

## Group Leader Guide

### “Be Fruitful or a Thornbush?” – Would You Rather?

May 11-12, 2019

#### Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation; encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

#### // Message Summary

We continue in our series **Would You Rather?** with guest speaker Carl Kuhl (see below). Carl leads us through the section of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus talks about how we can discern people’s motives by the “fruit” they bear. Like any good, healthy tree, people who are healthy and connected to Jesus will live out the Kingdom of God in a good, healthy way. But, Jesus isn’t showing us how to point our finger at others. He’s telling us to look in the mirror and see where we might be “dying on the vine”; not living out the connected, “with God” kind of life we should be living.

#### // Guest Speaker: Carl Kuhl

Carl Kuhl is the Lead Pastor at Mosaic Christian Church in Elkridge, MD. He and his wife Lindsay have four children and Carl is one of the many who have lived to tell the tale of being in Jim Burgen’s youth ministry program back in KY.

#### // Biblical Context

##### **Matthew 7:15-20, John 15:5 and Hebrews 11:36-37**

Matthew 7:15-20 and John 15:5: There were many rabbis and teachers in Jesus’ time with different perspectives on what God means, meant, and said in scripture, but Jesus has a stern warning in Matthew 7 for “*false prophets*” (people teaching false doctrines in God’s name). Jesus often targeted the Pharisees—a group of religious leaders who took God’s word (and intent) out of context; using it to bully, instead of encourage. In John 15, we again see Jesus using the metaphor of good trees/vines and good fruit as a way of discerning one’s heart.

Hebrews 11:36-37: Hebrews 11 is often called the “*Faith Hall of Fame*”; listing so many people of faith found in the Bible. This section shows the hard truth that it wasn’t easy for most of these heroes of faith who died in brutal ways.

#### // Discussion Questions

1. **Read Matthew 7:15-20.** Who immediately comes to mind when you hear “false prophets”?
2. What do you think “good fruit” looks like and what does “bad fruit” look like?
3. It’s always easier to point out the faults of others, but what are some good ways and practices to discern whether we’re a “healthy tree” with “good fruit” or not?
4. Carl asked the question, “*Would you rather face what you’re facing (your struggles) alone or with Jesus?*” What do you think facing life with Jesus offers over going it alone?