Discussion Guide for Small Group Meetings August 3 - August 9

(Based on Daily Readings for July 27 - August 2)

Icebreaker Question: The Jews faced significant challenges when rebuilding the temple. Describe a home renovation or room makeover project you were a part of and any challenges you faced.

Weekly Review (Psalm 37, 63, 90, 100, 145, Proverbs 1-2)

Psalm 37 encourages trust in God despite the success of the wicked. Psalm 63 expresses deep longing and satisfaction in God's presence. Psalm 90 reflects on life's brevity and asks God to teach us wisdom. Psalm 100 calls all people to joyful, thankful worship of the Lord. Psalm 145 celebrates God's greatness, compassion, and faithfulness to all generations. Proverbs 1–2 urge pursuit of godly wisdom, which protects, guides, and leads to understanding.

In your week's readings, what did you learn about God? What's one Bible passage or reflection thought that stood out to you?

Read Psalm 145:17-21

- 1. Psalm 145:17 says, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways." How do you reconcile God's righteousness with unanswered prayers or painful circumstances in your life (see Romans 8:28)?
- 2. In Psalm 145:18, God is near "to all who call on Him in truth." What does it mean to call on God in truth, and how do you personally draw near to Him during the week?
- 3. The promise of verse 19 is that God fulfills the desire of those who fear Him. How do you think fearing God changes our desires, and how does that affect how we pray (see Psalm 37:4)?
- 4. Psalm 145:20 says God preserves all who love Him. How have you seen God protect or sustain you, not just physically but spiritually, emotionally, or relationally?
- 5. The same verse also says He will destroy the wicked. How do you respond to the balance of God's mercy and justice in Scripture, especially in a culture that prefers

grace over truth (see John 1:14)?

- 6. In verse 21, David declares, "My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord." What are some practical ways we can make praise a natural part of our conversations and not just our worship services?
- 7. Looking at Psalm 145:17-21 as a whole, what truths about God's character stand out most to you, and how do they challenge or encourage your current faith journey?

Discussion Guide for Small Group Meetings August 10 - August 16

(Based on Daily Readings for August 3 - August 9)

Icebreaker Question: What's your favorite cheesy love song or romantic movie and why?

Weekly Review (Proverbs 3, 31, Ecclesiastes 12, Song of Solomon 1, Isaiah 6, 53)

Proverbs 3 urges trust in the Lord and promises His guidance. Proverbs 31 honors the virtuous woman who fears God. Ecclesiastes 12 concludes with the call to remember the Creator and obey Him. Song of Solomon 1 celebrates passionate love. Isaiah 6 shows Isaiah's vision of God's holiness and his call to prophetic service. Isaiah 53 prophesies the suffering servant, who bears humanity's sins and brings salvation through His wounds.

In your week's readings, what did you learn about God? What's one Bible passage or reflection thought that stood out to you?

Read Song of Solomon 1:1-10

- In Song of Solomon 1:2, the woman expresses desire for her beloved's kisses. How
 does this bold affection reflect the emotional intimacy God designed for
 relationships, and what can we learn about love that pursues connection (see
 Genesis 2:24)?
- 2. Verse 3 compares the beloved's name to "perfume poured out." How important is someone's reputation in love and friendship, and what legacy are we creating through our daily choices (see Proverbs 22:1)?
- 3. In Song of Solomon 1:4, the woman longs to be brought into the king's chambers. What role does pursuit play in healthy relationships, and how does that parallel God's pursuit of us (see Romans 5:8)?
- 4. In verses 5–6, she acknowledges her dark skin and defends her beauty. How can we affirm our God-given worth despite cultural standards or personal insecurities (see Psalm 139:14)?
- 5. Song of Solomon 1:7 shows her longing to be near her beloved. What are healthy ways we express desire and commitment in relationships today, and how do we

keep boundaries and intentions godly?

- 6. In verse 8, the beloved responds with tenderness and direction. How important is it to listen and respond with grace in relationships, especially when someone feels insecure or exposed?
- 7. Verse 10 contains poetic praise of beauty. How can we use our words to speak life, honor, and value into those we love—both romantically and in Christian community (see Ephesians 4:29)?

Discussion Guide for Small Group Meetings August 17 - August 23

(Based on Daily Readings for August 10 - August 16)

Icebreaker Question: What's a weird food or drink you've turned down even if everyone else loved it?

Weekly Review (Isaiah 55, Jeremiah 31, Lamentations 3, Ezekiel 37, Daniel 1-3)

Isaiah 55 invites all to receive God's mercy and Word freely. Jeremiah 31 promises a new covenant written on hearts. Lamentations 3 clings to hope in God's faithful love amid suffering. Ezekiel 37 envisions dry bones revived by God's Spirit. Daniel 1–3 shows young men remaining faithful in exile by refusing defilement, interpreting dreams, and surviving a fiery furnace, proving God's sovereignty and presence even in hostile circumstances.

In your week's readings, what did you learn about God? What's one Bible passage or reflection thought that stood out to you?

