

*Spring 2010*

*SMALL GROUP SERIES*

# *Christ and Culture*

*Discussion Guide*

*Week 4*

Small Groups   
Transforming Community @ RBCPC

## Christ and Culture: Jesus and Family

### Mark 3:31-35 (TNIV)

31 Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

33 "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked.

34 Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

### Mark 10:29-31(TNIV)

29 "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

## **Facilitator's Guide**

Here are four principles to help you CONNECT with the people in your group and to help them connect with one another.

1. Create a one-another community. In the New Testament there are over 50 different references to "one another": love one another, bear one another's burdens, pray for one another, and serve one another are just a few. This can't happen only on Sunday mornings; it needs to happen in other settings, like small groups.

Once you've invited your circle of friends and they show up, remember you don't have to be a Bible scholar to create a one-another community. Your job is to ask the questions, look around the room, and wait for someone to respond. When someone voices a response, affirm them, no matter what they say. Don't feel like you have to answer every one of the questions yourself. It's like a ping-pong game: just get it started and keep the ball in play.

Another way to create a one-another community upfront is to schedule socials and meals together. Pull families together and get to know each other. Schedule casual gatherings, like a pizza dinner, before the meeting starts. During this time, your group has time to check in on prayer requests. Throughout the six weeks, rotate homes, so that people embrace the group as their own.

2. Open your heart. Being authentic lets your group know you don't have it all together either. When we communicate openness, that makes it safer for everybody else to be open as well. It's healthy to say, "You know, good question. I don't know," "I'm not sure," or "I'm lost."

You are the role model, and they'll follow your example. When you're authentic, your group will be more authentic.

3. Naturally group members together for deeper discussion. It's important that every meeting permits discussion time. When your group gets larger than 7, it's more difficult for everyone to share. So break into discussion groups of 3-4 people. The more airtime an individual has leads to greater life application; and that's when you'll see lives transformed.

Also, this allows time for people to share prayer requests. You don't want to get halfway around the room during prayer request time and suddenly say, "Oops, we ran out of time." Break into smaller groups so you have time to share prayer requests pray as well as for one another.

Remember when people feel heard, they feel loved; when they feel loved, they return; and when they return, life transformation happens.

4. Never run from challenges, questions, or even conflict in your group. Remember, the Bible says, "Iron sharpens iron." The group that doesn't have sparks actually doesn't have as much life. Healthy groups have conflict.

-- Brett Eastman, adapted from [www.smallgroups.com](http://www.smallgroups.com)

## Christ and Culture: Jesus and Family

### START IT

- What are the best parts of family?
- What can be the worst parts of family?

### STUDY IT

- Read the two Mark passages. What's the story? Make observations.
- What does Jesus do to reinterpret the definition of family?
- How might that have come across to Jesus' family members? In what ways does he reject them? In what ways does he invite them?
- What is Jesus' definition of a family member?
- What does Jesus promise in terms of family?
- How do these passages communicate God's values?
- What makes creating a family environment at church difficult in our church?

### LIVE IT

- How might we respond to a family member who isn't a follower of Jesus?
- How can we offer a family environment to newcomers to church?

### PRAY IT

- For courage to redefine family.
- For the vulnerability to let people into our worlds.