

*Thank you for taking your Journey Group through **The Story**. These Journey Group Study Guides will provide you with three basic tools to use every week with your group to enhance your connection with the Bible and with each other.*

## TIMELESS TRUTH

This section captures the essence of the chapter in a few powerful words. This is a great phrase to actually have your group learn and repeat out loud to cement the big idea in their minds.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Chapter Summary is intended to be read out loud to your group. Select a good reader or two from your group to start off your meeting by reading the summary. Because this is a long passage that provides key teaching, you may wish to send the summary to the reader ahead of time so he or she can run through it beforehand.

## DISCUSSION STARTER & GROUP QUESTIONS

After the Chapter Summary is read, transition to the discussion time by asking the Discussion Starter Question. This is a good way to break the ice and get your group engaged. Lead right into the discussion questions provided (8-10 each week), which is really more than can be used in one study session, so select the ones that best meet the needs of your group. Here are a few guidelines for facilitating a meaningful small group discussion:

1. It's the inside that counts. Sincerity, honesty and authenticity are key qualities for any group leader. Your openness will set the tone and direction. Remember, trust is the foundation for building significant relationships in your group.
2. Ask good questions. The key to leading a good discussion is asking good questions. A key step in asking a good question is to patiently wait for someone to answer. Good questions produce an interchange of ideas and insights so we can learn from each other and deepen relationships. Be sure to focus on the questions that encourage personal reflection and application to daily life.
3. Learn to listen. Nothing says "I care" like taking the time to really listen. Listen with your heart, your eyes, and your ears. Good listeners draw information from the group by:
  - Rephrasing what's said to make sure you heard correctly
  - Asking them to expand on their comments to clarify what was said
  - Understanding what people are feeling as well as what they are saying

4. Transformation not just information. The goal of a small group is not just to learn the facts and details about the stories in the Bible but to be transformed by them. Share with your group how The Story is reshaping your own life.
5. Make prayer a priority. Praying for your group members and your study time is the best way to prepare. Make prayer a part of your study time. Also, be careful about asking others to pray before they are ready for such a step.

***Additional group discussion questions for all chapters can be found starting on page 473 of The Story. Refer to these questions if you need other ideas for your particular group.***

## PERSONAL DEVOTION QUESTIONS

This section is actually a handout that you can copy and distribute to your group to use during their personal devotions in the coming week as they read the next chapter in ***The Story***. The last activity of every group meeting should be, “In the time remaining, ask your group members to share any of their personal reflection insights from their journal entries.” This is a reference to their answers to these Personal Devotion Questions. These question sheets will be posted seperately. Encourage group members to read Chapter 1 before your first meeting and to record their answers to these questions in a journal; they will be given an opportunity to share their insights at the close of the group discussion.