, 3) they experienced God's faithfulness in answering their prayers... but the **biggest reward** is that they experienced **Jesus taking over the place and revealing his glory to them** ("they were all amazed and glorified God").

Quote from commentary: "*The removal of the roof may have showered disrespect as well as dirt on the guests below. Jesus is not offended by the roof removers, however, but encouraged.*"

*Taking risks for your one is messy,
but Jesus blesses the mess.
So, it's worth the risk.*

Questions For Discussion:

1. The sermon was about taking risks for your "one." Overall, do you see yourself as a risk-taker? Why or not? *This is a light and easy question that anyone can answer. But it is also meant to uncover some of the natural tendencies we all have when it comes to taking risks for Jesus. It is important for people to be self-aware. People who are natural risk-takers shouldn't be proud of their willingness to take risks for Jesus, because he gave them that tendency. On the other hand, people who are not risk-takers shouldn't be ashamed of their caution but need to understand where they can be challenged more in their faith.*
2. What are some of the ways that taking risks *for Jesus* might relate to having faith *in Jesus*? *This question gets a little more theological. The purpose is to get people to see that risk and faith are very much connected to each other. The most significant one for your group to see is that taking risks for Jesus requires faith in Jesus... **and** when we take the risk, it strengthens and deepens our confidence in Jesus. It's almost like a muscle that gets used and develops the more we use it. The more frequently we take risks specifically for Jesus, the more our faith is trained to take risks in the future.*
3. What do you sense might be a risk Jesus wants you to take for your one in the next couple of weeks? *The point of this question is not *just* to get people to think practically about what steps they can take, but even to help them share how Jesus has *already* been speaking to them over the past couple weeks. It's less about making them think of something to do that they haven't thought of yet, but to hear how God has *been moving* in them over the past couple weeks. **Encourage people to share any stories that have already happened!***
4. What do you think might happen if everyone in the church started taking risks like this? *The point of this question is to get them to see beyond themselves, and to start seeing how their small risk contributes to the larger mission of the church that they're a part of. They are helping Jesus do something far more than work in their own lives but potentially helping to bring something of a revival throughout the church. The possibilities are exciting!*

The last **15-20 minutes** should be focused on people sharing who their one is and then taking time to pray for God to use them. **If someone was not at church this past Sunday, you can give them an extra card and take some time to explain it. Just have people share who their one is or share how they have been processing this if they don't have a one. IMPORTANT: it is possible that people could be "turned off" by this series, because it makes other people feel like "projects." We are not treating people as projects; we are simply being intentional as a Christian friends. Friends love at all times. Love wants what is best for someone. There is nothing better for someone than Jesus. "Who's your one?" is a call to the church to be a good Christian friend to your non-Christian friends.**

The **last 15-20 minutes** should be unstructured hangout time. Let people leave early if they have to, or stay, chat, hangout, etc.

OPTION #2: NEXT WEEK'S SERMON

This is for people who would prefer not to "rehash" last week's sermon but look ahead at what is coming. The **advantage** to doing this is that it creates **active listeners** on Sunday. When you have considered and studied a passage before hearing it preached, you are much more thoughtful in how you listen and process the sermon. The **disadvantage** of doing this is that you don't give as much time for people to **process the sermon** after it has been preached. It is good for people to share with others what the word of God did for them.

Series: The Book of Romans (Season 6)

Title: "Dead to Sin, Alive to God" (Romans 6:5-14)

Summary: Paul is addressing an objection to the gospel in chapter six. The objection is that if people believe that are saved by grace, not by works, then that will make people think they can just keep on sinning because God's grace will cover it up. The big point he makes in chapter six is that true Christians have **died to sin but are now alive to God in Christ Jesus**. The tough part about this chapter is understanding what Paul means by this.

After you finish the **"getting to know you" questions**¹, introduce the passage by saying **something like**, "The main thing Paul is talking about in chapter 6 is an objection or a problem that some people have with the good news of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Some people think that because we are saved by grace and not by our good works, then that means we can keep on sinning because God will always forgive us and be gracious to us. But central to the gospel is that we have 'died with Christ and risen with Christ.' There is a new kind of spiritual attachment that we now have to Jesus and what he did for us in the cross and in his resurrection. The implications of this for our relationship with sin are powerful for us today. Can someone read the first four verses?"

