

4 WEEKS

The Story I'll Tell.





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Memory Verse for the Series:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:1-2

# The Story I'll Tell

I Decided To Start

Week 1



## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### **Kicking it off:**

Discuss how you think we each can live a story worth telling.

### **Big Idea:**

Decide today the story you want to tell tomorrow, by starting the small disciplines that will help craft your story.

### **Key Scriptures:**

#### **Hebrews 12:2**

*"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

#### **Daniel 6:1-5**

*"It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds*

for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

### 1 Kings 20:13-14

"Meanwhile a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and announced, "This is what the Lord says: 'Do you see this vast army? I will give it into your hand today, and then you will know that I am the Lord.'" "But who will do this?" asked Ahab. The prophet replied, "This is what the Lord says: 'The junior officers under the provincial commanders will do it.'" "And who will start the battle?" he asked. The prophet answered, 'You will.'"

### Discussion:

Read the three passages above and answer the following:

1. In each of the passages above, the focal person in the passage did something that characterized their story going forward. Discuss

what each did, and how that impacted their life, and the lives of others.

2. Do you feel you're living a story worth telling? Why or why not?
3. Describe a seemingly small and insignificant decision you've made in the past that altered your life's direction. How was your life altered by your decision?
4. Small disciplines lead to big life changes. What are some of the small disciplines you maintain in your life that have the most impact in shaping you?
5. What disciplines might God be leading you to start? In other words, what do you feel God wants you to want? What's your next step?
6. How well do you finish the things you start?
7. If you struggle finishing what you start, what most often causes you not to finish? How might your small group help hold you accountable to finishing?
8. Ultimately practicing Hebrews 12:2 can be the most helpful in spurring you on to finish what you start, by following the example of Jesus. How might you keep your focus on Him?



### **Wrapping It Up:**

Identify one thing that you believe God might have you start in this new year that very well may change the trajectory of your life. Each of you share with your group and pray for one another to follow through.

### **Memory Verse:**

See Pg. 3

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for the grand opening of the Hope Center on January 7. Pray that all who come will experience the love and grace of Jesus through our ambassadors of hope.

Therefore, since  
we are surrounded  
by such a great  
cloud of witnesses  
let us throw off  
everything that  
hinders and the  
sin that so easily

# The Story I'll Tell

I Decided To Stop

Week 2

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

#### **Kicking it off:**

What's the most difficult habit you've ever tried to quit?

#### **Big Idea:**

Decide today the story you want to tell tomorrow by stopping the things that are getting in the way of what God wants you to want.

#### **Key Scriptures:**

#### **Exodus 18:17-24**

*"Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot*

*handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with*

you. *If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said."*

## Hebrews 12:1-2

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

### Discussion:

1. Read Exodus 18: 17-24.  
What did Moses need to stop in order to move forward with what God had called him to do?
2. What might have been the result of him stopping those things?
3. What are things that may be getting in the way of what God wants you to do, or what He wants you to want (as discussed last week)?
4. What's one thing you need

to stop doing today? What's your next step?

5. What do you think will be the hardest part of stopping the one thing you identified earlier?
6. What impact do you think stopping your one thing will make on your life? On the lives of others?
7. When you want to give up on stopping your "one thing", how might Hebrews 12:1-2 encourage you?

### Wrapping It Up:

Commit to hold one another accountable for the thing you are both starting and stopping. Do a weekly check in on this in the coming weeks.

### Memory Verse:

See Pg. 3

### Prayer Focus:

Pray for our Street Medicine ministry as they serve the homeless in our community in these cold winter months.



# The Story I'll Tell

I Decided To Stay

Week 3

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### **Kicking it off:**

What's your favorite movie that ends with someone staying when they could have gone?

### **Big Idea:**

Sometimes the best decision to make is to stay when it would be easier to go.

