

Session 3

WHO AM I?

MONTHLY VERSE

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
Ephesians 2:10 NIV

MONTHLY QUESTION

What is your high/low for this month?

CONTENT

The Sacred Enneagram by Christopher L. Heuertz

ASSIGNMENTS

Book Content

Use the Book Reflection Guide to capture the highlights. Come ready to discuss what you've learned with the group. Print a copy for everyone if you're able.

Prepare Your Story

Prepare your story to share during the Retreat, using the *Telling Your Story* Guide.

Scripture Reading

Read Ephesians 4-6.

Deeper Dive

If you would like to dive deeper into this topic, either now or after you complete this group, consider the following resource(s):

website: www.enneagraminstitute.com

podcast: www.typologypodcast.com

assessment: www.groupleaders.org/temperament-assessment

Scripture READING

READING THROUGH PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

BACKGROUND

Ephesians is a letter written by Paul to a church in Ephesus. Paul wrote this letter while imprisoned in Rome. Paul had a special connection to Ephesus, a city where he planted a church and visited multiple times (Acts 18:19, 26, 20:31). Paul encouraged his apprentice Timothy to stay in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), and likely wrote letters to the Corinthians during his stay in Ephesus.

AS YOU READ:

Read actively. Highlight sections that stand out to you. Write questions in the margins of your Bible, in a note on your phone or tablet, or in a journal.

Review. Begin reading by reviewing what you read and noted the day before.

Choose a verse or phrase. Each week, choose one verse or phrase from your reading that stands out to you. This verse or phrase may be something you are intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that resonates with you, or you want to examine further. Write down the verse or phrase and then answer these questions:

- What strikes you about this verse?
- How can you apply it to your life in some way?

SESSION 3 READING PLAN:

- **WEEK 1:** Read Ephesians 3
- **WEEK 2:** Read Ephesians 4
- **WEEK 3:** Read Ephesians 5
- **WEEK 4:** Read Ephesians 6

CONSIDER:

Consider purchasing a study guide or commentary that asks reflective questions and deepens understanding. Here are three study guides recommended by other leaders:

- Be Series, by Warren Weirsbe
- John Stott Bible Studies
- Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters, by N.T. Wright

Telling YOUR STORY

OVERVIEW

Your story matters. It matters to God, to the church, to our world and to this group. Scripture says there is something powerful about sharing our stories that brings glory to God and defeats the enemy. And Jesus was a model of regularly using stories to convey His teachings.

We are hardwired to love stories and we crave the connection it brings. Though there are many ways to tell your story, we want to help you think through yours in light of the major themes of God's Word, also known as the Biblical narrative: creation, fall, redemption, restoration. Just as we can see these themes demonstrated in the whole Bible, we also see them woven throughout individual stories in Scripture, and in our own lives.

Creation – God has created you as a one-of-a-kind person, in a unique place and time in history.

Fall – Like the rest of humanity, you have fallen. You've sinned both against God and others. You've been hurt by the sin of others and felt the effects of living in a fallen world.

Redemption – At some point, you came to know Jesus. When you came to understand the gospel and placed your faith in Christ, a shift occurred. He took on the consequences for your sin and you received His righteousness. Now God no longer sees you as guilty of sin.

Restoration – After you placed your faith in Christ, God began the process of restoring you to who He also intended you to be. We won't finish being restored in this life, but we find ourselves growing more and more like Christ. Ultimately, God will completely restore us.

PREPARING YOUR STORY

While we recommend crafting and practicing a short (3-5 minute) version of your story, for this group you will have 20 minutes to share your story and 10 minutes for the rest of the group to ask questions. Consider providing more details and context around key life events, family dynamics, adolescent markers, difficulties, joys, and your professional journey. When sharing your story, it is important for others to feel like they understand the real you, rather than just facts or events. Look to connect in a meaningful way by revealing your emotions, feelings, and beliefs in conjunction with the details of events.

BEST PRACTICES

- Provide insight into your heart, rather than just details about your life.
- Clarify where you are in your faith journey.
- Share the significant events in your life that affected your beliefs and development.
- Be sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit. There may be parts of your story that you are still processing or that you don't fully understand. That is okay, and you can discern whether you are ready to open up about those thoughts and emotions to the group.
- Let others know areas where they can pray for or support you.
- Your story isn't finished yet.
- Write out your story like you speak. Practice telling your story a couple of times before group to gain more insight into where you might need to condense and clarify to help listeners follow along.

Telling YOUR STORY (CONTINUED)

Here are additional questions that might help you prepare your story:

Before I Accepted Christ

- What was my life like that will relate most to the non-Christian?
- What did my life revolve around the most? What did I get my security or happiness from? Or, what challenge or struggle lay before me that threatened to pull me away from the Lord?
- How did those areas begin to let me down? Or, how did that experience threaten my faith?

How I Received Christ

- When was the first time I heard the gospel and what were my initial reactions? Or, when did I turn to God in my struggle?
- When did my attitude toward God begin to change? Why?
- Why did I accept Christ? Or, why did I finally relinquish my situation/struggle to Him?

After I Accepted Christ (or gave Him complete control)

- Is it easy for you to identify a “before” and “after” Christ in your story? If not, how has your relationship with Christ grown and changed throughout your story?
- How have I continually learned to turn toward Christ in life? How did my faith grow after placing my trust in Christ?
- Why am I motivated differently now? How do I see myself and my situation differently than I did before? In what ways do I have more hope?

In conversations with others, your story can be a perfect transition to explain how God wants to do the same for everyone. Your story is the gospel lived out in your life. On our own we are a sinful mess and need a Savior (we are fallen). God enters our story and saves us (Jesus redeems). Once we have a relationship with God, He continues to change us and help us grow (God restores us).

GUIDELINES FOR LISTENING

The way we listen to one another and with one another can make all the difference. As you listen to the stories of other group members at your next meeting, keep these guidelines in mind as well.

- **Confidentiality** means that we don't tell one another's stories without permission.
- **Focused attention** is a gift that allows the speaker to stay in their own story, knowing the listeners are not too busy or distracted to be there with them.
- **Unconditional acceptance** is offered as a form of giving grace.
- **No fixing, advising, or rescuing** allowed. Attempts to fix a person or situation can push a soul into hiding. Most of the time, we just need to be heard, not fixed. Please withhold the urge to offer advice, unless specifically asked.