

Leader's Growth Group Homework Guide

For the week of May 20, 2018

(This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion)

As we wrap up the Spring Quarter of Growth Groups, we'd love your feedback. Along with your study, you'll take some time to fill out the new online Feedback Form to provide input about your group experience and your plans for the fall. An email with the Feedback Form will be sent the night of your group. We really value your comments, and we're looking forward to hearing from you about your group!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

⇒ **NEW ONLINE FEEDBACK FORMS THIS WEEK**

We'd like to have your group fill out Feedback Forms this week. Let your group know how important their honest feedback is for you as leaders and hosts. Make sure you allow plenty of time to complete the forms.

Here's how our new online forms will work: (Watch video here) Everyone in your group will receive an email with a link to the Feedback Form the same night as your Growth Group this week. Please take the time in your Growth Group to fill out the form online together. It takes just a couple minutes, it's super easy and can be done on any smartphone. If needed, you can forward the email or text the link to anyone in your group who didn't receive the email. The Feedback Form can also be found on the Growth Group website (link below). The results of the Feedback Form will be emailed to you the following week. If you decide to use hard copies, please have them to us by June 11.

**Senior Groups will be sent hard copies.*

Link to Forms: mygrowthgroup.org/leader-tools/leader-resources

⇒ **DISCUSS PLANS FOR THE FALL & NEXT WEEK**

Next week is the last meeting of the quarter. Find out from your group if they know their plans for being part of the group in the fall. They can indicate their plans on the Feedback Forms. Also, let us know of any roster updates or changes that you know of, to your meeting day, time or location for the Fall quarter when you submit your attendance.

⇒ **PRAYER FOR NEW FALL GROWTH GROUP LEADERS & HOSTS**

Take some time to pray for new leaders and hosts to launch new Growth Groups in the Fall.

⇒ **EVENTS & CLASSES COMING THIS SUMMER**

Check out northcoastchurch.com/classes to see what's coming this summer. You may want to consider making one of these events a summer social for your group!

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1

This weekend we were reminded about the fear of God. Have you ever noticed that our most popular worship songs are about the love of God and seldom about the fear of God? Can you think of any reasons why this might be?

Examples could be: love is comforting, whereas fear is intimidating. The love of God is more known and acceptable than the fear of God.

What lyrics would you include in a worship song about the fear of God?

Examples: beginning of wisdom, fear of his judgment, motivation to be reconciled with him, respect, to be in awe of him, adoration, to humble ourselves before him.

Additional Questions: How has your view of fearing the Lord changed over time? Do you think people tend to focus more on the fear of God or the love of God?

"The Bible uses the word fear at least 300 times in reference to God, so we make a mistake when we downplay it." –Christianity Today "What does it mean to fear God?"

2

For many of us, our understanding of what it means to fear God is based on our past history or overall experience with fear. For some, that may mean having very little fear or disregarding the fear of God. For others, this may mean that a fear of God leads us to shut down or avoid God altogether. On a continuum from low to high, where would you rate your fear of God?

Low

Medium

High

Good question to ask everyone.

How would you describe what fearing God looks like to you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1

As we continue to focus on having an accurate view of what it looks like to fear God, how might the passage below challenge someone who doesn't fear God?

Daniel 10:1-12, 15-19 – In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.

² At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. ³ I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, ⁵ I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶ His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

⁷ I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. ⁹ Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

¹⁰ A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

¹² Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

¹⁵ While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. ¹⁶ Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. ¹⁷ How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe."

¹⁸ Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. ¹⁹ "Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong."

When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength."

Additional Verses:

Exodus 3:1-6 – Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵ "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Revelation 4

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." ² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. ⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶ Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

*"Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come."*

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

*¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."*

Additional Questions: *Can you think of a time you were scared stiff, similar to Daniel? How would you explain to someone why it's important to fear God? How does the fear of God differ from fearing a scary movie?*

How could the following verses help someone who has a fear of God which keeps them from approaching him?

Romans 5:1-2 – Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

We've been justified (made right) through our faith and we have peace with God. Our faith has earned us grace (unearned favor).

Hebrews 4:16 – Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

We have an approachable God who gives us not only grace but mercy (doesn't give us what we deserve).

2

When reading verses about the fear of God, it's clear God works through our fear of him. What insights do the following verses give on how God uses our fear of him to change us, help us grow or equip us?

Psalms 111:10 – The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Those who follow him grow in understanding.

Proverbs 16:6 – Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the Lord evil is avoided.

Our fear of the Lord helps equip us to resist evil things.

Psalms 25:14 – The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.

God reveals things to those who fear him.

Additional Verses:

Ecclesiastes 7:16, 18 – ¹⁶Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise—why destroy yourself? ¹⁸It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.

Deuteronomy 5:28-29 – ²⁸The Lord heard you when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, "I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good."²⁹ Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

Proverbs 10:27 – The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.

Proverbs 22:14 - The mouth of an adulterous woman is a deep pit; a man who is under the Lord's wrath falls into it.

Additional Verses about Jesus' fear of God:

Hebrews 5:7-8 – ⁷During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered

Isaiah 11:1-3 – A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

² The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—

the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might,

the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

³ and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,

or decide by what he hears with his ears;

Additional Questions: Can you think of any ways your fear of your parents was a healthy thing? How does that relate to how God uses our fear of him for our benefit?

Can you think of any ways the fear of God has equipped you, changed you or helped you grow?

In answering this question, I think about the life I was living before becoming a Christian and how things have changed since. Now I have a real desire to follow God and to resist sin. All this is motivated not only by my love for God but also my fear of him.

"The remarkable thing about God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else." – Oswald Chambers

3

This weekend we saw how Abraham had faith in God because he is good and faithful. This can be hard to see today because we often have a different opinion of what it means for God to be good and faithful. How might the following verses help us redefine what we see as goodness and faithfulness?

Psalms 145:9 – The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. God is good to all and has compassion on his creation.

James 1:17 – Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Every good thing is from God.

“Of course, the ultimate goodness of any gift must be measured on an eternal scale.

Something that may seem to be only good (such as winning money in a lottery) may in fact be turned to our destruction.” – Guzik

1 Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

God is faithful. He won't let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. When you are tempted he'll provide a way out so you can endure it.

Additional Verses:

Psalm 31:19 – How abundant are the good things
that you have stored up for those who fear you,
that you bestow in the sight of all,
on those who take refuge in you.

1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Psalm 107:1 – Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Exodus 34:6 – And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

What are some people's expectations of God's goodness and faithfulness that differ from the verses above?

TAKING IT HOME

As you think through the sermon and this week's study, is there anything you'd like to focus on or change in the coming week?

PRAISE / PRAYER REQUESTS:

→

→

→

→

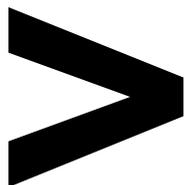
→

→

→



JESUS > ABRAHAM



1.

2.

3.