



# LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Core Value: We Are A People Who First Receive His Goodness

*We love because he first loved us.*

1 John 4:19

Valuing God's goodness involves cultivating the expectation of receiving good from God, being impressed with the evidence of his benevolence all around us, becoming part of the good that God does in this world, and contending against the insinuations of the devil that God is not altogether good. The passages below have been chosen to help us grow together in our value for God's goodness.

### WEEK 1

#### Opening LG Discussion Questions

1. Can a couple of people share some impactful ways that God has demonstrated His goodness towards them in their life?
2. Can a couple of people share some ways God demonstrated His goodness towards them this week?

#### Bible Study Discussion

##### I. Read **Genesis 1, 2:15-17, 3:1-5**

1. What do we mean by saying that God is good? Scan **Genesis 1** to find evidence that God is good at literally everything he does and that whatever he does turns out really good! (Hint: vv. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, & 31).
2. What evidence can you find that God is not only pleased with his own handiwork but that he personally delights in and wills the best for his creatures? (Hint: vv. 22, 26, & 28).
3. Have you ever felt God *willing* you to flourish in his goodness toward you? Are these times remembered fondly as blessings or were they experienced as commands? Or did they sometimes feel like a little of both? Discuss.
4. In **Genesis 2:15-17**, what does it say about God that his very first "command" in the Bible (2:16) actually begins with an invitation to enjoy free access to every tree in the garden except one?
5. Does the "knowledge of good and evil" (2:17) seem like a good thing? Do you find yourself thinking that God's exclusion of that one tree makes it more valuable than all the others? But what reason does *God himself* give for not eating of it?
6. In **Genesis 3:1, 4-5**, How are the lies of the serpent opposed to God's goodness?
7. In what ways do we still succumb to lies against God's goodness?

## Life Group/D-Group Activation

1. Just as we can go to Genesis 1 to take inventory of how God displays His goodness towards the creation, take a few minutes to silently listen and journal the ways God has demonstrated His goodness towards you. (*\*this list could be done chronologically of the events in your life or it can be done by categories such as spiritual blessings, relationships, health, gifts, achievements, etc.*)
2. Now take a few minutes to personally pray to the Holy Spirit to have Him show you the areas in which you are still doubting His goodness. List these out. Ask yourself, “are you willing to confess these to another believer/friend”?
3. Break up into smaller groups (2-4) and have folks share their two lists to the degree that they are willing to being open and vulnerable. (*\*LG Leaders- while no one needs to be forced to share, give vision of the power of walking in the light and confessing to one another the areas of gratitude and areas of struggle*)
4. Pray with one another accordingly in your small groups.

## WEEK 2

### Opening LG Discussion Questions

1. Can a few people share moments from their life where God’s glory was visibly on display?
2. What are some examples of the more subtle or hidden ways God is still glorified in our life?

### Bible Study Discussion

#### II. Exodus 33:18–23; 34:5–8

The context of these verses comes after the golden calf incident (Exodus 32:1–10). In the wake of that great sin, Moses finds himself interceding for Israel in two ways: that God not destroy them as they deserve, and that God’s own presence continue to accompany them to the promised land instead of God withdrawing from their sinfulness by sending a mere angel with them instead (Ex. 32:11–33:17).

Amazingly, God graciously forgives Israel and grants these requests! But Moses then asks God to show him his glory. God agrees, but takes measures to protect Moses from receiving a fatal dose of his glory. So, while giving Moses just a glimpse, God utters his name and declares his inherent goodness and justice. *Exodus 34:6–7 thereafter became the most profound and oft-repeated autobiographical statements of God in all of Scripture* (see Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Ps 86:15; Ps 103:8; Ps 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2).

1. “Define” what Glory “looks” like or “sounds” like? (33:19/34:5-7)
2. The declaration of God’s character leads us to a revelation of His goodness. What attributes of the Lord’s nature, either listed here in Exodus 34 or elsewhere in the Bible, have been impactful in your life? How so?
3. God’s justice (34:7) often gets neglected in the discussion of God’s goodness. Why is it necessary to not forget His *justice* when talking about His *goodness*?

4. While God himself goes out of his way to give far greater weight to his lovingkindness than to his punishment of the guilty, sometimes we nevertheless find ourselves fixating on the punishment. Why? How can we let God's own self-revelation correct this?

### **Life Group/D-Group Activation**

1. We all need ongoing encounters of the Glory of God; and to be more specific, the revelation of the goodness of His character. Prepare 1-2 worship songs to sing together (Recommended: *What a Beautiful Name/His Name is Jesus*). Before you begin, open up with a time of prayer that reflects Moses' cry, "Show me your glory".

2. If appropriate, transition to a time of corporate prayer and intercession that is focused on declaring various attributes of God's goodness over various people or situations.

## **WEEK 3**

### **Opening LG Discussion Questions**

1. Can a few folks share what their personal experience has been growing up about their view of "God the Father"? Has it mainly been positive or negative, or both?

2. Why do you think Christians can sometimes struggle to personally connect to or have an affectionate relationship with God the Father?

### **Bible Study Discussion**

#### **III. Read Luke 15:11-32**

1. Both of the sons in the story missed the mark. The younger son can represent the rebellious and licentious heart, while the older brother can symbolize the self-righteous and legalistic heart. Looking back at your life, which wrongful tendency have you more identified with?

2. Often times in the retelling of this story, the word "prodigal" is applied to the younger son and his wasteful or "extravagant" rebellion. However, the Father also demonstrates a *Prodigal/extravagance toward* his repentant child. Can you list out all the demonstrations of such love and kindness?

3. Which one of the Father's actions resonates with you most and why?

4. Is there anything else from the passage that resonates with you?

### **Life Group/D-Group Activation**

1. Take some quiet time to pray/reflect/journal individually the following:

a. Holy Spirit, show me if there is any area of rebellion or licentiousness that I need to repent of.

b. Holy Spirit, show me if there is any self-righteous or performance/works based “religion” that I need to repent of.

c. Holy Spirit, is there a view of God the Father that I have that doesn't line up with this story that I need to repent of and also believe rightfully?

**2.** Break up into small groups (2-4) and share with one another your responses.