



FLOWER MOUND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CONNECTION GROUPS

BECOMING | *Connection Group Study Guide* | Week 4 of 5

CONNECT (10 TO 15 MINUTES)

If a newly forming group: remind each other of your names. Otherwise, take a moment to discuss the following:

- Share your thoughts about worship this week:
 - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you this week?
 - What challenged you to move and how did you live into that?
 - What's one point that was made that really resonated with you or challenged you?
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CONTEXT (30 TO 45 MINUTES)

Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion. But first, reflect on this question as a group:

- What is a word or phrase someone said to you once (long ago) that, for some reason, has always stuck with you?
 - Who was that person? What did they say? Was it a positive or negative comment?
 - How did their words change, challenge, or shape you?

Watch the Connection Group Video

- How does the theology of “creation ex nihilo” challenge or resonate with your preconceived understanding about God’s role in creation?
- Taylor asserts: “God did not have to create the material elements, and yet God spoke them into being. Why? Because God desired to create out of love.”
 - What does this theology imply about the created order?

Biblical Note:

This is a little longer of a passage, but the context is that Jacob and Esau are paternal twins who “wrestled in their mother’s womb.” Esau, the firstborn, was a hunter and favored by his father; whereas Jacob was a close second-born (he came out gripping his brother’s heel) and closer to his mother. In this scene, Jacob steals his brother’s birthright.

Read Genesis 1:1-40

- What is the biblical significance of Blessing? Why was it important to be blessed?
 - Why doesn't Isaac just revoke his blessing from Jacob and give it to Esau instead?
 - Re-Read verses 28-29.
 - Words matter. Speaking a word into someone's life has the power to either build up or tear down.
 - How does the blessing Isaac offers his son, even if the wrong twin, have power?
 - Is there a parallel between God irrevocably speaking creation into being and Isaac irrevocably granting the wrong son a blessing?
 - In the biblical sense, are blessings simply "gifts and talents" or do they indicate something deeper?
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CALL (10 MINUTES)

The purpose of and how we measure success in Connection Groups boils down to our whether or not we see growth in our ability to move from theory to practice, from theology to lived-faith. Use the remaining time in your group to make the leap from ivory-tower to life.

- You ARE blessed. With gifts, talents, skills, personality, character, etc. Where did these gifts come from?
 - If you claim they come from God, then how does that change your understanding of: (1) how you are to use/steward your gifts? And (2) how you are to name other peoples' gifts if they too came from God?
 - This week reflect on what it is YOU are capable of that can transform the world (think big) and begin to ask: what small steps do I need to develop in my daily-life that need to become second-nature in order for me to continue to cultivate this gift in me? Spend a few minutes writing these down and sharing with your group.
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CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

If you're already a fully-formed Connection Group we invite you to spend some time sharing your Roses, Thorns, and Buds. If, however, you're participating in Connection Nights, we invite you to reflect on these questions as a group. You can finalize the details in the last session.

- If we were to stay together, how often would everyone like to meet?
 - Weekly, every other week, monthly?
- What day of the week and time-frame would work best?
- How long would this group be together?
 - Year round? Break during the summer? During the academic year?
 - Would your group like to use the Connection Group series curriculum three times a year?
- Where do you want to meet?
- What do you need in a Connection Group?
 - Spiritual Support? Emotional Support? Study Opportunity? Other?

Share your Rose, Thorns, Buds & Invite Someone to Pray Out