

ONE

WEEK 5

LIFE GROUP
FACILITATOR GUIDE

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 // Keep It Accessible: ONE - Week 5

// Week 5 // Main Emphasis: Keep it Accessible

Over the past month, we have been exploring the ways that God wants to further unite all of us here at Newbreak as “ONE.” One of the ways we cultivate this “oneness” is by having a “Newbreak Way” of doing things. Church looks a certain way for us, not because our way is the “only way” (it’s not!), but because God has called our community of believers to do life and ministry together with a unique identity, as He does with all churches. Our series verse (from Ephesians 4) is about traveling on the same road in the same direction, and to do this, we have identified four key ideas that are meant to permeate all we do.

The first part of the Newbreak Way is to “Keep it Accessible.” That means we keep God accessible, keep church accessible, keep life groups accessible, keep serving accessible, and keep biblical truth accessible. We define access as “ensuring our ministry reflects the simplicity of the gospel message so it is available to everyone.”

// Opening Prayer // 5-7 minutes

FACILITATOR NOTE: Open this week by praying for God to do a mighty work through this study and that we will be united as ONE church focused on ONE mission.

// Lean In // 5 minutes

Last week we talked about the targeted transformation of our communities and being socially aware of what’s going in them. How have you taken specific steps this week to live this out? If you haven’t yet, what is the first step you plan to take?

// Look Down // 15 minutes

Read Deuteronomy 30:11-14

God does not set impossible standards and does not make it impossible for us to serve Him. It was never God’s intent to make things too difficult for us to accomplish. This doesn’t mean we won’t face hard stuff; it doesn’t mean life will always be easy or that aligning our lives around the ways of God is a walk in the park. God simply promises it is not **too difficult** for us to actually accomplish. Sacrifice is hard; denying ourselves is hard; serving others when we want to serve ourselves is hard. But it is not impossible for us to do, as God promises to equip us to do all He wants us to accomplish.

Sometimes our greatest challenge is learning to recognize how He is working and what He is doing in our lives.

QUESTION 1: *Share a time or situation in your life that may have seemed too difficult for you, but where God worked to make it possible to get through because of His promises?*

QUESTION 2: *Where do you see God at work in your life right now?*

QUESTION 3: *What is something God is doing in you right now that feels too hard or difficult? How can we as a group support and/or encourage you in this?*

God's guidance and direction are closer than we realize. Fasting is a means of humbling ourselves to realize this. How is this so? In this upcoming season of Lent, we all have an opportunity to choose to fast something. In so doing, we acknowledge our overwhelming love for our "stuff" more than Him. Fasting is an opportunity for us to create space to hear from God. It says "I long for you, God, more than I long for my 'stuff'."

QUESTION 4: *What are some of the things in your life that can take priority over God at times and would be good to fast during this upcoming Lenten season?*

FACILITATOR NOTE: For more information about fasting, go to the Newbreak website and check out our Fasting Seminar: <http://newbreak.org/resources/seminars/fasting-seminar>.

God's ways are meant to be known and understood by all. From a Newbreak perspective, this means that we intentionally communicate in a way that people understand; we try to limit "churchy" or insider language, not because we shy away from biblical truth or hard concepts, but because we want that biblical truth to be understandable for everyone, not just the "Christian elite." We want it to be easy for you to apply what you learn in a weekend message to your everyday life. We want it to be easy for you to sign up to be involved in ministry. We want it to be easy for you to take your life group out on an outreach.

From an individual perspective, that also should color the way we communicate with others. Notice Jesus' example in the gospels. He taught ordinary individuals profound truths using parables and illustrations. He didn't attempt to confuse or impress his hearers. Instead, he spoke with the intention of helping them to understand—though this didn't always occur. He used culturally relevant language constantly about farming, fishing, eating, servants, households, banquets, etc. "Keep it accessible" means I consider my audience, the people I am around. Popular Christian blogger Jon Acuff has coined the phrase "*Christianese*" which basically means, a language within the Christian culture with words and phrases created that only apply to those inside the Church. Bottom line, God made His message understandable and so should we. We need to beware of our "churchy language" and our insider jokes.

FACILITATOR NOTE (Read this prayer aloud together): “Holy Father, our Almighty Creator, we humbly approach Your throne of grace and beseech Thee this day from our position as broken sinners unworthy of the sanctifying grace You have offered us through the sacrifice of Your only-begotten Son...”

GROUP ACTIVITY: *Work together as a group to change how you could say this same prayer but in a way that would feel comfortable for everyone. Talk about language that could make it easier for anyone to pray out loud, whether a newer Christ Follower or a long time Christ Follower.*

// Look in // 15 minutes

“Keep it accessible” means finding relevant ways to show people God’s plan for a relationship with Him. We can commit to learning how to tell God’s story and our God stories in ways that are accessible to others. This means we also need to learn how to show others how the Gospel and our relationship with God is in fact extremely practical and can/should be lived out in every single area of our lives.

QUESTION 5: *As you think about beginning to make God accessible to others by sharing your story, what are some of the challenges you face in being able to describe to other people how God is working in your life?*

QUESTION 6: A big part of “keeping it accessible” is learning to tell our God story. Putting language to the experience we have had with God starts by being able to answer things like “what brought you to a point where you began your relationship with God?” and even includes ideas like “what brought you to this life group?” Talking earlier about what God is doing in your life right now is part of your God story. Putting words to what God is doing is part of how we keep it accessible. ***Where are you in the process of learning how to tell your God story?***

// Live it Out // 15 minutes

“Keep it accessible” means removing the barriers that keep people from following God. We need to be cautious about living our lives in ways that alienate people from God – coming across as judgmental instead of loving, spouting our political views in dogmatic ways or not being available to others. We can’t live in a Christian bubble. God is here to help us consistently live out what we learn.

QUESTION 7: *What are some practical steps you can take this week to help make God more accessible to others in your life?*

// Look Up // 5-7 minutes

FACILITATOR NOTE: Take some time and share any prayer requests. As you close this week take time to pray for God to give us as Newbreak the strength and courage to share our God story with our community. Take some time to pray for God to show us how He is working in our lives today.