

Small Group Guide

HE CAME TO BRING US LIFE

The Church at Brook Hills, Dr. Bart Box

December 20, 2009

John 10:7-10

This guide is designed to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use, and there may be instances when you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience, not complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool rather than a rigid teaching task list.

Connect

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Have you ever been tricked or deceived by someone or something? You expected one thing, but got another. You hoped something would be one way, but it turned out just the opposite. The product or "free trip" wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

Invite learners to share their experiences. Explain that the thief (ultimately Satan) is a liar who conceals the truth about sin and its consequences. Today we will study how Jesus' design for us is the only true and fulfilling life.

Option 2

Have you ever sacrificed immediate pleasure for a long-term gain? Maybe you chose to study instead of playing, or chose to diet instead of gaining weight by eating a delicious desert, or chose to save for retirement, etc.

Invite learners to share their experiences. Explain that Christ offers eternal pleasures that will last this Christmas and forever. The world's pleasures are fleeting at best.

Review the Message

In today's passage, John 10:7-10, we contrast the thief's design of devastation and Christ's design of delight.

Two Designs upon Our Lives...

- **The Design of Devastation**
 - **The design of the thief is concealed**
 - **The immediate pleasures are highlighted**
 - **The inevitable wreckage is hidden**
 - **The design of the thief is comprehensive**
 - **The thief is devoted to total devastation**
 - **The thief is intentional about total devastation**
- **The Design of Delight**
 - **The design of Jesus is abundance—eternal life**
 - **The design of Jesus is simple—knowledge of God**

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Discussion...

- Ask for a volunteer to read John 10:7-10.
- Who are the thieves and robbers to whom Jesus refers? Explain how many of the Pharisees did not believe Christ and tried to prevent others from believing in Him. (Refer to chapter 9 for context, particularly 9:24.)
- Who is the ultimate thief and robber? (See John 8:44).
- What is the sole focus of the thief? How determined is he?
- Why does Jesus say that He has come? (v. 10)
 - What are the benefits and consequences of Jesus' offer to us? Contrast these with the benefits and consequences of Satan's design.
- What is eternal life, as defined by Jesus in John 17:3?
 - How does this definition line up or contrast with your previous thoughts about eternal life?
 - How is the concept of abundant life sometimes twisted in teachings today?
 - How would you compare the simplicity of Jesus' design with the deceit of the devil's design.

Application...

- Since our enemy is so intentional about our total devastation, how should we view and treat sin? How can we guard ourselves against sin? How can we prepare ourselves to resist the lies that tempt us to sin?
- Much of Scripture shows us that idolatry is at the core of sin. What idols tempt us in today's culture?
- What gives us confidence against the schemes of the devil? (See 1 John 3:8)
- Read 1 John 2:16 and John 1:4. Compare what Jesus offers to what the world offers. How can we learn to value the eternal pleasures in Christ over the fleeting pleasures of the world?
- Read Philippians 3:7-11. Do you find the longer you are a Christian that you are less and less satisfied with what the world has to offer? Why or why not? How can we learn from Paul's experience?

Two Responses with Our Lives...

- **Enter by the Door**
 - The door is **personal**
 - The door is **singular**
- **Enjoy Christ's Provision**
 - Enjoyment of Christ's provision demands **repentant** hearts
 - Enjoyment of Christ's provision demands **renewed** desires

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Discussion...

- How critical to our eternity is our understanding of what Jesus is saying here in verses 7 to 10? How does He indicate that?
- Who is the Door? What systems or organizations or things do people sometimes replace Him with?
- Is there more than one gate or door? Why is Jesus unique? What has He done to prove His unique status?
- Read Acts 4:12 and 1 Timothy 2:5. How does God's Word clash with our culture's predominant view toward salvation and eternal life?

Application...

- Considering that sin still wars in our soul even after conversion, what is the key to enjoying daily Christ's provision?
- How do we miss out on joy when we choose sin? How do we belittle God and defame His Glory when we choose sin?
- Why do you think our affections for God are sometimes so weak? Why are our attachments to the world sometimes so strong? How does God renew our desire for Him?
- Read Isaiah 55:1-3. How does God's free offer of life help us resist sin? How does knowing the joy God promises help us choose Him over the world?

A Final Plea...

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him! (Psalm 34:8)

Application...

- Spend some time in confession before God. How can we daily take refuge in God so that we prefer our broken Savior over our broken world?