

# Weekly Study Guide

The week of October 23, 2016

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## Daily Readings

### MONDAY

Acts 9:10-19

### TUESDAY

Acts 9:20-31

### WEDNESDAY

Acts 9:32-43

### THURSDAY

Acts 10:1-8

### FRIDAY

Acts 10:9-23

### SATURDAY

Acts 10:23-48

*Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.*

# Group Discussion

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## CONNECT

*Starting light:* If you had to eat only one food for the rest of your life, what would you choose? and/or

*Digging deeper:* One of the two goals for growth groups is that people would connect as brothers and sisters in Christ who know and love one another. Share about a time in your life, if any, that you've experienced this.

## LEARN AND APPLY

In this week's message, we learned about the faith statement, "I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only son, our Lord," and we focused on these titles for Jesus: "Son of God" and "Lord." The title "son of God" was somewhat flexible in Biblical times. Sometimes it simply referred to a particular, faithful human leader (such as King Solomon in 2 Samuel 7:12-14), but this title applied to Jesus in ways that were different from others.

- Read Mark 1:11 and John 5:19-23. What do these verses say about the relationship between Jesus and God the Father?
- If the "son" represents the "father" as no one else could, what can we know about God from Jesus? As a group, try to name three things we know about God because of Jesus.
- This means that it's important to learn about the life and character of Jesus! In addition to Sunday worship and Growth Groups, reading the Bible at home can be very helpful. Does anyone in your group have suggestions about habits of Bible reading that have worked well for them?

Saying "Jesus is Lord" is the oldest and most central Christian faith statement. Read Romans 10:9-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:3 for two examples of this confession that can be found in letters to these very early Christian communities.

- This faith creates a kind of unity among all Christians, even in spite of meaningful disagreements, that we do not share with those who reject the Lordship of Jesus. Do you have any experiences of being or feeling like you are "on the same team" as other Christians?
- Read Philippians 2:5-11, which describes the character of Jesus and climaxes with his identity as Lord. What kind of Lord is Jesus?
- What kind of lifestyle does this passage suggest for those who share the mindset of Jesus (v. 5) and who call Jesus Lord?

In Jesus' own lifetime, the word "Lord" was a political word. Other rulers called themselves by that word. Talking about politics can be divisive and hard. Yet, if Jesus is Lord then he is Lord of everything, including our politics. And Christians, of all people, should be able to pursue truth in love, even amidst disagreement. Let's try discussing a hard topic with grace and love.

- If Jesus were to make priorities for a society or a shared economy, what do you think his priorities would be? (Think priorities not candidates or political parties.)
- Do Jesus' priorities challenge your priorities at all? (If they are exactly the same, ask yourself whether you have learned from Jesus or if you might be projecting your own opinions on him.)
- If you have opinions about issues relevant to this election (immigration, health care, tax policy, etc.), share with your group why they matter to you.
- What do you think is the most important thing Christians can do to imitate the example of Jesus in this election season?

## PRAY AND APPLY

Members of your group may support different candidates in this election, but we can still pray together. Among your prayers for each other, pray also for peace in our country and world, for good to be done by our government, and for the protection of the vulnerable wherever they are.