



The Good Book

In the Beginning

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Leader Check-in

Tell about a struggle you had (or have) with the Bible and how you're seeking to resolve it. What do you hope will happen in your heart and life through your study of *The Good Book*?

Discover

What is your favorite thing God created?

Read Genesis 3:1-19. What were some of the consequences Adam and Eve faced because of their sin?

Name some of the ways in which the Serpent (Satan) enticed Adam and Eve into sinful choices. How does the Enemy still use these tactics today?

Read Genesis 6:5-10, 22. What are some of the daily reminders that sin is still affecting creation, culture and our lives?

How does God show His redemptive grace and reveal His plan of salvation in the opening book of the Bible?

Fully Own

Read Genesis 22:1-19. Is there an area in your life where you're waiting for God to lead you? How is He growing your faith during this season?

Reflect on the phrase, "We do not coast into Christlikeness. Christlikeness requires risk." Are you willing to risk even when it doesn't make sense?

Read Genesis 1:27. What does it mean to you that you were created in the Image of God?

Challenge

Spend time together as a group praying. Thank God for His creation and the beauty we see around us. Ask God to grow your group over the next few weeks. Ask God to help each of you take risks and look more like Jesus.

The Good Book

God is Good When Life Gets Messy

Leader Check-in

Recall the phrase from last week, “We do not coast into Christlikeness. Christlikeness requires risk.” What has been your response to this statement?

Discover

Why do you think the Bible is so honest about the frailties, struggles, sin and rebellion of God’s people?

Tell about a time when you faced unexpected loss, pain or deep struggle in your life. How did God show up and help you?

Read Exodus 3:1-15. What key words or phrases stand out to you that reveal that God cares for His people?

If God hadn’t appeared to Moses in the burning bush, where might the Israelites have ended up? If God hadn’t shown up in your life where might you be today?

Read Exodus 14:14. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and delivered them to the Promised Land. In what ways has God delivered you?

Fully Own

Take a moment and think about a biblical story where God used a messy person or situation to accomplish His purpose. Share with the group.

How does this biblical account encourage or inspire you to follow Jesus despite your messiness?

Reflect on the quote, “God’s commands may keep us from short term pleasure but they lead us into long term joy.” What short-term pleasures are distracting you from long-term joy?

What steps can you take to start walking more diligently on the long road of obedience to the ways of God?




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Challenge

Write out each of the 10 Commandments in your own words, expressing what you believe is the heart of each command. Ask God to continue to push you into a right relationship with Him and with others.



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God is Big

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Leader Check-in

How easy (or difficult) was it for you to make your list this week? Does anyone want to share how they expressed the 10 Commandments?

Discover

Tell about a time you faced a major storm in your life and either pulled away from God or ran towards Him. How did this affect you?

Read Job 1:12-22. What do we learn about Job by looking at his response to suffering? How does this serve as an example for us in times of pain and suffering?

How can sharing our pain and loss with others help us and those with whom we share?

Read Psalm 23. What in this chapter shows us that God is faithful even in times of suffering?

Fully Own

Reflect on the phrase, “The places we go to look for help shed light on what we believe about God.” When storms hit our lives, many people turn away from God and seek comfort in other things. What are some of the things people turn towards? Why don’t these things ultimately satisfy or help them through the storms?

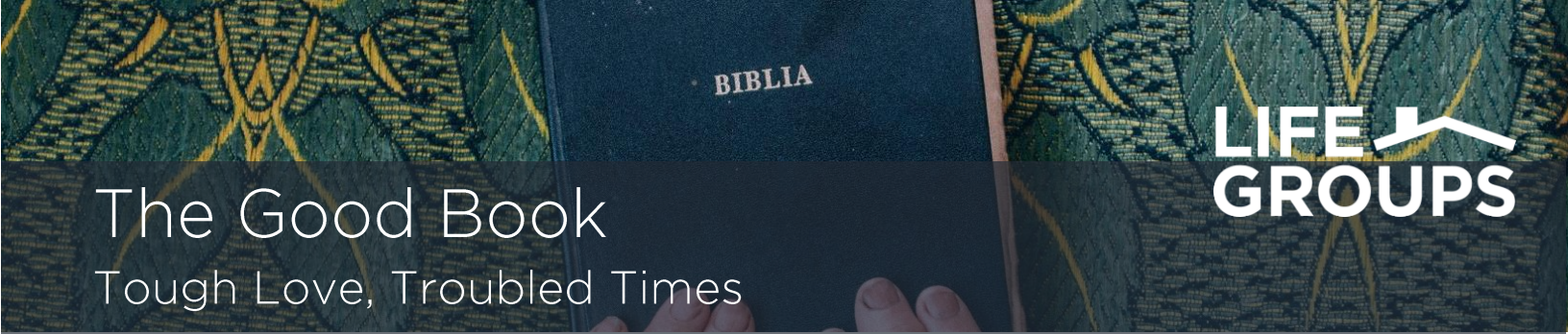
Where do you run when life gets hard?

