



## **In the Flesh – John 15**

March 10 | Group Discussion Guide

**Begin by asking an opening question, reading Scripture, and praying together (15 minutes).**

OPENING QUESTION: What was your high from this past week? What was your low?

SCRIPTURE: Read **John 15**.

PRAYER: After reading, have someone pray for your time together.

**Break into gendered prayer groups (30 minutes).**

Many of you did this exercise during our life group vision nights. If you did, great! Split into same-gender groups for deeper discussion on these prayer points. If you weren't able to attend the life group vision nights, use this prayer exercise as a tool to focus your attention on the Lord and share with your group.

In this abiding exercise, we enter into an awareness of God's presence. Think of this as a guided conversation among friends. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct *the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart* (Psalm 19:14).

**VISION** – Open with one or two people asking God to give each person in your group eyes to see the way God sees:

- Let us see God for who He is (Isaiah 6:1 – *I see the Lord, high and lifted up*)
- Let us see one another the way God sees each one
- Let us see ourselves as God sees us

**SILENCE** – Silence yourselves before God. Breathe in deeply. Notice how you come to this time. Notice God’s presence. (Psalm 46:10 – *Be silent and know that I am God*)

**GRATITUDE** – Offer words of gratitude to God for the people in your group. Take turns thanking God for each person present in your circle. Let this unfold naturally. (Romans 16:19 – *I rejoice because of you*)

**DISTANCE** – Take some time to notice where God has seemed distant in this season. This may be personal or communal. Has there been pain, disillusionment, distraction, or shame? How have you sensed that God has been distant from you? Has there been sin... pride, dissent, slander, lust, dishonesty, selfishness, greed, idolatry, etc.? How have you sensed that *you have been distant from God?*

- Simply name what you have experienced. This could include confession, but it might also just name a feeling such as, “God as I faced this disappointment this week, it felt like you were distant ...” etc.
- This could include situations in your life group or your personal life. Don’t try to fix anyone or solve anything. The goal here is honest communication with God and one another.

**PRESENCE** – Where have you noticed God’s presence? Review the recent times together as a group or in your own life when you saw God moving or felt his nearness. Speak to God about what you have experienced or noticed lately.

**RESPONSE** – Hold silence for a few moments and be curious about how you should respond out of this time.

Ask God to direct your steps. If there are any invitations you’re sensing, everyone is invited to pray those to God. (Isaiah 6:8 – *Here I am, send me*)

**THE LORD’S PRAYER** – Conclude this experience by praying together the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray (Matthew 6:9-13).

**Come back to a large group for discussion to recap your prayer time and the life group vision night you attended (30 minutes).**

- In his vision night talk, Dan mentioned **Acts 2:42-47**. Read that passage and ask, “What do you need to do to help our group raise the bar to move toward the vision for community laid out in this text?”
- How do you feel like you, as an individual, are doing with coming to group consistently, vulnerably, and expectantly? Explain.
- **Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-12**. What would it look like for you to “open your heart” in this group? What do you need to do/how do you need to come to make that a reality (i.e. Do you need smaller spaces within the group for more intimate sharing? Do you need more time to process in group or before group?)
- How do you need to come to make this group a place where “open hearts” are welcomed?
- In his sermon on **John 15**, Dan mentioned three directives from Jesus that are necessary for us to produce a life of abundant fruit, three things you must be able to do: (1) Renounce reliance on myself; (2) Remain connected to Jesus; and (3) accept pruning from the Father. Which of these do you need to press into to make your involvement with this group more aligned with this group’s vision and purpose?

**Finish with logistics and prayer requests (5 minutes).**

1. **Inform your group** about the study devotions available to help you walk through the gospel of John series! You can find that material at [thecreek.org/devotionals](http://thecreek.org/devotionals).
2. **Finish your group** session by sharing prayer requests and praying.