



APRIL 14

THE NEW REALITY

A NEW US



GETTING STARTED

This week we continued in our three-week miniseries, *The New Reality*. There is something beautiful we discover as we step into new life with Jesus. He leads us into relational restoration *with God* as His Spirit works within us, and then with each other as He brings us into a new family together, a family He calls His Church.

As you begin the study, take a moment to reflect on the verse below:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **2 Corinthians 5:17**



GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

What is your home-screen wallpaper on your cell phone? What made you decide to select that image?



STUDY QUESTIONS

1. This weekend Joel shared three marks of *A New Us*. In Jesus, we are...

- *United In A New Community*
- *A People Marked By Mercy*
- *Builders Of A New Kingdom*

Which of these three marks do you feel is most impactful for you right now? Explain.

2. In Jesus, we are *United In A New Community*. When it comes to unity in the Church, it's fascinating to look at the first Christ-followers because they didn't immediately get it, but then Jesus opened their eyes to *The New Reality*, and as a result, barriers fell as the Spirit brought people together. Read the story of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10:1-48.

- a. How was the Holy Spirit working to bring Peter and Cornelius together?
- b. What are the requirements of God for unity according to verses 34-35?
- c. How does this story encourage or challenge you when it comes to unity in the church?

3. Joel taught that unity can only be real if we are united around the same thing. Once we belong to Jesus, we now also belong to one another.

- a. Do you view your church community as a family who is united around the same thing? As a family who belongs to one another? Explain.
- b. Is there anything that prevents you from seeing the church in this way? How so?
4. In Jesus, we are *A People Marked By Mercy*. How have you experienced the life-changing mercy of God in your story?
5. Read Colossians 3:12-14. Mercy challenges us when we embrace a “cancel-culture” mindset and also when we live in a kind of moral ambiguity that neutralizes calling out what is wrong as wrong. How does embracing the mercy Jesus offers us present living in an entirely different option?
- a. As you look at all of the character traits listed, which of these traits do you feel is the strongest in your life? Why? How have you seen this character trait play out in your life?
- b. Which trait is the weakest? Write out a short prayer, asking God to transformed you in this area.
6. In Jesus, we are *Builders Of A New Kingdom*. Read 1 Peter 4:7-11. How might God be calling you to build the church in this season?
7. As Christ-followers, there is always a new reality that God desires to lead us into. Take a moment and ask the Lord to show you if you are living in that reality or not. How can your Life Group be praying for you this week to experience the new that God has for you?



TOPICAL PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of each Life Group. Often those who are new to a Life Group are intimidated by praying aloud if they have never done it before. Others are so comfortable with prayer that they can take over the prayer time without meaning to. For these reasons, we suggest practicing topical prayer to help your group get comfortable praying together. Here are three basic guidelines:

1. Focus on a Single Topic/Request at a Time

Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request. Once a topic is introduced, one or two members pray for that request. Then the Life Group Leader will direct the prayer time by sharing the next topic/request.

2. Pray Several Times Together

By focusing on one topic at a time, each member has an opportunity to pray at different times for the requests they are most passionate about.

3. Keep Requests/Prayers Short and Simple

By keeping both requests and prayers short and simple, everyone has a chance to share and pray. This helps those who are new to prayer feel more comfortable praying. It also helps everyone stay focused during your time of prayer together.