



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 1 July 17, 2022
"West Side Story"



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for your unconditional love for each and every one of us. We know that in response to your love, we are called to love others like ourselves. But Father, you know that we have some dark places in our heart that make it hard to love others who are not like us. So, teach us to love as you love and remove the fear we have of others who may be different from us. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

1 John 4:18 (NIV)

¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Leviticus 19:33-34 (NIV)

³³ "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. ³⁴ The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God."

Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

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Week 1 *July 17, 2022*
"Asbury at the Movies: West Side Story"

INTRODUCTION

An adaptation of the 1957 musical, *West Side Story* explores forbidden love and the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks, two teenage street gangs of different ethnic backgrounds. So, where does it point us toward the Bible?

Like the Sharks and the Jets, it's human nature to fear people that are different than us. When we fear 'the other,' our actions are also not very admirable. The solution to acting out of fear is to act out of love. John reminds us that "there is no fear in love, and perfect love drives out fear." And Jesus reminds us that in order to love your neighbor, you need to get to know your neighbor.

QUESTIONS

1. Did you see the movie "West Side Story?" What are your thoughts on the movie?
2. During the message, Pastor Eric said "our friends determine the direction and quality of our lives." Do you agree or disagree? Discuss.
3. Read Leviticus 19:33-34. What does this suggest about how God sees people of all nations and races? As God's follower, how can you live out that same spirit in your attitudes and actions today?
4. Read Matthew 5:9 on page 1. How can you be a peacemaker in your sphere of influence?
5. Read I John 4:18 on page 1. During the message, Pastor Eric said "in order to love your neighbor, you have to know your neighbor." Do you agree or disagree? How can you make that happen?

FINAL APPLICATION

This week, find someone who is different than you (race, ethnicity, social class, religion etc.) and get to know them a little better.