

# Sermon-Based Group Guide

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## VISION

Imagine a group of people in an authentic community, loving each other honestly, covering each other's sins with forgiveness, prayer, confession, and encouragement, serving and supporting each other genuinely. When we dream of a small group of people dwelling together in unity, we begin to see the supernatural work of God within our relationships. Thank you for facilitating life change by hosting or leading a sermon-based small group, our prayer as your pastors is that you would experience God's grace by building a life-giving culture.

## 1. Connect

This is a time to personally connect, introduce yourself and share a bit about who you are. Each week you are together, go a little deeper and more personal. This is a time to catch up from the last time you met and ask about their family, relationships, work, hobbies, and anything they spend time on. This helps our hearts connect so that they can be formed later through the Word and the Presence of God. Everyone wants to belong somewhere.

## 2. Worship

You can take some time and play a few worship songs on a speaker or TV that would facilitate focus on God. Take some time to thank God for who He is; before asking or seeking, just be grateful, and tell your soul that it's time to bless the Lord. (Psalm 103: 1) If you don't have any music, you can turn into worship, use one of the Psalms, and read prayerfully through that. You can pray with an attitude of thanking God for His nature. Psalm 145, 146, 40, 8, 65, 98, and 150.

## 3. Summarize

Take turns summarizing the message in your own words, and allow everyone to participate in translating the message. This is not a personal application yet, only taking turns summarizing the news and building it in its entirety. Make sure you, as a small group leader, are filling in any gaps; the main point, scripture, and the end of the message.

## 4. Personal

This section will allow you to go deeper and be sensitive to God's activity in people's lives. Ask questions and facilitate conversation about the message this past weekend.

- What did you get out of the message, and why?
- Go over the primary scriptures from the message.
- How will this influence your soul (mind, will, heart, and emotions), your work, and your life?
- What is God asking you to be or do based on the message?

## Summary for Groups

We are in a season of Seeking God with our whole heart. That means we spend time in His presence through the reading of His Word, spending time in authentic community, confessing sin, and spending extended times in prayer and practices like fasting. Seeking God is the way forward. It's the direction we are heading in, but it requires a removal of the weight and the sin for our journey in this life. Fasting helps us to rid our hearts of extra weight and removes the sin by first exposing it. Fasting is a willing practice that humbles our hearts, takes our shallow lives deeper, and breaks up the selfish areas. Fasting prepares our hearts to seek God, read His Word, and pray. Let us commit to seeking God through fasting together for two weeks leading up to Easter.



## Scriptures

Mark 4:1-9 ESV  
Mark 4:18-19 NIV  
Isaiah 58:1-12 ESV  
Matthew 16:24 ESV  
Hosea 10:12 NKJV  
2 Timothy 3:1-2 ESV  
Philippians 3:18-19 ESV

## Church Life

Here is a bit about the church life we want you to know about.

March 28 & 31: Easter at Grace  
for service times visit:  
[gracechurchsp.org/easter2024](http://gracechurchsp.org/easter2024)

## Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to you that you are bought with a price, that you no longer live, and that Christ lives in you? (Galatians 2:20, 1 Corinthians 6:20)
2. As you read through Mark 4:1-9, describe the 4 heart conditions. (Hard. Shallow. Cluttered. Humble.)
3. How do you think the fast in Isaiah 58:1-12 will help your hard, shallow, and cluttered heart?
4. What is the connection between Jesus' promise in John 10:10 of abundant life and how He invites you to follow Him in Matthew 16:24?
5. In 2 Timothy 3:1 it says we live in difficult times as we near the end of days. Why do you think it's so difficult?
6. Was your answer from 2 Timothy 3:2? Discuss how the difficulties of the 'world' are needing to be dealt with in your own heart.
7. Are you an enemy of the cross? (Philippians 3:18)
8. Practically speaking. Fasting exposes the true condition of your heart. It does not set it free. How can being part of your authentic community, the Word, and seeking God in prayer help set you free?

## 5. Application

Take this time to ask what everyone will do with what they heard from the message.

What will you do with what you heard?

What is God asking you to be, and/or do, with what you heard?

## 6. Pray

Pray. Take some time to pray with and for each other.

