

## Message Discussion Guide OUR GOD-CENTERED GOD

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

September 12, 2010

Ezekiel

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

### **Connect . . .**

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

#### **Option 1**

Encourage students to answer the following questions:

- What makes some people difficult to love?
- Why do we love them?

Explain that today we will discuss why God loves His people?

#### **Option 2**

Invite any willing learners to share briefly about a time when God used a difficult time in their lives to reveal Himself to others.

Explain that today we will discuss that God works all circumstances for His glory.

### **Review the Message . . .**

#### **The Reality of Ezekiel..**

God \_\_\_\_\_ saves \_\_\_\_\_ His people because God \_\_\_\_\_ loves \_\_\_\_\_ His glory.

- The glory of God \_\_\_\_\_ revealed \_\_\_\_\_...
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ omnipresent \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ omnipotent \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ omniscient \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ faithful \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ merciful \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He is \_\_\_\_\_ personal \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Discussion**

- Explain to learners that the Babylonians began to attack Judah and Jerusalem and in 597 BC took some captives to Babylon, of which Ezekiel was a part. From captivity, Ezekiel prophesied to Jerusalem for much of the book. Later, Jerusalem falls, and he prophesied to the people of God as most of them were in captivity.
- Enlist one or several learners to read Ezekiel Chapter 1.

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- Looking at verse 1, how is God's mercy evident in the way His glory was revealed to Ezekiel?
- What does God's revelation of Himself in verse 1 and 28 indicate about His pursuit of His people?
- Does Ezekiel describe exactly what he saw in his vision, or is he trying to give a description "like" what he saw? What does this kind of description indicate about God in relation to anything else that we know?
- What does the unlimited ability of the wheels and their all-seeing eyes explain about God's power?

#### Application . . .

- How is God unlike anything or anyone we've ever known?
  - How does His uniqueness make Him worthy of our undivided worship and obedience?
  - Why is He alone worthy to receive glory?
  - God has and does reveal Himself to us. Do we live as if we deserve this truth or as if we are blessed and unworthy to know Him? Why?
  - How does it make us feel to know that God is personal in His relationship with us? How should our lives be changed by the fact that God is not distant but wants us to know Him?
- The glory of God \_\_\_\_\_ removed \_\_\_\_\_...
    - They exchanged the \_\_\_\_\_ splendor \_\_\_\_\_ of the true God for the \_\_\_\_\_ senselessness \_\_\_\_\_ of false gods.
    - They exchanged the \_\_\_\_\_ protecting \_\_\_\_\_ presence of God for the \_\_\_\_\_ punishing \_\_\_\_\_ presence of God.

#### Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read Ezekiel 8:10-12, 16. How had the people of God refused to give God the glory He deserved?
- Read Ezekiel 9:8-10 and 10:18. What was God's ultimate act of judgment on His people?
- What was the relationship between His presence and His wrath?

#### Application . . .

- What are ways that we exchange God's glory for false "gods"?
  - What do we expect to happen when we disobey God? Do we tend to expect mercy without any discipline?
- The glory of God \_\_\_\_\_ restored \_\_\_\_\_...

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- He will anoint a new king.
  - The servant of God.
  - The shepherd of men.
- He will inaugurate a new covenant.
  - The old covenant: perpetual promises.
  - The new covenant: permanent peace.
- He will form a new people.
  - Forgiven of their sin.
  - Filled with His Spirit.
    - He will transform their wants.
    - He will enable their wills.
- He will bring them to a new place.
  - For them...
    - They looked forward to the city of Jerusalem.
    - In that city, they would rebuild the temple.
  - For us...
    - We look backward to the cross of Jesus.
    - In Christ, we have become the temple.

### Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read Ezekiel 34:11-13, 23-25. Describe how God stated that He would restore His people?
- Read Ezekiel 37:24-28. How was God's new covenant different from the one they had been living under?
- Enlist a learner to read Ezekiel 36:24-28.
- How would God deal with their sin?
- How would His people be able to obey Him? Why would they want to?
- Read Ezekiel 36:16-23. Why was God concerned with the restoration of His people? What was His motivation in acting?
- What does this truth indicate about God's love for His people?
- How were God's glory and His actions toward His people related?
- Who were to be the ultimate recipients of God's restoration of Jerusalem?

### Application . . .

- How does our inability to follow God on our own drive us to the new covenant of Christ?
- For the people of the Old Testament, the temple represented God's presence to them. How should we, as temples of the Holy Spirit represent God's presence in the world?
- Why does it make us uncomfortable to think that God is self-serving?
- Why is it so dangerous to place human understanding and qualities upon God (unguided by direct Scriptural connection)?

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- How should our understanding that God is beyond anything or anyone we have ever known influence our comfort level with the mysteries of God?
- How is it humbling to realize that God does not love us because of what we have done but because He chooses to?

### The Reason For Our Lives...

We have been saved ONLY by the sovereign grace of our God,  
and we now live ONLY for the supreme glory of our God.

### Application . . .

- How can this truth be scary for us in our everyday lives?
- What does our reaction to this truth reveal about our trust in God? About our reliance and need for control?
- How can it be fulfilling and purposeful?
- Why can we be confident that God is working for His glory in love for His people?
- How can we best prepare our lives to be joyful recipients of wherever God's sovereignty leads our lives?
- How should the fact that we are saved ONLY by the sovereign grace of God affect how we think about and talk about our conversion experience?
- What is the proper response to God's sovereign grace in our lives?