



## **Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups**

### **“Centering Jesus”**

**Preached by Andrew Arndt**

**January 4, 2026**

#### **Summary**

*Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.*

Pastor Andrew preached about centering Jesus Christ in our lives as we enter the new year, moving beyond typical goal setting to focus on discipleship. He emphasized three key areas where we must center Jesus: in our actions (loving God with our strength), in our thoughts (loving God with our mind), and in our affections (loving God with our heart and soul). The message challenged the cultural gospel of self-actualization, calling believers to seek Christ rather than themselves in all they do. Pastor Andrew provided practical tools like viewing ourselves as mountains rather than weather when difficult thoughts arise and using scripture meditation to center our minds on God.

## Key Passages

- Mark 12:30
- 1 Peter 3:15
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Colossians 1:16
- Matthew 16:23
- Psalm 125:1 & 16:8

## Opening Prayer

*Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own*

**Heavenly Father**, as we gather together to discuss Your Word, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us today. Help us to be receptive to Your Spirit's leading and to encourage one another in our faith journey. Lord, we pray that through our time together, You would draw us closer to You and help us to love You more fully with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. In Jesus' name, **Amen**.

## Getting Going

*Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.*

What is one New Year's resolution you made in the past that you either completely forgot about or gave up on within the first few weeks?

## Discussion Questions

*Answer as many of the following questions as time and interest permit.*

1. Pastor Andrew mentioned that our culture trains us in the 'gospel of self-actualization.' How do you see this playing out in your own life or in society around you?
2. When you think about your daily actions and decisions, whose name is being made great through them? How can you be more intentional about centering Christ in your actions?
3. The sermon discussed the concept of metacognition - thinking about our thoughts. Can you share a time when you noticed yourself having thoughts about your thoughts?
4. Pastor Andrew used the metaphor of being like a mountain rather than the weather. What kind of 'weather' (thoughts or emotions) tends to sweep you away most often?
5. How do you currently practice the discipline of scripture meditation and memory? What challenges do you face in this area?

6. The message talked about being a 'porter' who can interrogate thoughts before letting them in. How might this change the way you handle difficult emotions like anger, fear, or anxiety?
7. What would it look like practically for you to love God with your money, your relationships, your work, and your influence this year?

## **Making It Personal**

*Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life*

This week, choose one specific area of your life (work, relationships, finances, etc.) and intentionally practice centering Jesus in that area. Before making decisions or taking actions in that area, ask yourself: 'How can I seek and serve Christ in this?' Keep a journal of how this changes your perspective and actions throughout the week.

## **Key Takeaways**

*Commit to memory one point from the message before you dismiss.*

- We are called to center Jesus Christ in our actions, doing everything for the glory of God rather than for self-actualization.

- We must center Jesus in our thoughts through metacognition - learning to observe and direct our thoughts rather than being victimized by them.
- We are called to center Jesus in our affections, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- The discipline of scripture meditation and memory helps displace chaotic thoughts and centers our minds on God.
- We love God not because we are good at loving, but because He first loved us - His commitment to us is based on His love, not our performance.

## **Closing Prayer**

*Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.*

**Lord Jesus**, thank You for the reminder that You are to be the center of everything in our lives. We confess that too often we have centered ourselves instead of You. Help us this week to practice centering You in our actions, our thoughts, and our affections. When difficult thoughts come, help us to remember that we are like mountains - stable and secure in You. Fill us with Your love so that we might love You wholeheartedly in return. We trust in Your commitment to us and ask for Your strength to follow You faithfully. In Your precious name, **Amen**.