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his

¹ Access these questions in the other guide for **previous sermon**.

death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

After someone reads this, you can say something like, “This was the passage that was preached a couple weeks ago at our baptism service. As you can see, Paul is adamant that Christians cannot keep living in sin. We cannot continue in sin, he says, in order that grace may abound. Instead, those who truly believe in Christ and were baptized in him are now defined by Jesus’ death and resurrection for them. This sets us up for this upcoming Sunday’s passage, which is Paul’s further explanation of what it means that we have died to sin and are alive to God in Christ.”

Have someone read Romans 6:5-14 out loud. After it is read, consider having people read it quietly for themselves 2-3 times. If you do this, you may want to play some light music in the background so it's not so quietly, which can be uncomfortable for some people.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

After it has been read and processed a couple times, you can ask the following question. Another option is to have people answer these questions in smaller groups before discussing them together as a larger group. You could have everyone answer these questions **before you meet as “homework” but that just needs to be communicated beforehand.**

1. What is the overall comparison that Paul seems to be making? **Generally, Paul is making a comparison between the death and resurrection of Christ with our death to sin and new life to God in Christ. This just gets people to see the big picture of the passage before diving into the details of the passage. You can see the blue and yellow highlighted parts of the verses to see the comparison that Paul makes.**
2. What are some of the key phrases or themes that stand out to you? Is there a repeated word or phrase is stated in different ways? **Death, sin, resurrection, raised, rise, live, life, freedom, enslavement. United with Christ, died Christ, raised with Christ. Dead to sin. Alive to God.**

3. What seems to be the purpose for our being spiritually united to Christ? Then how does this relate to the original problem that Paul brought up earlier in verse 1? "... sin would be brought to nothing... so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin... alive to God in Christ." In other words, God wants to set you free from sin and to live free for righteousness in Christ.
4. What verse or verses seem to be the "turning point" in the passage? What makes it seem like a turning point? Either verse 11 or verse 12. The reason that verse 11 is a turning point because it is stated in the form of a command. It tells us what to *do* rather than what has *been done* to us or for us. The reason that verse 12 could be the turning point is because there is a *therefore* as well as new terminology about sin not reigning in your body and sin's passions.
5. What are all the commands that Paul says in the passage? There are 3-4 commands in verses 11-13. "Consider yourselves... Let not sin therefore reign... Do not present your members... but present yourselves..."
6. Verse 11 is the **first command in the entire book of Romans**. In your own words, what do you think it means that "You must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ"? This just forces people to think carefully about what this is saying, rather than just saying some cliché thing that they think sounds right. Encourage people to think carefully and about how to restate this in their own words. Here is a quote from Leon Morris' commentary that could be helpful for you, "*This is the classic 'Be what you are' (or perhaps, 'Don't be what you are not'). Believers must act in the same way; there is emphasis on yourselves, 'you, in addition to Christ.' Faith means seeing things as Christ sees them and then acting on the vision. Count is a favorite word of Paul; it conveys the idea of reckoning or calculating. Perhaps here 'regard' or 'recognize' would help us understand that Paul is arguing that his readers should come to see the truth of their situation. Christ's death and resurrection has altered their position, and they should live in accordance with the new reality.*"
7. How does all of this change the way you see your relationship with sin? In other words, how does changing how we see ourselves in Christ lead to greater freedom from sin? This question simply encourages people to think about how they should change the way they see themselves in Christ. They might act like they are *not* free from sin, when in fact they *are* free from sin.

Prayer time:

Spend time praying through the truths of Romans 6.

Consider having people share 2-3 specific truths from the passage that you could pray over the entire group?

QUESTIONS TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Introduce your spouse OR partner:

1. What is your *full* name?
2. Where were you born and raised?
3. When is your birthday?
4. What is your current or former work?
5. How long have you been coming to CAB? How did you find CAB?
6. What's your favorite thing to snack on?
7. What would you order at Starbucks?
8. What *might* people be surprised to learn about you?
9. What's your "claim to fame"? What might your spouse brag about you?
10. What are you looking forward to most in this group?