What keeps you from quickly confessing your sins to God and running back to Him when you find yourself wondering? What steps can you take to overcome this obstacle?

Read Psalm 139. What are some of the unique ways God has made you? Share with the group. Spend time in prayer together thanking him and taking delight in the ways God has uniquely made each of you.

Challenge

Spend some time this week and ask yourself this question: “Am I allowing my struggles to define what I think about God?” Ask God to show His presence to you and the ways that He is working in your pain.



The Good Book

Tough Love, Troubled Times

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Leader Check-in

What truth has stuck out over the past few weeks as we study *The Good Book*? Share with the group.

Discover

Have you ever felt pressured to do something you knew didn't honor God? How did you respond? What happened?

What have you sacrificed, or what price have you paid because of your decision to follow Jesus?

Read Jonah 1:1-3. In what ways do we run from God and resist His leading? What typically happens when we run from God?

Read Daniel 3:1-6, 13-23. How did the three young men respond when they bumped up against cultural norms that violated their faith?

Fully Own

What are the changing norms and behaviors in our culture that violate our faith? How can we stand up and resist like the three young men in Daniel?

Read Matthew 9:11-12. Who do you know that is 'sick'? What can you do to be Jesus to that person this week?

Identify an area in your life where you see yourself sliding away from God's will and towards the ways of the world. Write it down and ask God this week to draw Himself to you as you seek to draw yourself to Him in this area.

Challenge

At this point in your Christian walk would you consider yourself more a spectator or on the field and in the game? Why? What are ways you can get in the game? Consider serving at church or in a local ministry.

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Jesus Has Just Entered the Building

Leader Check-in

In what ways did you commit to 'get in the game'?

Discover

Have you ever gone out of your way to show someone the love of God? What did you do? How did it go?

What are some of the consequences for people who seem deeply committed to knowing the right Bible information but don't let the truth change how they conduct themselves in their daily lives?

Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22-23. What would it look like to truly understand and embrace the truth that God is with us? How can knowing Jesus as Immanuel (God with us) help us when we face fear, anxiety or worry?

Fully Own

Read Matthew 7:1-6. In what ways do you tend to judge others? What steps can you take to overcome this tendency?

Read Philippians 2:5-8. In your own words, express what Jesus sacrificed when He left heaven, took on human flesh and died on the cross.

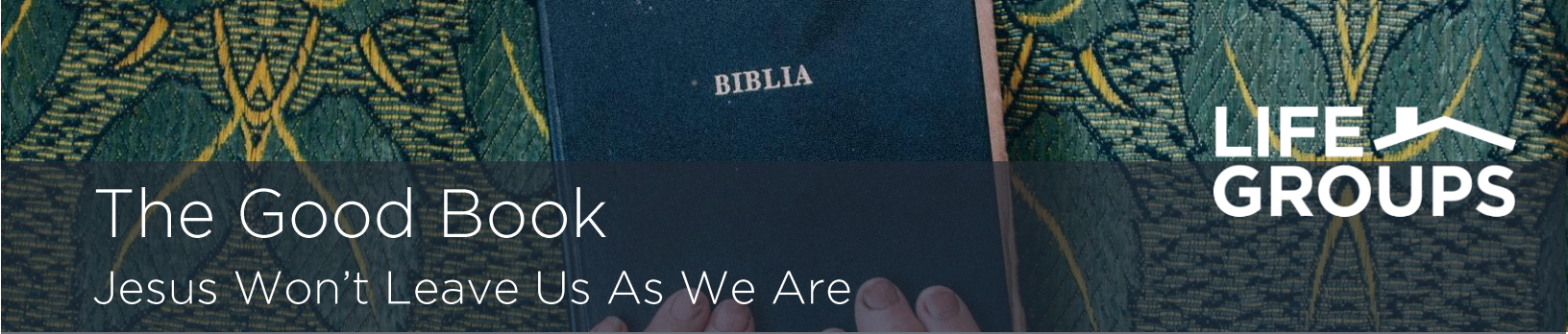
What would selfless love look like if you decided to follow Jesus' example in these areas:

