



## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week 2: The Significance of Scripture, Fall 2023

Worship Together | Prepare Disciples | Build Community | Seek the Kingdom

### **TONIGHT'S PLAN**

- Weekly Highlights
- Responses from the Past Week
- Upcoming Events for Small Groups to Consider
- The Daily Liturgy
- Questions for Discussion
- Closing Prayer

### **WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS, < 10 minutes**

In one or two sentences, have each group member share one highlight from the past week.

### **RESPONSES FROM THE PAST WEEK, < 10 minutes**

Before we begin today's daily liturgy exercise:

1. Does anyone have any comments or reflections from The Daily Liturgy this past week?
2. Does anyone have any comments or reflections from this past Sunday's worship service?

### **UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SMALL GROUPS TO CONSIDER, < 5 minutes**

- East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM) Coat Drive September & October
- Day of Fasting and Prayer with Evening Prayer Walk at PHC Thursday, September 28
- The Well: Worship & Discipleship Event for Women Friday, October 6
- East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM) Shelter Meal Friday, October 13
- The Blessing Board Furniture Donation Day Saturday, October 21
- The Blessing Board, BBQ, and Beverages Event for Men Saturday, October 21

*For more information about any of these events, visit the PHC website's registration page or email: [communications@pleasanthillschurch.com](mailto:communications@pleasanthillschurch.com)*

## **THE DAILY LITURGY, < 12 minutes**

In preparation for The Daily Liturgy group exercise, take a moment right now to choose which small group members will lead each section. You may want to read some sections collectively (for example, The Lord's Prayer).

Remember, there's no need to rush through this exercise. Allow the content of the liturgy to actually guide your conversation with God. The prayers are your words to him. The Scripture passages are God's Word for you. Between each section of the liturgy, allow 10-20 seconds for comprehension and personal reflection..

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### **Opening Prayer**

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach us your ways! We gather here to meditate on your words and fix our eyes on your commands. Be gracious to us and show us your goodness, that we may experience the abundant life you promise. Open our eyes so that we may behold wondrous things in your law.

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### **Confession of Sin & Prayer for Grace**

God of Truth, we confess today the sin of apathy. Rather than prioritizing our relationship with you, we have allowed ourselves to be distracted by lesser things. Our hearts desire to be entertained, not transformed. Our minds focus more on the temporary things that are seen instead of eternal realities that are unseen. Yet, because Jesus died for us, we do not need to be ashamed. We can freely admit all our faults and failures. Forgive us, Lord, for not believing in the power of your Word and our lack of faith in your promises. Jesus, ignite our desire to know you. Holy Spirit, meet us as we read Scripture today and every day. Amen.

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### **Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 11:8-21**

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### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

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## **New Testament Reading: Matthew 4:1-11**

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### **Prayer of Adoration**

Lord Jesus, we stand in awe of your commitment to Scripture. In the midst of temptation, we often stumble or fail. Yet, you remained steadfast. The promises of your heavenly Father served as your weapon against the devil's lies. Shape us into your likeness, Lord, so that we can follow in your footsteps of obedience that comes by knowing and trusting your Word.

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## **Psalm Reading: Psalm 119:17-32**

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### **Prayer of Consecration**

Heavenly Father, these words of this part of Psalm 119 are written from a place of pain. The psalmist feels like a stranger in this world, surrounded by people who have strayed far from your commands. Even those in leadership positions scorn the faithful. We, too, know how it feels to be weary with sorrow. We know what it means to be ridiculed for our attempts to be faithful. Yet, this truly is the way of Jesus. Despite his innocence, he experienced ridicule, rejection, injustice, humiliation, and death— even death on a cross. Strengthen us in times of suffering. Help us to remember that if we share in the sufferings of Christ, we will also share in a resurrection like his. This is our great hope, grounded in the promises of Scripture. Lord, we believe. Help us overcome our unbelief. Guide us according to your Word.

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### **Benediction**

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us now and always, until the day of Christ's return.

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## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION: “GUIDED BY THE WORD”, < 20 minutes

### **Have a group member read Deuteronomy 11:13-17.**

1. The fundamental command of God’s entire law is this: *to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul*. Today’s theme is “Guided By The Word.” As a group, discuss why God would root all of his laws and commandments in this one overarching appeal: to holistically love him.
2. What are the results of allowing our hearts to love something else more than the Lord?

### **Have a group member read Deuteronomy 11:18-21.**

3. To this day, faithful Jewish men will use leather straps to bind two small leather boxes to their arm and forehead during their morning prayers (called *Phylacteries* or *Tefillin*). Why would the Lord command his people to set up so many reminders on their bodies, their doorframes, and the entryways of their properties? Why talk about the commands **constantly** with their own kids or the younger generation?
4. Most importantly for us, how can we apply this concept of constant recitation of God’s Word in our own lives and homes?

### **Have everyone in the group open their Bibles to Matthew 4:1-11 to discuss these questions.**

5. Consider this narrative about Jesus being tempted by the devil in the wilderness: what are some things we learn about the devil (elsewhere called “Satan” or “the evil one”)?
6. Yes, Christians believe that Jesus is God in-the-flesh. We believe that Jesus is infinitely more powerful than the devil. Yet, Jesus battles each of the devil’s temptations with words from Scripture. What does this teach us about Jesus?
7. Consider the temptations you face most often. How would memorizing appropriate Scripture passages– a figurative version of “binding God’s Word on your forehead”– help you during times when you are most tempted?

### **Have a group member read Psalm 119:18.**

8. Many people struggle with God being a law-giver. However, the psalmist writes, “Open my eyes that I might see **wonderful things in your law**.” How might the commands of God, which some perceive as too rigid or legalistic, actually reveal God’s goodness *and* promote our best interest?

## CLOSING PRAYER, < 15 minutes

Take prayer requests. Then, the small group leader will begin the prayer time and a small group member can close the prayer time. This week, remember to spend time with God each day using The Daily Liturgy resource.

*If group members have any questions regarding the Bible, email: [kevin@pleasanthillschurch.com](mailto:kevin@pleasanthillschurch.com)  
These questions will help guide the content for the church-wide “Bible Basics” class in Oct/Nov.*