



I Know a Guy – Week 4 Group Guide – He Moves Toward the Pain

Use this guide to reflect on Sunday's teaching with a few friends or a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about taking a next spiritual step, contact info@wschurch.org. Group leaders receive communication with specific instructions during this series. Have questions? Email DerekV@wschurch.org.

Introduction and Icebreaker (10 minutes) – Make sure you hear something from everyone.

- Quickly share: What's one thing that comes easily for you & one thing that does not?
- If you were to personify pain as a character in your life, how would you think of it? (e.g. As a bully from childhood? An enemy you try to avoid? A thief you're guarding yourself against? A teacher? A boss?)

Message and Scripture Discussion (30 minutes)

- **What stood out to you from Sunday's service?** How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- It can be difficult to trust God in the face of pain and suffering. **Have you wrestled with this tension recently? How so?**
- **Read Luke 22:39-46 and watch Jesus wrestle with God in his prayer.** Have someone read it outloud for your group.
 - What do you notice about Jesus?
 - What is your reaction to this scene? How does it challenge you?
- Eddie shared that "temptation is anything that draws us away from God or his will for us." **Is this different from how you normally think of temptation? According to his definition, when might comfort or convenience be a temptation for you?**
- He also shared, "God gives strength far more often than he gives explanations." **Have you ever experienced this?**
- **Read Psalm 22:1-31.** This is an ancient worship song that Jesus quoted while he was suffering on the cross. Have someone read it outloud for your group.
 - Is there a word or phrase that stands out to you?
 - How does Jesus' use of this scripture on the cross demonstrate that pain is a part of God's plan?
- Hebrews 12:1 talks about keeping our eyes on Jesus and not giving up. **What are some things that help you stay connected to Jesus and not get weary?**
- Is there anything else from the message you want to explore this week?

Daily Time With Jesus Debrief (30 minutes)

Invite your group to share about their time with Jesus from the past week and any notes they made in their book.

- **Open your book to page 43.**
Invite your group to share their observations and reflections on the questions:
 - **How did Jesus interact with people?**
 - **How did people interact with people?**
 - **How have I interacted with people this week?**

- **Open your book to the Life-Changing Friendships section on pages 17-24.**
Is there anything you want to share as you've been reflecting on your relationship circles?
If you haven't spent much time here yet, explore it more this week.

Group Logistics (10 minutes)

- **Daily Time with Jesus:** Encourage them to keep going. If you've not done this so far, it's not too late to jump in!
- **Life-Changing Friendship Reflection** – Point them to this section and ask them to work through it this week. We'll unpack some of it in the Week 5 gathering next week.
- **What's Next?** Continue talking with your group members about plans for after this session ends. We've provided more guidance in your leader notes.

Prayer (10 minutes)

- Today's discussion invited vulnerable sharing about painful experiences and questions. Allow your prayer time to be a way to follow Jesus' example of honest prayer and surrendering to God's will.

To find all of the series information, go to www.wschurch.org/iknowaguy.

You can sign up for daily text devotions by texting JESUS to 217217 or by going to www.wschurch.org/txtsignup. These devotions correspond with the daily time with Jesus in your book.

Message Main Points and Scripture:

- **Does the Christian faith have an adequate explanation for life's deepest pain?**
- Luke 22:39 - Then, accompanied by the disciples, Jesus left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. There he told them, "Pray that you will not give in to temptation."
- **Temptation is anything that draws us away from God or his will for us.**
- Luke 22:41 - He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.
- **Nothing is more human than wishing our pain away.**
- Luke 22:42 - "Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."
- **The universe was designed to ultimately fulfill God's will, not mine.**
- Luke 22:42 - "An angel from heaven appeared and strengthened Jesus."
- **God gives strength far more often than he gives explanations.**
- **Abba**
- **Daddy**
- Mark 15:34 - "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"
- **The pain is part of the plan.**
- Psalm 22:1 - My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help?
- Psalm 22:15 - My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.
- Psalm 22:16 - My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs. An evil gang closes in on me.
- Psalm 22:16 - They have pierced my hands and feet.
- Psalm 22:18 - They divide my garments among themselves and throw dice for my clothing.
- Hebrews 12:1 - Let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people—then you won't become weary and give up.
- **Everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through affliction and not through happiness.**