

Small Group Discussion Guide Chapters 11-20

Chapter 11 – WORSHIP

- **Key Question: How do I honor God in the way He _____?**
- *****Key Idea: I worship God for _____ He is and what he has _____ for me.**
- Key Verse: “Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with _____ and extol Him with music and song” (Psalm 95:1-2).
- Key Application: I _____ acknowledge God for who He is what He has done for me.
- Key Application: I worship God, _____ and _____ with the songs I sing, the words I speak, and the way I live my life.
- Key Application: When I attribute _____ to God as a child of God, unmerited worth is attributed to me.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Watch this clip from “Believe Me.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNxGgVwMYI8>
Read Exodus 15:20 & 2 Samuel 6:16-23. What is your posture during worship? Do you like to sing loud or are you more reserved? Do you like to stand with your hand stretched high or do you like to quietly listen and sit? How can your posture help or hinder your worship experience? How could you grow in your posture during worship?
- 2) Is there a worship song that almost always resonates with you? Why does it speak to you so deeply? What does it teach you about God and your relationship with Him?
- 3) Read Romans 12:1-2. How does this passage help you understand the scope of worship? How can we see worship in this broader sense?
- 4) Brother Lawrence once commented that we often struggle with distractions during prayer or worship because we spend so much time away from God—with our minds cluttered by so many other worries and anxieties. How can you grow in regularly casting all of your cares and anxieties on Jesus, knowing that He cares for you (feel free to read Philippians 4:6-7)?

Chapter 12 – PRAYER

- **Key Question:** How do I grow by _____ with God?
- *****Key Idea:** I pray to God to _____ him, to _____ direction for my life and to _____ my requests before him.
- “Watch _____ and then simply do what he does.”
- It is completely _____ for us to lay our requests before God.
- Like Jesus, we should seek to _____ our lives to God’s will, versus asking God to align his life to our will.
- Key Verse: “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my _____. Praise be to God who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me” (Psalm 66:18-20).
- Key Application: I _____ to align my life to God’s will
- Key Application: I pray to lay my _____ before God to find peace.
- Key Application: I won’t make any major decisions in my life without _____ God through prayer.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What’s a product, company, or brand that you would swear by (something you find yourself accidentally selling to your friends because it is just that awesome)? Why do you like it so much? Read Psalm 66:18-20 and what is the writer suggesting we trust in?
- 2) Deep down, prayer is a tangible expression of our belief that we serve a Personal God, a God who cares, a God who loves us. How has prayer functioned in your life? Is it a regular part of your life? Do you find yourself praying 9-1-1/emergency/HELP! Prayers or is there more of a routine to your prayers?
- 3) Read Matthew 6:5-13. What does Jesus say NOT to do? How does He then model for us to pray? Which of these phrases (or “petitions”) in what we call “The Lord’s Prayer” speaks to you right now? Which one do you think you often neglect in your prayer life? Which one might God be leading you to prayer on behalf of a friend, neighbor, coworker, or family member?
- 4) Read Luke 22:41-43. How can we learn from this example? How can we learn that Jesus delivers us THROUGH our circumstances, but not always from our circumstances? What verses in scripture come to mind when you think about trials (James 1:2-4; John 16:33; 1 Peter 3:14-15)? How do these verses give us hope?
- 5) Is anything off limits in prayer? Why or why not? Do you think we can pray to God when we are angry or even doubting (read Hebrews 4:16)?

Chapter 13 – BIBLE STUDY

- **Key Question:** _____ do I study God's Word?
- *****Key Idea:** I study the Bible to _____ God and His _____ and to find _____ for my daily life.
- "Whoever has ears to hear, let them _____" (Matthew 13:9).
- **Key Verse:** "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and _____ of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).
- The Bible can go deep if the _____ is willing to receive it.
- **Key Application:** Keep your hearts soft and _____ to God's Word.
- **Key Application:** Understand the one _____ of the Bible.
- **Key Application:** Study God's Word in _____.
- **Key Application:** _____ God's Word.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read Hebrews 4:12 & Ephesians 6:10-20. What do both of these passages refer to God's word as? What kind of weapon is this (offensive or defensive)? Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus use God's Word (Deuteronomy in particular) as a sword? How was Jesus able to access this tool?
- 2) Read 119:9-24. How might we "hide God's word in our heart?" What sort of things does this psalmist do to make scripture a regular part of our lives?
- 3) What parts of the Bible do you struggle to read? Have you ever owned a "study bible" or used online aids or commentaries? What tools have you used to try to make bible reading simpler, more regular, and engaging?
- 4) How has studying the bible with other people made it more rewarding? What kinds of things have you learned as a result of community bible studies or small groups?

