

# WEEK 5 - What Now?

## Countercultural Commitments

Spring Emphasis 25 // Canopy Guide

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

*These questions are great for breaking the ice and getting your group talking. Pick a question or two that fits your group for an all play conversation.*

- What were some core values in the home you grew up in? How did you know they were important? Were your family's spoken values the same as your family's lived values?
- Have you ever had to engage with someone at work or school whose moral compass pointed in a different way than yours? If so, how did you handle it?

WEEK 5 VIDEO INTRO: [CLICK HERE](#)

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

If you remember back to our conversations on the Big Story of Scripture from last semester, you may remember that the early church had a devoted commitment to each other's well being. As Acts 2:42-47 recounts,

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

Their commitment to each other was tangible and different. They invested their finances (selling property/possessions), their time (every day meetings in the temple courts), and their relationships (eating around the table together). The way they cared for each other stood out, and more people began to have a relationship with God as a result of it. As you fast forward and look at the Church today, there are pockets of believers who still very much live in this way with generosity and hospitality, putting the needs of others above their own individual needs. However, this is not the stereotypical view of the Church in America if you're on the outside looking in. Hopefully you know and have seen stories within the life of the Church where the good has been true, but it is generally still more the national exception than the norm. Similarly, the things we say we value don't always match with how our actual calendar, spending report, and relationships look in real life. Sometimes if we're honest, Christian households can be difficult to differentiate between non-Christian households here in America.

As the Church was born, followers of Jesus faced persecution quickly for the ways they practiced their faith. Yet in our current cultural setting, it's fairly easy and culturally acceptable to profess Christ and follow his ways without real danger knocking at your door. Those terms may change over time, but for right now Christianity tends to feel comfortable in America. Sometimes comfort is good, but sometimes it makes us more apt to go with the flow, become entitled, and act lukewarm.

We have included this topic of conversation because we think it's a place of growth and awareness within the Church - a topic that matters as we strive toward maturity so that our values match our practices. As we saw in the Acts 2 passage, the commitments and practices of that community stood out to their neighbors, and many people came to know Christ as a result. At Grandview, we're grateful to know so many who champion and demonstrate this well, so carving space out for conversation on this topic is a healthy practice as we spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

## SCRIPTURE TO READ

- Acts 2:42-47
- Deuteronomy 6:1-9
- Hebrews 10:23-25
- Matthew 6:19-21

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which of these countercultural commitments feels the most challenging to match your daily practices with your core values: your money, your time, or your relationships?
- Committing the time it takes to be part of a canopy requires some sacrifices of your time and resources. Share together why this is something you value together.
- Which of the scriptures listed above gives you something you want to chew on and think through for a while?
- If you're in a season of parenting kids or teens, how do you view the community instructions from Deuteronomy 6:1-9 both as an individual family unit and as part of a bigger faith community? If you aren't in a season of parenting kids or teens, how can you practice these things?
- As you think about countercultural commitments in our relationships, what are things you value personally? What countercultural commitments in our relationships do you see valued in Scripture?
- Reread the Matthew 6 text and take a minute to explore what this means: wherever you invest your treasure, your heart will follow.

## RESOURCES

*These resources are great for leader prep and for group member follow up if you're interested in learning more on the topic today.*

- Sermon on Investing with Your Heart from Ethan Magness, start at the 12:45 mark for a helpful explanation of Matthew 6:19  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wl47naeG0LY>
- Blog on Acts 2 Community: "Captured. Committed. Contagious." Marshall Segal, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/captured-committed-contagious>
- Book: [Life on the Vine](#), Phil Kenneson, 1999.
- Recommendations for those in the season of parenting: (because the amount of material out there is admittedly overwhelming)
  - [Raising Disciples](#), Teresa Roberts, 2024 - great resource on guiding your kids into a faith of their own that includes some practical ideas,

benchmarks, and a developmental approach for introducing certain topics, stories, and scriptures into your daily rhythms

- [Habits of the Household](#), Justin Whitmel Earley, 2021 - book with great aspirations and ideas to implement into the way you develop habits in your family
- [Raising Boys & Girls Podcast](#), Dave Thomas & Sissy Goff. There's a lot of episodes that are topic based & based in Christian counseling. The series on ["Modern Parents, Vintage Values"](#) has some really good episodes.