

Small Group and Personal Bible Study Guide

This week's memory verse: James 4:8

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Small Group Questions:

1. Read Luke 10:38-41, what do you learn from these two sisters?

In this lesson I learned that although everything Martha was doing to serve Jesus and the disciples was good intentioned, we must remember that first and foremost we must love and learn from Jesus. Our service should be simply an overflow of our love for Jesus and our love for Jesus comes only from sitting at His feet and getting to know His love better and better.

2. Read James 4:8, John 8:31-32, John 15:4, Matthew 11:28, Psalm 46:10, Philippians 4:5-7. What do these verses tell you about being with God?

Ask your group which of these verses touch you/them the deepest? Why?

I learn that God is waiting. He wants me to know him and trust him. He provides rest and peace for me if I will simply come to him and trust in him as I spend time with him.

3. When was a time in your life that you felt very close to God? What was going on in your spiritual life?

Share personal experiences with your group.

For me, I have found that when I spend daily intimate quality time with God I hear him and come to know and trust him more. I have become an advocate for intensive studies like Experiencing God and The Disciples Cross because it has been during these times that I have come to know God more intimately and He has spoken clearly his will into my life through daily time with him in his word. As an example, at one point in my life, God used my daily time in prayer, the word and through journaling as I went through Experiencing God to clearly change my heart towards down and out people. God first revealed to me an area of my heart needing to change. He moved me to prayer. He showed me where He was at work and gave me a passion to join him. Because of this, we started our homeless ministry at InnVision and God has used this ministry to change many lives and save people from their sins. This would never have happened in my life had I not spent daily time with God listening to His word and prayer for His leading.

4. Share how time with God has drawn you to know, love and adore Him more.

Share personal experiences with your group.

I have experienced that through quiet times with God, especially times alone at the beach or up in the mountains, God has revealed himself to me in a way that has drawn me to glimpse his greatness and his grace in a clearer way. These mountain top experiences have carried me through difficult desert times of my spiritual life and have helped me understand the amazing grace of God that is unchanging and never away. I simply need to come to Him. James 4:8 has been a promise I remember always along with Hebrews 13:6.

5. Are you spending daily time with God now? Why or why not?

Let people share and encourage open honesty. Most of us struggle with a daily time with God.

6. What is the biggest challenge you face in spending daily time with God? What would it take to allow you to spend a daily time with God? Who could help you stay committed?

Let your group come together as accountability partners, prayer partners. Consider beginning a daily study you can do together and hold one another accountable to. My home group has begun a 12-week daily study called "Seeking Him". In doing so, we can begin to encourage and hold accountable one another for having a daily time with God and hopefully establish daily habits for those who struggle with it.

Options for daily study include continuing to follow these outlines and having everyone follow our daily reading schedule. Consider having a discussion on the chapters read during the week. Or, start a group study. I highly recommend Experiencing God and Seeking Him. Disciples Cross is another great study. Many other studies are available. Consider going to Berean Christian book store for ideas or give me a call and we can discuss suggestions. Even a simple daily devotional like "Our Daily Bread" can help begin a daily time with God.

This week's reading schedule:

This week practice the habit of spending daily time with God as you read through 1 Peter. Start by preparing your heart for God and inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to you, then read and listen to the word God has for you today and then respond to God in prayer as He leads you.

Day 1 – 1 Peter 1

Day 2 – 1 Peter 2

Day 3 – 1 Peter 3

Day 4 – 1 Peter 4

Day 5 – 1 Peter 5