

Allowing Christ's Return influence how we live while we wait on Him.

PERSONAL HOLINESS | TIER 2 DISCIPLESHIP | 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

DISCUSSION GUIDE :: AT A GLANCE

INFORMAL: (10 minutes)

Take attendance with the LEAD App and ask guests to complete a connection card. Allow for informal conversation with your group but be prepped to transition. REVIEW Memory Verse (Hebrews 4:14). Can anyone quote Hebrews 4:12-14? GOSPEL PRESENTATION: 1 person a Sunday. Encouragers, you're first. Keep it under 3 min. Research the provided Gospel presentations to decide what you like best.

INTRODUCTION: (6 minutes)

OPENING QUESTIONS: Why is it that we tend to overlook the significance & impact of our choices and decisions in life? (i.e. how we speak to others, how we treat others, how we treat ourselves, how we use our time, etc.)?

PRAY: Ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to desire, see, understand, & live the truth.

READ: 1 These 5:1-11 out loud. Jeron will GIVE some background during the opening.

DISCOVER - Asking Who, What, Where, or When (4 min)

WHAT will come "like a thief in the night"? (verse 2)

WHAT are those that belong to the day supposed to put on? (verse 8)

WHAT two instructions are given in verse 11?

INVESTIGATE - Asking Why or How (4 min)

WHAT is the "day of the Lord"? HOW does a "thief in the night come"?

Do you think the "people" of verse 3 are believers or unbelievers? What about in verse 4?

HOW does the illustration of someone being drunk or sober help you understand how we are supposed to live while we wait for Jesus' return?

GO - Asking Questions That Require Action (4 min)

Are you tempted to live as if your choices today do not matter?

If you knew this week was your last, what might you do differently this week?

How can we help each other to live more urgently? What can we say? What can we do?

ACTIVITY: Coin Flip (10 min)

We will use a coin to illustrate the need to live urgently and to help your small group share ways they need encouragement to pursue urgent living.

COMMUNITY & CONCLUSION (10 min)

CLOSING QUESTIONS: Related to this morning's DIG study & the activity... How can we pray/encourage you this week? How can we hold you accountable this week? Close in prayer.

February's Memory Verse

Hebrews 4:15

Provided Supplies

Pennies



Sermon Connection

Today's Discussion will be an application based upon on Owen's Message.



Emmaus Connection

When a connection is being made to our discussion we will outline that here.

DISCUSSION GUIDE :: EXPANDED

INFORMAL: (8 minutes)

Take ATTENDANCE with the LEAD App.

Ask GUESTS to complete a CONNECTION card. Find ways to learn about the guest.

Allow for informal CONVERSATION but be prepped to TRANSITION to allow time for Bible discussion & community.

REVIEW this month's Memory Verse (Hebrews 4:14).

GOSPEL PRESENTATION: In response to the Discussion Guide a few weeks ago we want your small group to carve out 3 minutes each Sunday for a different person to practice sharing the Gospel. I want our Encouragers to lead the way first as to model this for the students. Keep it under 3 minutes. So who is up to bat first?!? Once all the Encouragers have taken a Sunday to give it a shot start asking a different student (a week in advance) to come prepared to share the Gospel the following Sunday. You may need to be more hands on with some than with others. Below I listed several ways to communicate the Gospel. The first three in the list are my favorite. Before you print your Discussion Guide click the link on the pdf so you can access the one you prefer.

- 3 Circles: <https://youtu.be/V7mURm-8cOI> (there is an App for this...Life Conversation Guide or Life on Mission)
- 4 Words - God, Man, Jesus Response: <https://www.9marks.org/answer/what-gospel/>
- Life in 6 Words: <https://lifein6words.com/the-g-o-s-p-e-l-message-explained/> (There is an App for this...same title)
- 3 Minutes: <https://ca.thegospelcoalition.org/columns/ad-fontes/sharing-the-gospel-in-3-minutes-or-less/>
- How to Know God: <https://www.cru.org/us/en/how-to-know-god/would-you-like-to-know-god-personally.html>
- Romans Road: <https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2016/09/evangelism-the-romans-road-to-salvation/>

INTRODUCTION: (7 minutes)

OPENING QUESTION: Why is it that we tend to overlook the significance & impact of our choices and decisions in life? (i.e. how we speak to others, how we treat others, how we treat ourselves, how we use our time, etc.)?

- *Our natural human tendency is to have a narrow view of the impact of our decisions. We convince ourselves that our words and/or actions are justifiable, do not matter, or have no consequences. We also tend to be quite self-centered. We face great temptation to speak and act from our flesh as opposed to honoring the Lord in all we say and do. Further, we do not consider that we are not guaranteed time. We do not know the day or time of Jesus' return. So we do not have a guarantee of an opportunity to make things right, or get control of a situation.*

PRAY: Ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to desire, see, understand, and live the truth.

