

THINK SMALL

WEEK ONE: Study Guide

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Through history, creative thinkers, like our own church leaders, have looked for new ways to reach people for Christ. Of course, God is the author of everything, but I have always loved how we live out this desire to introduce people to Jesus at The Cove. Mike Madding has been gradually bringing us up to speed on the potential for making a huge impact through Neighborhood Campuses. When I was given the thought-provoking title to this series, *Think Small*, I couldn't wait to jump in, research and Google everything I could find! It's all on the internet, right? Although loosely applicable, check out this story of one of the best advertising campaigns of the twentieth century.

In the 1950s, Helmut Krone launched a risky idea to the post-war automotive industry that would require a much different way of thinking. Shortly after World War II, everything in America was big: poodle skirts, baby boomers, world trade, and you guessed it—the American muscle car! The challenge was to introduce America to the idea of a compact, small engine car manufactured in former Nazi-occupied Germany to the American market. The idea should have never made it past the first board meeting! Or should it? The advertising plan was simple: *think small*. The advertisements that Helmut and his team took to America's neighborhoods and televisions were plain, with white backgrounds and visuals consisting of a measly small black and white image of a car along with fine print at the bottom. The print for such advertisements read:

"Cut gas bill in half"

"Low maintenance cost and insurance"

"A couple of dozen college kids don't try to squeeze inside it"

"Five pints of oil instead of five quarts"

"Rear engine makes it great in mud and snow"

The creativity of this small way of thinking was a huge success to say the least, and would forever take its unique place in global marketing. The car you ask? Nothing other than the 1950's Volkswagen Beetle.

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WEEK ONE: STUDY GUIDE

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Can you imagine the odds of Volkswagen pulling off such a feat, especially during that generation? Have you ever tried introducing a new concept or idea to someone? What are some comments or challenges you experienced? Would you say your approach was along the lines of "Think Small" or "Think Big"?

Into the Bible

- 2) Jesus faced substantial marketing challenges Himself. In the timeframe of first century Judaism, He had the task of introducing Himself as the long awaited Messiah, along with some pretty radical new ways of living! How daunting a task that must have been! **Read John 4:19-26**. What new concept did Jesus introduce to the Samaritan woman? What was Jesus teaching her in regard to temple worship?
- 3) **Read Matthew 11:28-30** and compare it to **Acts 15:1-11**. How is Jesus' yoke different from the yoke of the Pharisees? Do you get the impression that Jesus tried to remove barriers so that it would be easier for the outside world to know Him, or do you feel He made it more difficult? Explain.
- 4) Doesn't it seem as if everything Jesus was introducing to the culture was simple, easy to manage, personal, and highly effective? This is "thinking small." The misconception is that thinking small means small outcomes or small results. Jesus chose only twelve disciples to join Him in mission with monumental outcomes! Twelve to help change the world, and one of them even betrayed him. **Read Matthew 4:12-22**. How many disciples are mentioned in this passage? How many of the remaining disciples do you think Jesus found in this small area of Galilee consisting of Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Nazareth?

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WEEK ONE: STUDY GUIDE

- 5) As the way of Christ was spreading throughout the area, small fellowships and churches were forming in neighborhoods and communities. **Read 1 Corinthians 16:19.** Describe Aquila and Priscilla's church. Were the disciples following a "think small" premise in starting up congregations of believers? How did Jesus shape this for them?

How Does This Apply?

- 6) Have you ever stopped to think that the biggest impact we could have in our world could be through the smallness of living out true friendships, unconditional love, and acts of service in our own neighborhoods? Just by introducing a Big God to our friends, in a personal way, we can shape lives for eternity. At The Cove, the first part of our mission statement reads, "We will introduce our friends to Jesus." How could you make it easy for a neighbor or friend to attend a service at The Cove?
- 7) Here is a multiple choice-type question. Below are listed approximate values of density per square mile in towns in North Carolina. This means that if you live in any given area of one of these cities, you could travel just a half-mile to the north, south, east, and west, and be in the vicinity of that number of people. Match the correct values to the appropriate city by drawing a straight line to each.

Mooresville, NC	370
Denver, NC	1500
Statesville, NC	2300
Salisbury, NC	1200

What is the population per square mile in your town? _____

Did you realize how much potential lies just one square mile from you?

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Current Prayer Focus

What we're praying for together as a church:

- Neighborhood Campuses
- Building for the Statesville Campus

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

8) When thinking of the life and ministry of Paul the apostle, we may overlook his role in the birth and health of so many "neighborhood campuses." Read the following verses and look at Paul's comments. What are the patterns? Does this paint a different picture of what church life may have been like?

- 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4
- 1 Thessalonians 1:1-9
- Colossians 4:15-18
- Colossians 1:5-8
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Ephesians 1:1-2
- Galatians 1:1-5
- 2 Corinthians 1:1-2,15-16
- 1 Corinthians 16:19-20
- Philemon 1:22-25