



FOLLOW





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This study guide and electronic versions of the videos for this series and the many others produced by Equippers Church can be accessed at www.equipperschurch.com/egroups

HOST'S GUIDE

This study guide is here to help you lead a fun and transformative eGroup study over the next few weeks that will see each person progress and grow. Use this guide, along with the DVDs and weekly Study Guides, for a life-changing, interactive experience.

BEFORE YOU MEET:

- Ask God to prepare the hearts and minds of the people in your eGroup. Ask Him to show each of you how to apply what you learn to your own heart to see growth and to move forward.
- Preview the DVD and read through the study guide for that week. Think about what you might answer for each question. Make notes in your study guide if you want to.

SETTING UP:

- Take time before everyone arrives to prepare some snacks to share with everyone, set up the room you will use, check that there are enough seats, and try to create a relaxed and comfortable environment to meet in. You might want to play music quietly to create a relaxed atmosphere when everyone arrives, or move the furniture in your living room to make the space inviting.
- Have a Bible handy for verses that you might want to look up during discussion.

HOW TO HOST YOUR GATHERING AND USE YOUR STUDY GUIDE:

ENGAGE: Welcome each person as they arrive. Spend time chatting, getting to know one another, or just sharing about the week. Your relationships as a group are as important as the time you spend watching the DVD or in discussion. A relaxed and friendly environment is an easy place to learn and hear from God.

RECAP: After the first session you may wish to spend a bit of time each week recapping how your last seven days has been, inviting members to share any opportunities they had throughout the week to apply what they learned and how their individual activation went.

KEY THOUGHT: This is the main takeaway for the week. You don't have to read it out but can use it as a guide to frame your discussion.

WATCH: After you have spent some time engaging with each other watch the DVD for the week.

DISCUSS: Read out each question in the study guide, allowing time for everyone to share their thoughts or experiences if they desire.

When a question arises, ask the group for their input, and resist the urge to answer it yourself straight away. Your primary role is to create an environment where people feel comfortable to be themselves and participate, not to provide all the answers to all of their questions. Don't be afraid of silence as participants think of their response to the questions.

Remember, the goal is not necessarily to 'get through' all of the questions. The main priority is for each person to learn and engage in dynamic discussion.

PRAY: Ask the group to pray for each other from week to week, especially about key issues that arise during your discussion time. This is how you begin to build authentic relationship, and encourage spiritual growth within the group.

ACTIVATE: As a group, read out and talk about the action in the study guide for that week. Decide together to commit to doing this action during the week to help you each grow and engage with God individually.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAMES FOR YOUR GATHERING:

ENGAGE: 15 minutes

RECAP: 10 minutes

WATCH: 10 minutes

DISCUSS: 30 minutes

PRAY: 5-10 minutes

ACTIVATE: 5 minutes

(Please note that these are just suggested times, you may wish to take longer in certain areas. However, we do recommend keeping your gathering to a maximum of one and a half hours in consideration of others' time)

KEYS TO A DYNAMIC EGROUP

RELATIONSHIPS: Meaningful, encouraging relationships are the foundation of a dynamic eGroup. Discussion and prayer are important elements of a gathering, but the depth of each part is often dependent upon the depth of the relationships between members.

AVAILABILITY: Building a sense of community within your group requires members to prioritise their relationships with one another. This means being available to listen, care for one another, and meet each other's needs.

MUTUAL RESPECT: Mutual respect is shown when members value others' opinions (even when they disagree) and are careful to never belittle or embarrass others in the group (including their spouses, who may or may not be present).

OPENNESS: A healthy group environment encourages sincerity and transparency. Members treat each other with grace in areas of weakness, allowing each other room to grow.

CONFIDENTIALITY: To develop authenticity and a sense of safety within the group, each member must be able to trust that things discussed within the group will not be shared outside the group.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: Group members will share the responsibility of gatherings by using their God-given abilities to serve at each meeting. Some may greet, some may prepare food, some may pray, etc. Ideally, each person should be available to care for one another as needed.

SENSITIVITY: Dynamic eGroups are born when the leader consistently seeks and is responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, following His leading throughout the meeting as opposed to sticking to the “agenda”. This is especially important during the discussion and prayer time.

FUN!

Dynamic gatherings take the time to have fun! Create an atmosphere for fun, and be willing to laugh at yourself every now and then!

