

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

TIMELY MOMENTS WITH GOD

Words of Encouragement: Timely Moments with God

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

Regarding COVID: While stress from the COVID-19 pandemic is still high, be sure to check in with group members with what has come to be known as **CPR** (Care, Prayer, Remember):

- **Care** refers to loving and supporting each other, from helping one another with tangible needs, rejoicing in celebrations together, and supporting personal struggles with encouragement and empathy
- **Prayer** refers to bringing our worries and needs before God and depending on him for the answers as we pray for each other, our community, and the world
- **Remember** refers to reflecting on God for who He is, what He has done in our lives, and what He is capable of doing

For more resources on care and prayer, check out the Slack channels.

Using the Discussion Questions:

- Start your group discussion with the “Check-in” question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week’s application challenge.
- Review the “Big Idea” to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week’s message.
- Read this week’s scripture passages together and guide your group through the “Discuss” questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week’s message.
- Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in “Apply”. Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.

NOTE: You do not have to cover all the “Discuss” or “Apply” questions.

- Connect with God together as a group through this month’s “prayer practice”, which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

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| CHECK-IN | What was the best part of your summer? What are you looking forward to the most this fall? |
| BIG IDEA | Trusting God, even when life is difficult. |

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| <p>DISCUSS</p> | <p>Read Proverbs 3:5–6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What in the sermon spoke to you, challenged you, or was a new thought to you? 2. How do you define the word trust? 3. In your opinion what is the difference between trust and submit? 4. When was the last time you asked God why? |
| <p>APPLY</p> <p>How do we respond to God's teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What makes it so hard to trust God? 2. What do you believe about God but is hard to trust? 3. Is there something in your life that you need to let go of in order to be closer to God? 4. Psalm 9:10 states "Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you." How could you better seek God this week? How could you get to know Him better so your trust in Him could grow? |
| <p>PRAYER PRACTICE (15 minutes)</p> | <p>Please use ONE of these two options to lead your group through prayer. Choose the one that fits best with your group:</p> <p><u>Palms Down, Palms Up Prayer Practice</u></p> <p>Step 1: Sit in a comfortable position with as little background distraction as possible. Turn off cameras and audio on Zoom. Take a few deep breaths.</p> <p>Step 2: (Two minutes with timer) Put your palms down as a symbol of letting go. Talk to God as if he was sitting across from you. Tell Him what's on your mind as if your best friend were sitting beside you. Talk about your hurts, your distractions, your cares, what happened today or what made you happy or you are looking forward to. Share whatever comes to mind.</p> <p>Step 3: (2 minutes with timer) Now turn your palms up as a symbol of surrender and receiving. Sit in silence listening to God. It is</p> |

natural for your mind to wander. When it does, gently bring it back to focus on God, listening to what He has to say in response to you.

Step 4: (5 -7 minutes) Debrief with the group.

Let these questions guide you:

- What was your experience during this exercise?
- What did you hear God say to you?

OR

Ask if someone could write down prayer requests for the group.

Step One: Begin the time of prayer by asking each member of the group to share one thing they need help with connecting their calling to real life.

Step Two: Explain to the group that we will be praying for each other's prayer requests. Tell them that we will ask those who feel comfortable to pray for one of the requests given. Emphasise that everyone has the right to pass.

Step Three: The leader will lead first by praying for one of the requests and then leave a time of silence for others to join in.

Step Four: After the time of silence (one minute), the leader will then close the meeting by praying for any missed prayer request and close the evening in a final prayer:

"Lord may we discover who we are in You. Give us ears to hear your calling. Help us Lord to be obedient to use the gifts you have given us for the benefit of others. Use us to bring change to our communities, to comfort those who need comfort and to serve those you put in our path.

Amen.