

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026



GROUPS

TALK IT OVER

THE WAY | SESSION 1: THE INVITATION

For the eight weeks of The Way group study, the weekly Talk It Over Guide will reflect the content from the group study.

CHECKING IN

- Think about when you received an invitation that meant a lot to you. What made it special?
- When you hear the phrase “follow Jesus,” what comes to mind?

MEMORY VERSE

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick ... For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

MATTHEW 9:12-13 NIV

As Jesus passed by Matthew’s tax booth, He offered a simple invitation: “Follow me.” Jesus did not begin with a list of rules. Jesus did not begin with behavior modification. Jesus began with an **invitation**.

1. SIN DOES NOT DISQUALIFY YOU

Matthew was a **tax** collector. Many people viewed him as a **sinner** and outsider. Jesus saw more than Matthew’s **past**. Jesus saw Matthew’s **potential**. Religion often says, “Change and then you can belong.” Jesus says, “Follow me, and I will change you.” God’s kindness leads us to **repentance**.

2. DOUBTS ARE WELCOME

Many people assume they must have everything figured out before following Jesus. Following Jesus often begins before complete **understanding**. Faith is not the absence of questions. Faith is choosing to **trust** Jesus with our questions. Jesus welcomes honest seekers. Doubt does not have to become **unbelief**.

3. RELATIONSHIP IS THE INVITATION

The Pharisees focused on rules and appearances. Jesus focused on **relationship**. God desires mercy, not merely **sacrifice**. Christianity is not primarily about doing things for Jesus. It is about being **with** Jesus. Following Jesus is not about earning God’s love. It is a response to God’s **grace**.

BOTTOM LINE

JESUS DOES NOT INVITE PERFECT PEOPLE. JESUS INVITES WILLING PEOPLE.

Regardless of your past. Regardless of your questions. Regardless of your failures. Jesus still says, “Follow me.”

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. What stands out to you most about Jesus choosing Matthew?
2. Why do you think people often feel they need to “clean themselves up” before coming to God?
3. Have you ever struggled with feeling disqualified because of your past mistakes, failures, or sin? What helped you move forward?
4. Why do you think Jesus was comfortable spending time with people that religious leaders avoided?
5. What is the difference between religion that focuses on performance and a relationship with Jesus?
6. How does knowing that Jesus welcomes honest questions affect your view of faith?
7. What step might Jesus be inviting you to take in your relationship with Him this week?

PRAYER DIRECTION

Spend time praying in groups of two or three.

Pray specifically:

- Thank Jesus for inviting imperfect people to follow Him.
- Confess any areas where shame, guilt, or failure have made you feel distant from God.
- Ask God to strengthen your faith in areas where you still have questions.
- Pray for a deeper relationship with Jesus this week.
- Pray for someone in your life who needs to experience the grace and invitation of Jesus.

For those uncomfortable praying aloud, simply share a prayer request and allow someone else to pray for you.

DIVING DEEPER

As you read this week’s daily devotions ...

- Notice what the Gospels reveal about the heart of Jesus.
- Reflect on the difference between religion and a relationship with Christ.
- Ask yourself: “What is my next step in following Jesus?”
- Pay attention to areas where shame, guilt, or fear may be keeping you from fully embracing His invitation.
- Continue memorizing Matthew 9:12-13 throughout the week.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, spend time reflecting on Jesus’ invitation to “Follow me.” Identify one area where you have been hesitant to fully trust Him because of your past, your doubts, or your desire to stay in control. Take one intentional step of faith this week by saying “yes” to His invitation. Then, pray each day for one person in your life who needs to experience the same grace and invitation that Jesus has extended to you.

Daily devotions for this week: newpointe.org/daily