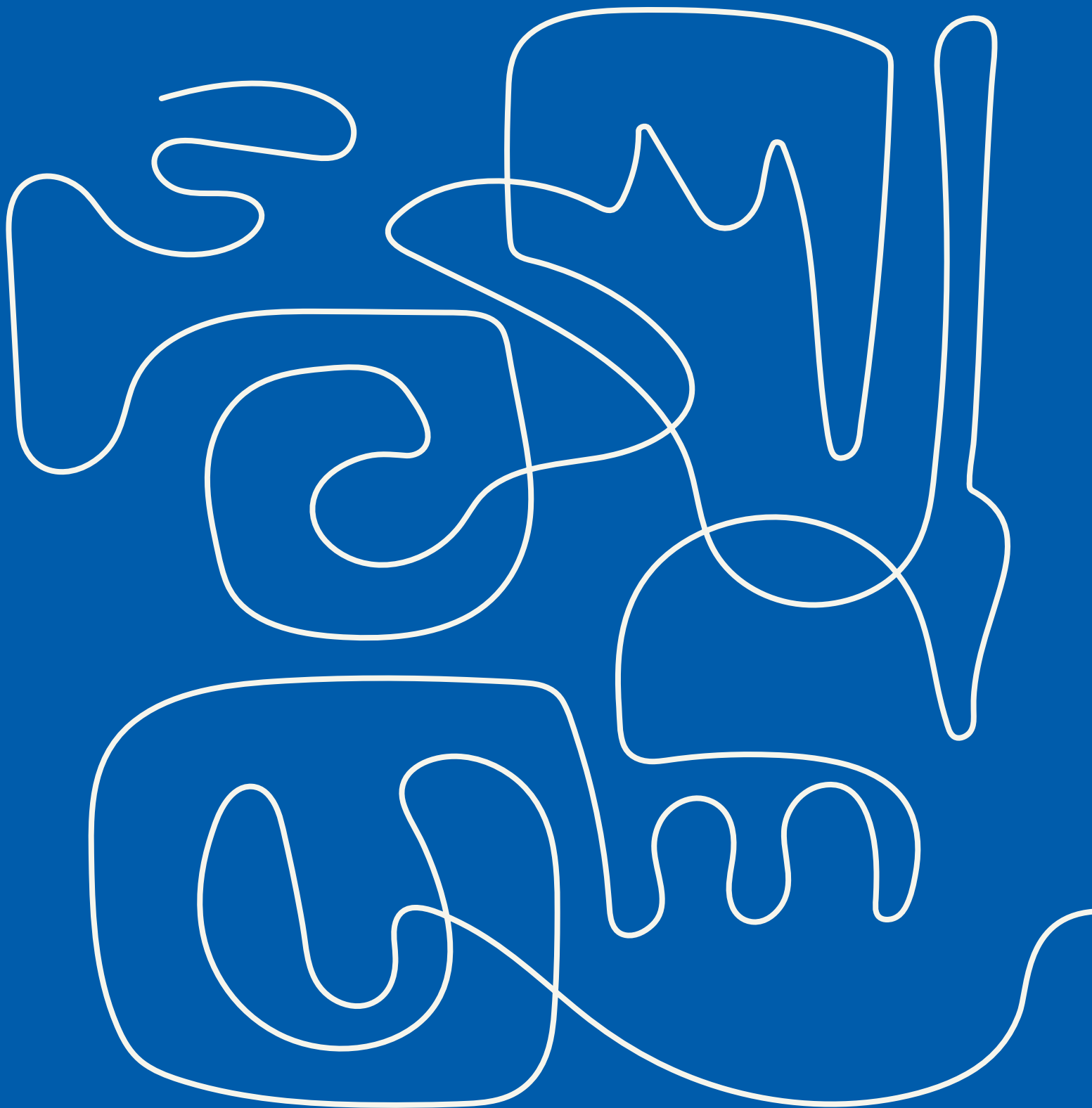


In Flux



PREPARING FOR LIFE BEYOND COLLEGE

Created and Written by Allison & Joe Priola | Edited by Jon Eastwood

A Resource Developed by Cru City - cru.org/embark

FOCUS

In Flux focuses on equipping participants for the pending transition by celebrating their journeys so far, as well as by exploring ideas, concepts, language and resources to help graduates walk forward with greater clarity for the road ahead. Our heart to help them develop a deeper confidence in God's love and wisdom for them as they walk forward while uncovering a sense of calling and participating in his mission to redeem and renew all of creation.

