

## GUIDES TO GROUP DISCUSSIONS

This world has a lot to say about your love life, with empty and dangerous messages constantly bombarding us, leaving us feeling unsatisfied. But God's Word goes against the world's cliches, pointing us to Jesus as our true fulfillment. Join us for our new series, *Proverbs for Your Love Life*, as we learn to combat the unwise romantic advice around us with the truth of Scripture.

### SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Remember that you aren't in this alone! God will help you prepare and lead your group discussion. Make it your goal to keep in step with the Holy Spirit!

Pray and read the passage a few times on your own. Take a few minutes to identify what makes an impression on you and how the passage might impact your group.

Once you've taken some time to read the passage on your own, read through the entire Discussion Guide. Make sure you understand the Main Point. Identify which questions you want to use in your group time and rewrite them in your own words.

Once your group time is over, take a few minutes to evaluate the discussion. What went well? What could have been different? If you had a "bad night," DON'T GIVE UP! Everyone has tough nights. There were times when even the disciples didn't get what Jesus was talking about!

#### FREE RESOURCES

To equip you as a leader, we provide resources each series to help you and members of your group understand and respond to the biblical truths we're studying as a church. Don't forget about the Mariners Annual Read and the <u>Gospel Every Day podcast</u> discussing each devotional.

The CSB Study Bible is an excellent resource if you'd prefer a physical copy of the translation used by Mariners Church. It is available for purchase online and in the <u>bookstore</u> at Irvine.

All Scripture references in this guide are CSB unless otherwise noted.

#### **HOW TO USE THE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

#### **MAIN POINT**

Discussions often take on a life of their own, but they typically lack power when they lack focus. The Discussion Leader ought to use the Main Point to keep everyone on the same page. To do this, you might say something like, "That is very interesting and a good topic for another discussion, but today's study is about..." and ask a question that brings people back to the topic of discussion. There will be times when it makes sense to ignore the Main Point—for example, when someone in your group experiences a significant crisis. If you decide to move away from the lesson's Main Point, you want to do so on purpose and not by accident.

#### RHYTHM REMINDERS

A prompt will be provided when one of the 7 Rhythms of Rooted has a natural point of emphasis. We want to help everyone continue to grow holistically in their spiritual journeys. Obviously, some rhythms always exist, like prayer, but occasionally it will be helpful to draw fresh attention to or spend additional time in one of the rhythms.

#### **LEADER NOTES**

Where needed, each lesson may have several Leader Notes. This material will provide insight on how to steer the conversation and care for your people. Additionally, these notes will provide greater context to help you understand a difficult word, phrase, or verse.

### LEAN IN BREAK THE ICE

These questions will help kick-start your discussion time. The main goal for this time is to get everyone talking and prepare them for the more focused conversation to follow.

#### LOOK DOWN LOOK AT GOD'S WORD

The goal for this section is to let the passage speak for itself and stand on its own. This isn't easy! During this time, you will read the passage out loud (twice) and answer questions focused on the details of the biblical text.

# LOOK OUT IDENTIFY THE RELEVANCE OF GOD'S WORD IN THE WORLD

Jesus calls us to love others, just as He loved us. Based on your understanding of the text and how God is transforming your heart, how will you treat others? How will you apply this teaching to all of your relationships and to everyone you will see this week and beyond?

#### LOOK IN APPLY GOD'S WORD

Transformation comes from renewing your mind (Romans 12:2). The goal for this section is to look inward to allow God's Word to change you from the inside out. Use this time to discuss how your thoughts and feelings are affirmed and/or challenged.

Be sure to close your time together in prayer. You can take requests from the group, invite others to lead, and bring God the needs that stood out to you in your group time.

## WEEK 1: YOU ARE UNITED WITH GOD NOT "FIND YOUR SOULMATE."

#### **GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

#### PREPARE

Listen and subscribe to the Mariners Life Group Leader Podcast.

If you missed the weekend message or want to review specific points, you can always watch, listen, and find bulletin notes online at marinerschurch.org/messages.

#### **MAIN POINT**

The world pleads with you to find your soulmate—the one who can complete you. The cultural cliché hurts those who are single, hinting that they are lacking someone to make them whole. It hurts those who are dating by causing them to pass on great options in hopes of the mythical one. And it hurts those who are married, setting unrealistic expectations and causing some to view any conflict as a hint that "this must not be my soulmate." The Word says you are not half a person who needs someone else to complete you. You were not cut in half from your soulmate (a myth from Plato). No, you were created by God and cut off from Him because of your own sin. But He came here to make you one with Himself, and if you fear Him, your soul is satisfied.

## LEAN IN BREAK THE ICE

What is a super funny or cheesy piece of relationship advice you have heard? And is it lame or actually kind of solid?

LOOK DOWN LOOK AT GOD'S WORD Read Proverbs 19:23

The fear of the LORD leads to life;
one will sleep at night without danger.

Read Proverbs 19:23. What does the writer of Proverbs say leads to life?

Read Matthew 19:11-12. How does Jesus describe singleness as a gift for God's Kingdom?

LOOK OUT
IDENTIFY THE
RELEVANCE OF
GOD'S WORD IN
THE WORLD

How does the world's idea of "finding a soulmate" clash with what we see in Proverbs and Matthew 19?

How have movies, TV shows, or dating apps reinforced the pressure to find "the one"?

In what ways does the "soulmate myth" impact how society views both singleness and marriage?

LOOK IN
APPLY GOD'S
WORD TO YOUR
LIFE

If you're single, how does this teaching help you see your singleness a bit differently than before?

If you're in a relationship, how does Scripture help you take unrealistic burdens off of your spouse?

How might your love life look differently if you cared more about finding ultimate satisfaction in Jesus rather than in another person?