

# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## Core Group Guide: Know & Love God

**Opening** Take 5 minutes to have each person briefly share a high & a low from their week. Then have someone pray for any immediate needs as well as for the group time.

### Core Questions

You will spend most of your time on the first value, but make sure you get to all three.

## Value #1: Know & Love God

**Read *Luke 10:38-42* Together** Have someone summarize the story. Ask, “Do we agree with the summary?”

**Discuss** Use the questions as needed to guide discussion, but end with the last one to transition to the next passage.

Who in the story is most appropriately seeking to know & love Jesus? Why?

Is how Martha was seeking to love Jesus wrong?

When you’ve sought to know and love God recently, has it looked more like Mary or Martha?

What hinders us from choosing to know and love God as the “good” or “better” thing?

***What should motivate us to continue to know and love God more?***

**Read *Philippians 3:1-16* Together**

**Discuss** Use the questions as needed to guide discussion, or simply use the bolded ones.

What does it mean to know and love God according to Paul here?

Have you had to consider anything as loss for the sake of following Jesus?

***What motivates you to know & love God despite the sacrifices you may need to make?***

***What motivated Paul?***

Answer: Knowing Jesus and attaining the resurrection. Guide the group as necessary by pointing out 3:9,10.

Deeper Dive: If the hope of resurrection at the return of Jesus is new to the group, read *Phil. 3:20-21* followed by *John 5:21-29* or *6:37-40* to hear it in Jesus’ words along with Paul’s. Also see *Dan 12:1-3*, *Isa 25:6-9*, *Heb 6:1-3*.

**Apply** Make what you’re talking about really practical and accountable.

What potential life circumstances could challenge your motivation to love Jesus? What would be too much of a loss and not worth attaining to the “resurrection of life” (*John 5:29* ESV)?

***Is there anything that the Lord may be calling you to “consider loss” for the sake of Christ?***

LISTEN: Pause to give the group a moment to listen to the Holy Spirit. He may guide to a proper response.

DISCUSSION POINT: “Consider loss” doesn’t necessarily mean completely abandon practically, but it does mean completely abandon hope of attaining God’s love, justification, righteousness and eternal life in the resurrection by it. We will only be found justified and righteous on the basis of faith in Christ’s completed work (*Phil. 3:7-9*). For example, Paul completely abandoned his persecution of the church, but he didn’t entirely abandon his Jewish cultural background nor his association as a Pharisee in how it directly informed his faith in Jesus. See *Acts 23:6*.

That being said, those who are justified must respond with good works in obedience (*Phil 2:12-13*, *John 5:28-29*).

***How can we hold you accountable to that going forward?***

## Value #2: Love One Another

Have you been honoring, understanding, and generous with others this past week or two?

If not, is there anything to confess? Is God leading you to seek forgiveness from them?

After each confession, read *Proverbs 28:13* over them and pray as the Spirit leads.

## Value #3: Make Disciples

How can you love God by being a good friend to someone who doesn’t know Jesus this week?

### Closing Ministry Time

End in ministering to one another if you haven’t done so already. At minimum, take time to pray for one another.

You could also pray the Lord’s prayer altogether followed by an expounded prayer on the line that says “do not lead us into temptation” as you leave your time together.