

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your time together to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Read Together

“Sovereignty” and “providence” are two words Christians often use when speaking about God. These two words are central to our understanding of who God is. They are the foundation of the Christ-follower’s declaration that—even in the midst of suffering and pain—“God is good”. But what do we really mean when we speak of God’s “sovereignty” and “providence”?

Sovereignty is an essential attribute or quality of God. When we refer to God’s sovereignty, we are speaking of His authority and dominion. Nothing and no one can prohibit God’s free exercise of His power over His creation; He is omnipotent. God’s sovereignty means that we can trust Him, we can pray to Him, we can take comfort in Him, and we can hope in Him.

In the same way that a kiss is an expression of love, God’s providence is an expression of His sovereignty. Through God’s providence He preserves His creation, accomplishes His purposes in the world, and governs all of His creation. When God intervenes in His creation, He does so to direct the world toward a divine goal. The ultimate expression of this is His plan for and provision of our salvation. Jesus Christ is God’s greatest and most generous provision.

The sovereignty of God and His generous provisions for creation are why we can say with all comfort and all assurance: “God is good”.

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- Sovereignty is an essential attribute of God. When we refer to God’s sovereignty, we are speaking of His authority and dominion. Select one of the passages below. As you read, identify truths within the passage that highlight the sovereignty of God.
 - Lamentations 3:19-66
 - Isaiah 46:1-13
 - Jeremiah 32:17-19
 - Acts 13:13-52
 - Acts 17:24-25
 - Romans 9:14-29
- Providence is an expression of God’s sovereignty. Providence is an action of God’s ongoing, ruling relationship with His creation. Select one of the passages below. As you read, identify truths within the passage that highlight God’s providential action within His creation.
 - Genesis 12:1-3
 - Deuteronomy 4:32-40
 - Psalm 75
 - Psalm 104
 - Job 38:1-40:2
 - Matthew 5:17-20
 - Ephesians 1:3-14
 - Colossians 1:15-17



- God is sovereign and He expresses His sovereignty in His ongoing providential relationship with His creation. Throughout Matthew 6:19-34, Christ calls His disciples to grow up by trusting God the Father's sovereign power over all things. Discuss what it means for a growing disciple to trust the sovereignty of God over the following:

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| - The Enemy's power in this world | - Your prayer life |
| - The basic needs of your life | - Your role in the Great Commission |
| - The uncertainties and adversities of life | - Your plans and dreams |
| - Your health | - Your family members |

- As citizens of a greater Kingdom, Christ calls His disciples to realign themselves with the priorities of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 5-7). In the Kingdom of God the accumulation of wealth is redefined. What is the currency of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:19-21)? Provide additional scriptural references to support your answers. Why is this Kingdom currency superior to the wealth of man? How does one lay up treasures in heaven?
- "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21) John Calvin famously warned that man's heart "is a perpetual factory of idols". Author Paul Tripp has expanded on this suggesting that at our core we have an "awe problem" that produces a "pleasure problem".

When awe of the creation replaces awe of the Creator in your life, you will have a very difficult time controlling your desire for and pursuit of material things. Our material addiction is rooted in awe replacement. Only when awe of God rules your heart will you be able to keep the pleasures of the material world in their proper place.

The battle for the heart is common to all mankind. Identify one earthly treasure that seduces your heart to replace your awe of God. What guardrails or accountability measures have you established in your life to properly align your heart to the pursuit of heavenly treasures? How has God provided grace in this struggle?

- Six times in Matthew 6:25-34 Jesus warns His disciples against being "anxious"—troubled with cares, uneasy, uncertain, or worrisome. The Greek word that is translated "anxious" means "to divide, to separate." Jesus is warning His disciples from being divided in their loyalty to the Kingdom of God. Our default position will be one of anxiety toward uncertainties. But Jesus calls us to seek our heavenly Father who is good and generous. Share a time in your life when the Enemy used a situation in life as a weapon to divide your loyalty to the Kingdom of God. How did the goodness and generosity of Christ overcome the darkness?

Do Life Together

These questions are designed to be asked in a smaller group of 2-4 people. The smaller setting will provide better opportunity for authentic responses. In your smaller group time, take notes to help others remain accountable to their answers. Grow together!

- How is God calling you to "grow up" in Christ this week?
- How can Jesus redeem this area? How has He proven that in Scripture?
- Who will keep you accountable to this commitment this week?

Pray Together

Read and pray through Philippians 4:4-7.