Read Daniel 1:3-17

- Daniel 1:3–4 describes the captives chosen for their potential. How do you think
 Daniel and his friends stayed grounded in their identity despite Babylon's attempts
 to reshape them?
- 2. In Daniel 1:5, they were offered the king's food and wine. When have you faced pressure to blend in or compromise your values to gain approval or comfort?
- 3. Daniel 1:8 says he "resolved" not to defile himself. What does spiritual resolve look like in your life, and how can we strengthen it daily (see Romans 12:2)?
- 4. Daniel makes a respectful request in verse 12 instead of rebelling. How can we speak with both conviction and grace in environments that oppose our beliefs (compare 1 Peter 3:15)?
- 5. In Daniel 1:15, they appear healthier after honoring God with their diet. What are some modern "disciplines" or habits that help us stay spiritually fit and distinct in a culture of compromise?

- 6. Verse 17 says God gave them learning and understanding. How does faithfulness often lead to unexpected favor and wisdom from God (see James 1:5)?
- 7. Looking at the whole passage, how does Daniel's quiet courage inspire you to live for God in challenging environments—like school, work, or social settings?

Discussion Guide for Small Group Meetings August 24 - August 30

(Based on Daily Readings for August 17 - August 23)

Icebreaker Question: If you had a "do-over" button for one moment this week, when would you press it?

Weekly Review (Daniel 4-6, Hosea 14, Joel 2, Amos 9, Obadiah)

In Daniel 4–6, God humbles proud kings and delivers Daniel from the lions' den. Hosea 14 calls Israel to return and promises healing and blessing. Joel 2 urges heartfelt repentance, revealing God's mercy and a promise of restoration. Amos 9 proclaims judgment but ends with hope for David's fallen house. Obadiah warns Edom of its downfall due to pride and violence but points to deliverance and the Lord's kingdom for His people.

In your week's readings, what did you learn about God? What's one Bible passage or reflection thought that stood out to you?

Read Joel 2:1-13

- 1. Joel 2:1 begins with a trumpet blast announcing danger. What "alarms" has God sounded in your life to wake you up spiritually and how did you respond?
- 2. Verse 3 paints a vivid contrast between paradise before and desolation after. How do sin and disobedience sometimes look appealing at first but leave lasting damage (see James 1:14–15)?
- 3. Joel 2:6–7 describes people in dread before a powerful army. When have you felt overwhelmed by the consequences of a wrong choice and what helped you face it?
- 4. In verse 12, God invites His people to return with *all* their hearts. What keeps us from fully turning back to God, and how can we respond wholeheartedly when we've drifted?
- 5. Joel 2:13 says, "Rend your hearts, not your garments." What's the difference between surface level regret and true repentance?

- 6. God's character shines in verse 13: gracious, compassionate, slow to anger. How has God's mercy shaped your view of Him, especially in seasons when you've needed grace?
- 7. Looking at Joel 2:1–13 as a whole, how does this call to repentance challenge our view of God as both just and merciful and how can we help others understand that balance in their faith journey?

Discussion Guide for Small Group Meetings August 31 - September 6

(Based on Daily Readings for August 24 - August 30)

Icebreaker Question: What's your go-to song or activity when you're in a seriously joyful mood?

Weekly Review (Jonah 1, Micah 7, Nahum 1, Habakkuk 3, Zephaniah 3, Haggai 1, Zechariah 14)

Jonah 1 shows the prophet fleeing God's call and facing a storm. Micah 7 declares hope in God despite injustice. Nahum 1 proclaims God's power and judgment over Nineveh. Habakkuk 3 is a prayer of awe and trust in God's might. Zephaniah 3 ends with joy, restoration, and God's presence. Haggai 1 urges God's people to rebuild the temple and reprioritize Him. Zechariah 14 describes the Lord's ultimate victory and reign over all nations.

In your week's readings, what did you learn about God? What's one Bible passage or reflection thought that stood out to you?

Read Zephaniah 3:14-20

- 1. Zephaniah 3:14 says, "Sing aloud... shout... rejoice with all your heart!" What helps you worship freely, and how can joy be a spiritual weapon even in tough seasons (see Nehemiah 8:10)?
- 2. In verse 15, God removes judgment and drives out the enemy. When have you experienced a time where God lifted a burden or helped you find unexpected peace?
- 3. Zephaniah 3:16 says, "Do not fear... let not your hands grow weak." What situations in your life tempt you to give up, and how does God's strength renew your resolve (compare Isaiah 40:31)?
- 4. Verse 17 says God "rejoices over you with gladness." How does that image challenge or encourage the way you think about how God feels about you?

- 5. God is described as "quieting you by His love" in Zephaniah 3:17. What has helped you experience that stillness and reassurance in His presence during anxious or chaotic times?
- 6. In verses 18–19, God promises to gather the outcast and deal with oppressors. How does this speak to those who feel overlooked or wounded by life and how can the church reflect that same heart?
- 7. Zephaniah 3:20 promises God's people will be restored and "renowned." How do we live with that hope even when we don't see it yet and how does Romans 8:18 support that perspective?