FOLLOW

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other.

KEY THOUGHT: Their decision to invite Jesus into their life was not a one time event but the start of a lifelong relationship. They should also come away understanding that they are saved, whether they make mistakes or not.

WATCH: Watch 'Session One' of the video.

QUESTION 1: Jordan and Reggie both shared how they experienced salvation and first started following Jesus.

What's your story? How did you come to start following Jesus?

QUESTION 2: Read Matthew 9:9. Imagine when Jesus says "come, follow me" that he is speaking to you and inviting you to follow him.

What would you do if Jesus walked into the room right now and said that to you? How would you feel? What would you say?

QUESTION 3: Salvation isn't just a one time decision, it begins a journey. A journey of getting to know Jesus as we follow Him.

Why do you think Jesus wants us to follow him? What does that mean?

QUESTION 4: Explain the concept of justification (I am saved), sanctification (I am being saved) and glorification (I will be saved). [Would be helpful to use whiteboard].

Do we have to be someone special to follow Jesus? Do we have to be 'perfect' first? Why or why not?

QUESTION 5: In Reggie's story Jesus is like Gary, who 'loved on' Shannon despite her terrible mistake. Even when we have made many mistakes, Jesus loves us, accepts us, and keeps on loving us. We can't earn his love by being good, He gives it to us for free. This is what we're talking about when we talk about the word Grace... getting what we don't deserve.

What do you think about that story? Have you ever done something where you thought that you couldn't be forgiven?

QUESTION 6: When Jesus saves us, do we deserve it? So why does he do it when we ask him?

KEY VERSE: "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" - Romans 10:9

- What does it mean to be 'saved'? Saved from what?

- Is there anything else a person needs to do to be saved?

- It sounds pretty simple, just believe and then speak it. Why do you think it is so simple?

RECAP: This session has talked about what it is to live a life following Jesus.

Before today, what did you think a follower of Jesus was meant to 'do'? Has that changed? What is one thing that you got out of today's' group?

PRAY: Take time to pray about what you have discussed as a group. Avoid using 'Church language', try to pray in a way that any new follower would understand.

ACTION: Encourage each person to take time during the week to re-read the verses you talked about in this session (mark them in their Bible) and write down any questions they think of during the week to ask next time.

RELATIONSHIP

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other.

KEY THOUGHT: We can communicate with God like we would another person, and it's through communication that we build relationship with and become more like Him.

WATCH: Watch 'Session Two' of the video.

KEY VERSE: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." - John 3:16.
This verse tells us that God loved, so He gave. He initiated the connection with us.
- **Who made the first move in your relationship with God? You or Him?**

QUESTION 1: Reggie talked about reading his Bible, and God using it to speak to him personally. Jesus wants to use the Bible to speak to us. He has a way of making his Bible personal.

Why do you think people read the Bible? What are some of the things that we find difficult about reading the Bible? Have you ever read the Bible and heard God speak to you from it? What did He say?

QUESTION 2: The central part of any relationship is communication. We can talk to God the same way that we would talk to a friend.

What have you heard about prayer and how you should pray? How do you feel about prayer?

QUESTION 3: (Read aloud a few of these prayers by kids)

"Dear God, I bet it is very hard for you to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only four people in our family and I can never do it."

"Dear God, If you watch in church on Sunday I will show you my new shoes."

"Dear God, Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother."

What do you notice about these prayers? Could you talk to God in the same way these kids pray?

QUESTION 4: If we are going to follow Jesus, it will help us if we get to know him. By spending time with Jesus, you get to know him better.

What do you think are some of the best ways to get to know a person? Which of these things could you do with Jesus?

QUESTION 5: The goal for followers of Jesus is to become more and more like Him. When you spend time with someone quite often, you begin to speak, act, think like them.

Just by hanging out with certain people in your life, what good/bad habits have you picked up off them?

QUESTION 6: Look up Galatians 3:27 (MSG). This verse talks about baptism. Getting baptised is an exciting step in your journey with Jesus. Baptism symbolises that Jesus has made you new and it's your way of telling others that your relationship with God is official, that you are now following Jesus.

Why would you want to tell other people about your relationship with Jesus?

Why do you think Jesus asked his followers to be baptised? Do you want to get baptised? Why, why not?