FRAMEWORK

The series is broken into four separate 2-hour gatherings, which can include dinner or dessert. Ask students to commit to all four gatherings, while leaving room for them to come to as much as they can. Each gathering is sequential with the following framework:

1. CELEBRATING YOUR JOURNEY & ENTERING GOD'S STORY
2. NAVIGATING TRANSITION & OWNING SPIRITUAL FORMATION
3. ESTABLISHING A THEOLOGY OF WORK & CULTIVATING A KINGDOM VISION
4. CREATING CULTURE & GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS

FORMAT

Gatherings may work best around Sunday evenings since students schedules are still full. It is recommended that hosts/facilitators incorporate a welcome dinner, as well as a celebratory or commissioning experience at the conclusion.

Scan QR Code for supporting articles, tools and resources.



001

CELEBRATING YOUR JOURNEY
& ENTERING GOD'S STORY



CELEBRATING YOUR JOURNEY

We begin the journey forward by looking back.

It's important to take time to celebrate what God has done in your life during these last four or five years, as well as to acknowledge all that you've been entrusted with as you reach this educational milestone.

Each of our stories are full of experiences, relationships, and opportunities for growth that form our unique selves. Celebrating the highlights and acknowledging the hardships (and inviting God into them through reflection for his redemptive purposes) is a great way to discover how you are continually being shaped.

In this session you'll have the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate what God has done.

EXERCISE: CREATING "COLLEGE LIFE MAPS"

The purpose of this time is to help students visually observe how they have been blessed and entrusted with much during this season. (Materials needed: 3 different colors of small Post-it Notes: red, blue, yellow; large posterboards, pens).

Question: What has most influenced or shaped you during your time in college?

Step 1: Take time to brainstorm various people, events, circumstances, experiences on three different colored Post-its and place them on a piece of paper.

Think through the following:

- People (friends, family members, classmates, peers, mentors, pastors, etc...) (Red Post-it)
- Events/Circumstances (conferences/retreats, summer missions, bible studies, outreaches, roommate trips, etc.) (Blue Post-it)
- Development/Skills (training you have received) (Yellow Post-it)

Step 2: If you want to go a step further, delineate between which have been positive vs. which have been painful or hurtful when you experienced them. Then drawing a line through the middle of the page, placing positive Post-its above the line and painful Post-its below the line. God uses all of our life experiences in our formation.

Step 3: Arrange the Post-its in chronological order.

Step 4: Using a Green post it note or box write down any key takeaways or landmark lessons that you've had during your time in college that you want to recall and remember. These could represent what you learned about yourself, God or the world.

Step 5: Once this is done, share about your timeline in groups of 3.

ENTERING INTO GOD'S STORY

Stories are powerful.

Stories can help us understand where we come from and give us a sense of direction for our life. Stories can provide us a sense of meaning, purpose and especially identity. If you don't know what story you are participating in or the trajectory of it, making decisions and planning for the future can become confusing and even paralyzing.

Developing a better sense of the bigger story - God's Story - in the world gives us directional bearings so we can align our lives with Him, cultivate a vision for how we are to see and navigate the world, as well as make decisions with greater clarity and confidence. Contrasted with the prevailing contemporary belief that you are to go and create your own sense of identity, meaning and purpose in the world, the Christian's sense of identity, meaning, purpose and calling is found within the greater Story of God at work in the world.

This session aims to give a fuller understanding of the grand narrative of Scripture, what God has done, is doing, and will do, as well as how we can participate in gospel renewal in the here and now.

TEACH FOUR CHAPTER STORYLINE FRAMEWORK
Kingdom Story Essay and/or watch [The Big Story with Amy Sherman - Flourish San Diego](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What's the narrative of Scripture that you grew up with, or perhaps understand at the moment? Which of the "chapters" are emphasized more?
- What are the implications of the Four Chapter Storyline of God's mission in the world? How does it reframe the way we think about God, humanity, the Church and his redemptive purposes?
- If God's Story ends with the renewal of all things, what is our part? (Proverbs 11:10, Jeremiah 29:6-7)
- What might flourishing in our relationships and communities look like in light of this?

Closing Question: What stood out to you tonight? What is something you want to remember? If willing, perhaps share with a friend or two who is with you.



002

NAVIGATING TRANSITION
& OWNING SPIRITUAL FORMATION

NAVIGATING TRANSITION

All new beginnings start with an ending.

