

## LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Sermon Title:** The Bible is a Tough Read

**Sermon Recap:** The Bible, inspired as God's Word, is a trustworthy guide that shapes our worldview and reveals Jesus, equipping us to live out His love despite apparent contradictions or doubts. By embracing its authority, we find a lens to navigate life's challenges with faith and humility.

**Key Verse:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

### Discussion Guide:

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. How does believing the Bible is "inspired/God-breathed" change the way you read or apply it in daily life?

Facilitator Tip: Walk your group through the following positions on what it means that the Bible is God breathed. Which position do they find the most plausible? How does this inform how they read or apply the Bible?

The term "God-breathed" (theopneustos) in 2 Timothy 3:16 ("All Scripture is God-breathed...") is interpreted in diverse ways within Christianity, reflecting a range of theological perspectives on how God inspired Scripture. It can mean divine authorship, where God ensured every word's truth (Evangelical view, Chicago Statement, 1978); Holy Spirit guidance, shaping authors' thoughts while preserving their style (Reformed, 2 Pet 1:21); dynamic inspiration, focusing on God-inspired ideas, not verbatim words (Mainline Protestant); narrative authority, carrying God's story toward Jesus without requiring inerrancy (Tim Mackie, The Bible Project); or functional inspiration, emphasizing Scripture's purpose for faith and practice, not science or history (Catholic, Dei Verbum). These varied interpretations highlight the richness of understanding what it means that God breathed and animates Scripture.

*Sources: Geisler & Nix, A General Introduction to the Bible (1986); The Bible Project, "What Is the Bible?" (thebibleproject.com)*

2. What does it mean for you to treat the Bible as authoritative in a world with competing voices (e.g., media, culture, other religions)?

Facilitator Tip: Ask your group members to think about 3 or 4 areas where we would look for authoritative guidance from the Bible. For example – stewardship of my finances and time, marriage, work, family. In these specific areas, what does it mean for us to follow God's Word over or instead of competing voices? All of us have wrestled with how to apply God's authority to a specific life issue. Ask one or two group members to share an example from their life.

3. A worldview is the set of beliefs, values, and assumptions through which a person interprets reality, answering fundamental questions about God, humanity, purpose, and morality. How has the Bible shaped your worldview?

Facilitator Tip: Ask your group members to think about ways their worldview has been changed by Scripture. For example – Submitting to the Lordship of Christ. How has that journey happened in your life? When did you come to the point of realizing the purpose of your life is to live for God's glory? Example 2 - in the area of stewardship of finances, how has God shaped your worldview about money and the how to glorify God in your finances?

4. What is one area (e.g., relationships, work, sex) where you struggle to follow the teachings and worldview of the Bible over other influences?

Facilitator Tip: Remind your group members that although all of us struggle to follow Jesus as we should (see 1 John 1:8-9) Jesus is at work in His followers, helping us to gain victory as we look to Him. (Philippians 1:6). LifeGroup is a key place where we can confess our shortcomings to one another and pray for and encourage each other in the race (James 5:16, Philippians 3:12-14).

5. The Bible teaches that humans are created in God's image (*imago Dei*), designed for relationship with Him, others, and creation (Gen 1:26-27), yet fallen due to sin, resulting in a broken, rebellious nature (Rom 3:23). Do you struggle to embrace this view of what it means to be human?

Facilitator Tip: In our culture of expressive individualism, we struggle with the idea that any authority outside of ourselves can tell us who we are. Here's an article that outlines what expressive individualism is and how this culture message opposes a biblical understanding of our identity - <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/expressive-individualism-what-is-it/> Ask your group members to share how embracing the Bible's definition of who they are has helped them live out their identity in Christ.

6. Share a time when a Bible verse guided a decision or action (e.g., forgiving someone, making a tough choice).

Facilitator Tip: The “one another” passages in the Bible are examples of Bible verses that can guide us relationally. Here’s a list of them <https://overviewbible.com/one-another-infographic/> You may want to reference a few examples of these verses or others from the Bible to spur conversation about how your group members have been guided by that verse or precept.

7. What happens to you when you make reading the Bible a daily practice? (Read Romans 12:2 for one idea)

Facilitator Tip: Ask your group members to share how God has used their reading of the Bible to renew their mind. It may be helpful to read Psalm 19:7-9 and Joshua 1:8. Here are 10 reasons to read the Bible every day <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/ten-reasons-to-read-the-bible-every-day>

8. Read Matthew 4:4. How can you make reading the Bible a daily habit?

Facilitator Tip: A great resource to make Bible reading a daily habit is YouVersion. <https://www.youversion.com/the-bible-app/> Ask your group members to share what tools or resources have helped them in their habit of reading the Bible.

**Prayer Exercise:**

Have each group member choose a favorite verse or one from the discussion. Go around the circle, with each person praying a one-sentence prayer of gratitude, e.g., “God, thank You for inspiring Psalm 23 to comfort me in tough times.”  
Close with a leader praying for ongoing engagement with Scripture.