Group Meeting

Welcome!

Welcome to Session 8 of *Believe*. If there are any new members in your group, take a moment to introduce yourselves to each other. Then spend a couple of minutes sharing insights or questions about this session's personal study. Now start the video!

-VIDEO TEACHING NOTES----

As you watch the video segment for Session 8, use the following outline to record some of the main points. (The answer key is found at the end of the session.)

Key Question: What about the poor and _ Key Idea: I believe God calls all Christians to show to people in need. • Key Verse: "_____ the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. ______ the weak and the needy; them from the hand of the wicked." (Psalm 82:3-4) "Religion that God our Father _____ as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress." (James 1:27) The right question is not "Who is my neighbor?" but "Who _____to be a neighbor?" As a Christian, the plight of the poor, oppressed, abandoned and needy is ____ problem. (Key Application) I will do unto others, as I would have me. (Key Application) People do not _____ how much I know, until they know how much I care. When people cry out, "Where is God when it comes to the poor and injustice on the earth?" the answer should be, "Look at God's people.

They are right in the

-GETTING STARTED-

Begin your discussion by reciting the Key Verse and Key Idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE: "Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." (Psalm 82:3-4)



KEY IDEA: I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to people in need.

-GROUP DISCUSSION—

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging, and why?

- I believe that God calls me to be involved in the lives of the poor and suffering.
- I believe I am responsible before God to show compassion to the sick and imprisoned.
- I believe that I should stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.
- I believe that Christians should not purchase everything they can afford, so that their discretionary money might be available to help those in need.

Based on your group's dynamics and spiritual maturity, choose the 2-3 questions that will lead to the best discussion of this week's Key Idea.

- 1. In what ways have you experienced compassion from a family member, friend, or stranger?
- 2. What is the difference between trying to "fix" poverty and injustice and "suffering with" someone who is experiencing it?

- 3. In addition to a financial gesture, what other compassionate ways are there to comfort someone in need?
- 4. In what ways can debt and financial stress hinder compassionate generosity? What would it look like to strategically budget, so that an individual is equipped to act generously in times of need and injustice?

Read Deuteronomy 24:10-15, 17-22 (see the section "Israel: Called to Compassion" in Believe) and choose 1-2 questions that will lead to the greatest discussion in your group.

- 1. Are you aware of any weak, needy, oppressed, or fatherless people in your community? If not, what steps can you take to raise your awareness? If so, discuss what can be done to "defend" and support them.
- 2. Pick a specific situation (i.e., widow, orphan, refugee, homeless person, addict) and discuss what it would look like to "suffer with" the individual in need.
- 3. List some reasons why many people choose to ignore the needy and oppressed. Then discuss what it would take to break free from the status quo and be a defender of the weak and oppressed.

CASE STUDY

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's Key Idea into practice.

Cassandra has worked hard to get where she is in life. She grew up in a big family with a meager income but has found a way to be successful despite her modest beginnings. You have been working out together for two years. Before you leave the gym, you always end your time in prayer together. A few days ago, she told you about her brother who has fallen on hard times. She has been avoiding his calls because she doesn't know what to say or how to "fix" his financial problems.

Using the Key Applications from this session, what practical advice would you give Cassandra? (If needed, refer to your video notes for a reminder of this session's Key Applications.)

-CLOSING PRAYER-

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's Key Idea into practice.

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