

Cultivate Discussion Guide

Why is God Father? June 15 and 16, 2019

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

Tips for leaders:

- Prepare for group. Read the questions and choose the topics you believe will lead to REAL conversation.
 - It's okay if you don't answer every question. Your goal is to discuss what's most meaningful to your group.
 - Close in prayer – using our prompt or your own. We ALL need Jesus to help us live out what we're learning!
 - To help everyone follow along, ask them to print the Discussion Guide or pull it up on their phone.
 - If questions remain unanswered, encourage women to work through them as they cultivate God's word on their own throughout the week.
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Reflect: God does not use our past to determine our future. Entering into a relationship with Jesus means adoption into the family of God, a new beginning and a future inheritance full of promise and hope. You are a child of God and an heiress to His Kingdom!

Read 1 Peter 1:3-5 MSG:

“What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead we've been given a brand new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you'll have it all—life healed and whole.”

- **Who is keeping careful watch over you?**
- **How does that truth speak into your life and circumstances today?**

A Wise & Kind Note: God knows everyone needs a great dad, but not everyone has one. Our relationships with fathers, father figures and the men in our lives can be complex. As you have a REAL conversation, be mindful of each woman's unique experience. Remember, this is an opportunity to reflect on the love of our Heavenly Father, not a time to tear down men. Let's choose kind.

#1: Define what “father” means to you?

#2: How has your experience with your father or father-figure contributed to your view of God as Father?

#3: Based on that experience, share what it means for you to be called a child of God. Does it feel safe and secure or do you struggle to claim that identity? Why?

Our Heavenly Father...is good, stable, strong, loving and available. He is trustworthy, safe, honorable and faithful. He NEVER tires of hearing from you and won't EVER stop fighting for you. He wants to know you, save you, forgive you and redeem you. He ALONE is ALL these things ALWAYS.

#4: In which of these ways do you most need your Heavenly Father today?

#5: Do you ever find yourself turning to people to fulfill the character of God?

- **What contributes to that – are people easier, more accessible, safer?**
- **How do you react when people don't meet your “godly” expectations?**
- **How might seeking God first make a difference in your life and relationships?**

#6: Is there a man in your life who you believe needs God as a role model?

- **You are not the rule giver or the rule enforcer—only God is—but what are some [kind, practical] ways you could connect him to God as a Father?**

Jesus said: “Not my will, but Yours.” He did the harder thing—for us—and endured temptation, persecution and suffering unlike anything we will ever face. Our struggles are REAL, but we have a Father who understands and freely offers grace, mercy and love.

#7: Share a time God asked you to choose His way instead of your own.

- **What did that process look and feel like for you?**
- **What has happened since – have you seen God move, are you waiting in faith?**

#8: As you’ve considered “father,” is there a past hurt or a current struggle that you want to exchange for the grace, mercy and love of your Heavenly Father?

Be REAL with self, God and others and you consider this. Are there any unhealthy expectations you’re holding onto? Any hurt, anger, disappointments or dysfunction you’re ready to lay down?

God loves you AND He loves all His children. Are you holding a grudge, but expecting grace? Are you bearing resentment while praising His reckless love? What do you need to let go of?

Cultivate Prayer: Move into a time of prayer asking God to redeem, restore or heal. Ask Him to help you forgive, provide strength and give you courage. Tell Him what you most need and thank Him for being a good Father - faithful, safe and stable.

Note to Leaders: Is there anyone in your group who has not professed Jesus as Savior, recognizing that He is the only way to the Father? Give them the opportunity to pray and accept Him or offer to talk more after group.

Need Help? If someone in your group is struggling with past hurts or present trials, we’re here to help. Encourage them to visit move.sc/help to connect with our Soul Care Team for prayer and support.

Summer Book Club: This summer we’re growing spiritually wise as we read and discuss *Adamant* by Lisa Bevere. Beginning Monday, July 1 you’ll find a bonus section right here, in the Cultivate Discussion Guide, with questions to lead your group in REAL conversation about this incredible book on finding truth in a universe of opinions. Visit cultivate.sc/adamant for full details.