



DNA Strand #1: People

Ice-Breaker Question

Go around the circle and share thoughts to this question:

Who is someone in my life that influenced my walk with Jesus? What, specifically, was it about that person that influenced me?

Watch VIDEO #3: PEOPLE

NOTE: You will need to pause the video for discussion after 16:34 minutes of playback. Resume the video *after everyone has had a turn to answer.*

PAUSE video when noted on the screen.

1. Take time to discuss Rev. Newman's questions:
 - a. How does the story of the Northwest District help you see the purpose of your church and ministry?
 - b. Who are the people you are being called to care about in your community? What is one way you can begin showing that care in the next 30 days?



Resume video to end. Listen carefully and be prepared at the end to share at least one thing that jumped out to you as important.

After the VIDEO (Digging In)

2. Rev. Newman digs into the history of the LCMS in America. What's one thing that jumped out from what he shared? Why?

3. In the last study, President Linnemann asked us to consider what it looks like to invest in people. Rev. Newman reminds us, "... *the reason why most churches of the past have lost the heritage of the Gospel is because they no longer... reflected the true light of the world to the world... .*" He points out that the first strand of our DNA, our inheritance, our legacy, is an active love for people, actively reaching out and seeking to build relationships. Go around the circle and share at least one way, bridge, or activity through which our congregation has historically loved people.

4. Newman challenges us: "*The greatest struggle is to really care about others, to love people, to have time for people. There are a bunch of people we don't like, or are really afraid of... but we can take the risk as people on the frontier and follow Jesus on His mission to be a friend of sinners.*" What do I think of this statement?

5. Now consider the answer to the very first question (**the ice-breaker**) about the person who influenced my walk with Jesus. If that person were here with me in this group, what would he/she say about taking risks and following Jesus to love people?

Getting Traction in Scripture

Newman references the parables of Jesus about the lost sheep and coin found in Luke 15: 1 - 10. Read them together out loud. After reading, share thoughts on the following:

- *What "AHA" or new insight did I have?*
- *What is something in the parables that challenges me?*
- *What is something in the parables that comforts me?*
- *What do these two stories say about God? (Be as detailed as you can in your answer to this question!)*
- *What does it mean for our congregation if we put these insights into action?*



Last Month's Action Step

What specific action did our congregation take to prioritize the movement over the institution? How did I prioritize movement over institution in my personal life? What could I do to practice this even more?

Monthly Action Step

Return to your answers to Rev. Newman's first two questions in this discussion, and:

- Share again one way you can show love in the next 30 days.

- Take a moment and write down the specific actions you will take to carry this out, and the anticipated or hoped for results. Be prepared to share about your experiences in next month's study.

Closing Action and Prayer (*This prayer will also be used for the closing time in Leadership Team Guide Supplement.*)

Go around the circle and pray out loud for the person to your right, asking the Lord to help him or her grow in His ability to love people. Add these petitions for your friends to your daily prayer time for the next 30 days.

BONUS: Watch "Bonus Video 1: Family Ministry" in the Gospel DNA Toolkit folder in the Resources section of nowlcms.org. In what ways can your congregation utilize some of the opportunities and initiatives mentioned?





SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT **Leadership Team Guide**

“People”

This additional study accompanies the small group discussion guide. It is designed for leadership teams as a process to discuss a strategic ministry plan connected to their mission and local community. The Leadership Team Guide is a focused group process that leads to specific action steps with progress checks at future meetings.

DISCUSS / EVALUATE

- 1. Last month, you wrote down at least two action steps and identified who will help make them happen. Talk about the progress that has been made in this area. Is the original timeline for implementation still doable, or do you need to adjust/refocus?**
- 2. What worked, and what needs to be done differently?**
- 3. [Brainstorm] Based on this discussion, what are some ideas for action steps to take this month? Take a minimum 10 minutes to discuss all ideas. No ideas are wrong, just write them all down and listen encouragingly to one another. If you need to repeat the steps from the last study, that’s absolutely OK. Getting a movement rolling is not a linear process; it zigzags, and sticking to the journey together is what matters. [Note: You will come back to these in the “Implement” section.]**
- 4. Review: How have members of our congregation responded to the previous studies? What movement, changes, developments have we witnessed? Where have efforts been met with resistance? How can we communicate the positive changes, activities, or growth that is going on?**



5. **Extra Question for Thought: Loving people (sinners) is not easy – especially those in the family of God with us! Sometimes growth needs to start with healing – both individually and as a congregation. If this is necessary for us, what are some ways this healing can be initiated?**

PLAN

6. **How does what we learned from Rev. Newman about the DNA strand of “loving people” in the video influence our plans as a leadership team?**

IMPLEMENT

7. **Don’t move on without doing what you can to identify the answers to the next four questions:**
 - a. *From our brainstorm session, what are at least two action steps for our team before our next meeting?*
 - b. *Who will make this happen?*
 - c. *How can we include more leaders in this activity?*
 - d. *When will we meet next?*

PRAY

8. **Go around the circle and pray out loud for the person to your right, asking the Lord to help him or her grow in His ability to love people. Add these petitions for your friends to your daily prayer time for the next 30 days.**

EVALUATE

9. **When your leadership team gathers again, be prepared to use the next discussion guide together. It will include a “check-in” on how you did implementing your plan.**

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