

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

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ROOTED

THE HIDDEN PLACES

WHERE GOD DEVELOPS YOU



Session 1 - Chapters 1 & 2

Topics: Discipleship, Fruitfulness, God's Process

Welcome

Welcome to the first session of *Rooted*. If your group members do not yet know one another, introduce yourselves by using the icebreaker before opening in prayer.

Icebreaker

What thoughts come to mind when you think about yourself thriving in life?

Worship & Prayer

You don't necessarily need a worship leader to have worship in your small group. Stream your favorite Jesus Culture worship song on your favorite stream provider or play your favorite Jesus Culture CD.

Word - Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

John 15:5-8 - *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will⁶ ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

Philippians 4:11-13 - *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹²I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.¹³ I can do all things through Christ¹² who strengthens me.*

Discussion

Read Aloud: On page 2 Banning says, “If you are a disciple of Christ, then your calling and destiny are to be fruitful. Fruit is not a bunch of spiritual or religious activities like going to church, reading your Bible, keeping the Ten Commandments, or even preaching the gospel. Fruit means that when people taste your life, you taste like Jesus.”

Ask: In your own words, what does it mean for a disciple of Christ to “be fruitful” and “taste like Jesus”?

Read Aloud: On page 10 and 11 Banning says, “God’s version of success looks like building our lives on eternal things for eternal things. Anything less does not impress Him and shouldn’t impress us. Unfortunately, many believers today don’t live with forty years in mind, let alone eternity. One of my deepest concerns with the church is how hung up we have become with short-term success that doesn’t impress God one bit.”

Ask: What do you believe God has called to become over the long-term?

Ask: Philippians 4:13 - “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” is one of the most popular and quoted verses today. What do you think people overlook in verses 11 & 12 that makes this verse 13 so powerful?

Read Aloud: On page 16 & 17 Banning lists 4 distractions that prevent us from thriving:

1. Wish we were in someone else’s process
2. Resist the lesson God is trying to teach us in our circumstances
3. Rush the process
4. Skip steps in the process

Ask: What area of distraction do you personally wrestle with the most? What does *Christ giving you strength* to avoid being distracted in this area look like practically in your life?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

Pray the prayer at the end of Chapter 2 as you close your small group. Invite others to thank the Lord for the process they are in:

Lord, thank You for the process in which You have me. You’re growing me, teaching me, and wooing me. Thank You for hiding me in the cave and not releasing me too soon. Thank You for protecting me and everyone around me by waiting until I have the right foundation to carry Your promises. Thank You for developing roots in my life and creating in me the strength necessary to sustain what You will release to me. Help me to thrive in the process.

Session 2 - Chapters 3 & 4

Discussion Topics: Trust, Faith, Rest

Welcome:

Icebreaker: Share with your small group some excerpts of the book “*Rooted*” you highlighted this week?

Worship & Prayer

A great song to kick off your small group tonight is “God with Us” by Bryan and Katie Torwalt from Jesus Culture’s “Let It Echo” album. As you worship reflect upon the trustworthiness of God.

Word - Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

Psalm 9:10 - *And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.*

Psalm 127:1 - *Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.*

Discussion

Read Aloud: On page 43, Banning makes this statement, “*Intimacy and dependence come only through personal knowledge and encounter.*”

Ask: How does intimacy and dependence in your relationship with God develop your trust in God?

Ask: Can you describe an experience where you God revealed Himself to you and because of it you have a greater knowledge of who He is in your life.

Ask: What is the character and nature of God?

Read Aloud: In Chapter 4, page 55 Banning makes this statement: “*God is the architect, the financial backer, the owner, the foreman, the building crew, and pretty much everything else. Our part is to cooperate with God as He builds us and our vision.*”

Ask: In your own life and current situation, how does the above statement allow you to rest.

Ask: How can we cooperate with God as He is building our vision and us?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

Lord, you have given me everything I need to steward the vision you have entrusted to me. Today, I choose to trust you and rest in the fact that you chose me and that I have nothing to prove as your son/daughter. You alone are my proof and I thank you for developing me for the vision that is before me. I ask you to build the house and show me what to put my hands to. In Jesus Name – Amen

Session 3 - Chapters 5 & 6

Topics: Weakness, Supernatural Strength, the Word of God

Welcome:

Icebreaker: Tell of a time where you've been overwhelmed or stressed out over a situation that turned out better than you thought it would.

Worship & Prayer

For worship play "Power in the Cross" by Jesus Culture's Derek Johnson (Let It Echo)

Word – Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 - *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

Psalms 1:2-3 - *But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.*

Discussion

Ask: According to the 2 Corinthians 12, how does an individual delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties?

Ask: On page 70 Banning tells us that weakness actually gives us access to two things we can't get any other way; what are they?

Read Aloud: "God doesn't expect us to know and trust Him solely through these personal experiences; he is also revealed through the established, authoritative record of how He has revealed Himself to millions of people throughout history, namely, the Scriptures."

Ask: What are the promises attached to a life deeply planted in the Word of God?

Ask: What do the scriptures cultivate in our life?

Ask: Why can't we trust our experiences alone?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

God, I thank You that when I am weak You are made strong in my life. I will not shrink back from my weaknesses, but will embrace your grace when I face them. Today, I delight in my weakness and my struggle because I know your developing me for something bigger I cannot see.

