



FORWARD *Together*

LIFE GROUP
DISCUSSION GUIDE

A PRAYER FOR THE JOURNEY

Gracious and loving God, as a church we approach you with awe and wonder, with praise and thanksgiving. You are faithful to us as You invite us to new places and deeper understanding.

You are calling us to move forward together, as one body unified in Christ, on mission for Your kingdom. We declare that You are the same God who called Abraham to an unknown land, the same God who gave Moses the faith to lead through difficult circumstances, the same God who stirred up praise in David's heart for all You had provided, and the same God who gave Joshua the strength to lead with courage. We know we can trust You and follow You with assurance in Your goodness and might. In this season, we want to trust You once more. We want to move from comfort into calling, we want to have faith that is bigger than our fears, we want to give willingly in ways that will bless generations to come, and we want to build our lives upon Christ, who is our firm and unshakeable foundation.

Lord, as we study Scripture, spend time in prayer, and walk together, open our eyes to see You more clearly. Shape us to look like Christ and let us be kingdom people with a renewed sense of courage, purpose, and hope anchored in You. Help us to be unified around Your vision for us, rooted deeply in faith, and empowered to pour out love and generosity.

Just as David declared that all we have belongs to You, we come before you to offer You our lives, our resources, and our future. We do so with trust, gratitude, and thankfulness for what's ahead as we move forward together. Lead us, oh God. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen!

Blessings,
Pastor Pamela Palmer

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

Every movement of God begins with a step of faith. Sometimes that step looks like leaving what is familiar and safe. Sometimes it looks like standing still in trust when the waters rise. Sometimes it looks like pruning, surrender, or stretching beyond what feels comfortable. And sometimes, it looks like crossing into new territory, stepping into the promises of God with courage and hope.

That's what Forward *Together* is all about.

This devotional was written for such a season, a season of faith, dependence, and courage. As we prepare to take our next step as a church, my prayer is that these daily reflections will awaken your heart to the God who calls us forward. Not just as individuals, but together. Together, as one body, one family, one community anchored in the unshakable love of Christ.

Over these next few weeks, we will journey with Abraham as he leaves the comfort of what he knows, with Moses as he stands before the Red Sea, with the disciples as they learn to remain in the Vine, and with Joshua as he takes courage to lead God's people into promise. Each story reminds us that faith is not a static thing Faith moves, it trusts, it endures, and it follows.

Forward Together is not merely a generosity initiative; it is a spiritual pilgrimage. It is a call to trust God with our future, our resources, our comfort, and our hearts. It is about building something that will outlast us - a legacy of faith, mission, and love for generations to come.

So as you open these pages, I invite you to come with open hands and open hearts. Let this be a time to listen, to reflect, and to respond. May you encounter the living God who invites you—yes, *you*—to step forward into His unfolding story.

—Pastor Tara Beth Leach



WEEK 1 | LEAVING COMFORT

PERSONAL DEVOTION

SERMON NOTES

MEMORY VERSE | Genesis 12:4a
“So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.”

REFLECTION

God called Abram to take a step of faith... into the unknown. When Scripture introduces Abram, the first things we learn about him are that his father is Terah, his wife is Sarai, and she is barren. In the very next chapter, God promises Abram that he will become a great nation and a blessing to all peoples. Abram could have scoffed or doubted, but we are told that upon this invitation from God to follow, Abram went. Abram’s lineage would not end with him or in bareness, but instead, God promised that he would become a great nation! But first, this meant Abram and Sarai would need to leave the comfort of what they were used to and begin to trust in and depend on God in new ways.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

- 1. Recall a few times in your life when you walked a path of uncertainties or unknown outcomes.
- 2. Choose one particular situation. Consider what you learned from accepting God’s invitation to follow.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WEEK 1 | LEAVING COMFORT

GROUP DISCUSSION

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we praise Your holy name! We bless Your holy name! You are the God of all creation who reaches into our lives and brings goodness and hope. Inspire us, by the story of Abram, to trust You more, to follow You even when we have to sacrifice comfort, and to know that what You promise will come to pass. In Jesus’ name, amen!

ICEBREAKER

Share a time when you went somewhere or did something that had elements of uncertainty or lacked the conveniences and comforts you are used to.

