



## Sermon Based Small Group Leader Notes

For the week of September 25, 2011

### Opening Reminders

- The first 3 gatherings of your group are “on ramp” weeks (people should feel free to try different groups until they find the right fit).
- If you have not already done so, share email information this week.
- Have you filled the various roles within the group, e.g., service coordinator, prayer coordinator, fellowship coordinator, snack organizer?
- Keep your eyes open for the person/people in your group who could lead a group in the future. Leadership and group proliferation are goals of this ministry!

### Goals for this Gathering

1. To create a setting where participants can grow in relationship with others and Christ
2. To discuss this week’s study
3. To share praises and prayer requests, followed by time spent in group prayer

### Prayer

- Take prayer requests and praises
- Pray for all Small Groups meeting at Northwest and in homes
- Pray for the spiritual growth of your group
- Pray for relational growth between members of the group and the congregation

### Reminder to Leader

Encourage participants to take a few minutes each week to read the participant guide, jotting down a few responses to the questions.

### Group Leader Personal Connection

Prepare to consider this question by reading and meditating on all the verses found in the Lesson. Consider areas of your life where you personally experienced a humbling. Can you plan to share one story during this lesson?

### Getting Started

- *Questions 1-3* are designed to help people recall elements of the current sermon series and in particular meditate on humility, what it means and what it looks like.
- *Question 4*: Read the verse 2 Samuel 22:28: “*You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low.*” Discuss what is clearly God’s view of the humble vs. the haughty.
- *Question 5*: Asks people to share any struggles they find with humility.

## Into the Bible

**You Say:** *In today's Sermon Text: Philippians 2:3-11 – Pastor explored how when we are “lowered” or “humbled” – God is able to do much more through us – than when we remain “self-sufficient” and “honored.” This is a huge piece of what is GREAT about the Gospel; when we try with “all OUR might” to do great things we accomplish “a little” for God’s kingdom. However, when we humble ourselves and let “all GOD’s might” work through us – He accomplishes more than our wildest imaginations.*

*Let’s explore other texts that support the revelation that when we are “lowered,” God is able to do more through us than when we are “honored.”*

### **Ask someone to read aloud the account of Moses/summary of Exodus 1-4 in the participant guide**

**Answers to Question 6 may include:** He thought he was doing the right thing, he thought the Jewish people would love him for “saving” them from the mean Egyptian, thought he would spark a rebellion, his motivation was to do the right thing or try to help his people but he committed murder to achieve it.

**You Say:** *THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN MOSES’S LIFE. He decides to “do all he can” and use “his princely status” to help God’s people (and by extension to help God). It seems like he’s trying to do the right thing... but how far does it get him? Is this the start of a revolution, where he inspires the Israelites to rise up against their oppressors? Is this the first step in a great moment of liberation?*

*Mmmmmm not so much. Instead of being an encouragement to the Israelites, they scorn him as a hypocrite and he is forced to run and hide in the wilderness to escape punishment for murder.*

### **Discuss answers to Question 7**

**After discussion of Question 7 winds down, transition back to Moses:** *We catch up with Moses many years later. No longer a prince; but rather a simple shepherd; spending his days taking care of sheep. He is herding his flock one day when he sees a bush alive with flame – but not being consumed – and . . . **ASK SOMEONE TO READ FROM THE PARTICIPANT GUIDE***

**Answers to Question 8** should fall along the line of ... we might have expected him to respond with something like: “You bet, God; I’m your man; there probably aren’t too many other folks who could handle a job like this. Good thing I’m available; just leave it to me.” A confident and self-assured Moses ready to lead.

**To lead back into the guide say:** *Let’s see how “Moses the shepherd” responds to God’s calling.*

**Answers to Question 9 should be along the lines of:** God chooses Moses because He knows Moses is no longer looking to his own strength (which basically allowed him to accomplish nothing); instead, he is going to rely completely on God’s strength.

### **After discussing Question 9, transition back to the guide with the following:**

*Moses is just about to get a firsthand taste of what’s so great about the Gospel. You probably know the rest of this account. Through Moses, God brings ten incredible plagues on the people of Egypt to secure the Israelites’ release, and the Bible says that Moses led 600,000 of his fellow Israelite men (Exodus 12:37), which means – when you include women and children – that he led at least 2,000,000 Jews out of Egypt. Even when Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his army after them God used Moses to part the waters and then simply swallowed up Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea. **THAT’S** the kind of liberation that the princely Moses could never have imagined, yet God is able to do, when we lower ourselves and allow his power to work through us.*

**Move back to the Participant guide for Question 10**– these are personal responses

**Ask someone to read Romans 12:2-3 from the participant guide**

**Discussion on Question 11 – answers could be around:**

In this week's sermon we learned about all of the "honors" Paul could have chosen to use – including his Roman citizenship (Acts 16:37) – but, instead, he allowed God to transform his mind, and he chose to stand only upon the faith that God gave him.

This was not a one-time decision for Paul. He faced many different crossroads, and every time he had a choice: "trust in my strength and all that I am;" or, "trust in God's strength and all that God is."

If we look back prior to Paul's conversion we see how as "Saul" he used his honors and power to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1-31) but after he was humbled God used him to convert thousands.

**If appropriate after hearing responses on Question 12 you might say:**

*Many times as Christians, we find ourselves fighting this same battle of Tug-of-War. On the side of the rope, our reason, our emotions, and the world exhort the benefits of "self-reliance", "self-confidence", "self-sufficiency" as the keys to quick and efficient results. "Git-er-done" is our motto even when serving the "church."*

*But on the other end of the rope our faith tells us that "trusting in God's strength alone" – even when it seems to take longer and we cannot always see "from the beginning" how God's plan may unfold – will yield vastly more productive results, especially when we're doing God's will.*

**After discussion of questions is complete, close in prayer**