

10/15/17: David Curry from Open Doors -- Group Discussion Questions

Remember!! These are suggestions! Tailor this to the needs and personality of your Group...

Welcome & Intro: After welcoming, snacks, etc, choose one of these (great place for Apprenticing Leader!):

- High/Low: Have everyone share a high and a low from their week.
- Icebreaker: What is the most unusual place you have ever travelled -- and what made it so different??

Announcements / Transition: Have someone (preferably not the Leader!) share announcements.

- Discuss opportunities for serving together and playing together this quarter. Especially Harvest Fest and Giadrone Trunk or Treat (*see Group Leader Email dated 10/13!*)
- If your Group went to the All In Seminar and has not met since, share together about what stood out to you from that time. Would anyone be willing to share the Next Steps they identified?

Remind your Group that we had a Guest Teacher on Sunday, David Curry the President of Open Doors USA. Discovery has partnered with Open Doors in some significant ways in the last couple of years - and will continue to - as they serve our brothers and sisters around the world living under persecution. *Leaders: if you were not present Sunday, you will want to be sure to download the audio teaching at www.discochurch.com.*

Discussion (choose those questions MOST applicable to your Group. Do NOT try to do all of them!)

- What stood out to you from David's teaching? Or from anything else in the service?
- David spoke from **Philippians 2:25-29**. Read this passage. Do you see these verses in any fresh way after David's teaching?
- Some teachers claim that if we are following God, we will receive material blessings, health & safety. What does the suffering of Epaphroditus and persecuted believers today say about that claim?
- God is moving! Even while many of the nations with the worst persecution are Muslim nations, more Muslims have come to faith in Jesus in the last ten years than in all of history COMBINED! And China, where the church has experienced many decades of harsh persecution, has so many people coming to Christ EACH DAY that, by secular estimates, it is on track to be the largest Christian nation in the world by 2030. What can we learn about God from these facts? About following Jesus? About suffering?
- Read Matthew 5:43-48. What should be our response toward those who cause our suffering?
- How do these truths cause you to view your own barriers to fully following Jesus?
- What truth or action step is God emphasizing to you right now?
- Invite your Group to consider one of the following **Application Steps**:
 - The one thing persecuted Christians ask for above all is our prayers. Check out Open Doors' World Watch List at <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/world-watch-list/> -- Choose a country to pray for as a Group, clicking on the name of that country to see specific prayer points. Consider praying for this country each week when you meet -- or for a different country each week. Encourage your Group Members to pray daily.
 - If you want to learn more about Christians living in persecution, consider inviting Discovery's Yuri Kuriatnyk & Jane Narr to come speak to your Group about North Korea -- or Fred & Jeni Gregory to come share about Iraq, Syria & Turkey.
 - Plan to come as a Group to Discovery's International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church Luncheon on November 12 from 12:45-2:15 in the Library! Register on the church website.
 - Consider carving some time as a Group to write letters to persecuted Christians! In fact, your Group could do this regularly as your Mission Focus. For more information, see <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/take-action/advocacy/letter-writing/>

Prayer (Break early enough from the discussion -- and break into smaller groups if appropriate)

- Share personal prayer requests -- and encourage them to pray for believers living under persecution.