

INTRODUCTION

Do you remember the first time you fell in love? What about that first time is so impactful? Maybe you can still feel the “butterflies”, or maybe you get moved with emotion when thinking back to that time.

When we think of a marriage, we know that weddings are a big deal. This is why we make time every year to remember them - anniversaries. The same is true of your wedding to Jesus. It’s a big deal. That is why having time to remember is so important - communion.

Whether you are still searching and questioning what it means to follow Jesus, or you have been a follower for years, knowing and revisiting our First Love is so important. It helps rekindle the fire we once had and can still have.

Getting back to the basics is vital for a truly healthy life.

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”

- JOHN 3:16 NLT

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION:

JOHN - The Good News of Jesus written by John.

3 - Chapter 3 in the book of John.

16 - Verse 16 in Chapter 3.

NLT - New Living Translation of The Bible.

WEEK 1

GETTING STARTED

Whether you are searching, questioning, or walking with The King, we all have to look at the start.

Here at Damascus Friends Church (DFC), our reason for existence is simple: **“We exist to bring people closer to God”**. We further believe that you can belong to this community before you:

- **Believe** how you think you are supposed to believe about church.
- **Behave** how you think you are supposed to behave in a church.

We are all on a journey in our spirituality. This journey, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, has four stages:

- **Know God** - *Do you have a relationship with Jesus?*
- **Find Freedom** - *What struggles/sin is God working on?*
- **Discover Purpose** - *Where are you using your gifts?*
- **Make A Difference** - *Are you consistently serving?*

It is our prayer that everyone who attends here is continually taking steps forward in each of these facets.

This can be fast or take time, but we believe that all of us can eventually make a difference in this world for Jesus.

Let's start at the beginning: *Know God*. All of us are somewhere on our journey to know God. Whether you are searching, questioning, or walking with The King, one of the best ways to kindle or rekindle the fire of your love for God is to talk about how you first met Jesus and where you are on your spiritual journey. But first things first: let's dive into a few questions that will help us get to know each other.

When did you first come to DFC, and why have you kept coming back?

What is the main thing that you want out of this small group?

Our hope is that this small group will be a catalyst for you to either kindle or rekindle your relationship with Jesus.

When did you first meet Jesus? If you haven't yet, where do you feel that you are on your spiritual journey?

What is Jesus doing in your life TODAY?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. What insight does this give you about your life?

*"Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! **25** All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to*

win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. 26 So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. 27 I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.”

For the rest of our time together, our goal is to help you understand what it truly means to follow Jesus. In the next seven weeks, we will introduce you to or familiarize you with the essentials of walking with Jesus. This is not a sprint; this is a marathon. Knowing God may have come to you like a swift revelation, but that does not mean that finding freedom, discovering your purpose, and making a difference will happen just as quickly. This is a life-long process. Remembering that we are in a race helps put into perspective that we need to run it consistently and run it well.