

2026-05-24 Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: "Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to speak to your group, create vulnerability, and help members surrender areas where they've been walking with Jesus as Savior only, rather than as both Lord and Savior.

Icebreaker

Share one area of your life where you find it easiest to trust God, and one area where you struggle most to surrender control.

Key Scripture Passages

Matthew 16:13-17 - Peter's confession of Christ

Matthew 16:24-28 - The cost of discipleship

Psalms 31 - David's prayer for deliverance and guidance

John 13:34 - The command to love one another

John 14:8-14 - Jesus reveals the Father

Key Takeaways

1. Lord AND Savior, Not Just Savior

Many believers accept Jesus as Savior (receiving grace and forgiveness) but don't surrender to Him as Lord (obedience and submission). True discipleship requires both.

2. The Difference Between Leading and Guiding

Leading = The destination and the "why" (shared goal of eternal worship)

Guiding = The "how" and "where" (practical tools found in Scripture)

3. Three Commands for Disciples (Matthew 16:24)

Deny yourself

Take up your cross

Follow Jesus

4. False Idols in Modern Life

Money, career success, family, validation from others, comfort—anything we place above God becomes an idol that prevents true surrender.

5. Love As Jesus Loved

Biblical love isn't "love is love"—it's loving others enough to speak truth, call out sin with grace, and point people toward righteousness.

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Personal Inventory

When did you first accept Jesus as Savior? When (if ever) did you surrender to Him as Lord? What's the difference in your life between those two moments?

The speaker confessed to "putting on a good face" while not truly following Jesus closely. Can you relate? Where are you tempted to appear more spiritually mature than you actually are?

What are the false idols in your life right now? (Career, money, family, comfort, validation, success?) How do these things compete with God for the throne of your heart?

Section 2: Scripture and Obedience

The sermon emphasized that God's will is revealed in Scripture, not just through feelings or circumstances. How consistent is your Bible reading? What keeps you from spending more time in God's Word?

Read Matthew 16:24-26 together. What does it practically mean for you to "deny yourself" this week? What cross is Jesus asking you to take up?

Psalm 31:3 says "lead and guide me." How have you experienced the difference between God leading you (the destination) and guiding you (the how)? Share a specific example.

Section 3: Community and Accountability

The speaker mentioned his Tuesday night crew where they "get real" about their struggles. Do you have people in your life who know your real struggles? If not, what's preventing that level of vulnerability?

John 13:34 commands us to love one another as Jesus loved us. Jesus loved by speaking truth with grace. Who in your life needs you to lovingly speak truth to them? Who do you need to receive truth from?

The sermon challenged comfort Christianity—going to church, getting encouraged, then living the same way all week. How does this describe your faith journey? What needs to change?

Section 4: Mission and Witness

The speaker mentioned feeling prompted to pray with a struggling waitress but being afraid to seem "radical." When was the last time you felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to share Jesus or pray with someone? Did you obey? Why or why not?

Read the Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22:1-14). Many were invited but made excuses. Who in your life needs an invitation to know Jesus? What's stopping you from inviting them?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Daily Scripture Reading Commit to reading one chapter of Scripture each day, asking God to reveal Himself to you rather than relying on sermons or second-hand teaching.

Option 2: Confession and Accountability Reach out to someone in your group or a trusted believer and confess one area where you've been

walking in disobedience. Ask them to check in with you weekly.

Option 3: Obedience Over Comfort Identify one thing God has been prompting you to do that you've been avoiding (pray with someone, have a difficult conversation, give sacrificially, etc.). Do it this week.

Option 4: Idol Inventory Spend 30 minutes in prayer asking God to reveal the false idols in your life. Write them down, confess them, and surrender them to God as Lord.

Option 5: Love with Truth Think of one person in your life who is walking in sin or away from God. Pray for them daily and ask God if/how He wants you to lovingly speak truth to them.

Reflection Questions for Personal Prayer

Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do YOU say that I am?" How would you answer that question today based on how you're actually living?

What would change in your life this week if you truly surrendered to Jesus as Lord, not just Savior?

Where are you manufacturing your own "fruits" through behavior modification instead of surrendering to the Holy Spirit?

Closing Prayer Points

Pray for courage to surrender areas of life where group members have been holding back from God

Pray for genuine accountability and vulnerability within the group

Pray for boldness to obey the Holy Spirit's promptings, even when it feels uncomfortable or radical

Pray for hearts that truly seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness

Pray for those who need to accept Jesus as both Lord and Savior

For Next Week

Come prepared to share:

How you completed your practical application challenge

One way you saw God lead or guide you this week

One area where you struggled to surrender to Jesus as Lord

Remember: Heaven is filled with "bad people" made righteous by the blood of Jesus. The question isn't whether you're good enough—it's whether you'll accept the invitation and show up dressed in the righteousness Christ provides.