- *We never want to approach God's Word like we approach books we read for school/learning. We are not merely acquiring information. We are encountering words that are alive and change people through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's position ourselves in humility and ask God for His help and to transform us!*

READ: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 out loud then walk through the DIG Method.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 *34 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

DISCOVER - Asking Who, What, Where, or When (4 min)

WHAT will come “like a thief in the night”? (verse 2)

- *The Day of the Lord*

WHAT are those that belong to the day supposed to put on? (verse 8)

- *Let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation*

WHAT two instructions are given in verse 11?

- *Encourage one another and build one another up*

INVESTIGATE - Asking Why or How (4 min)

WHAT is the “day of the Lord”?

- *The “Day of the Lord” refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ.*

HOW does a “thief in the night come”?

- *A “thief in the night” comes quickly, quietly, surprisingly. A thief is not giving notice that he is coming. There could be additional answers.*

Do you think the “people” of verse 3 are believers or unbelievers? What about in verse 4?

- *Verse 3: the “people” represent unbelievers. Verse 4: “But you” is referring to believers*

HOW does the illustration of someone being drunk or sober help you understand how we are supposed to live while we wait for Jesus’ return?

- *Someone who is drunk has slowed reactions, dulled senses, decreased judgement, lack of awareness of surroundings, etc. Someone who is sober is going to exhibit more sound judgement, be alert, and operate otherwise aware of surroundings and circumstances. We are to live purposefully aware, alert, and ready for the return of Christ.*

GO - Asking Questions That Require Action (4 min)

HOW are you tempted to live as if your choices today do not matter? (What I say to my parents doesn’t matter, How I talk about that person doesn’t matter, I have time to change, I will do things differently when I get older, I will quit ____ when I get older, I have control over this)

- *The point is to challenge students to consider that the choices they make matter. That it matters if what they proclaim and display do not match up. Said differently, it is deeply problematic for them to say they love Jesus and then say and do things that are against the character and nature of God. Challenge them to think about these things in light of the urgency connected with the return of Jesus. Challenge them to consider the pattern of their behavior and what drives it. Psalm 1 is a reference point here.*

IF you knew this week was your last, what might you do differently this week?

- *The point here is that when we know something is coming to an end we approach things differently. Our human nature is to function as if we have all the time in the world. However, we know that no one knows the time of Jesus' return. We should not reserve choosing to live differently for when/if we know the end is coming. We should consistently reflect Christ is all we do and say. And when we do not reflect Christ, we should confess and repent and trust Him for the forgiveness He promises when we do.*

HOW can we help each other to live more urgently? What can we say? What can we do?

- *A few possible answers could be: We can use our words to encourage and build each other up instead of tearing down. We can put the needs of others before our own. We can pay attention to what is taking place in the lives of our friends and be loyal, faithful friends who spur each other on to Christ.*



ACTIVITY: Coin Flip (10 min)

PREFACE: Today's passage was about living urgently while we wait for Jesus to return. In this activity we are going to use a coin to help us talk about actions we need to take in order to live urgently. One side of living urgently requires us to realize that our decisions and actions matter and have significance. Today we mostly focused on fighting against sin and worldly influences. The other side of living urgently is reaching unbelievers with the Good News of Jesus.

EXPLAIN: Each person in the group will take turns flipping the coin. If it lands on tails encourage that person to share about an area in their life where they need God's grace and encouragement from the group to live urgently as they wait for Jesus to return. If it lands on heads encourage the person to share about an individual or situation in which they can begin having gospel conversations and influence in an urgent way.



COMMUNITY & CONCLUSION (10 min)

CLOSING QUESTIONS: Related to this morning's DIG study or other spiritual struggles... How can we **pray** for you? How can we **encourage** you this week? How can we hold you **accountable** this week?

- *Please use the above questions & **refrain** from stating, "Does anyone have any prayer requests?" This is too general & doesn't ask the student directly about spiritual issues. Until your group develops greater community invite students to connect with you individually.*

PRAY: Spend time in prayer as a group.

- *This will depend upon the life of your small group and the willingness of the individuals. A big win would be that everyone gets prayed for and every person prays. However, if your group isn't there yet take small baby steps throughout the year.*

ENCOURAGE: Pray for each other & check in with each other for encouragement & accountability.

- *As the adult encourager set the tone and be the lead prayer warrior this week. Give them an example to follow by checking in with your small group via text, GroupMe, or whatever means your small group has adopted for regular communication.*

POST SMALL GROUP STUDENT CONNECTION

CONNECT: With your small group or the students as individuals this week by...

- *Create a jpg (picture) through YouVersion App for the verse 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9 and share it with your small group.*
- *Pay close attention to the responses (or lack of responses) given this morning, especially during the activity. How can you pray/encourage/disciple the individual students in your group?*