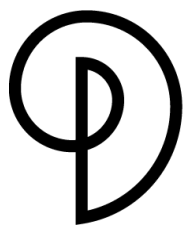


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



PRINCE
OF PEACE
Called to Connect



Conviction

March 19 & 20, 2022

God knows every intention of our heart and every thought in our mind. Is that good news or bad news? The answer depends upon your image of God. We could think about the Spirit as a teacher with a red pen, seeking to expose our failures, but how much better to imagine the work of the Spirit as lovingly aligning our lives to the aliveness that Jesus promises?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: JOHN 16:5-11

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of its sin. To convict means to be found guilty or proven to be in error. In John's Gospel to "convict the world of sin" primarily means that the Spirit will confront those who don't believe that Jesus is the Messiah and show them that they are wrong. But throughout Scripture we see that part of God's work, and therefore the Spirit's work, is to search our hearts and show us when we're wrong. Here is just one example: ***Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*** – Psalm 139:23-24

The question is, is that good news or bad news? If you think that God is delighting in pointing out your faults and marking your life with a red pen, then it isn't good news at all. If your image of God is someone who cares about you and wants you to thrive, then it is good news indeed. God doesn't convict you of your faults and failures to diminish you. And God certainly doesn't convict you in order to create a record of your wrongs so that there's proof of why you don't deserve to go to heaven. When God's Spirit convicts us it is to warn us that we're headed in a direction that will not bless our lives, and to steer us back in a direction that will. That's what King David was saying in Psalm 139. He said, "Search me and if anything in my life is out of alignment with your will, put me back on the right path."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about someone in your life that invested in you and helped you succeed.
- How does this passage give us a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in our life?
- How does the Psalm 139 passage broaden our understanding further?
- The Spirit is our advocate, helper, and encourager. What feelings does this stir in you?

APPLICATION: This week, tune into your conscience and spend some time in daily reflection. Where have you seen the Spirit at work in your life? Spend some time reflecting and thanking God for this wonderful gift.