Transitioning from one place to the next is like moving from total orientation and what's familiar to disorientation and what's unfamiliar. This process involves pain, friction and even loss. Our aim in this time together is to normalize the range of emotions every person is feeling around the fast-approaching transition and to introduce you to some concepts and language that can be helpful in understanding the transition experience.

EXERCISE: TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY
(Materials needed: Post-it Notes)

On Post-its have students write down the answers to the following questions:

- How are you feeling about graduating (identify feeling words; use emojis on a cell phone to help)
- What are your plans once you graduate?
- What are you hopeful for in the coming year?
- What are you concerned about for next year?

Share with the group by placing your Post-it notes together on a wall or board

INTRODUCTION TO "CHANGE MODELS"

Helpful frameworks or language around change may include: Order. Disorder. Reorder., or Orientation. Disorientation. Reorientation, or Life. Death. Resurrection. The main point in this exercise is that change is inevitable and involves loss, confusion and new things.

DYNAMICS OF TRANSITION

(Transition Diagram-See Resource Packet)

- Consider a past life transition or change. How did you experience that time? What lessons did you learn about how you navigate change?
- As you think about the upcoming changes, which feelings do you identify with and why?

Optional Video to Watch

[Dr. Danny Kimm](#)

INTRODUCTION TO GREENHOUSE & WILD FIELD ECOSYSTEMS

We introduce two ecosystem metaphors for life. One metaphor is that of a "greenhouse" and another is that of a "wild field". Each ecosystem has advantages and disadvantages, beauty and difficulty. Moving from one ecosystem to the other is inevitable. Understanding the differences, discovering and discerning what is going on internally, and developing new structures (i.e. relationships, community, mentors, spiritual practices) will serve as a trellis to help you flourish in the new and wonderful ecosystem of the wild field.

Share stories or data providing realistic pictures of young adults transitioning (i.e. a recent survey stated that only 27% of graduates have an idea of career path.) Vocation usually formed over time rather than found in a moment.

PRESENT ECOSYSTEM METAPHORS

[Eight Practices to Navigate Transition Article](#)

- What's true of the Greenhouse?
- What's true of the Wild Field?
- What was helpful to learn about the different ecosystems (greenhouse vs. wild field)?
- How does this make you feel?

OWNING SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The goal of Christian formation is oneness or unity with God.

Healthy Christian formation is actively and sacrificially living our whole lives before the Father, in the Son, and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Being attentive to our own formation into Christ-likeness allows us to be a transformative presence in the world around us.

Attempting to participate with God in bringing life to the world around us without placing some focus and work on our own transformation process would be similar to attempting to rescue someone who is drowning without putting in any work towards becoming a strong swimmer.

There is no drifting into the way of Jesus. There is God's part and there is your part. Putting in the effort to grow spiritually does not diminish the gracious, loving work of the Spirit in us. Dallas Willard writes in *The Great Omission* that, "Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude. Effort is an action." You must put in the work.

This session aims to introduce you to one way you can own your part in becoming more like Jesus.

EXERCISE: CREATE A RULE OF LIFE/TRELLIS
(Materials needed: tongue depressors or popsicle sticks, Sharpie)

A key concept that can help us to thrive as followers of Jesus as we move to a different ecosystem is a 'Rule of Life'. Developed by the early Church, a Rule (which comes from the Latin word 'trellis') is an intentional way of life involving practices and habits to assist Jesus people in staying connected to God.

A trellis is a wood structure in agriculture that aids plants like vines in both stability and growth by keeping the branches out of the dirt (bugs and bacteria) and up in the sunlight for health. Consider vineyards - vines and branches (John 15) for a moment. Healthy, connected vine branches produce good fruit. The Rule of Life is simply a tool to help us to remain connected - abiding- in God by assisting in intimacy and a deeper knowledge of God's love.

A trellis, or rule, is intentionally living into formational practices or habits that cultivate growth. These different daily, weekly, monthly practices can include: prayer, journaling, community, rest, service, solitude, reading, Sunday worship, and even play and physical activity. Planned integration of formational elements (a trellis) brings structure, stability and rhythms to help you to flourish in a wild field.

