

WHAT'S SO AMAZING ABOUT SCRIPTURE?



SMALL GROUP GUIDE *BASED ON THE BOOK*

Note: This guide is NOT to be confused with the video journey small group guide.

WHY WORK THROUGH THE BOOK WITH OTHERS IN A GROUP?

Small Groups help us to take the *What's So Amazing About Scripture?* content to the next level of impact in our lives in two ways; :

1. Going through the journey with a group will multiply our growth and learning.

Attempting to verbally share with others what we are discovering, wondering about and trying to implement has a way of deepening our discoveries, curiosity and implementation. Also, hearing what others are learning, asking and doing enriches our own. Or as Scripture puts it: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour." (Eccl 4:9)

This is especially true when it comes to speaking the truth to each other in the context of caring relationships: "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in

their deceitful scheming. *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow* to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” (Eph 4:14-15)

2. Going through the journey with a group will Head

On our own we more easily quit or lose energy in the journey somewhere along the way. Think of how much easier it is to get into an exercise habit, such as running, if you have a running group or partner. “Two are better than one, because ... if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.” (Eccl 4:10-11)

A SUGGESTION

Perhaps instead of using the book as the basis for a Small Group journey of discussion, you want to use the related Video Journey as the basis for one? There are a few reasons for this:

- The chapters of the book have varying length. This means that some meetings will require far more pre-reading and will try to squeeze in more things to talk about. The videos journey, however, takes the 17 chapters and breaks them up quite evenly into 30 videos.
- The video journey can be formatted to take 8 weeks if 3 videos are watched in preparation of each session, and another 1 is watched during the group time. A video in the group time also “spices up” the group time. The book journey will take longer than 8 weeks (which may be fine for your group.)
- Unless you have a group of readers, watching short videos rather than reading a chapter may be a more do-able ask on the non-readers.
- If you have purchased the book, you may have a ‘book owners discount code’ to purchase the video at a cheaper rate. There is also the possibility of a bulk purchase of the videos (40+ people) at a discount of 65-75%.

If you opt for the video group journey, one might ask if some people can read the book instead of watching the videos. For the sake of the

Group experience it is better that everyone sings from the same song-sheet. The book has far more detail in it than the videos, and much of the content is arranged in a different order than in the videos.

If you opt for the video group journey, be sure to use that group guide not this one.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF EVERYONE?

- Everyone in the group needs to do their allocated pre-reading.
- Everyone in the group needs to write down their answers in advance on the Personal Devotional Study available at www.bit.ly/2Vfqvol. There are two options for writing down the answers to these questions: 1. Type into the blocks of the fillable document. 2. Write down the answers in a journal. Either way, each person will need to bring their answers to the weekly gatherings, ready to share all or only their highlight reel of answers.

WHAT ARE THE TWO POSSIBLE LENGTHS?

The first length is 17 weeks. This means one chapter read in advance of each meeting, and then discussed.

The second length is shorter, because two short chapters can be read in one week, while giving a longer chapter its own week.

- Week 1: Introduction + ch 1+2
- Week 2: ch 3+4
- Week 3: ch 5+6
- Week 4: ch 7
- Week 5: ch 8
- Week 6: ch 9+10
- Week 7: ch 11+12
- Week 8: ch 13
- Week 9: ch 14+15
- Week 10: ch 16+17 + Epilogue

SHARE IN THE GROUP

If in a weekly gathering one or two chapters, or a longer chapter, are being discussed, there is a risk of too much talking in too little time. Some solutions include:

- Subgroup. If you have a large group, one solution is to form subgroups of two to four people, who share with each other.
- Share only your highlight reel of answers.
- If you provide duplicate answers to two questions, only share one of them.
- Keep your answers crisp—no need for too much explanation.
- If you're naturally talkative and confident in conversation, remember to hang back if your contribution starts to crowd out that of others.
- As interesting as other questions and subject matter may be, keep the conversation on the subject of the questions.

Some additional tips for sharing in the gathering time:

- 1) Appoint someone skilled to do so, to facilitate the conversation.
- 2) See what works better for your group: either asking and discussing one question at a time, then everyone shares; or allowing people to share their answers to all questions in a video all at once. (Keep in mind that you only need to share your highlight reel of answers.)
- 3) Affirm people when they do say something, even if it is small.
- 4) Put no pressure on anyone to share.
- 5) When a normally quiet person does share, everyone listen extra carefully.
- 6) Be real. Putting on spiritual graces and airs will not help anyone.
- 7) Be prepared. The more preparation each person does before the gathering will enrich the time for all.