

A conceptual image showing two hands, one from the top and one from the bottom, reaching towards a central bright light. The light creates a starburst effect with many thin, radiating lines extending outwards. The background is dark blue/black.

ENCOUNTERING GOD

4. HELP OTHERS ON THEIR PATHWAY

ICEBREAKER

If this is a new group or there are new people, please take a moment to **introduce yourselves**.



To start off your small group, briefly share your response to the following question:

Do you like Zoom meetings, or would you rather meet in person?

Share with your group.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Let's get a big picture of what we'll be learning today...

As Christians, we're all on this journey together. And even though we might have different pathways, we're all going in the same direction. Some of us love to pitch in and help out, while others like to read, study and teach. These unique spiritual pathways can all work together to bring more glory to God! And the ultimate goal of each pathway is to lead every Christ believer to a renewed and deeper intimacy with God. From a deep well of God's love and truth imbedded in the heart of a Christian will overflow a passion and conviction to obey and follow God's plan for his/her life. Get ready to take the assessment and discover your spiritual pathway!

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: SILENCE CELL PHONES. As a courtesy to those who are sharing in your group, please try to stay off your phones unless for emergencies. It is okay with the exception of the use of your smartphone device for online meeting (Zoom).

Tip: MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY. Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by calling and/or texting your host.

ONLINE Tip: HYBRID GATHERING (ZOOM &/OR IN PERSON). If you're meeting together on Zoom, familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time. If your group decides to meet in person, please practice safe social distancing by following the guidelines of being 6 feet apart and wearing a mask.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) The main goal of our Spiritual Pathways is to grow in Christ. Long ago, Jesus told us that as long as we stayed connected to Him, good things would happen.

"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in Me."

John 15:4 (NLT)

The example Jesus uses is of a vine that produces fruit, or a crop. "Fruit" can mean a lot of different things. It can be good deeds. It can mean other people you help enter the Kingdom of God. It can also mean the attitudes we have, like "love, joy, and peace."

When we are growing in the Spirit together, there will be obvious markers in our lives that show the world we belong to Jesus.

What are some fruits you see in someone else in this group? (Example: Someone who extends kindness, forgiveness, grace, helping to feed the hungry, sharing the gospel to someone who doesn't know about Jesus...)

2.) While it is up to each of us to walk in the Spirit, we share a common goal and common bond. It is our own responsibility to stay connected to God. But we also have the opportunity to help others stay connected as well.

Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 (NLT)

Think about the Seven Spiritual Pathways (see Part 1). Which one do you identify with most? Now, think of someone who is on a different Spiritual Pathway. **How can you help someone on another pathway stay connected to God? (Example, if you are on the Contemplative Pathway you can provide words of wisdom to someone on the Creation Pathway to think about as they go for a hike)**

3.) Today, we're going to look at two more pathways. Each of them can be used to help carry other's burdens, but in very different ways. The first is the "*Serving Pathway*."

"The Serving Pathway"

When they roll up their sleeves and get to work, they feel closest to God. It's through doing rather than saying that connects them. God's presence seems most tangible when you're involved with helping others. You are often uncomfortable in a setting where you don't have a role to do something.

There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor.

Acts 9:36 (NLT)

"Dorcas," a Greek name means "Gazelle." In other words, she was beautiful and full of grace, and her actions showed it! How wonderful to be known for helping others.

What do you hope to be known for by others? How good of a job do you think you're doing of it?

4.) The last pathway we will look at is the *“Intellectual Pathway.”*

“The Intellectual Pathway”

These people love to go deep in their study. They are tuned into God when they discover something new in the pages of scripture or have a stimulating conversation.

Paul was known for his intellectual prowess. In fact, Peter even said that *“some of the things he writes are hard to understand”* (2 Peter 3:16). But the two of them were close allies and used their gifts together.

Whether you are gifted at serving or at teaching, you should do each in a way that helps others. There are times as a servant that you want to do all the work and no one else gets a chance. And some teachers are so heady in their knowledge that they’re not very helpful with their words. In all things, we need to keep the focus on others as we help.

What are some practical ways you help other members of God’s family throughout the week? (Example: you pray for them, send them an encouraging text message and reach out with a phone call, etc.)

Finally, take some time to discuss right now if all of you will be continuing to meet in your small group. Or, discuss with your group if you plan to have a fun get together as you complete this small group study.

Note: No pressure at all to attend.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

This week, you may have an opportunity to help someone else grow:

- By serving them in a way that they can't help themselves.
- By teaching them something they don't already know.



CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a few minutes to close your time together with prayer and to pray for each other's prayer requests. Below is a sample prayer to read if you choose to. You can also choose to write down each other's prayer requests to remember throughout the week.



Sample Prayer:

"Father God, thank You for giving us a pathway to encounter You. We are not in this alone, but You have provided others along the way to help us. We thank You for bringing the right people into our lives in every season to walk alongside with us to encourage us, challenge us, and hold us accountable in our faith walk. Help us, Jesus, to not only look out for our own interest, but to be mindful and helpful to look out for our brothers and/or sisters in Christ. Help us to be a friend who mirrors You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

Group Prayer Requests:

Name

Request

DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 1

SCRIPTURE...

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us. Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 2

SCRIPTURE...

You are no longer ruled by your desires, but by God's Spirit, who lives in you. People who don't have the Spirit of Christ in them don't belong to Him.

Romans 8:9 (CEV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

The Spirit is God's guarantee that He will give us the inheritance He promised and that He has purchased us to be His own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify Him.
Ephesians 1:14 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.
Philippians 2:4 (CSB)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Dear brothers and sisters, I close my Letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. *2 Corinthians 13:11 (NLT)*

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...