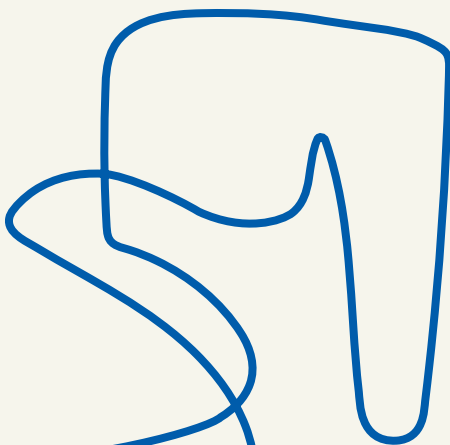
[Watch Ken Shegimatsu video](#) What is a 'rule of life' and why is it so important to a fruit-bearing life?

Group Discussion: What are some healthy practices and rhythms around faith & relationships (i.e. mentors, community, church, sabbath, prayer practices, study, mission/service)

Using tongue depressors, construct your own physical trellis and using a sharpie marker, have students write on the tongue depressors things that will represent their trellis goals (for example 'join a small group at church' or 'find a mentor')

Closing Question: What stood out to you tonight? What is something you want to remember? Share with your neighbor.

Optional Handout (See Resource Packet)
Creating a Rule of Life



003

ESTABLISHING A THEOLOGY OF WORK
& CULTIVATING A KINGDOM VISION

ESTABLISHING A THEOLOGY OF WORK

Group Discussion Question: How would you describe your view of work? Who or what has influenced your view of work? What Scripture passages can we look at to inform our view of work?

VALUE OF WORK EXERCISE: FROM BEAN TO BARISTA

Get in groups of three. Take a few minutes and think about how many people are involved in the process of you drinking a cup of coffee from your local coffee shop. Write down as many people as you can who would be a part of serving you in this seemingly simple transaction (the group that comes up with the most wins). Have groups share who they came up with to illustrate the value of work as service to others.

CREATION MANDATE

Genesis 1 gives a 30,000 foot level view of the creation story. Genesis 2 gives us some finer details. Read Genesis 1:26-28/2:4-15. This is often referred to as the Creation Mandate, which is the on-going charge to humanity, in the power and blessing of God, to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth and to gently subdue and cultivate the earth.

Bonus: Do a word study on the Hebrew words Kabash/Radah/Abad/Shamar.

Discuss with your neighbor the following descriptions of work.

“Work is any activity, paid or unpaid, whose main purpose is to cultivate blessing out of the created order.” (Theology That Works, Greg Forster PhD., pg. 10)

“However, we’re not called to just any kind of work. Some work is destructive to the earth, to the human brain, to the economy, to the family, to the developing world. We’re called to a specific kind of work. To make a garden-like world where image bearers can flourish and thrive, where people can experience and enjoy God’s generous love. A kingdom where God’s will is done on earth as it is in heaven, where the glass wall between earth and heaven is so thin and clear and translucent, that you don’t even remember it’s there”. (Garden City, John Mark Comer, pg. 61)

Question: How does the Creation Mandate inform the role of work in God’s mission to renew ALL things?

Optional Handout (See Resource Packet)
Why The Church Shouldn’t Ignore the Workplace

CULTIVATING A KINGDOM VISION

In light of what we've been discussing regarding God's story, navigating new ecosystems, and your view of work, this session is designed to help you *start the process* of developing a vision for your life that's integrated with God's mission in the world.

The mission of God is like a symphony where the Conductor animates the musicians playing their instruments representing the unity and diversity of cultures, gifts and personalities. Together, under the direction of the Spirit, each individual instrument plays various notes of the gospel to create beautiful music that brings light and life to the world.

God sent Jesus into the world for the life of the world. And Jesus now sends us into the world for (not 'from') the life of the world so that humanity might flourish in right relationship with God, with self, with each other, and with the created order.

[Watch Visioneering by Andy Stanley](#)

"Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others"
Jonathan Swift

How the mission is expressed in your life will constantly change... your part is cultivating a foundation of intimacy with God along with a deep sense of understanding who God has made you to be... the mechanics of the "how" will sort out and shift over time.

EXERCISE: FIVE THINGS
(See Resource Packet)

Use The Five Things to help students develop a personal vision and plan for life in the wild field in light of God's Story and in light of their goals, passions, talents, etc. The big idea here is to carve out the time and space for students to sit, think, pray and ask for help from others in making a plan.

1. Introduce concept & worksheet

[Watch Five Things by Holly Sheldon](#)

2. For each of the 5 components read handout and questions, give examples. Take 10 minutes to brainstorm each of the 5 things, answer questions and have students share with their neighbor.