I stand on our Word that is guiding me on paths I've never traveled and guarding my life with the truth of who You are. Continue to increase my faith, as I hear the Word of God for my life. In Jesus Name - Amen

Session 4 - Soil 1: Intimacy / Chapters 7 & 8

Topic: Secret Place, Preparation

Welcome:

Icebreaker:

When do you feel closest to God?

Worship & Prayer

“In Your Presence” by Kim Walker – Smith from the “Let It Echo” album will be the perfect song to kick off your small group.

Word – Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

Psalm 91:1 – *He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the most Almighty.*

2 Kings 4:5-6 - *So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out. ⁶ Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.”*

And he said to her, “There is not another vessel.” So the oil ceased. ⁷ Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest.”

Discussion

Read Aloud:

Everything you will ever need is found in the presence of God, for it is there you find the reason you were created. Everything in your life must be birthed from the revelation of His love for you. God desires to draw close to you and reveal His love, which is better than life itself. This must be the first ingredient placed in your life. (Pg. 104-105)

Ask: Why is the presence of God the most important ingredient in our life?

Ask: Where did Jesus go and what did He do to develop this in His life?

Ask: Describe your “secret place.” What about it draws you closer to God?

Read Aloud: Banning talks about *carrying the Word of the Lord* in chapter 8. The last point he makes on page 130 is you have to “prepare for it.”

Ask: How did the woman in 2 Kings 4 prepare for the word the prophet gave her?

Read Aloud:

“I believe that our level of preparation determines our level of outpouring. It’s not dependent on our works, but we are involved in what God wants to do. We don’t sit back and do nothing. Faith is active and alive, and when we believe God, we begin to prepare for what He tells us to prepare for.” (Pg. 130)

Ask: What has God has told you to do?

Ask: How are you or how can you prepare for what He is telling you to do?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

Jesus, I thank you for presence. I thank you that in your presence I find everything I need for my life. You are worthy to be praised!

Thank You for speaking to me. I ask that You would help me to carry your word to completion. Show me exactly what You want me to put my hand to and exactly what to take my hands off of. I yield my ways to you. In Jesus Name - Amen

Session 5 - Soil 2: Serving / Chapters 9 & 10

Welcome:

Topics: Serving, Humility, Grace

Icebreaker:

Where are you currently serving in your church or community?

Worship & Prayer

Everything and Nothing Less by Chris McClarney from the Let It Echo album will help posture your heart for this session's discussion.

Word – Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

Matthew 20: 25-26 - *But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.²⁶ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷ And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

Philippians 2:3-8 - *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

Discussion

Read Aloud: Banning states that Jesus married the concepts of greatness, leadership and royalty with the concepts of humility, love and service. (Page 141)

Ask: Why is it important to identify with Jesus' royalty if we are going to serve in humility?

Ask: How is greatness in this world different from greatness in the Kingdom of God?

Read Aloud:

Banning mentions that “if serving is leading you to burnout rather than grace, then it’s a sign that your serving is not an expression of true humility.”(Pg. 152)

Ask: What’s the difference between true humility and false humility?

Read Aloud:

Banning also says another powerful thing about false humility (Page 152-153):

The Lord doesn’t say we must not care about our own interests; He says, “Look out not only for your own interests.” Devaluing our lives in false humility and will position us to receive the grace of God.

Ask: How do we devalue ourselves when we are serving?

Ask: What are some practical things we can do to make sure we are caring for ourselves while caring for others?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

I humble myself before You and ask You to reveal Your love to me. I want to know how much You love me so can love others with the same kind of love. I ask that my service to You would impact others with Your greatness.

*Help me to identify any false humility in my life that is directly from burnout or devaluing of myself and my contribution to the Kingdom. Release Your grace in my life in greater measure. In Jesus Name
- Amen*

Session 6 - Soil 3: Community / Chapters 11 & 12

Topic: Community, Wisdom, Safety

Welcome:

Icebreaker:

What's one of the biggest decisions you have ever had to make? How did you go about making that decision?

Worship & Prayer

“Let It Echo” the title song by Chris Quilala is a great song to launch you into the discussion around community.

Word – Scripture Reading

Read Aloud:

1 Corinthians 12: 25- 27-*The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.*

²⁷ *You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your “part” mean anything.* (The Message)

Proverbs 13:20 - *He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.*

Discussion

Ask: Why do you think community is easier to talk about and read about than actually walk it out?

Read Aloud:

“Jesus repeatedly emphasized that our interactions with other people matter in our relationship with Him.” (Page 180)

Ask: Do you think people have a tendency to disconnect how they treat other people from their relationship with God? If so, why do you think that is?

Ask: How has being a part of this small group helped you grasp the importance of community?

Read Aloud: *There's a big difference between making decisions on our own and making them in community. According to the book of Proverbs, decisions made in the multitude of counselors are safe. Decisions made outside are unsafe. We are called to make decisions in community.*

Ask: Have you ever made a decision without first getting advice that came back to bite you? Share what you learned about that experience.

Ask: Did you ever seek counsel before making a big decision that benefited you in any way? How did the person's advice make a difference?

Works – (Concluding Prayer)

Go around the room and take time to encourage each person in your small group. Share one word that will build them up and then pray for one another as you close this last session.