

Divided We Stand: Right Now Media Study

July 14 - July 20, 2024

Life Group Leaders: For the Kingdom Come Message Series, we are going to do a RightNow Media (RNM) Study titled, Divided We Stand. Please click here to watch a special message from Pastor Patrick Eagan. If you or your Life Group members need access to RNM, text CELEBRATIONOLA to 49775.

Please keep Life Groups to 60-90 minutes. If the discussion is going well, then you can dismiss the group and allow those that would like to continue talking to stay, if possible.

Welcome - Read the Life Group Goals and ONE Guideline.

> **Have someone read this out loud:** *Welcome to Divided We Stand. By choosing to do this study, you are already taking a brave step that many struggle with. Throughout these meetings, we will explore what love looks like when we disagree, and we will practice the skills of humility and curiosity along the way. In this first week, we'll spend some time getting in touch with why division matters, how we each respond to it, and where we want to go from here as we seek to live and love like Jesus did.*

As a group:

- **Pray:**
  - Have someone pray to open this study. *Invite the Holy Spirit to prepare your hearts to experience more of God's love, truth, and grace.*
- **Icebreaker**:
  - What is a way that you felt loved or supported in the last thirty days?
- **Watch**:
  - Watch Session 1 of Divided We Stand: Right Now Media Study (16 minutes) - https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/player/video/763581?session=763582
- **Reflect**: Have someone read the following passage of Jesus praying out loud:
  - John 17:13-36 (NIV) "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my

glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

- *Then, spend one minute in silence individually as you pray this prayer:* God, thank you for pouring out your love and bringing me into complete unity with you. I want to glorify you in my life. Where are you inviting me to join you in loving others?

- **Discuss**: What does this mean to me?
  - LEADER choose a few questions from the list below to process together. You don't need to discuss all of them, but choose the ones that stand out to you the most. It can be tempting to give the "right" or "expected" answer for these questions. Resist that urge! Try to be as honest and real as you can. Remember the ground rules as you move into discussion:
    - Ground Rules:
      - Give each other grace.
      - Choose to value people more than issues.
      - Seek understanding, not agreement.
  - Questions:
    - What stood out to you about the video discussion?
    - What are the main emotions that come up for you when you enter into difficult or divisive conversations?
    - The roundtable talked about avoiding disagreement because we . . . a. feel uncomfortable. b. don't want to find out we might be wrong. c. are concerned our proximity will be seen as agreeing with someone's choices. Which of these resonate with you and why?
    - How was disagreement modeled in your family?
    - Where in your life might God be calling you to love even though it's uncomfortable?
    - Tommy shared that when we are only around people that are the same as us, we miss out on some of the depth of Christ. What do you think of this statement?
    - What is most difficult for you about this issue of division as a whole?
- **Apply**: What faith step is God inviting me to take? (**LEADER**: If you do Breakout Groups, this is the time to "Break-out")
    - Discussions can help us grow and learn, but we are also called to let Jesus transform our real, here-and-now lives. Spend some time as a group discussing how to take a first step this next week.
    - What is one practical, tangible way you can move toward love in the midst of division this week? Some ideas are below:
      - Identify someone you usually disagree with, and commit to praying for them this week.
      - Think of a person or a group of people on the "other side" of an issue. Try journaling or writing about them from God's perspective as someone he has watched and loved throughout their lives.
      - Spend a little time researching an area you feel uncomfortable engaging with. Try to understand the "other side" of the issue.
      - Think about one area of judgment or divisiveness in your life. Spend time in prayer asking God to help you see his eternal perspective on it.
      - Does anything else come to mind? Be creative, but practical.
    - Try to make it an actionable step in order to help integrate your actions with your beliefs.

- How I'm going to live it out (writing it down will help you remember it):
    - How can the group come alongside you over the next week?
    - Letting other people love, encourage, and walk with us is foundational in grace-filled relationships

- **Digging Deeper**
    - Look ahead to the Digging Deeper 1 material where we begin exploring how humility and trust in our identities unlock us to love.
    - There are five sections for you to read between now and your next meeting. *If you don't get to them, that's okay. You won't get as much time to process in this study, but don't let that keep you from engaging in your group.*

- **Pray** to close out this time together.

If you or your Life Group members need access to RNM, text CELEBRATIONOLA to 49775.