

Group Meeting

Welcome!

Welcome to Session 7 of *Believe*. If there are any new members in your group, take a moment to introduce yourselves to each other. Then spend a couple of minutes sharing insights or questions about this session's personal study. Now start the video!

VIDEO TEACHING NOTES

As you watch the video segment for Session 7, use the following outline to record some of the main points. (The answer key is found at the end of the session.)

- Key Question: How does God _____ people?
- Key Idea: I believe _____ people are loved by God and _____ Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own _____." (Isaiah 53:6)
- Key Verse: "For God so loved the world that he _____ his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not _____ but have eternal life." (John 3:16)
- "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still _____, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)
- (Key Application) I value _____ human life.
- (Key Application) I see and treat all people the way _____ sees and treats them.
- (Key Application) I am compelled to tell all people about _____.

GETTING STARTED

Begin your discussion by reciting the Key Verse and Key Idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)



KEY IDEA: I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging, and why?

- I believe that each person possesses a sinful nature and is in need of God's forgiveness.
- I believe we are created in the image of God and therefore have equal value, regardless of race, religion, or gender.
- I believe all people are loved by God; therefore, I too should love them.
- I believe God desires all people to have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Based on your group's dynamics and spiritual maturity, choose the 2–3 questions that will lead to the best discussion of this week's Key Idea.

1. Describe the thoughts and feelings that come to mind when you hear about God's radical love for you.

2. Do you find it difficult to receive God's love and forgiveness? Why or why not?

3. What personal disciplines can we adopt that invite the Holy Spirit to change our hearts toward difficult people?

4. Describe a time when God changed your heart toward a person or people group. What specifically caused the change within you?

Read Romans 1:18–32 and Luke 6:27–36 (see the sections "The Devastating Human Condition" and "Seeing People as God Sees Them" in Believe) and choose 1–2 questions that will lead to the greatest discussion in your group.

1. What does Romans 1 reveal about humanity and the human condition?

2. How does loving our enemies show the world that we are children of God?

3. The Bible calls us to love difficult people the way God does. Is this possible? If so how?

CASE STUDY

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's Key Idea into practice.

Charlie, Jamie, and their two kids have been coming to church with you for the last year and a half. In the beginning they were reluctant, but now they are eagerly seeking to apply God's Word to their lives—and the changes are evident. During a lunch conversation, Charlie mentions a neighbor who has been getting on his nerves. "Honestly, I'm reluctant to say it, but I can't stand the guy. His yard is always a mess, he never makes eye contact, and we couldn't be further apart when it comes to politics. During election times, his yard is filled with signs supporting people and ideas that I think are just plain dangerous. I know we are supposed to love our neighbors as ourselves, but I'm having a hard time finding something lovable about this guy."

Using only the Key Applications from this session, what practical advice would you give to Charlie? (If needed, refer to your video notes for a reminder of this session's Key Applications.)

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's Key Idea into practice.

JOURNAL

If your church is doing the Believe church-wide campaign, bring this study guide with you to church and use the following space to take notes from the pastor's or teacher's message. If your church provides an outline, consider keeping it with this guide so you will have all of your notes and thoughts from your Believe journey in one place.

[A large area of horizontal lines for journaling.]

VIDEO NOTES ANSWER KEY

see / all, need / way / gave, perish / sinners / all / God / Jesus.