

Cultivate Discussion Guide

How To Release My Potential April 13 and 14, 2019

If you missed this weekend's message, view it at cultivate.sc/discussion

A few tips for leaders:

- ❖ To help everyone follow along, have them print the Discussion Guide or pull it up on their phone.
 - ❖ It's okay if you don't answer every question! Your goal is to have REAL conversation about the topics/questions that are most meaningful to the group.
 - ❖ If questions remain unanswered, encourage women to work through them as they cultivate God's word on their own throughout the week – *especially this week leading into Good Friday and Easter.*
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Reflect: Take a few moments to reflect on our series, 10 Reasons Everyone Needs God. Does any message/commandment stand out to you? What understanding did you gain about God's heart for you? How have you changed your behavior or choices as a result of what you've learned?

Cultivate Truth: While many people believe that "freedom" is defined by living any way they want, Pastor Matt reminded us that only God can truly set us free. He challenged us to consider that what we're holding onto can either save us or sink us.

One of the greatest spiritual disciplines any believer can cultivate is confession. We ALL sin and fall short. We can have the best intentions, but still make the wrong choice. We can love God with all our heart and still struggle with sin.

Read the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 7:21-25:

"I have discovered this principle of life - that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Bible tells us that if we say we have no sin, we're fooling ourselves. Even more so, if we claim we have not sinned, we're calling God a liar and saying that His word has no place in our hearts (1 John 1:8,10). *Denial is the opposite of cultivating truth, but confession leads to freedom and should be a consistent part of a REAL relationship with God.*

The good news: God is faithful to forgive us when we are willing to confess (1 John 1:9).

#1: Are you able to quickly turn to God when you sin and ask for His forgiveness?

- If not, what stands in your way (fear, pride, consequences, etc.)?
- Once you've asked, do you receive the forgiveness you are promised, or do you struggle with forgiving yourself?

#2: God's word instructs us to confess our sins to trusted community, and our vision to be REAL encourages us to pray for one another to help us heal.

- How can your group pray for you today?

Freedom comes when we trust that God gives our lives meaning and His word gives us purpose. As women, we so often struggle to believe that what God provides is enough; that we are enough. Our culture overwhelms us with images, opinions and ideas that can make us feel inadequate and discontent. *Rather than trust God, we believe everyone else.*

As a result, we get caught in emotionally unhealthy patterns like: comparison, competition, jealousy, gossip, unkindness, people-pleasing, pursuing perfection, seeking affirmation to define our worth, and battling unreasonable expectations of ourselves and others—ALL which undoubtedly lead to disappointment, instead of fulfillment.

Consider the following verses:

“Let everyone be devoted to fulfill the work God has given them to do with excellence, and their joy will be in doing what’s right and being themselves, and not in being affirmed by others.”
Galatians 6:4 TPT

“A grasping (greedy) person stirs up trouble, but trust in God brings a sense of well-being.”
Proverbs 28:25 MSG

“So we speak, not as [if we were trying] to please people [to gain power and popularity], but to please God who examines our hearts [expecting our best]. 1 Thessalonians 2:4 AMP

#3: Ask God to examine your heart. What unhealthy patterns in your life are leading to disappointment and discontent, rather than meaning and purpose?

- **What would it look like for you to trust God more? Be specific - what do you need to stop doing or start doing?**
- **How do you see God working in your life to reveal or remind you of your purpose?**

Our ultimate freedom is from death BECAUSE Jesus willingly sacrificed His life to save ours. As we prepare for Good Friday and Easter, take some time this week to read and reflect on the biblical account of Christ’s death and resurrection in Luke 22-24.

#4: Jesus paid a debt we could not pay so that we could have a fresh start, a second chance and the hope of heaven. Share what that means to you personally.

- **The greatest way to express gratitude for what God has done for us is by sharing Him with others. Who will you invite to join you for Easter service?**

The Cultivate Podcast: On Episode 3 of The Cultivate Podcast: How To Stop Being Drama, Tammy Brown challenged us that God’s word - not gossip and drama - needs to motivate our actions and behaviors. **Share the last time being mindful of God’s word caused you to change your actions, behavior or words?**

Cultivate Prayer: Close your time together sharing prayer requests and praying for one another. Thank God for forgiveness and freedom from sin and death. Ask Him for the strength and ability to live with your eyes fixed on the meaning and purpose He provides.