

10-26 Small Group Guide

Small Group Discussion Guide: "Building on Shag"

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

****Icebreaker Question:**** What's something you were once really passionate about but have lost interest in over time? What caused that change?

Key Scripture References

- 1 Corinthians 2:6-10
- 1 Corinthians 3:1-15
- Matthew 24 (love growing cold)
- 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Sermon Summary

Pastor Steve challenged us to examine what we're building our lives on and whether we're truly growing in our relationship with Christ. Using the metaphor of trying to build on shag carpet versus a solid foundation, he emphasized that many Christians get saved (start the race) but never progress beyond spiritual infancy. The sermon called us to move from worldly preoccupations to passionate pursuit of Christ, reminding us that God has purposes for each of us that "no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived."

Discussion Questions

****Part 1: Self-Examination (15-20 minutes)****

1. ****The "Shag Carpet" Question:**** Pastor Steve asked, "What am I

building on, and am I building anything?" How would you honestly answer this question about your own spiritual life right now?

2. **Spiritual Infancy:** Paul told the Corinthians they were "mere infants in Christ" still drinking milk instead of eating solid food. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your spiritual maturity? What evidence supports your rating?

3. **Worldly vs. Spiritual:** The sermon mentioned that we often know more about celebrities, politicians, or sports teams than we do about Jesus. What consumes most of your mental energy throughout the week? How much time do you actually spend thinking about or talking to God?

Part 2: The Love Factor (15-20 minutes)

4. **Passion Check:** Pastor Steve said, "On your 1 to 10 scale of passion, how passionate are you about Christ?" Be honest with your group. What would increase your passion for Christ?

5. **Growing Cold:** Jesus warned that "the love of most will grow cold." Have you experienced seasons where your love for God felt cold? What contributed to that? What helped reignite it?

6. **Knowing Yourself to Deny Yourself:** God asked Pastor Steve, "How can you deny yourself if you don't even know who you are?" What does this mean to you? Have you ever inventoried your likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses in light of following Christ?

Part 3: Building with Purpose (15-20 minutes)

7. **Gold, Silver, or Straw?** According to 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, we can build with gold, silver, costly stones, or wood, hay, and straw. What do you think each represents? What are you currently building with?

8. **The Reward Reality:** How does the promise of heavenly rewards affect your motivation? Does thinking about arriving in heaven "empty-

handed" stir anything in you?

9. **The Spirit's Voice:** Pastor Steve mentioned learning to hear God's voice and recognize the Holy Spirit's leading. Share a time when you felt God speaking to you or leading you to do something. How did you recognize it was Him?

Part 4: Practical Application (15-20 minutes)

10. **People Investment:** God's greatest treasure is people. Who are 3-5 people God might be calling you to invest in spiritually? What's one practical step you could take this week toward that?

11. **The Ten People Exercise:** Pastor Steve suggested listing 10 people who have left positive impressions on you. Who would be on your list? What made them impactful? How can you become that kind of person for others?

12. **Breaking Free from Distractions:** What are the biggest distractions keeping you from growing closer to Christ? (Be specific: social media, news, work, hobbies, etc.) What's one thing you could eliminate or reduce this week to create space for God?

Key Takeaways

Salvation is just the starting line, not the finish line. We're called to grow and mature.

Christ must be our foundation, not the shaky ground of worldly pursuits and distractions.

God has secret purposes for those who love Him that we can't even imagine (1 Cor 2:9).

The Holy Spirit wants to reveal deep things about God to us if we'll

pay attention.

****What we build in this life matters eternally****—it will be tested by fire.

****We often know more about the world than about Jesus****, revealing where our attention truly lies.

****God's love is "crazy love"****—we may never fully understand why He loves us, but He does.

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to commit to this week:

****Option 1: The Morning Walk with God****

Spend 15-30 minutes each morning walking (or sitting) with God. Talk to Him, quote Scripture to Him, ask Him questions, and listen.

****Option 2: The Attention Audit****

Track what captures your attention each day. At the end of the week, compare time spent on news/social media/entertainment versus time spent with God. Adjust accordingly.

****Option 3: The Inventory Exercise****

Follow Pastor Steve's example: spend time writing down who you are—your likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, fears, and dreams. Then ask God, "How do I deny these things to follow You more fully?"

****Option 4: The Investment Plan****

Choose one person from your "10 people" list and intentionally reach out to them this week—have coffee, send an encouraging text, or pray specifically for them daily.

Closing Reflection

Read together: **1 Corinthians 2:9**

***"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."*

***Question:** What would your life look like if you truly believed this promise applied to you personally?

Closing Prayer Points

- Pray for hearts that truly love God above all else
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where we're building on "shag carpet" instead of Christ
- Pray for passion to replace spiritual boredom or coldness
- Ask God to show each person their unique purpose
- Pray for the Boswinkle family (loss of Penny)
- Pray for courage to invest in others spiritually

For Further Study

- Read all of 1 Corinthians 3 and journal your thoughts
- Study the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)
- Meditate on John 14-15 about the Holy Spirit's role
- Read "Crazy Love" by Francis Chan (referenced in sermon)

***Group Leader Note:** Create a safe space for honest answers. Many people feel guilty about their spiritual state. Focus on grace and encouragement toward growth, not condemnation. Celebrate small steps

forward!