SCRIPTURE READING | Genesis 12:1-4

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

- 1. What was God asking Abram to leave in verse 1?
- 2. What promises was God making to Abram in verses 2-3?
- 3. How did Abram respond to God’s call in verse 4?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Abram left the comforts of his life to follow God. What can we glean from Abram’s faith journey?
- 2. Think of a time when God has invited you to take a step of faith; what was your initial reaction?
- 3. What does comfort look like in your life right now? Could that be holding you back spiritually or be a danger to your faith formation?
- 4. Why do you think God oftentimes calls people away from comfort when He wants to use them?
- 5. Can you think of other biblical figures that had to leave the familiar to follow God? What happened?
- 6. Read Galatians 3:7-9. What does this passage demonstrate about God? How does that motivate you to follow when God may be asking you to take a step of faith?
- 7. Consider an area of your life God might be inviting you to take a step of faith. How can the group support one another as steps of faith are taken?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Closing Blessing | **Leader:** Go in peace and serve the Lord. **All:** Thanks be to God!

WEEK 2 | FACING CHALLENGES

PERSONAL DEVOTION

SERMON NOTES

MEMORY VERSE | Exodus 14:14
“The Lord will fight for you, you need only to be still.”

REFLECTION

Moses is a biblical figure that faced many challenges. His life was threatened as a baby, he grew up in the home of Pharaoh, he fled after murdering an Egyptian guard that was beating a Hebrew slave, he had a hard time speaking, and the list goes on! Yet from a burning bush, God called Moses to be part of rescuing and leading the Israelites. No doubt, Moses faced even greater trials as the leader of God’s people. Moses had to go back to Egypt and stand against Pharaoh, demanding that God’s people be freed. Ten plagues later, the Israelites were told to leave. Yet they ended up caught between the Red Sea and the Egyptians. In the face of challenge, Moses led the people with faith and trust in the Lord. It seems that Moses’ previous struggles had developed in him a deep sense of faith in the power and guidance of God.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

- 1. Think about a recent challenge in your life. In what ways did you seek God’s guidance or support?
- 2. Ask God to show you what that experience taught you about Him and His involvement in your life.
- 3. Read Hebrews 11:24-29. What about Moses’ story encourages you, in the face of fear and struggle, to put your trust in God?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WEEK 2 | FACING CHALLENGES

GROUP DISCUSSION

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we enter this time in awe of Your presence. We praise You for being the God who is in control of all situations and circumstances. We ask that the faith Moses would motivate us to know deep in our hearts that we, too, can have faith in the midst of the battles or obstacles we endure. Let us not grow weary but rather persevere even when things are tough. In Jesus’ name, amen!

ICEBREAKER

When you face a tough or stressful situation, what’s your natural response—fight, flight, or freeze? Give an example.

SCRIPTURE READING | Exodus 14:10-16

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

- 1. What was the emotional state of the Israelites when they saw the Egyptians approaching in verse 10?
- 2. In verses 11-12, how did they respond to Moses, and what does that reveal about their trust in God?
- 3. What were Moses’ instructions and encouragement to the people?
- 4. What did God command Moses to do in verses 15–16?

PRAYER REQUESTS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. The Israelites were afraid, but Moses had faith that God would deliver them. What may have influenced Moses’ trust in God?
- 2. Why do you think the Israelites were so quick to panic, even after all God had done for them?
- 3. In verse 13, Moses says, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord.” What does it mean to “stand firm” in the face of fear?
- 4. In verse 15, God says, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.” What do you think God is teaching them—and us—about facing challenges?
- 5. What does it look like to “go forward” when we feel stuck or afraid?
- 6. Read Hebrews 11:24-29. How can we balance trusting God with taking action?
- 7. Is there a situation in your life right now where you feel like you’re “trapped at the Red Sea”? How might God be asking you to move forward, even if you don’t see the full plan?

Closing Blessing | **Leader:** Go in peace and serve the Lord. **All:** Thanks be to God!

WEEK 3 | LEARNING DEPENDENCE

PERSONAL DEVOTION

SERMON NOTES

MEMORY VERSE | 1 Chronicles 29:14
“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”

REFLECTION

Earlier in 1 Chronicles 29, David called the leaders and people to give their resources for the building of the temple. David had just given willingly, and he turned to the people to ask that they do the same. Often, we find in the Old Testament narratives of God’s people failing and turning away from God, but in this scene, they faithfully responded by giving willingly. When David stood back and looked at everything the people had generously given to build the temple, he was moved with awe and praise to God! He could barely believe the abundance that came as a result of the people’s generosity and alignment with what God was calling them to do. David realized for some, it may have felt like a hard sacrifice. He reminded them that everything they had actually belonged to the Lord. The people did not cling to their wealth, they gave it back to the One who had first given it.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

- 1. What has God entrusted to you that you can offer back to Him—time, talents, resources, influence?
- 2. Think about your attitude around giving: do you give with joy and gratitude, or with reluctance and fear?
- 3. Spend time thanking God for His ownership and provision.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WEEK 3 | LEARNING DEPENDENCE

GROUP DISCUSSION

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, thank You for being a good God who gives freely and generously. We are grateful that You take care of Your children and provide for our needs. Lord, thank You for calling us to be part of Your mission and the furthering of Your kingdom. What blessed work this is! Let the generosity of David, and the truth that all belongs to You, awaken in us the desire to respond by giving willingly. Lord, we pray for all that is done in us and through us to be done for Your glory. Amen!