RECAP: This session has talked about ways that we can relate with Jesus.

Has your idea of what a relationship with Jesus is like changed in any way today? How?

PRAY: Take time to pray about what you have discussed as a group. Avoid using 'Church language', try to pray in a way that any new follower would understand.

ACTION: Encourage each person to take time during the week to re-read the verses you talked about in this session and write down any questions they think of during the week to ask next time.

LOVE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other.

KEY THOUGHT: God's motivation and drive toward every human is love, and we can now show that love to others.

WATCH: Watch 'Session Three' of the video.

KEY VERSE: Look up Luke 15:11-32

- Why was the father so excited when his son came home; shouldn't he have been angry? What was his focus?

- Did the son expect to be welcomed home? Why not?

- Who are you in this story - the father, the son, or the older brother?

- In this story the father represents God. What kind of person do you think God is, based on the father in this story and how he acted?

QUESTION 1: Reggie's story about the girl who used to dance with her father, but ran away to dance in bars, is a lot like this story from the Bible.

Who deserves to be loved unconditionally, like the prodigal son, or like this daughter? Do we?

QUESTION 2: We are starting to see that God's motivation and drive toward every human is love.

Why do you think God loves people so much?

QUESTION 3: As we keep following Jesus we are becoming more like Him.

Has anything changed in you since you first met Jesus? Do you feel/think or act differently in any area or your life?

QUESTION 4: Each and every Jesus follower plays a part in changing the world, even through the smallest gestures. Like Reggie said - just 10 seconds can change the world for someone.

Love - a feeling or a decision? Why do you think that?

RECAP: You might be wondering why we haven't talked about what you are meant to 'do' now that you are a follower of Jesus. Maybe you have been thinking, "sure but what are the rules?"

Have your thoughts about being a follower of Jesus changed over the last few weeks? How?

PRAY: Take time to pray about what you have discussed as a group. Avoid using 'Church language', try to pray in a way that any new follower would understand

ACTION: Encourage each person to take time during the week to re-read the verses you talked about in this session and write down any questions they think of during the week to ask next time.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other.

KEY THOUGHT: We are created for community with other believers, and we need the power of the Holy Spirit within us to live the life God has called us to.

WATCH: Watch 'Session Four' of the video.

KEY VERSE: "But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you." - John 14:26.

- Before watching this session, what had you heard about the Holy Spirit?
- What does this verse say about the kind of help the Holy Spirit will give us?
- This verse tells us that he will teach us, what kind of things do you think he could teach us?

QUESTION 1: When we invite Jesus into your lives and begin to follow Him, we become a part of His family - the family of God. Everyone that follows Jesus is a part of this family.

Have you ever thought about other believers around you as family? Why/why not?

QUESTION 2: God has given us the Holy Spirit and his family to walk with us as we follow Jesus. We never need to feel like we need to figure it out on our own. **What are the risks of trying to follow Jesus all on our own?**

QUESTION 3: This session has outlined that you are not alone in your walk with God. You have a family, and a home in the 'house of God' (another name for the church). One way to 'walk with other people' who are following Jesus is to be part of an eGroup. eGroup is a great place to belong and build relationship with other followers.

How do you think spending time with other people who are following Jesus would impact you?

QUESTION 4: Ps Jordan talked about the Holy Spirit being like the fuel in a car; in the same way that fuel gives a car the power to go where it needs to go, the Holy Spirit gives us the supernatural ability to follow Jesus and do extraordinary things. **Could you do with some more 'fuel' or power in your life? What kind of things would the power of God be helpful for?**

QUESTION 5: There are different expressions of what happens when the Holy Spirit fills you: you might feel a strong desire to worship God or tell others about Jesus, you might feel tingles or like crying with joy, some people shake, and many people are given a supernatural prayer language called speaking in tongues. **Have had an experience like this before? How did you feel about it?**

QUESTION 6: The Holy Spirit and his supernatural strength are available for anyone, we just need to ask Him and he will give us what we need. **Have you ever talked to the Holy Spirit or asked him for help? How do you feel about doing that?**

PRAY / ACTION: (Take time now to ask if anyone would like to be prayed for to be filled with the Holy Spirit)
Lay hands on those who accept this offer and pray that the Holy Spirit would fill them, releasing his peace, joy, and the supernatural gift of speaking in tongues.





