WEEK ONE - Introduction

After handing out books, turn to page 87 where you’ll find “An Invitation”. Have someone read this section as the rest follow along.

1. On page 88 the author says, “It’s not an exclusive club only for the very spiritual. It is a community of people committed to getting to know God together…….Although this passion, this calling must be answered on an individual level; the journey is not meant to be taken alone. We do not learn to know God in a vacuum.”

Why do you think this journey (getting to know God) is such an important one for each of us?

2. If you are studying this book as a group take some time now to share some of the ways that we can help each other in our quest to know God. What are some ways that you find personally encouraging?

3. Have you ever thought about how much God is prepared to invest in your quest to know Him? Can you share a time when you felt God was letting you know how precious you are to Him, and how He longs to have a relationship with you?

4. All of us are at some point in this journey. Where do you think you are:

-I’m at the very beginning of this journey.

-I’ve got a good start, but I need some encouragement.

-I’ve been on this journey for awhile and I feel like the farther I go, the more exciting it gets.

-I would describe my journey this way:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Take some time to share with the group why you think you are at this point.

WEEK TWO – Chapter One

1. What kind of pictures or images do you associate with God?

2.Which word would best describe how you feel about being in His presence?

-loved

-welcome

-afraid

-ashamed

-hurried

-curious

3. Read the first two paragraphs on page 16. The central place of God’s presence was the Holy of holies. And in the Holy of holies, the ark of the covenant was most significant because on it was the Mercy Seat. Look up the meaning of the word ATONEMENT. Why was this concept important in coming into God’s presence?

4. Read Romans 3:23-26 and discuss how we, today, enter God’s presence? On what basis do we find atonement?

5. What does Hebrews 4:14-16 tell you about the heart of God? What does mercy and grace mean to you personally?

6. Why do you think so many people are afraid of dying? How does Hebrews 2:14-15 say we can be free from this fear?

WEEK THREE – Chapter Two

1. How would you define “a quick fix”? How is wanting a quick fix like trying to get water from an empty well?

2. What are some of the strategies that are readily available to us? In other words, describe what you see as empty wells.

3. Read Isaiah 55:1-3. Discuss what you think God really means when He says through the prophet Isaiah, “The life of your soul is at stake.”

4. Do you agree with this sentence (page 27), “The problem lies in our inability to correctly define what we need!” Why or why not?

5. What would it mean to you personally, to *rest* in the presence of your enemies? Can you remember a time when you cried to God to answer a request and then realized that instead of answering your prayer, He was giving you a deeper awareness of His presence? He was giving you “rest” in the presence of your enemies?

For personal reflection:

“If Jesus is not our treasure, we will find ourselves consumed with trying to find happiness and contentment in things that were never meant to fill the deepest longings of our heart.” (Page 32) Often we find ourselves unhappy with situations or relationships because they just don’t seem to be all we thought or hoped they would be. As you honestly reflect on your life, can you say that Jesus is your dearest treasure, or have you been using things and people to find happiness and contentment?

WEEK FOUR – Chapter Three

1. Read Romans 8:328,29 and then describe in your own words what you see as God’s purpose for us.

2. How does your understanding of surrender change when you consider it as “into” rather than “away from”? (See page 39)

3. Read again the excerpt from John Piper (pp 40 and 41). If you were to honestly consider whether you are living with a “secular mindset” or a “biblical mindset”, what would your answer be? Why? How does having a biblical mindset start to change your thinking about life and decisions and choices we all must make?

4. What areas of your life do you think the Holy Spirit may be asking you to relinquish? Can you do so, knowing that you will only be “falling into the arms of Jesus, fully satisfied, fully at rest.” (Page 47)

For personal reflection:

How would you interpret the concept of compartmentalizing areas of our lives? In your heart of hearts, do you suspect that there may be areas that you have kept for yourself? If so, what are they?

WEEK FIVE – Chapter Four

1. As you read this chapter did you identify with a time of painful loss when you felt God was far away? Why do you think these times are so painful? What are some of the things we generally use to numb our hearts and distract us during these experiences?

2. “We live in a world that is so noisy and so filled with activities and distractions. But if we truly long to know God, He will take us to a place of stillness where He can slowly begin to strip away all the things we have been clinging to. He will knock the props from under us. He will faithfully destroy our false gods.” P.58

Why do you think God sometimes “blesses” us with a dessert experience? (see bottom half of Page 59)

3.Has your definition of “faith” changed or been clarified as you studied this chapter? How?

For personal reflection:

The hardest part of our journey to know God is identifying the things that WE personally use and have come to trust in. What are the things the Holy Spirit has identified in your life?

WEEK SIX – Chapter Five

1. How would you describe what it means to live in the tension between the NOW and the SOMEDAY? How can this “tension” become a way to know God better?

2. What is the HOPE that grounds our faith?

3. The struggle to live with a constant awareness of God’s presence has been described by many people as “learning to live in the moment”. Do you think the struggle itself has value? What are some of the things that keep us from being aware of God’s presence in our lives?

4. Why do you think it is easier to define ourselves by what we do than by who we are?

For personal reflection:

Read Colossians 3:1 – 3. Using these verses as an evaluation tool, what changes do you hear God asking you to make?