

Grand Canyon Insights

(If Jesus was from Arizona and not Galilee)
Pastor Bob Johnson, April 28th, 2024

I. The Hiking (and Jesus following) Culture

- encouraging, welcoming, likable
(Acts 2:46-47)
- local, global and historical
(Revelation 7:9-10)

II. The Hiking (and Jesus following) Journey

- the right gear and expectations
(Luke 5:16, John 16:33)
- avoid excess baggage
(Hebrews 12:1a)
- value transparency for others and yourself
(1 John 1:7-8)
- avoid sitting too long
(Galatians 5:13, John 3:8)
- rest stops are important
(Hebrews 12:1b-2)
- allow others to help carry the load
(Galatians 6:2-5)
- stay alert all along the way
(1 Corinthians 10:12)
- stay still longer than is comfortable
(James 4:6-8, Psalm 46:10)
- begins when we take the first step
(John 1:12, Romans 10:13, Romans 5:1)

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This Week's Discussion Guide

Welcome to our fourth week of our 12 week small group season this Spring. Each week we read and reflect on various Bible passages and discuss ways we can apply what we reflect on to our daily lives.

It is our prayer at GPC for our Sundays and small groups to provide the encouragement we all need to support each other as we desire to grow closer to God and build friendships as part of our vision at GPC to raise up committed Christ followers in a healthy church community.

Getting Started:

Each week, we typically start out with a few lighter questions to get us warmed up :).

The focus of last Sunday was comparing hiking with walking with Jesus. Speaking of hiking, what is a hiking, camping, or traveling story that brings back some fun memories?

In one of your short or long travels, what happened that wasn't planned and how did you deal with it?

What is one of your earliest memories where you traveled to someplace new and/or experienced something new?

What have you done in the past weeks or months that was new to you? Would you do it again?

In one of your travels, what happened where you needed some assistance and who came to your assistance?

Can you think of a time when someone asked you for some assistance and you were able to help them?

Digging Deeper:

1. Similar to a hiking culture, God desires our Jesus following culture to be encouraging, welcoming and likable.

Let's re-read Acts 2:46-47. What are some practical ways our small group and our gatherings on Sunday can be described the way God wants us to be described?

Like the hiking culture, our Jesus following culture is also local, global and historical. Let's re-read Revelation 7:9-10.

How can our small group be more engaged with the global community of Jesus followers? Who are some people and what are some places we can pray for during this small group season?

2. The following are the nine insights shared on Sunday related to the journeys of hiking and following Jesus.

a. regarding having the right gear and expectations, what gear has helped you walk well with Jesus? What are some essentials and non-essentials in following Jesus?

Regarding expectations, let's re-read John 16:33. Scripture makes it clear, Christians are not spared from injustice and unfairness. What is a personal example or another example where you are reminded this is a broken world and we are not in heaven yet?

What are some ways we can better handle the hurts that will come our way as we follow Jesus?

b. Let's re-read Hebrews 12:1-2. Excess baggage is to be avoided in both journeys. What is some weight God has empowered you to let go of in your Jesus journey?

c. Being honest with fellow hikers and fellow Jesus followers is important. Let's re-read 1 John 1:7-8. What are some practical ways our group can be a safe group for us to share our struggles with each other?

d. In hiking and walking with Jesus, motion is lotion. Let's reread Galatians 5:13 and 1 Peter 4:10. If we sit too long, we can stiffen up and actually get weaker as a Christ follower. A helpful motion for a Christian is service. This Spring, what are some ways we can all move into service? What is one way we can serve together this Spring?

e. Rest stops (taking time for renewal) is important. What are some things that can possibly prevent you from taking a Sabbath day for rest and renewal? What would you say to someone else ... or yourself ... who thinks they don't need to build in the discipline of rest?

f. Along with appropriate rest, hikers and Jesus followers need to humble themselves and receive assistance when the weight of what is on our shoulders is too much. Let's reread Galatians 6:2-5. What are some questions we can regularly ask each other so that we can care for each other?

g. We have all heard sad stories of sad endings. Hikers and Jesus followers must stay alert along the way. Let's reread 1 Corinthians 10:12. What are some practical things we can do and remind ourselves of to stay alert and avoid falling off the path?

h. If hikers (and Jesus followers) are too determined to get to a destination as fast as possible, we can miss a lot of beauty along the way. Let's reread James 4:6-8 and Psalm 46:10. How would you rate yourself regarding having enough silliness and silence in your life? What are some practical helps to 'still our soul' from time to time ... to intentionally draw nearer to God?

i. A hiker is not a hiker if he or she has merely read about hiking. Hiking requires taking a first step and then one step after another. What is a next step for each us as a Jesus follower?

Let's pray for one other as we desire to walk with him until we meet again.