ICEBREAKER

Tell about a gift you’ve received that meant a lot to you—not because it was expensive, but because of the heart behind it.

SCRIPTURE READING | 1 Chronicles 29:10-18

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

- 1. Who is speaking in this passage, and what is the occasion?
- 2. What does David say about God’s nature in verses 10–13?
- 3. According to verses 14–16, how does David view the people’s generosity?
- 4. What does David ask God to do in verses 17–18?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What stands out to you about David’s attitude in this prayer?
- 2. How does this passage challenge the way we think about God’s provision of our possessions or resources?
- 3. David connects worship with giving—how can generosity become an act of worship for us today?
- 4. Why do you think David emphasizes “everything comes from God”? What do you learn about God?
- 5. What does David’s prayer reveal about the importance of the heart (“willing hearts”) in giving and serving?
- 6. Read 1 Corinthians 4:7 which reinforces the idea that all we have is from God. How might recognizing God’s ownership change the way we budget, serve, or give?
- 7. Is there an opportunity, project, or ministry where God may be calling you to give or serve willingly?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Closing Blessing | **Leader:** Go in peace and serve the Lord. **All:** Thanks be to God!

WEEK 4 | ARRIVING AT PROMISE

PERSONAL DEVOTION

SERMON NOTES

MEMORY VERSE | Joshua 1:9
“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

REFLECTION

Joshua was Moses’ aide, but when Moses died, Joshua’s role changed drastically. God called him to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. The moment had arrived in which the Israelites would inherit the land God promised to them! Perhaps Joshua wondered if God would be with him in the same way that He had been with Moses. In the passage, God reassured Joshua and the people that though Moses had passed, they did not need to fear. With the death of Moses, perhaps the people feared God would not deliver on His promise. The Israelites’ journey to the Promised Land was not an easy or straight path. God never went silent, though. Although arriving to the Promised Land, a new place for them, came with uncertainty and struggle, God’s faithfulness and love never dwindled. As we wait for prayers to be answered, to be brought to new places, or breakthrough to happen, we can be confident in God’s enduring faithfulness.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

- 1. Have you experienced a longing for something to come to fulfillment in your life?
- 2. The Israelites arrival to the Promised Land was delayed by 40 years. In what ways can you relate to their journey of waiting?
- 3. Read Matthew 28:16-20. What promise does Jesus make to the disciples? Spend time with God, talking to Him about how His promise may comfort or motivate you when you are called to a new thing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

WEEK 4 | ARRIVING AT PROMISE

GROUP DISCUSSION

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, thank you for your good plans and the hope we have because of you. We want to believe in and walk confidently in your strength and presence, being assured that you are indeed with us wherever we go. Arriving at the promise is a journey—it may be hard, there may be uncertainty—but help us to look forward to your promises coming to fruition, to answered prayers, and to experience the hopeful plans you have for us. In Jesus name, amen!

ICEBREAKER

Have you ever had to step into something before you felt fully ready? What was it, and how did it turn out?

SCRIPTURE READING | Joshua 1:1-9

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

- 1. What had just happened before this passage begins? (See Joshua 1:1)
- 2. What promises did God give to Joshua?
- 3. What commands did God give to Joshua?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Joshua is stepping into leadership after Moses—how might he have felt? Can you relate to moments of transition in your own life?
- 2. What is the relationship between God’s promise to give the land and Joshua’s responsibility to lead the people?
- 3. In what ways do you see God’s faithfulness in this passage?
- 4. Three times God says, “Be strong and courageous.” Why do you think Joshua needed that reminder?
- 5. How does meditating on and obeying God’s Word (verses 7–8) relate to victory and courage?
- 6. Read Matthew 16-20. Where do you see connection between calling and God’s presence? How might this help Christians today?
- 7. Is there a “promised land” God is calling you toward—a goal, calling, or next step?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Closing Blessing | **Leader:** Go in peace and serve the Lord. **All:** Thanks be to God!



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