

5 | GROUP PRAYER

Rather than going around the group and sharing prayer requests, you might consider simply bowing your heads and taking turns praying for the things on your heart or that the Holy Spirit brings to mind.

NEXT STEPS AFTER GROUP

1 | SCRIPTURE FOCUSED

• Verse to Memorize: _____

• Other Passages to Read: _____

2 | PRAYER FOCUSED

- How can you pray for people in your group this week?
- Is the Holy Spirit speaking to you about something you need to repent of and turn over to Jesus?
- How are you going to respond to this truth and put it into action?

3 | OTHERS FOCUSED

- Did anyone in your group share a need that you might be gifted to help with?
- Consider inviting a friend from group to meet up for a meal or a hang out time.
- Is the Holy Spirit bringing someone to mind with whom you can share the things you've learned today?

GROUPS

STUDY GUIDE

Why Would I Prepare BEFORE My Lighthouse Group?

Reading, thinking, and praying about the primary passage your Lighthouse Group is studying ahead of time may be one of the most pivotal ways to make your Lighthouse Group discussions powerful and meaningful. When you do prepare beforehand, you're coming with thoughtful insights and ideas you've been wrestling through. That's different from grabbing at the most accessible thoughts in real time.

How Do I Prepare BEFORE My Lighthouse Group?

1 | PRAY

Ask God to open your eyes, mind, and spirit to His truth. Your desire is not to "get the right answer," but rather to know Him as He has revealed Himself so that you can trust and rely on Him more fully.

2 | READ

Read the main passage. Consider reading the same passage in multiple versions, like ESV, NIV, AMP, and NLT. All of these can be found at BibleGateway.com. For better context, read the paragraphs before and after the study passage as well.

3 | REFLECT

What does this passage teach you about God? Maybe something to praise Him for? Does this passage reveal an area of your life you should confess as sin to God? What does this passage lead you to ask God for? How does this passage point to Jesus work on the cross and out of the grave?

Think through some of the questions you'll be discussing during your Lighthouse Group time.

4 | WRITE

This is when you cross over from reading into study - writing down truth that you are discovering. Write down questions that come to mind as you are reading.

We've included space on the next page of this guide for you to write down insights, questions, and more that you can bring up in your Lighthouse Group discussion time.

PREP BEFORE GROUP

PRIMARY PASSAGE: Ezekiel 34:1-16

WRITE YOUR INSIGHTS & QUESTIONS HERE:

ADDITIONAL CROSS-REFERENCES: Matthew 9:9-12; Luke 18:15-27; 19:1-10; John 10:11-18; John 21:15-19

DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of: October 21-27

1 | **PRAY:** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead your group in truth and spiritual growth.

2 | **READ Ezekiel 34:1-16**

One volunteer reads the passage in the ESV or NIV. Another volunteer reads the passage in AMP or NLT.

3 | **CONSIDER SITUATIONAL/HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

In the historical context, the prophet Ezekiel is telling the priests of Judah that they will be removed from their places of leadership and God would Himself be the Shepherd of the people. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy, coming to seek the lost and lay down his life to redeem them. The religious leaders were only in it for themselves and were (and are) incapable of saving even their own souls, let alone anyone else's. Jesus did what no one else could do: he paid the price for ALL sin, and calls ALL sinners to come to him to be redeemed.

4 | **DISCUSSION**

CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. How might the priests in Ezekiel's time have felt about the accusations?
2. Why did Israel's leaders not search for the lost, v. 8?
3. What did Ezekiel say God would do for the sheep once He'd found them/what are all the things a good shepherd does?

TRUTH QUESTIONS

1. Why were the religious leaders trying to shepherd only themselves instead of caring for those God put under them?
2. Is it possible to shepherd others well if you do not allow God to be your shepherd?
3. Does Ezekiel say anything about the worthiness of the sheep? Will God only seek the healthy, unblemished sheep and leave the rest to their own resources?

APPLICATION/PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. Does the "Great Commission" (Mt. 28:18-20) have any relation to this?
2. Have you submitted yourself to Jesus' leadership and entrusted yourself to the care of the Good Shepherd?
3. If you have, then Jesus is already leading you to shepherd others (think of Jesus calling Matthew the tax collector to be his disciple, or Jesus reinstating Peter). Who is God calling you to shepherd?