



CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week # 1 - "When There's Not Enough"



GETTING STARTED

Spend some time checking in with each other. Any highs and lows since the last time you met?

Pastor Angie talked about an experience in Ghana that changed the way she thought about the world. Have you ever had one of those moments?

THIS WEEK'S THEME

The word "bread" appears in the Bible 361 times – 280 times in the Old Testament and 81 times in the New Testament. What bread stories from the Bible come to mind for you?

What do you think of Pastor Tony Campolo's challenge to the college students? Why is it so powerful? Have you ever heard a speaker who challenged you?

Discuss ways in which you can identify "hunger" in the world around you – whether it's physical, emotional, or spiritual – and how you can respond.

What do you think Jesus' command to his disciples, "You give them something to eat," means for us today?

Have you ever had an experience where your little offering made a bigger impact than you expected? How can we learn to trust that our small acts of compassion matter?

Pastor Angie mentioned that sometimes we build up calloused compassion in response to the overwhelming needs in the world. How can we avoid becoming desensitized and instead be more compassionate and proactive in our actions?

What are some practical ways we can "break bread" with those who are marginalized or in need, following Jesus' example?

How can we as a community cultivate a sense of *splagchnizomai* (compassion that moves us to action)? What could that look like in our group?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Matthew 14:13-21

Prior to this story in the book of Matthew, Jesus is rejected in his hometown, and his trusted friend, John the Baptist, is killed at the hands of Herod. Jesus and his disciples withdraw into the wilderness, and he continues teaching them. He's exhausted, but the crowds are gathered, so Jesus has compassion on them.

This miracle story appears in all 4 Gospels, reminding us that it's something we should pay attention to. It's at this point in Jesus' ministry that his attention turns heavily to the disciples, as he's preparing for the approaching time when he will no longer be with them. Through the agency of the disciples, Jesus feeds the crowds.

Read more here: <https://enterthebible.org/passage/matthew-1413-21-feeding-the-five-thousand>

How do you relate to the disciples' response to the problem? Do you ever feel like the needs around you are too great to make a difference?

What was significant about the boy offering his meager lunch of barley loaves and fish?

In what ways can we offer our "barley loaves" and "fish" in our daily lives?

If the point of the story isn't that we should try to buy enough bread to meet all the needs around us, but rather to not look away, how does that change your approach to *hunger times*?

PRAY

Ask how you can pray for each other this week. What prayer requests do you have?

Lord God, Bread of life. Come to us this lenten season and sustain us with your love and grace. Amen.

TAKING IT HOME

Reflect on this truth: What is something small you can offer today that could make a big impact in someone else's life?