

HOW TO USE THIS GROUP GUIDE

CONNECT (10 MINS)

- Pick one or more of the warm-up questions and have all the group members give a response to the question(s).
- Make sure everybody gets a chance to speak. Don't let talkative people dominate the conversation, but graciously welcome everybody to participate.

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TRUTH (15-20 MIN)

- Read the scriptures and paragraphs in this section to clearly communicate what the Bible says about the week's topic.
- **"DISCUSS" sections:** These sections get people discussing the practical implications of the truth being discussed. Have one or two people give an answer, but don't spend too much time on these questions.

GRACE (5 MINS)

- Read the grace scripture and section which shows how the passage points to Jesus Christ and God's grace.
- This section is really important, because it shows that life change begins with the grace of God and not our own efforts.

CHANGE (10-15 MINS)

- Have everyone give an answer to each of the change questions.
- Take a good amount of time here. Really encourage people to think through how they can practically put truth into action.

PRAYER (10-15 MINS)

- Read through the prayer focus points and have one or two people in the group pray.
- Make sure not to rush through prayer. The things we want God to change in our lives will often happen through prayer.

DISCIPLESHIP CHECK-IN (2 MINS)

- This final portion aims to get people reading the Bible for themselves and thinking about engaging others with the gospel.

WEEK 1

P R O M I S E

K E P T

GROUP GUIDE

CONNECT

*BREAK THE ICE AND
GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- What are some of your favorite Christmastime... foods / music / movies / traditions / memories?

TRUTH

*UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS
THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

Maybe you enjoy Christmas movies, maybe you don't. Maybe you used to set out cookies and milk for Santa as a kid, maybe you didn't. Whatever your affinity or dislike for traditions around Christmas might be, for a Christian, Christmas is about celebrating the long-awaited arrival of one person—Jesus Christ. God had promised to send a Savior, and in Jesus he did. His promise, however, didn't just involve Jesus. It involves you and I as well. In Jeremiah, we find out that God promised to send Jesus and to make priests of those who would follow him.

What is a Priest?

READ: Jeremiah 33:22

DISCUSS: Given what you understand about what Levitical priests used to do, what do you think it means for you to be a priest?

Because we have the rest of the Bible, we know that “the offspring of David” refers to those who put their faith in Jesus—his disciples. Disciples might not carry the giant pillars of the tabernacle around the desert, or offer animal sacrifices, or go into the most holy place, but we still prepare the way for God’s presence. When we live our lives for his glory, with the power of his Spirit at work inside us, we are bringing his presence wherever we go, and the whole world gets to see it.

The Old Way Has Lost But Still Fights

READ: Romans 7:7–15

DISCUSS: Can you think of a time in your own life where sin “seized an opportunity” by using God’s rules?

If Paul had jumped straight from verse six to chapter eight, we might have thought it was simple and easy –you just leave the old way behind and walk in the new way. It’s not. Sin still lurks in our flesh, trying to make us mistrust God. Sin seizes opportunities by exploiting the weakness of our flesh. What’s more, it uses God’s commandments to do it. Just like the serpent convinced Adam and Eve that God was holding out on them, sin tries to arouse sinful passions by convincing us of the same thing.

GRACE

SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS

Who Is This Priest?

READ: Jeremiah 33:14–18

DISCUSS: Jesus is the “Branch” referred to here. What do you think is significant about that image?

In verses 17 and 18 we get an idea of how exactly the Branch would save Judah. He becomes the man who offers perpetual sacrifices in God’s presence, bringing a never-ending flow of God’s presence to his people. Only in Jesus do we see how this becomes a reality. When Jesus had grown up, he would become the sacrifice to end all animal sacrifices. And after dying, he ascended into heaven at the right hand of God, where he is our once-for-all sacrifice. Those who put their faith in him receive God’s very presence in the person of the Holy

Spirit, and they now bring God's presence to the world as his redeemed priests.

CHANGE

*APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR
THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

- If everything God gives us to do is a way we minister to him and bring his presence, that means everything we do, no matter how small, is very important. In what ways has God called you to minister to him at this point in your life?
- In order to be a priest you have to be reborn into God's family (v. 22). Have you been reborn by his grace through faith? Would you like to today?
- Read vv. 20-21 again. How does the certainty of God's promise impact you?

PRAYER

RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER

- Jesus told us to pray God's kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. As his priests who minister to him, pray this promise over your life and your city.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're engaging with the gospel?



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