

5 | GROUP PRAYER

Rather than going around the group and sharing prayer requests, you might consider simply bowing your heads and taking turns praying for the things on your heart or that the Holy Spirit brings to mind.

NEXT STEPS AFTER GROUP

1 | SCRIPTURE FOCUSED

- Verse to Memorize: _____
- Other Passages to Read: _____

2 | PRAYER FOCUSED

- How can you pray for people in your group this week?
- Is the Holy Spirit speaking to you about something you need to repent of and turn over to Jesus?
- How are you going to respond to this truth and put it into action?

3 | OTHERS FOCUSED

- Did anyone in your group share a need that you might be gifted to help with?
- Consider inviting a friend from group to meet up for a meal or a hang out time.
- Is the Holy Spirit bringing someone to mind with whom you can share the things you've learned today?

GROUPS

STUDY GUIDE

Why Would I Prepare BEFORE My Lighthouse Group?

Reading, thinking, and praying about the primary passage your Lighthouse Group is studying ahead of time may be one of the most pivotal ways to make your Lighthouse Group discussions powerful and meaningful. When you do prepare beforehand, you're coming with thoughtful insights and ideas you've been wrestling through. That's different from grabbing at the most accessible thoughts in real time.

How Do I Prepare BEFORE My Lighthouse Group?

1 | PRAY

Ask God to open your eyes, mind, and spirit to His truth. Your desire is not to "get the right answer," but rather to know Him as He has revealed Himself so that you can trust and rely on Him more fully.

2 | READ

Read the main passage. Consider reading the same passage in multiple versions, like ESV, NIV, AMP, and NLT. All of these can be found at BibleGateway.com. For better context, read the paragraphs before and after the study passage as well.

3 | REFLECT

What does this passage teach you about God? Maybe something to praise Him for? Does this passage reveal an area of your life you should confess as sin to God? What does this passage lead you to ask God for? How does this passage point to Jesus work on the cross and out of the grave?

Think through some of the questions you'll be discussing during your Lighthouse Group time.

4 | WRITE

This is when you cross over from reading into study – writing down truth that you are discovering. Write down questions that come to mind as you are reading.

We've included space on the next page of this guide for you to write down insights, questions, and more that you can bring up in your Lighthouse Group discussion time.

PREP BEFORE GROUP

PRIMARY PASSAGE: John 5:39-47

WRITE YOUR INSIGHTS & QUESTIONS HERE:

ADDITIONAL CROSS-REFERENCES: 1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 51:7-23, 106:6-8; Matthew 15:8-9; John 16:8-11; Romans 3:9-20, 12:1-3; Galatians 2:15-16

DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of: May 26-June 1

1 | **PRAY:** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead your group in truth and spiritual growth.

2 | **READ** John 5:39-47

One volunteer reads the passage in the ESV or NIV. Another volunteer reads the passage in AMP or NLT.

3 | **CONSIDER SITUATIONAL/HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

In this passage, Jesus is addressing conservative Jews who are angry enough to kill him because he claimed to be the Son of God. He tells them they are missing the whole point of Scripture. Scripture points to Jesus as Savior because we cannot hope to be made right with God by obeying God's law. Sin is *any* form of self-leadership, even if it masquerades as devout rule-following.

But this is more than just an innocent misunderstanding on the part of the Jews. Jesus exposes the pride, fear and selfishness of their hearts. They care about honoring each other but refuse to seek the glory and approval that comes from the one and only God. This is true of all humanity, not just the Jews. We are helpless in this sinful state. The only way out is to admit our helplessness and submit to Jesus as Lord and Savior.

4 | **DISCUSSION**

CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. Who is Jesus speaking to, and how did they conduct their lives?
2. How did the Jews interpret the purpose of Old Testament Scripture?
3. What is the purpose of the Old Testament according to Jesus?

TRUTH QUESTIONS

1. Why did the Jews refuse to come to Jesus to receive life?
2. As God's chosen people, how did the Jews come to care more about honoring each other than about seeking God's glory and approval?
3. What purpose does the law of God serve and why did God give it centuries before sending Jesus?

APPLICATION/PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, how would you define sin?
2. What is God's definition of sin?
3. As a Christian, your knowledge of God's holiness vs. your sinfulness will increase throughout your life. How will you fight discouragement in the battle against sin?