Back Into Focus

Group Discussion Guide - September 2026

Premise: Every September we're pressured to rush back into the routine. From back to school, to sports, and work schedules, we're whiplashed out of Summer and back into the swing of things. Instead of jumping on the hamster wheel and running as fast as we're able, what if we took a moment to focus on what really matters this Fall? Let's get back into God's Truth, back into a dedicated community of Jesus' followers, and back into action for the mission of Christ!

Week One: Back Into Truth - Sept 13

Ice Breaker: The term *disciple* means *learner*, *student*, and *follower…* So, let's pretend we're back in school for a moment. When you were a student, who was your favourite teacher? What made them so good at their job? What's the biggest lesson you learned from them?

Jesus was a master teacher! Crowds of people would gather to hear Him speak. What made Jesus' teaching so unique? Consider *John 1:1-4; 5:24; 6:63,68*.

According to *John 8:31*, what is a mark of a true follower of Jesus? What does it look like to *abide in His Word?* Describe a few practical ways you have found consistency in valuing God's Word.

Here's why we need to bring God's Truth back into focus - In *John 8:32*, Jesus refers to a kind of freedom that can only be found in knowing the truth. Jesus expands on this by contrasting freedom in the truth, with slavery to sin in verse *34*.

We all know the feeling of being caught in a lie. How does belief in a lie lead to slavery? Has mankind bought into the lie that true freedom is found on the other side of the experience of sin? Consider *Genesis 3:1-13*.

Are we prone to drifting from the truth? Consider: *Mark 14:38, Galatians 5:16-17, Judges 21:25, Psalms 119:176, Jeremiah 50:6.*

Romans 6:17-18 tells us that true freedom is only found in rejecting the lie of sin and submitting to what is right! What role does authority play in determining truth? Consider *John 8:58*; *14:6.* Submitting to the True One is what discipleship is all about!

What practical step can you take this Fall to put God's Truth back into your focus?

Week Two: Back Into Community - Sept 20

Ice Breaker: Summer is a great time to get away! Are you the type of traveller who, by the end of vacation, you're ready to come back home? Many of us enjoy exploring new places,

but if we're honest, there's just something about home… It's where we belong! What do you miss most about your own community while you're away?

We don't hear Jesus speak often of His relatives or His hometown… Other than being rejected by them… But Jesus definitely spoke about relational community! He showcased intimacy with God the Father (*John 5:19; 6:15; 10:30,38; 14:9; 17:21*). He demonstrated love to those in need (*John 4:46-47; 5:6; 9:1*). He invited people to share in everyday life together with Him (*John 1:38-39,43*).

According to *John 13:35*, what is a mark of a true follower of Jesus? What does verse *34* say about *why* and *how* we are to love one another? Consider also *1 John 4:19-21*. Why is this such a uniquely clear sign of our faith to the world?

The term *'one another'* is showcased 100 times throughout the New Testament. As a group, take a moment to consider which of the following verses is a personal strength, and which are areas in need of growth: *Rom 12:10,16; 14:13; Gal 5:26; Eph 4:32; 5:21; Col 3:13,16; 1 Thess 5:11.*

What practical ways can you focus back into community this Fall?

Week Three: Back Into Action - Sept 27

Ice Breaker: It's now officially Fall! Another season filled with options and new opportunities, projects and work to be done… And maybe that's okay with you! Are you the type of person who can't sit still on vacation, you just find things to do? Share about a completed Summer project or a new endeavor this Fall!

Let's face it, life's busy! Jesus knows what it's like to have a full schedule… Traveling and teaching, crowds to serve, religious opposition, and disciples to train! But Jesus was very focused on the reason why He came! Consider *John 3:17; 6:38; 10:10; 12:46-47; 18:37.*

According to *John 15:8*, what is another proof of a follower of Jesus? Are the values of *truth* and *love* present in the context (*verses 7,9-10*)? What happens to our fruit if we lose sight of *truth* and *love* (*John 15:4-5)*?

The term *fruit* refers to what is *produced* in and through our lives. What does Jesus mean by '*bearing much fruit'*? Is there a way of living that produces bad fruit? Consider *Romans 7:4-6; Galatians 5:22-25; Colossians 1:9-12; Titus 3:14*.

According to *John 15:11*, why is Jesus calling us to produce fruit? Is it possible to find joy without this sense of purpose and mission? Of course, Jesus directly calls us to action in *Matthew 28:19-20*. How have you found joy in getting involved in the mission of Christ?

What is a practical way you can step back into action this Fall?