

LifeGroup Leader Discussion Guide

The Life You Were Made For

Week 3: The Voice in Your Head

Key Verse: Romans 8:1

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Big Idea

You can't build a life if you're destroying the builder.

The gospel reminds us that although we are flawed, we are deeply valuable—we are God's workmanship. Jesus doesn't meet our failures with condemnation, but with grace, restoration, and an invitation to keep following Him.

Opening Prayer

Leader:

“God, thank You that You know us completely and yet You love us completely. Thank You that when we fail, You don't turn away from us. You meet us with grace.

Tonight, help us become honest about the voices we listen to—the voices of shame, failure, comparison, and condemnation, but also the voice of your Spirit reminding us that we are loved, forgiven, and your workmanship.

Give us courage to be vulnerable with one another and wisdom to listen well. Help us speak words of grace to ourselves and to each other. And as we talk tonight, remind us that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.”

Discussion Questions & Leader Insights

1. What idea from this week's sermon caught your attention?

Leader Insight:

This is an intentionally broad opening question. Give people space to identify what connected with them rather than immediately steering the conversation toward the “right” answer.

Listen for:

- Something that challenged them
- A story or Scripture that stood out
- A realization about their inner dialogue
- Something they found encouraging
- Something they disagreed with or are still wrestling with

Leader Tip:

You don't need to comment on every response. Sometimes simply saying, *“Tell me more about that,”* creates the best conversation.

2. Read 1 Kings 19:3-4. Elijah had just won one of the biggest spiritual victories in the Bible—then sat under a broom tree and prayed to die. Why do you think exhaustion and despair so often hit right after our biggest efforts? Have you ever had a “broom tree” moment?

Leader Insight:

Elijah's experience reminds us that spiritual faithfulness doesn't make us immune to exhaustion. Sometimes the greatest emotional crash comes after an intense season of giving, serving, leading, parenting, working, or fighting through something difficult.

A “broom tree moment” doesn't necessarily mean someone has lost their faith. It may simply mean they've reached the limits of their emotional, physical, or spiritual resources.

Follow-up:

“What made that season particularly exhausting?”

Leader Tip:

Because this question can touch on deep emotional struggles, don't pressure anyone to share more than they want. If someone shares something very personal, thank them for trusting the group rather than immediately trying to fix it.

3. Read 1 Kings 19:5-8. God's first response to Elijah's despair wasn't a lecture or a correction—it was sleep and a hot meal. What does that tell us about how God views our physical needs? What's one basic need—sleep, food, rest, movement—you've been treating as optional?

Leader Insight:

God's care for Elijah was remarkably practical. Before giving Elijah new instructions, God gave him rest and nourishment.

Sometimes we spiritualize problems that also have a physical dimension. We may think we need a deeper Bible study when what we desperately need is sleep. We may interpret exhaustion as spiritual failure when our bodies are simply telling us we need care.

Key principle:

Physical restoration (sleep, food, rest, movement) isn't an interruption to following Jesus. Sometimes it is a key part of following Jesus.

Follow-up:

“What makes it difficult for you to give yourself permission to restore physically?”

4. Read 1 Kings 19:9-13. Elijah expected God in the wind, earthquake, and fire—but God came in a gentle whisper. As someone learning to follow Jesus, what does this teach you about how He tends to meet you in your lowest moments?

Leader Insight:

God doesn't always meet us through dramatic experiences. Sometimes His presence comes quietly—a Scripture that speaks to us, a conversation with a friend, a moment of peace, a gentle conviction, or simply the awareness that we're not alone.

The gentle whisper is especially significant because Elijah was in a place of fear and discouragement. God didn't overwhelm him. He drew near.

Follow-up:

“What helps you become quiet enough to notice God's voice?”

Leader Tip:

Avoid implying that every difficult experience contains a hidden message from God. The point isn't to decode every circumstance but to cultivate attentiveness to God's presence and truth.

5. Read Psalm 139:13-14. David writes, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” When you hear that said about you personally, do you agree or argue? Where did you learn to talk to yourself the way you do? Does your inner voice tend to be gentle or harsh?

Leader Insight:

This question gets to the heart of the sermon. Many people would never speak to another person the way they speak to themselves.

