

SCRIPTURE CARD GUIDE FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

"KARMA MEETS CHRISTIANITY" FEBRUARY 4

SERIES OVERVIEW:

Biblical truth matters for a myriad of reasons... it is certainly for the power of the Gospel to save souls, but as well biblical doctrine reaches into the health of mind and spirit in faith communities. Mental and spiritual health, and Christian care and concern can be shaken and experience deep harm when biblical doctrines are erroneous. In this series we will address how often in American Christianity a buffet of doctrines suiting our desires are selected, resulting in confusion and pain, and can even distance us from Jesus Christ. However, true biblical teaching that takes in the whole counsel of God's Word, comforts us, strengthens us, and reassures us of the goodness and faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

Follow the directions below for a guided group discussion with a friend, in a family, small group, etc. Grab a Scripture Card (printed or electronic) and simply follow steps from 1 to 6 on this page and the next.

1

PRAY

About 1 minute

Open in prayer. Consider reading Psalm 145:1-7 as part of the opening prayer.

2

BIG IDEA

A minute to read

We are truly blessed by giving and living a life in response to God's saving Grace. However, the giver is NOT giving to "get." The giver's motivation is to honor and love God. The "blessing" is a deepening relationship with Jesus and being transformed more and more into His image.

3

CONNECT

About 10 minutes

Consider an item you wanted to have when you were 10 years old.

What was it and did you eventually get it? Would you still want it today? Why or why not?

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Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.
- Philippians 3:8

Reflect
Read the full passage in your Bible - Philippians 3:3b-11.
What is something that is grabbing your attention from the passage and why?
Take a look at Paul's pedigree in verses 4-6, the expansive list of things that he could put his confidence in. How could Paul count this list as garbage compared to knowing Jesus?
What does knowing Christ Jesus as your Lord mean to you? Where does it land on your list of "what's most important about you"?

4

DISCIPLE LIFE DISCUSSION

About 45-50 minutes. Read the Scripture above and discuss the questions there. Additional questions below.

Theology of Glory falsely emphasizes a "cause and effect" that makes giving transactional. e.g., "If I increase my financial giving then I will increase my financial receiving." Theology of the Cross rightly recognizes that giving is a free response to that which God has freely given.

Read Acts 20:32-35. In what ways have you been more blessed to give than receive?

What steps can you take to ensure that your giving is motivated simply as a response to God's grace in love and to be more like Jesus?

Read Luke 6:37-38. Sometimes v38 can be taken out of context. Looking at both verses together, we are to give forgiveness and mercy. What practices help you increase your knowledge and understanding of God's Word in the context of all of Scripture?



DISCUSSION HELP:

Use follow-up questions to take the discussion deeper. Guide answers to be honest and real.

Can you say more about that?

How have you seen that play out in your life?

What does that stir up in you?

Has anyone else had a similar thought or experience?

What might God be inviting you to do?

5 PRAY:

About 15 minutes

Read the prayer prompts and allow for a time of reflection.

Pray now in a time of popcorn prayer. The leader or apprentice will open the time of prayer. Consider closing the prayer time with the following:

"Jesus, our Savior, transform our hearts to align with Yours. Teach us to look to the cross, understanding that giving is a free response to Your boundless generosity. Help us to give, not in order to receive, but simply because we have known and received Your incredible love and grace. Help us to exemplify joy and show Your love in all we do and say. Amen."

THE [DISCIPLE] LIFE

Pray

Talk to God about your thoughts from that last question (under Reflect).

Share with God how knowing him has transformed your life, making you more like him.

Thank God for the opportunity to serve him and honor him with your life (as a response to the gift of salvation).

Live It Out

INVITATION: Ask God to bring to mind someone whom you could share your story, the story of how God has worked in your life and is continuing to make you more like Jesus.

CHALLENGE: In addition to this, pray for them and reach out, asking to get together. As you meet together, be prepared to share a bit of your story. Do this with gentleness and respect.

**Jesus, thank you for inviting me
into this LIFE of following you today!**

6**LIVE IT OUT:**

About 2 minutes

Read the "Live It Out" section and invite the group to take the steps noted.