

GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Spring 2024 - Acts Sermon Series - "Witness"
Monday, March 18 - Sunday, March 24 (Week 4)

ICE BREAKER: If you could only watch one movie for the rest of your life, which one would it be and why??
(OR [click here](#) for a helpful list of ideas for this time or create / do your own!)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. If you are 50 or older, you are invited to join in a time of food, fellowship and fun, at our Prime Timer's fellowship! Our next meeting is on Saturday, April 13th at 6 PM. We will share a meal, be encouraged by God's Word and enjoy a game together in the name of Jesus. This meeting's game is Military Bridge. If you have any questions and to sign up, please email Kris Rienstra, kgrienstra@gmail.com.
2. We will be holding an 8-week marriage class on specific Sundays from 2-4 PM in April & May as a follow-up to our recent marriage sermon series. The class will utilize the book, "Love That Lasts" by Gary & Betsy Ricucci. This class is open to married, engaged, & dating couples, as well as singles who are looking to learn more about marriage. For more information and to register to join the class, please email info@churchatbergen.org
3. All women are invited to join us Friday, April 5th from 7-9 PM for "The Bridge". We are excited to gather generations of women for a night of fellowship, worship and devotion! To sign up to attend please email info@churchatbergen.org
4. We're thrilled to announce the launch of a MomCo Meetup this April! MomCo is a vibrant community of moms who support each other and grow in their faith. We'll meet twice a month on Monday mornings from 9:15-11 AM at the church. The Meetup is open to expecting moms and those with children aged 0-9 years. You do not have to attend CAB to join us! Please share this with any moms who you think would be interested. For more information and to register, email jackie.levesque@churchatbergen.org. If you can't attend the Monday Meetups due to work but want to be part of our community or if you're interested in volunteering, please also reach out to Jackie Levesque.
5. 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 to sign up!
6. We hope you will join us at our Good Friday service on Friday, March 29 at 5:30 PM. Childcare will be provided for infants - PreK4.
7. 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. Regular BergenKIDS programming will be provided at both services, infants - 5th Grade.

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 21:17-26, and then read this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:

GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Spring 2024 - Acts Sermon Series - "Witness"
Monday, March 18 - Sunday, March 24 (Week 4)

The sermon titled "Tensions on the Rise," given by Pastor Peter, chronicled the unfolding events in Acts chapter 21:17-26. The sermon explored the tensions between Paul, who was a strong advocate for salvation through grace alone, and believers fervently committed to the Mosaic Law. In the midst of rising Jewish nationalism, Paul's journey to Jerusalem ahead of Pentecost was met with intense conflicts and suspicions of compromise with Gentiles. The situation was intensified by James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, who adhered strictly to the Mosaic Law. In a bid to quell the brewing tensions, James and church elders developed a strategy asking Paul to partake in a Nazarite vow. This tactic aimed to display Paul's observance of the law, dispelling rumors that he had abandoned Moses. Paul agreed to this course of action. However, his participation was for unity's sake, thus making sure not to compromise his doctrine. He chose not to be a stumbling block but instead to show love and be a peacemaker. The main takeaways of the sermon revolved around Paul's example of managing personal passions and beliefs. It emphasized that while upholding the truth is vital, it should not foster division within the church. Thus, believers are called to self-examination in their attitudes and actions to avoid causing harm or disunity. The sermon also advocated for believers to stand firm in their faith, but adjust their actions or preferences to maintain peace within the church, ensuring that the focus remains centered on Christ and The Gospel.

QUESTION #1: In what ways do you see tensions and conflicts arising in the church today due to differences in theological beliefs and cultural practices? How can we navigate these tensions and promote unity?

QUESTION #2: What does it mean to be a peacemaker like Paul? How can we apply his example of adjusting our actions for the sake of love and unity in our own lives?

QUESTION #3: The sermon emphasizes the importance of being zealous for Christ rather than being zealous for specific issues or traditions. How can we ensure that our zeal for Christ remains central and unifying, rather than causing division within the church?

QUESTION #4: How can we strike a balance between standing firm in our beliefs and being open to differing perspectives within the body of Christ?

QUESTION #5 Why is it important to focus on Christ and the gospel above all else? How can this focus help to overcome divisions and promote unity?

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.)