

2026-01-07 Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: Job's Journey - Understanding Life, Death, and God's Purpose

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by thanking God for the opportunity to gather and asking Him to open hearts and minds to His truth as you discuss the sermon together.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Question: Share about a time when "ordinary life" suddenly felt precious to you—perhaps after an illness, loss, or challenging circumstance. What did that experience teach you?

Key Scripture References

Job 17-18

Psalm 37:3-4

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

Matthew 7:21-23

Luke 12:1-3

2 Corinthians 5:10

Main Takeaways from the Sermon

1. The Gift of Ordinary Life

The pastor emphasized how we often take predictability for granted, always wanting more or something different, when ordinary life itself is a spectacular gift from God.

2. Perspective on Aging and Death

Death is not the enemy we make it out to be—it's a natural part of life that releases us into eternal glory. Understanding this removes fear and helps us live purposefully.

3. The Danger of Hypocrisy

Living with secrets and maintaining appearances keeps us from authentic community and genuine relationship with God and others.

4. Accountability and Judgment

We will all stand before God, and everything will be made known—not to shame us, but to reveal the depth of Christ's redemption and create true unity.

5. Love as a Daily Challenge

True love isn't just feeling—it's choosing to care for people we naturally wouldn't, allowing the Holy Spirit to work through us.

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Gratitude and Perspective (15 minutes)

The pastor said, "There's something special about ordinary." When was the last time you thanked God for an ordinary day? What prevents us from being grateful for the predictable aspects of life?

Read Psalm 37:3-4. What does it mean to "delight yourself in the Lord"? How does this differ from just asking God to give us what we want?

Job felt like he was being "ripped off" by life. Have you ever felt that way? How does our expectation of "normality" set us up for disappointment?

Section 2: Facing Mortality (15 minutes)

The pastor mentioned that "a part of living is dying." Why do you think our culture avoids talking about death? How does acknowledging our mortality actually free us to live better?

Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-7. This poetic passage describes aging and physical decline. How does understanding the temporary nature of our bodies affect

how we invest our time and energy?

The sermon stated: "It's freeing when you begin to believe that you can die." Do you agree? Why or why not?

Section 3: Authenticity and Hypocrisy (15 minutes)

Read Luke 12:1-3. The pastor asked, "Who would come if we had a confession night?" Why is vulnerability so difficult in Christian community? What would it take for you to feel safe sharing your struggles?

The sermon mentioned that "it's those secrets that keep us from melting together." How have you seen authentic confession and vulnerability strengthen relationships or community?

How do we balance appropriate boundaries with the kind of honesty that builds genuine community?

Section 4: Living with Purpose (15 minutes)

Read Matthew 7:21-23 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. These passages emphasize doing God's will, not just knowing about Him. What's the difference between hearing God's Word and actually doing something with it?

The pastor shared his personal struggle with loving difficult people. Who are the people in your life that are hard to love? How can we practically ask God to help us love them?

The rich young ruler walked away from Jesus because of his wealth. The pastor pointed out we have far more than he did. What "wealth" or comfort might God be asking you to hold more loosely?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose One

Option 1: Gratitude Practice Each day this week, write down three

"ordinary" things you're grateful for—things you normally take for granted (hot water, a working car, your health, etc.). Thank God specifically for these gifts.

Option 2: Mortality Reflection Set aside 30 minutes for quiet reflection. Ask yourself: "If I knew I had one year left, what would I change about how I'm living?" Then identify one concrete change you can make this week.

Option 3: Authentic Connection Reach out to one person in your small group or church community and share something you're genuinely struggling with. Ask them to pray for you. (Start small if this feels scary!)

Option 4: Difficult Love Identify one person who is hard for you to love. Pray for them daily this week and ask God to show you one practical way to demonstrate Christ's love to them.

Option 5: Eternal Investment Evaluate how you're spending your time, energy, and resources. Identify one activity or expense that's purely self-focused and redirect it toward something with eternal value.

Personal Reflection Questions

(For individual journaling or prayer time)

What is my biggest fear about aging or death? How does Jesus address that fear?

In what areas of my life am I most like the Pharisees—looking good on the outside while struggling on the inside?

If everything I've done "in secret" were made known today, what would be revealed? How does this motivate me toward holiness?

Am I living as if I truly believe I will die someday? Or am I living as if I have unlimited time?

What does God want me to do with the "vim and vigor" I have right now?

Closing Discussion (10 minutes)

Question: What's one specific thing God spoke to you about through this sermon? How will you respond this week?

Accountability: Pair up with one other person and share your chosen practical application. Exchange contact information and commit to checking in with each other mid-week.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Pray together as a group:

Thank God for the gift of life—both ordinary and extraordinary moments

Ask for courage to face mortality with faith rather than fear

Pray for authenticity and vulnerability in your community

Request the Holy Spirit's help in loving difficult people

Commit to living purposefully for eternity, not just for today

Additional Resources

For Further Study: Read through the entire book of Job this month, one chapter per day

Recommended Reading: "Don't Waste Your Life" by John Piper

Worship Song: "It Is Well With My Soul" by Horatio Spafford (reflects peace in suffering)

Leader Notes

Sensitivity Alert: This sermon deals with death, aging, and judgment. Be prepared for emotional responses, especially from those who have recently lost loved ones or are facing health challenges.

Create Safety: If your group is newer or not used to vulnerability, don't force confession or deep sharing. Model it yourself first and let trust build naturally.

Balance: While the sermon addresses sobering topics, maintain hope and joy. The point isn't to be morbid but to live purposefully and gratefully.

Follow Up: Check in with anyone who seems particularly affected by the discussion about mortality or judgment. Offer to pray with them individually.