### **Key Scriptures:**

#### **Ruth 1:15-16**

*"Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."*

#### **Ruth 2:11-12**

*"Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."*

#### **Galatians 6:9**

*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."*

## Hebrews 12:1-2

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

### Discussion:

1. Read the Ruth story in Ruth 1 and 2 above. What do you think gave Ruth the courage to stay with her mother in law? What benefit happened as a result?
2. Describe a time when you decided to stay when it would have been easier to go. What did you learn from your experience?
3. Based upon your experiences, how do you typically decide when to stay and when to go?
4. Where in life might God be calling you to stay? What's your next step? And how might Galatians 6:9 encourage you in your staying?

5. How might Hebrews 12:1-2 encourage you to stay?
6. When you think about what story do you want to ultimately tell with your life, how does that determine whether you will stay or go?
7. In what season of life would you describe yourself as being? How do you think this season fits into your story?

### Wrapping It Up:

If you are sensing a specific area in which God is calling you to stay, have your group pray over you, for your endurance and perseverance to do so.

### Memory Verse:

See Pg. 3

### Prayer Focus:

Pray for all our ministry leaders at Sunnybrook, that they would not grow weary of doing good and continue fixing their eyes on Jesus.



# The Story I'll Tell

I Decided To Go

Week 4

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### **Kicking it off:**

Share a time when you felt called to go. What happened in that situation and how was your life changed?

### **Big Idea:**

Sometimes the best decision you can make is to go when it would be easier to stay.

### **Key Scriptures:**

#### **Genesis 12:1-4**

*"The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who*

*bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran."*

#### **Hebrews 11:8**

*"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going."*

#### **Exodus 3:10-11**

*"So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."1 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh*

and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

## **Exodus 4:1-12**

“Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you’?” Then the Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?” “A staff,” he replied. The Lord said, “Throw it on the ground.” Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then the Lord said to him, “Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.” So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. “This,” said the Lord, “is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you.” Then the Lord said, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow. “Now put it back into your cloak,” he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. Then the Lord said, “If they do not believe you or pay attention to

the first sign, they may believe the second. 9 But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.” Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

## **Hebrews 12:1-2**

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”



## **Discussion:**

Read the stories of Abraham and Moses in the above Scriptures, then discuss the following:

1. What things was God asking Abram to leave behind in order to go?
2. What challenges to you think he faced with being obedient to go?
3. What did God promise would happen if Abraham went?
4. What challenges did Moses face in going where God was asking him to go?
5. How did God reassure Moses in his doubts and fear?
6. What happened in Moses' situation as a result of his going?
7. Do you tend to most often act out of fear or on faith? Explain.
8. Is there any sense that you have in your life currently where God is telling you to go?
9. What faith-step do you need to take? What will be your first step?
10. Is there anything that might be keeping you from taking your step of faith? If so, what is it and what will you do to overcome it?

11. "Making promises to God does not change us, but we are changed by believing God's promises to us." How have you experienced the truth of this statement in your life? How can you lean into this statement?

## **Wrapping It Up:**

How might Hebrews 12:1-2 encourage you in your going?

## **Memory Verse:**

See Pg. 3

## **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our missional partners who have answered the call to go: Aaron and Lori Luse family (Papua New Guinea), Adam and Alicia Penning family (New York City Cru), Grooters and Raymond family (Haiti), Meyer family with STEMM (Tanzania), Abbie Edgar (Germany).

# Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
  - Take time to prepare.
  - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
  - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
  - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
  - What is the purpose of our group?
  - What is the vision for our group?
  - What are your expectations?
  - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
  - What are some things we value as a group?
  - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
  - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
  - Encouraging and challenging one another
  - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?



# Group Agreement

## OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: \_\_\_\_\_

## OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

## OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes \_\_\_\_\_
- Childcare \_\_\_\_\_
- When we will meet (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_
- Where we will meet (place) \_\_\_\_\_
- We will begin at (time) \_\_\_\_\_ and end at \_\_\_\_\_
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of this agreement \_\_\_\_\_
- Date we will review this agreement again \_\_\_\_\_
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study \_\_\_\_\_



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