Our inner voice is often shaped by experiences—family expectations, criticism, failure, comparison, bullying, culture, relationships, or our own perfectionism.

The goal isn't to develop an inflated view of ourselves. Biblical humility doesn't mean believing we're worthless. It means seeing ourselves truthfully: **created by God, deeply loved, flawed, dependent on grace, and still valuable.**

Follow-up:

“If your closest friend talked about themselves the way you sometimes talk about yourself, what would you say to them?”

6. In John 21 Jesus restores Peter with breakfast, not a lecture. He simply says, “Feed my sheep.” What does Jesus’ gentleness toward a failed disciple teach you about how He is discipling you through your own failures?

Leader Insight:

Peter had denied Jesus three times. Yet when Jesus met him on the beach, He didn't humiliate him or continually remind him of his failure.

Jesus restored Peter and gave him meaningful responsibility again.

This doesn't mean Jesus ignores sin. Rather, **Jesus' goal in confronting our failures is restoration, not destruction.**

Key thought:

Failure may be part of your story, but it doesn't have to become your identity.

Follow-up:

“What is the difference between conviction and condemnation?”

Leader Insight for the leader:

Conviction draws us toward God and repentance. Condemnation tells us we're hopeless and should hide from God. Romans 8:1 speaks directly into that distinction.

7. Read Luke 15:11-24. The prodigal son rehearsed his speech—"I am no longer worthy to be called your son"—but his father ran to him before he could finish. What "I'm no longer worthy" script have you been rehearsing? How does the Father's response rewrite it?

Leader Insight:

The son's internal script was about worthiness: *I've failed, therefore I've lost my place.*

The Father's response was fundamentally different. He moved toward his son.

This doesn't erase the son's choices or consequences. But the Father's love isn't withdrawn because the son failed.

Possible "scripts" people may carry:

- "I'm a failure."
- "I've blown it too many times."
- "God couldn't really use someone like me."
- "I'm not a good enough parent."
- "I'll never change."
- "I don't deserve to be loved."
- "Everyone else has it together except me."

Follow-up:

"What does the Father's response say that the voice of shame doesn't?"

Leader Tip:

This can become a powerful moment of gospel application. Keep bringing the group back to what **God says**, rather than simply encouraging positive self-talk.

8. You'd probably care for a struggling friend far better than you care for yourself. Where's the biggest gap between how you treat others and how you treat you, and what's one step to close it?

Leader Insight:

This question moves the conversation from awareness to action.

We aren't being invited to become self-absorbed. We're learning to extend to ourselves some of the same grace, patience, and compassion that we readily extend to others.

Possible next steps:

- Stop using insulting language toward yourself.
- Take one genuine day of rest.
- Ask for help instead of pretending you're fine.
- Replace one recurring lie with a biblical truth.
- Confess a failure without turning it into an identity statement.
- Receive forgiveness instead of continually punishing yourself.
- Talk with someone you trust about a struggle.

Leader Tip:

Ask each person to identify **one small step**, not ten. Transformation often begins with something simple and specific.

9. Read Psalm 42:5. This psalm shows David preaching to his own soul: "Why, my soul, are you downcast?" What would it look like for you to speak truth to your soul this week instead of just listening to negative thoughts?

Leader Insight:

David doesn't pretend everything is fine. He acknowledges his discouragement and then speaks truth into it.

That's an important distinction. Biblical hope isn't denial.

The practice is:

Notice the voice → Name the lie → Speak God's truth → Take the next faithful step.

For example:

“I'm a failure”

becomes

“I made a mistake, but my mistake isn't my identity. I am still loved by God.”

Or:

“God must be disappointed in me.”

becomes

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Challenge for the week:

Invite everyone to identify **one negative statement they frequently tell themselves** and write beside it a biblical truth they can intentionally speak when that thought returns.

Closing Reflection

Invite everyone to sit quietly for 30–60 seconds.

Then ask:

“If God could speak one sentence of grace directly into the voice in your head tonight, what do you think He would want you to hear?”

Give people the option to share—or simply keep it between themselves and God.

Closing Scripture

Romans 8:1

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”