Chapter 14 – SINGLE-MINDEDNESS

- **Key Question:** How do I keep my _____ on Jesus amidst distraction?
- *****Key Idea:** I focus on God and His _____ for my life.
- **Key Verse:** “But _____ first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).
- **Key Application:** _____ lay your calendar and decisions before God for direction.
- **Key Application:** Make decisions based on Christian _____.
- **Key Application:** Try the _____ Day Planner.
- **Key Application:** Learn to say “no” to the things you _____ be doing.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) There’s great pseudo-documentaries like “The Office” and “Parks and Rec.” If a film crew followed you for an entire day, what would they find? What would they conclude that your life is really about? How would your faith be evident or hidden?
- 2) Read Luke 17:33. What did Jesus mean in this passage? What does this look like in our everyday lives? What kinds of things will we gain/save by letting go?
- 3) Read Psalm 37:4. What do you think this means? How can aligning our hearts with God’s fulfill this promise (how can we let His heart be echoed by ours)?
- 4) Read the story about Katie in the yellow book on pages 119-120. What can we learn from her quote that she is “just doing what God called me to do as a follower of him?” What little things can we do to adopt a cause that might change our little corner of the world?

Chapter 15 – TOTAL SURRENDER

- Jesus is looking for a “_____ faith” from His followers.
- “Whoever wants to be my disciple must _____ themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).
- *****Key Idea: I _____ my life to God’s purposes.**
- **Key Question: How do I cultivate a life of _____?**
- Every time one of Jesus’ disciples was martyred or punished, it only _____ the movement of Christ.
- Key Verse: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to _____ your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1).
- Key Application: Constantly remember the _____ Jesus made for you.
- Key Application: _____ that you are in a no-lose situation.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Tell the joke: The chicken said to the pig that she wanted to prepare a breakfast for the farmer and caretaker. The chicken said, “I will provide the eggs, and you provide the bacon.” The pig responded, “You are only making a contribution; I am making a total sacrifice!”
Read Luke 9:59-62. How do you think people received some of Jesus’ harsher words? Do you think Jesus was nice all the time, why or why not?
- 2) Read Philippians 3:4-14 & Acts 20:24. How does Paul feel about his life, reputation, accomplishments, and credentials compared to knowing Christ?
- 3) Read Daniel 3 & Acts 6:8-7:6a. What does it mean to really be willing to lay down your life for what you believe?
- 4) What fears do you think get in your way of fully surrendering? How do you think God and your community can help you grow through this struggle?

Chapter 16 – BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

- In Genesis 2:18, God said, “It is not good for the man to be _____.”
- God is a _____—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We too were created _____ community and _____ a community.
- **Key Question: What do I do to develop healthy _____ with others?**
- *****Key Idea: I fellowship with Christians to _____ God’s purposes in my life, in the lives of others, and in the world.**
- Key Verse: “All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to _____ to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to _____ together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and _____ together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:44-47).
- Key Application: Fellowship with other believers to keep your relationship with _____ strong.
- Key Application: Fellowship with other believers to keep your relationships with _____ strong.
- Key Application: Fellowship with other believers to _____ God’s will on the earth.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Are you an introvert or extrovert (how do you recharge)? What things get in the way of you regularly meeting with other believers? Why do you think people are content to live in isolation? How has this small group fulfilled some of your yearning for community? How can we do better?
- 2) Read Acts 2:42-47. What sort of things did they do on a regular basis and how could we do something similar? How did their community change the people near them? How can we have a similar impact on our neighbors?
- 3) How well do you welcome people who are different from you? How do you make people feel welcome? Who do you think would be a good person to invite to a church event, to Sunday worship or to this small group?

Chapter 17 – SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- **Key Question: What gifts and skills has God given me to _____ others?**
- Key Verse: “For just as each of us has one body with many members and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member _____ to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us” (Romans 12:4-6).
- *****Key Idea: I know my spiritual gifts and _____ them to fulfill God’s purposes.**
- Key Application: As a community, help each other _____ what gift God has given to each of you.
- Key Application: Know and _____ the gifts of the people God has placed around you.
- Key Application: _____ your gift(s).
- Key Application: Acknowledge and give God the _____ for your gift(s).

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read the chicken truck wreck scenario and describe which of the roles you think you would try to fill (yellow book 134-135). Why do you think you would gravitate towards that particular role? What does this perhaps say about your spiritual gifts?
- 2) What do you think limits your ability or willingness to know and use your spiritual gifts for the benefit of others (training, fear, insecurities, opportunities, mentorship)?
- 3) Read Romans 12:4-6 again. Take some time to affirm how you see each of your fellow group members using their spiritual gifts well. Be specific and make sure to encourage each member. Encourage them and let them know that they have an important place in the body of Christ.
- 4) How do we respond to our own gifts and the gifts of others (uncertainty about our own, jealousy of others, pride about our gifts appearing better or more visible)? How does 1 Corinthians 13 give us a quality understanding on how we should use the spiritual gifts (discussed in 1 Corinthians 12)?

