

GROUPS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

GENESIS GROUPS TARGET

The goal of your time together is to grow in your relationship with Jesus and to help others do the same. To disciple people well, there are three areas in which this guide is designed to help you engage with each other and with Scripture. Those areas are the **head**, the **heart**, and the **hands**.

HEAD

God has created us to be intellectual beings, but this doesn't mean that we have to study the scriptures at an academic level to understand them. But we must process them with our minds if we want them to take root in our hearts.

HEART

After we have sought to engage the scriptures with our minds, the truth of God's word begins to take root in our hearts. This is where real internal change begins to take place. We believe that scripture is alive and active (Hebrews 4:12) through the work of the Holy Spirit, and it is his work that changes us into a greater representation of Jesus.

HANDS

This is where our faith begins to take action. It is the overflow of our hearts that prompts the action of our hands. As we let the truth of God do its work on our hearts the natural overflow is for it to be displayed in action. From our worship to our serving to how we engage with others, it is all an overflow of what is in our hearts.

Leader note:

Remember, this is a guide, not a recipe. This is meant to help you guide your conversation with your group, but it does not have to be precisely followed. Trust the Spirit to guide your conversation & follow wherever he may lead it.

Before jumping into this guide, have everyone try writing down the Ten Commandments in order. The winner gets as many free bagels as they want at church on Sunday.

HEAD

Read Exodus 20:1-11 out loud together.

After the dramatic scene of God showing up on Sinai, he gives Israel these ten commands about how they are to live. These commands can be split into two sections. Section one is about relating to God, and section two is about relating to others.

1. **Why do you think God gave more commands about relating to others than he did about relating to him?**
2. The first command says, “You shall have no other gods before me.” **What are the “gods” we sometimes give more affection to than God?**
3. The command about not using the Lord’s name in “vain” can be translated as “misuse” and can also be interpreted as “bearing or carrying” God’s name.¹ **What difference do you think there is between bearing God’s name and misusing his name?**
4. All people are created as God’s image bearers, but only those who come to him in faith are given the privilege of bearing his name. **What does that mean to you?**

HEART

Read Exodus 20:12-17 out loud together.

It’s common knowledge that living in a relationship with other people isn’t always easy. As we look at the last six commandments we see basic expectations for how we are to live in community with others. It all seems pretty straightforward, but when we consider that following these commands is meant to flow out of our relationship with God, they start to look a little different.

1. **How do you think that following these commands from a place of love for God—rather than civil obligation—makes them different?**
2. Many of these commands involve our actions, but the command to not covet is about a heart issue. **How do you think your heart plays into the other commands in this section?**
3. As members of the people of God, it’s our responsibility and our privilege to reflect God’s character to others. **How do you think living according to these commands can reflect God’s character to others? How does the idea of reflecting God’s character challenge you?**

HANDS

Read Matthew 22:36-40 out loud together.

In these often-cited verses, Jesus summarizes every law God gave to the ancient Israelites. Being followers of Jesus makes us part of the people of God, and the love we have experienced from him should change every part of our lives.

1. **Do you think a person can be transformed by the love of God and not love people? Why or why not?**
2. **How do you think love for God plays out in our relationships with others?**
3. **What do you think would happen if we filtered every action and word toward another person through our love for God?**

CLOSING

Spend time praying for each other’s needs.

¹ Dr. Carmen Imes | Interview with Dr. Cyndi Parker