



**The Good & Beautiful God
Philippians 2:6-11
February 21, 2010**

Week #6: God is Self Sacrificing

CONNECTION.....30 Minutes

1. Take a few minutes and give people a chance to catch up and connect with one another.

2. **Review the Assigned Soul Training Exercises From Last Week:**

Were you able to spend 5 minutes every day or most days in silence?

Were you able to do the lectio divina exercise? If so, describe what you did and how you felt about it.

What do you think about the concept of soaking in God's love?

What, if anything, did you learn about God or yourself through the exercise?

3. Invite the Spirit of God to join and lead your group.

EXPLORATION.....30 Minutes

Read through Philippians 2:6-11 and then practice lectio divina together as a group.

Philippians 2:6-11 (NLT)

⁶ Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Select someone from the group who is familiar with lectio to lead the group in this soul training exercise. The instructions are listed below:

Be Still (1-2 Minutes)

Spend a minute or 2 just relaxing and breathing deeply. After you have done so, invite the Lord to guide the group with a phrase like: "Come Holy Spirit" or "Speak Lord for your servants are listening."

Read the Passage Two Times (2-4 Minutes)

Read the passage aloud, slowly and gently. As you hear the words, pay attention to any particular words or phrases that stand out to you or capture your attention.

Read Again and Reflect (3-5 Minutes)

Read the passage again, but this time once you arrive at the word or phrase that speaks to you stop and repeat it a few times and silently ask God: "What do you want to say to me? What do you want me to know?" Rest here and listen for God's voice.

Respond (2-3 Minutes)

Talk with God about how you are feeling in response to His speaking to you.

Listen and take action

Finally, take some time to sit in silent prayer resting in the presence of God and listening for any further word from Him. Commit to take action on what you were led to.

1. Have the group members share what word or phrase spoke to them personally and what if anything they think this means or how it made them feel?
2. Ask if there is any action they feel led to take as a result of the exercise.

ACTION.....30 Minutes

1. Again, find 5 minutes each day to sit in silence. During this time, your thoughts may run rampant. If so, you can do the following 2 things to help still your mind:

Have a notepad nearby to jot down things that may come to your mind. This will help to quiet your mind. or ease into the time by reading the bible for a minute or two.

2. Take a few hours this week in order to read the entire gospel of John. It is not often that we read an entire book of the Bible at once. Usually we read small portions or a short devotion based on a single verse. However, by reading the whole book we are able to experience the complete story, beginning, middle, and end.

In John's Gospel, he gives us a glimpse into the life of Jesus with a series of unique stories, but most importantly, he is able to clearly depict the relationship Jesus has with His heavenly Father.

Perhaps, you can break up the Gospel into four sections, reading 5-7 chapters in a single sitting. If you have pressing questions that arise during your reading, you may want to write them down and search for answers at another time. But for this exercise, simply read the Gospel as if you were reading a story with a beginning, middle, and end. This will be a challenging exercise, but very rewarding if you are able to complete it.

3. Share any items of Community News

*The content of this Study Guide is taken from **The Good & Beautiful God** – James Bryan Smith