



### GROUP DISCUSSION

- ❑ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.
- ❑ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.
- ❑ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.
- ❑ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



### INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

## DEEP IMPACT

Things get passed from one generation to the next. Some things we inherited from our family of origin are good and healthy while others can be unhealthy and sinful. There are also lots of people and places that have deeply impacted the way we relate to people and react to the world around us, whether it's our culture, childhood experiences, friendships, church upbringing, etc.

The cycle doesn't have to continue with us. We can break the cycle of unhealthy, sinful patterns in our life with God's help, which is what your group is going to discuss today.

**Q:** *Name one positive thing that was passed down to you from your parents.*



## DEEPER DIVE

Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.

# THE POWER OF SELF-REFLECTION

In our hustle-and-bustle world filled with busyness and plenty of distractions, few seem to find time for self-reflection. Whether it's your classes, work projects or extra-curricular activities or volunteer work, it's easy to find excuses not to stop and reflect.

The Bible contains a collection of songs (called psalms) that reveal how powerful it can be to examine yourself and ask God to reveal what's true of you and your situation in life. Let's take a look at some key passages from the psalms and how the psalmist self-reflects and seeks God's truth.

Q: Have volunteers read Psalm 25:4-5a, 139:1-12 and 23-24. What do these passages reveal about the character of God? What do they reveal about us?

Q: What benefits are there in taking time for self-reflection?



## REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Select 2–3 questions from this section to answer.

# BECOMING A CYCLE-BREAKER

Change is possible. Sinful patterns can be unlearned but self-reflection and God's supernatural help are required if we want to break free of the past in order to live joyfully with God in the present. We also need each other to discover more about who we are in Christ and the freedom He gives us in our lives.

In *The Deeply Formed Life* (WaterBrook: 2020) Rich Villodas identifies three important areas we must reflect on in order to understand how our past might be impacting our present:

1. *Patterns* – repeated behaviors, practices, habits or ways of thinking and acting that are passed from one generation to the next. When we can name these patterns in our lives, it puts us in reality and in a position

to work with the truth, not illusions or deceptions.

2. *Trauma* – abuse, loss or tragedy that are suffered and can be scarring or triggering to those who experience it. While trauma can be things that happened to you, it can also be things that failed to happen.

3. *Scripts* - the messages that were given or roles we believed we had to play. Examples of roles include: protector, peace-keeper, second-mom, all-star, scholar, beauty queen.

🙏: *Where would you like to experience more of God's freedom in your life?*

🙏: *What would it look like to go through this process in community with others?*

🙏: *Commit to spending next week in prayer and self-reflection and consider the above areas and where they may be present in your story.*



## PRAY

Take a moment to pray your own version of the psalmist's prayer. Sit in silence and listen for anything the Lord wants to reveal to you.