



Leader's Growth Group Homework Guide

For the week of March 25-30, 2019

(This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion)

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Which is your favorite indulgence

- Chocolate
- Sweets of any kind
- Salty or savory snacks
- Binge watching television
- Sleeping late
- Other

GOING DEEPER

1. Read Isaiah 55:1-9

55:1 Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

55:4 See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

55:5 See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

55:7 let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Q. How would Isaiah 55:1 have been music to the ears of the people of Israel at this time?

Background Information

These verses in Isaiah meet the people of Israel as they are returning from exile. Those returning had been living in a foreign land that was hostile to their religious way of life.

Yet, they had also seen others, mostly non-Jews, living with plenty. Now, God was inviting them back to the Promised Land where they could live in abundance, where they could drink and eat off of God's provisions, no longer subsisting in meager situations.

2. What do you need to stop in order to listen the word of God so that you may live? What does verse 3 mean to your life right now?

Other scripture reference: Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ."

3. How are we also guilty of feasting and laboring for that which does not satisfy? (Isaiah 55:2)

Q. What does the question "Is God enough for me?" mean to you? How would you answer to the question?

As Thexton a scholar puts it: "They had been in Babylon for many years-some for the whole of their life. They had grown roots, acquired property and commercial interests, were prosperous and secure. The prophet does not plead or argue, but throws into the quiet pool of their complacency a disturbing pebble, as he asks: 'Does all this really satisfy you? Is this what you are for'"

4. How does God's grace operate in surprising ways? [Isaiah 55:8-9] Can anyone share if you experienced such a grace?

John Wesley on Salvation – Discussion

Convicting Grace and Repentance. Though our culture tends to shy away from notions of sin, neither Scripture nor John Wesley is afraid of discussing the topic. John Wesley pointed out that part of God's grace is in the conviction of sin, which comes through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Repentance can be likened to a porch on a house; its purpose is to lead us into deeper and more meaningful areas where relationships can become more intimate.

Read the following quote from John Wesley's Sermon "On Working Out Our Own Salvation" and discuss the question that follows:

"Salvation is carried on by *convincing grace*, usually in Scripture termed *repentance*; which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation; whereby, 'through grace,' we 'are saved by faith;' consisting of those two grand branches, justification and

sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God. All experience, as well as Scripture, shows this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of God and man. It gradually increases from that moment, as 'a grain of mustard-seed, which, at first, is the least of all seeds,' but afterwards puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till, in another instant, the heart is cleansed, from all sin, and filled with pure love to God and man. But even that love increases more and more, till we 'grow up in all things into him that is our Head;' till we attain the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

(<https://www.umcmmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-85-On-Working-Out-Our-Own-Salvation>)

5. What has been your experience of repentance? How is ongoing repentance vital to becoming a mature “citizen of heaven”?

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.



End by praying the following or similar prayer:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you alone are the source of peace and abundance. Forgive us when we have not been as generous as you call us to be. Just as you modeled humility and a self-giving posture of life, empower us to be people who offer extravagant love to all we encounter. Amen.



Growth Group Community Service Project

We ask every group to take on at least one service project a year (the ideal is two) and to have at least one social gathering (potluck) per half a year. Please consider with your group members of what community service you'd like to participate in. There is a project list made by our church that you can join in and outside the church.