Kingdom Vision Questions

- What is the dream God has for me as I develop intimacy with him?
- What kind of person do I want to become? (with God's help)
- How has God made me? (talents, gifts, passions)
- What are the needs around me? (work, home, community)
- What gives me joy? What do you desire?
- Who do I enjoy serving?
- What makes me pound the table?
- What could be and should be true about the lives and environment around me?

Closing Question: What stood out to you tonight? What is something you want to remember? Share with your neighbor.

004

CREATING CULTURE
& GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS



CREATING CULTURE

The Scripture's four gospel accounts of the life of Jesus give great insight into how he, and therefore we as his followers, are to engage in the culture around us. What posture are we as Jesus people to have in our relationships and communities? Jesus artfully navigated with truth and grace in multiple contexts including various political and theological factions and across gender, ethnic and racial divides. His aim was to liberate, heal and restore to life what was stolen away by Sin and Death.

This session will give us some perspective on how the Church has often historically engaged culture, as well as help us discern where we find ourselves today. In addition, we'll seek to understand how to have meaningful gospel conversations in everyday contexts.

HISTORICAL POSTURES OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS CULTURE

[Watch Andy Crouch: Culture Making: The Good News in a Changing World \(Part 1\) - Biola University Chapel](#)
(Send link after Gathering 3 and before Gathering 4 to save time)

- How have you seen these various postures lived out (Condemn, Critique, Copy, Consume)?
- Have there been times in your own life when a gesture of condemnation, critique or copying became a posture? How did that happen? What did you gain and lose by taking on that posture?
- Is there a cultural arena, large or small, where you've made your own transition from suspicious critic to active cultivator or creator?

GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS

What does a thriving witness and ministry impact look like in life outside of the greenhouse?

Cultivating a healthy "ministry" in the marketplace and in your neighborhood may look like adopting a long-game approach. It is building a witness through faithful presence and sowing relationships. So when life happens, when turbulence sets in with friends, neighbors, and coworkers as it does with all of us, we are present, have garnered trust, and can confidently step into the sacred moments ready to give a reason or answer to anyone who asks for the hope that lies within each of us.

Note: This conversation can also serve as a time to address the concern or confusion that may be around the use of traditional campus evangelism tools (i.e. surveys, Soularium, Perspective cards and KGP) in the workplace/community. It is helpful to normalize that life and ministry will not look the same and that is okay. KGPs (a personal salvation plan presentation) may not fly in the cubicle, and random initiative evangelism using Soularium may not fit with company guidelines. This is not right or wrong, good or bad.

[Watch We are Created For: How Christians can Engage Culture with Rasool Berry](#)

- What starting points in culture other than the Bible would you use to begin a conversation about God?

While there certainly is a core aspect to the gospel message that is indeed good news for each and every person, it is difficult to share good news with others if we aren't mindful of where they are at, what kinds of burdens they are carrying, or understand the various longings, aches and pains of the people around us. The opportunity is to be a creative, thoughtful and intentional people who listen to the Holy Spirit to find ways to contextually communicate the good news of Jesus for them, today.

5 BEHAVIORS FOR MEANINGFUL GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS

(Handout: Cas Monaco Article-See Resource Packet)

1. Be present and listen- follow the conversation and not your agenda
2. Find common ground- build a relational bridge
3. Walk in their shoes- understand their story
4. Talk like a real person- use words meant for real people and not the pews
5. Create a better story than the one they have heard (i.e. Four Chapter Gospel)

Question: Which of these behaviors is easy for you, which one will take time to practice?

This also brings into focus the need for each of us to be in tune with how the Gospel is informing or forming us personally each day. As Christ followers, how is the good news of Jesus as King in my life today shaping the way I see myself, others and the world around me? A good tool to help people reflect on this is the Micro-Testimony Worksheet (See Resource Packet).

PANEL DISCUSSION

Gather 2-3 recent Cru graduates to share their stories of transition.

- What were you hoping for/expecting about your spiritual life in leaving college?
- What was surprising?
- How have you flourished?
- How have you floundered in your first few years out of the college/cru community?
- Would you have done anything differently to help prepare well?
- What did you wish you knew (or that someone would have told you) before you made the transition?
- Q & A with students

Closing Question: What stood out to you tonight? What is something you want to remember? Share with your neighbor.

Optional Handout (See Resource Packet)
I Want to Find a Church Home

COMMISSIONING/ WRAP UP

Thank the students for carving out time for these gatherings. Invite those staying in your area to stay connected (give some tangible ideas of what this could look like). Connect those going to other cities to City Embark Staff or other known networks. List of cities and staff can be found at cru.org/embark.



