

2026-03-01 Small Group Guide

Small Group Discussion Guide

Sermon Title: Beyond Consumerism: A Heart After God

Text: Luke 7:36-50; Hebrews 10:19-39, 12:14-29

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to receive His Word, and to help the group move beyond surface-level Christianity to genuine brokenness and transformation.

Ice Breaker

Question: Have you ever had a moment where you felt completely unworthy, yet experienced overwhelming grace? Share briefly if you're comfortable.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

God looks at the heart, not outward appearances - While we focus on external things, God examines our inner spirit and motivations.

True faith requires brokenness - The sinful woman's tears and humility demonstrated genuine repentance, not just acknowledgment of sin.

American Christianity has become consumeristic - We often approach God asking "What can You do for me?" rather than "What can I do for You?"

Our God is a consuming fire - Grace is not a license for comfortable living but a call to holiness and reverence.

Without holiness, no one will see the Lord - This is a sobering warning that should drive us to examine our relationship with Christ.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

Read Luke 7:36-50 together. What contrasts do you see between Simon the Pharisee and the sinful woman? How did each approach Jesus?

In verse 47, Jesus says, "her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown." How do you understand the relationship between forgiveness and love in this passage?

Read Hebrews 12:14-29. What does it mean to "make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy"? How is this different from trying to earn salvation?

Personal Reflection

The pastor asked, "What would it take for you to be broken that way with Jesus?" How would you honestly answer that question?

Are there areas in your life where you've been treating Christianity like a consumer—focusing on what God can do for you rather than surrendering to Him? Be specific if you're comfortable sharing.

The sermon mentioned that we often want "a designer God"—one we create to fit our preferences. In what ways have you been tempted to reshape God to fit your lifestyle rather than reshaping your life to fit His will?

Challenging Questions

The pastor said, "If we don't glorify God, we become two-faced." What does this mean practically? Can you identify times when you've been "two-faced" in your faith?

Hebrews 12:14 warns: "Without holiness no one will see the Lord." How does this verse challenge the popular notion that "everyone's going to heaven"? How should this affect our daily lives?

The sermon referenced people who say, "I got grace, I can do whatever I want." How is this an insult to the Spirit of grace? What's the difference between genuine grace and presumption?

Application-Focused

The woman in Luke 7 demonstrated her faith through action—tears, washing Jesus' feet, breaking her alabaster jar. What tangible actions could demonstrate your faith this week?

The pastor encouraged us to ask God: "What can I do to serve You today?" If you asked God that question right now, what do you think He might say?

How can we as a group help each other avoid the trap of consumer Christianity and instead cultivate hearts that genuinely worship and serve God?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Daily Brokenness

Each morning this week, spend 5-10 minutes in prayer acknowledging your unworthiness and God's amazing grace. Journal about what God reveals to you.

Option 2: Service Over Consumption

Instead of asking God for things this week, ask Him each day: "Lord, what can I do for You today?" Then act on what He brings to mind.

Option 3: Scripture Immersion

Read yourself INTO the story of Luke 7:36-50 each day. Put yourself in the position of the sinful woman. What does this reveal about your heart?

Option 4: Holiness Assessment

Using Hebrews 12:14-29 as your guide, honestly assess your pursuit of holiness. Write down specific areas where you need to "make every effort" and share with an accountability partner.

Group Exercise: The Alabaster Jar

Materials needed: Small piece of paper and pen for each person

On your paper, write down something you're holding onto that keeps you from complete surrender to Christ (pride, comfort, reputation, control, a particular sin, fear, etc.)

Fold the paper and hold it in your hands.

Reflect silently: "Am I willing to 'break my alabaster jar' and pour out this thing at Jesus' feet?"

If you're willing, place your folded paper in a basket as an act of surrender. (These will be destroyed unread after the meeting.)

Pray together for the courage to live broken and surrendered before Christ.

Memory Verse

Hebrews 12:28-29

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'"

Closing Reflection

The pastor ended by asking: "Let's take Jesus seriously. What do you think about that?"

Take a moment of silence for each person to answer that question

personally before God.

Closing Prayer

Pray specifically for:

Hearts that are broken before God, not hardened by comfort

Freedom from consumer Christianity

Genuine passion for Christ that goes beyond Sunday morning

Courage to live undignified lives for Jesus

Those in the Middle East and missionaries in dangerous places

Each other's specific needs and challenges discussed tonight

For Next Week

Homework: Read the entire book of Luke this week, reading yourself INTO the stories as characters. Come prepared to share what God revealed to you through this exercise.

Accountability Question: "Did you ask God each day what you could do for Him, and did you act on it?"

Remember: The goal isn't perfection but progression. We're not trying to earn salvation but responding to the amazing grace we've already received through faith in Christ.