Small Group Leader Guide: Luther’s Five Favorite Verses

Week Two

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Word Alone

*15 minutes*  **Social Time**. Fellowship time is important! Plus people do it anyway.

*15 minutes*  **Opening**.

* Welcome everyone.
* Opening prayer using the PTA model below, or differently as the Holy Spirit leads you. *Lord, we praise you for your wisdom and knowledge. You know so much more than we ever could, we praise you for that. Thank you for giving us your word, the bible, to impart your wisdom to us. We ask you to bless this gathering, that your word would inspire and transform us. In Jesus’ name, amen.*
* **Check in.** Going around the room, remind each person in turn of what they said they were going to do at the end of the last session. Ask “How did that go?”
* Ask the following **Launching Questions**:
  + What Bible Studies and Small Groups have you done in the past? How were they?
  + What are you doing now (besides this group) to read and study the bible?
  + What is the bible to you?

*45 minutes*  **Discussion**.

* Ask for a volunteer to read the theme verse for this session, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, which is at the top of their handouts.

*16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

* Watch the sermon from April 30. Participants make notes on their Small Group Handout.
* Discussion questions (see page 2-3)

*15 minutes* **Closing**.

* Ask everyone to share their answer to the Two Questions, “What has God been doing in your life in the past week?” and “What are you going to do about it?” Record the answers.
* Before the closing prayer, explain to the group the three parts of the PTA prayer. Tell them this is the model you have been using. Then pray use the prayer below, or another.

*Lord, we praise you for bringing us together and thank you for the opportunity to talk and share and grow during this time. We ask that you would help each of us to be watching for what you are doing in our lives, and to do what we said we would. In Jesus name, amen.*

Small Group Discussion Handout

Week Two: Word Alone

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (New Living Translation)

*16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

1. Write down your thoughts and observations from the bible study and the sermon. Share them with the group for discussion.
2. Key words are those which, because of emphasis or repetition, stand out as being central to the message of the passage. What are some key words or phrases in this passage?
3. According to this passage, what does the bible do for us? How does God use it?
4. Based on this passage (and others), Martin Luther taught the doctrine of *Sola scriptura*, which is that the Christian Scriptures are the sole rule and final authority on matters of faith and practice. Show of hands: who knew this? And what does this mean for our use of the bible? How often should we read it? What should we do about what we read?
5. The bible contains some stories of God or the people of God doing things that make us uncomfortable, particularly in the Old Testament. What are we to do with such passages?
6. According to Luther, Psalm 119 prescribes a three-way approach to theology.
   1. The first rule in reading the Bible for faith is to pray. Ask for God’s Spirit to enlighten us and to fulfill all God’s promises to us.
   2. The second rule is to think and discuss. It’s to consider and talk about the affairs and cares of our lives in light of what we read.
   3. The third rule is to remember God’s promises. God tells us that the agonizing struggle of life is how moves us to trust him.

Have you experienced any or all of these? What happened, what was it like, and what was the outcome in the end?

1. What is the role of the bible in making important decisions in your life? What about the everyday decisions?
2. What would you like the role of the bible to be in decision making? What might God be calling you would to start or stop doing so that you can get there?
3. The Two Questions

This is what God has been doing in my life over the past week: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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This is what I’m going to do about it: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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10. The PTA Prayer

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