

House of Belonging Discussion Guide – “Reaching Out” (Session 2)



Introduction: “House of the Lord” & “House of Belonging”

We are now starting week two of a 40-day journey discussing and reflecting on the question:
What does it mean to belong at Bethel?

In review, last week we learned that Bethel means, “House of the Lord,” and as such, we seek to build it into the “House of Belonging” that he desires, God helping us. If we are following our mission – **Becoming like Christ, and sharing him with others** – then we will naturally engage in the work on building a house of belonging.

This week we are focussing on the latter half of Bethel’s mission statement, “... sharing him with others” because Bethel is a “House that Shares.” In obedience to the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20, one of our goals is to spread the Good News that the world may know, they too, are loved and belong.

If you are already a believer, think back on your story. *Who shared the gospel with you?*

Read: Read Luke 14:15-24 (focus on verse 23), and Matthew 28:18-20 aloud.

After reading, give everyone 3 minutes of silence (*set a timer*) to reflect on the passage. Consider some of the following questions during this time:

- What is the instruction found in both passages? Does it seem optional to you?
- How do these passages challenge me? What comfort or encouragement do you hear in the Matthew passage?

Reflect: Sharing Our Faith

1. Why do you think many believers shy away from sharing their faith? Do any of those reasons ring true for you?



2. How do you define success in sharing the Gospel?
(Hint: it's not about bringing anyone to the Lord. "Winning souls for Christ" is the work of the Holy Spirit.)

3. Radio and television commentator, Paul Harvey, said, "We've strayed from being fishers of men, to being keepers of the aquarium." What do you think he meant by this? What needs to change?

4. 1 John 2:6 says, "Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did." Now read Matthew 4:23-24. What are your thoughts as you put these two texts together?

Summative Thought: *As believers, we are called to share our faith with others! And yet statistics show, on average, it takes a person 7.6 times hearing the Gospel before it changes his or her life. The change is not up to us, but the telling is. Are you going to hide your light under a basket, or are you going to put it on a lampstand so it can give light to all? Be encouraged! God's main ask of us to be willing and obedient. The rest is up to him.*

Challenge: The next 40 Days...Remember and embrace how God has called you to belong in Christ and with one another.

1. What might sharing your faith look like in the different settings and relationships of your life?
2. Let prayer guide you. Choose a Bible passage (ex. Colossians 4:2-6) and turn it into a prayer before going into each day. It might be a new concept but try it and allow the words to shape your heart for sharing. Discuss what this experience is like with others.
3. Is there anyone specific God is laying on your heart to share your faith with? Someone you can invite and include in God's vision of home and belonging at Bethel?
Consider a few people you would like to reach out to in the coming weeks.

Prayer: Discuss how you as a group can support each other in these areas.
Spend time in prayer for one another.