Chapter 18 – OFFERING MY TIME

- **Key Question: How does God want us to view the twenty-four _____ we have in a day?**
- Key Verse: “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17).
- *****Key Idea: I _____ my time to fulfill God’s purposes.**
- Give careful thought to your _____.
- Key Application: Take care of God’s _____ and he will take care of yours.
- Key Application: Do everything as an _____ to God.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Listen to the song, “Seasons of Love” from the most recent film version of “Rent” (you can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvyHuse6buY>). How do you measure your time? What things orient and shape how you see each of your days? What “season” do you think you are in right now, a season of growth, a season of loss & mourning, a season of celebration & accomplishment?
- 2) Read Ecclesiastes 3 (esp. 3:1-8). What can we learn about having a perspective on time?
- 3) There are two Greek words for time: Chronos & Kairos. Watch this video to see a new perspective on time and allowing God to speak into pivotal moments of our lives: <https://vimeo.com/101761387>.
- 4) Accountability time. Read the story about the overworked father and his lonely son on page 142-143. Think about how you spend your time. Is there anything missing? Are you overlooking one of your primary callings/vocations as a parent, spouse, or child of God? Is there someone who would literally do anything to buy some of your time that you have been neglecting? How can you make the most of your time with those who are most precious to you? How can you be encouraged to trust God with the fleeting amounts of time we have on this planet by the following verse, Psalm 39:4-7?

Chapter 19 – GIVING MY RESOURCES

- **Key Question: How do I best use my _____ to serve God and others?**
- *****Key Idea: I give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.**
- Key Verse: "But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of _____" (2 Corinthians 8:7).
- Key Application: Your willingness comes from a heart _____ by God's purposes.
- Key Application: Resources go _____ money.
- Key Application: Giving others _____ your intimacy with Christ.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Talk about a profound experience you had with money. It could be the first time you lost gambling in Vegas. It could be what you did with your first paycheck. It could be the first time you saved up for a really nice treat for yourself, like a new TV or even a new car. It could also be the first time you tithed or gave to a charity.
- 2) What was your favorite opportunity to bless someone? How did it feel to be generous?
- 3) Read 1 Timothy 6:9-10. Notice how the passage calls "the love of money," not money itself evil. Do you know anyone who has been ruined by their pursuit of wealth and love of money?
- 4) Let's take a look at examples of people giving their resources to serve God and His people. Read Luke 7:1-5, Matthew 14:14-21, Luke 19:1-10, & Philippians 4:14-15. What do you notice about each person's generosity and how did it effect God's people and His Mission?
- 5) Read Luke 21:1-4. The amount is not the primary concern. Instead, focus on where your heart is and if what you give stretches you.

Chapter 20 – SHARING MY FAITH

- **Key Question:** How do I share my _____ with people I don't know?
- *****Key Idea:** I _____ my faith with others to fulfill God's purposes.
- "The Lord is not slow in keeping His promises, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to _____" (2 Peter 3:9).
- **Key Verse:** "Pray also for me, that whatever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an _____ in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should" (Ephesians 6:19-20).
- **Key Application:** Look for divine _____.
- **Key Application:** Start with a question and wait for the _____.
- **Key Application:** Share your _____.
- **Key Application:** Acceptance of the Good News is not your _____.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read Romans 10:14-17. Talk about who first introduced you to Jesus and the Gospel. When was it? How did you receive it? How has your understanding of Jesus and the Gospel grown over the years? Have you ever shared your faith with someone else? How did that go? Why do you think we associate fear and anxiety with sharing our faith?
- 2) Read Ephesians 6:19-20 & 1 Corinthians 5:18-21. What primary role does Paul say all believers have? What does this person do in a secular setting and how does a follower of Jesus take on this unique role? How does this role shift how you feel about yourself and your message?
- 3) Read 1 Peter 3:15. This crucial verse has three things to teach us. First, we must have Jesus at the center of our lives (sacred and holy). Second, we must see that evangelistic encounters necessitate both preparation and opportunity (we can be super prepared, but we shouldn't try to answer questions that people aren't asking). Third, we must approach every opportunity God gives us with the utmost gentleness and respect (which means we must learn to accept and appreciate the beliefs of others).
- 4) Challenge time. Pick one person in your life that is not a believer and pray for him/her for this whole week. As you pray, ask God to give you one single message of hope to share with this person. Then, share that little message of hope. Don't get long-winded. Share a sentence or two. Tell them you are thinking about them. Tell them that they matter to you and that you wanted to encourage them today.