- Home
- Work
- Neighborhood
- Community

Reflect on the phrase, "The depth of love can be determined by the level of sacrifice." What level of sacrifice are you willing to give so your friends, coworkers and neighbors can experience the depth of God's love? What do you think that would look like?

Challenge

Read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). List the lessons you are learning from this passage and some action steps you can take to live out what Jesus is talking about.



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Jesus Won't Leave Us As We Are

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Leader Check-in

Did you read the Sermon on the Mount? How did it go? What action steps did you write down or take?

Discover

Tell about a time you broke something (an object, relationship, etc.) you thought was beyond repair but then discovered it could be repaired.

Read John 14:6. What are ways people push back against the idea that Jesus is the only way to salvation? Why do you think there is so much resistance to this idea?

Read Luke 15:3-32. How does God feel when a person who is lost and far from Him comes home and receives the grace of Jesus?

As you look back on your life, how did God search for you, reach out to you, and bring you to Himself even if you didn't recognize it at the time?

Fully Own


Read Matthew 28:16-20. What mission did Jesus give His followers? What are ways we can enter that mission?

How can we, the People of God, do a better job of embracing and loving people who are hurting, different or even just plain difficult?

Think of one person in your life who seems far from God. Take time as group to pray for that person. Ask God to give you opportunities to show them Jesus' love.

Challenge

Take time this week and write out prayers of praise that begin with, "Because Jesus is risen from the dead, I..."



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Follow Jesus

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Leader Check-in

Share with the group some of your prayers of praise you wrote during the week.

Discover

Share about your experience with church as you grew up. What was good? What was bad? If you didn't grow up in church, what was your impression looking in from the outside?

Read Acts 1:8. What comes to your mind when you hear people say, "I'm filled with the Spirit?" or "I'm Spirit led?"

Read John 16:5-15. What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do when He enters the life of a Follower of Jesus? How have you experienced the Spirit of God working in your life?

Read Acts 9:13-19. What do we learn about the character and faith of Ananias in this account? How can his example inspire us to take risks as we follow Jesus? Are there risks you have resisted taking because of fear?

Fully Own

Read Acts 2:42. Identify key characteristics that marked the community of the 1st century church. How can we embrace and grow these same practices in the life of the church today?

Who do you struggle to love? What do you need to change to love them in the way that God loves you?

How can you be more open and responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Are you open to the Holy Spirit getting you out of your comfort zone and interrupting your life? Why or why not?

Challenge

Look out for "Holy Spirit interruptions" this week; people or situations God places in your path where He can work and move through you.



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God's Message For You

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Leader Check-in

Did you experience a Holy Spirit interruption last week? Share about it.

Discover

Tell about a time when you saw someone serve, invite, include and love others like Jesus did.

Read Romans 8:14-17 and Ephesians 1:3-6. Identify key words and phrases that talk about what it means to be part of God's family.

In the ancient Roman world, adoption meant two things (1) the person became an heir of the family estate and (2) all of the person's debts were wiped out and he or she was given a fresh start. What are the spiritual implications of this truth? What do we inherit when we become children of God? What is wiped away?

Fully Own

Reflect on the phrase, "No one is too far gone to experience God's grace." Do you know someone in your life who has expressed that they feel too far gone? How can you show them this is not true?

Think of one person you know who is often left out and marginalized. What can you do to include this person and encourage God's family to embrace him or her?

Read 1 John 3:1-2. How are you experiencing life transformation right now? Where is God at work and where is He wanting to begin a new work in you? How can your life group pray for you and hold you accountable?

Challenge

Take time to list out or think through some of the junk piled up in the garage of your heart. How can you clean out the junk to make more room for Jesus?