



DISOBEDIENT

G O O D

HOW  
TO  
TRUST  
A GOD  
THAT  
GOES  
OFF  
SCRIPT

A L B E R T T A T E

# 1


## WHAT ARE YOU REACHING FOR?

You've gotta love a good Christian cliché. So often when people are dealing with hard things, well-meaning believers will say, "You can either let this make you bitter or make you better." Like all clichés, this one is rooted in a truth—we can allow difficulties to poison our hearts and our approach to life, or we can choose to grow and learn from our hardships.

However, these churchy sayings also make things seem really easy, and if it's difficult to overcome bitterness when the people in our lives disappoint us, it's even harder when we think God has let us down. In this study, we're going to be looking at why God so often goes "off-script" and behaves differently than we think He should—and how we should respond in relationship with Him.

**LET'S DIVE IN.**



A man in a dark suit and white shirt is singing into a microphone on stage. He has a focused expression and his right hand is raised, pointing towards the audience. In the background, other musicians are visible, including one wearing a hat. The scene is lit with warm stage lights.

The Lord is good to those whose hope is in  
him, to the one who seeks him.

*Lamentations 3:25*

SHARE YOUR STORY



Before you start this first meeting, get contact information for every participant. Take time to pass around a copy of the LifeGroup Roster on page 155, a sheet of paper, or one of you pass your Study Guide, opened to the LifeGroup Roster. Ask someone to make copies or type up a list with everyone's information and email it to the group during the week.

Then open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. Take the opportunity at the end of the group time to take prayer requests and pray more specifically regarding the sharing of the group. As always, stay aware of times when someone may just need to be surrounded by prayer in the moment.

We created a "Question of the Day" similar to our weekend services. Please take a moment to talk with someone you have not connected with yet. Answer the following question. Keep in mind that unlike our weekend we will give you a few more minutes and the question may be a little harder to answer. Here we go...

## THINK ABOUT IT

**What expectations do you have for how God will treat you or what He will do? Where do those expectations come from?**

**Whether your group is new or ongoing, it's always important to reflect on and review your values together. On page 144 is a LifeGroup Agreement with the values we've found most useful in sustaining healthy, balanced groups. We recommend that you choose one or two values—ones you haven't previously focused on or have room to grow in—to emphasize during this study. Choose ones that will take your group to the next stage of intimacy and spiritual health.**

**If your group is new, welcome newcomers. Introduce everyone—you may even want to have name tags for your first meeting.**

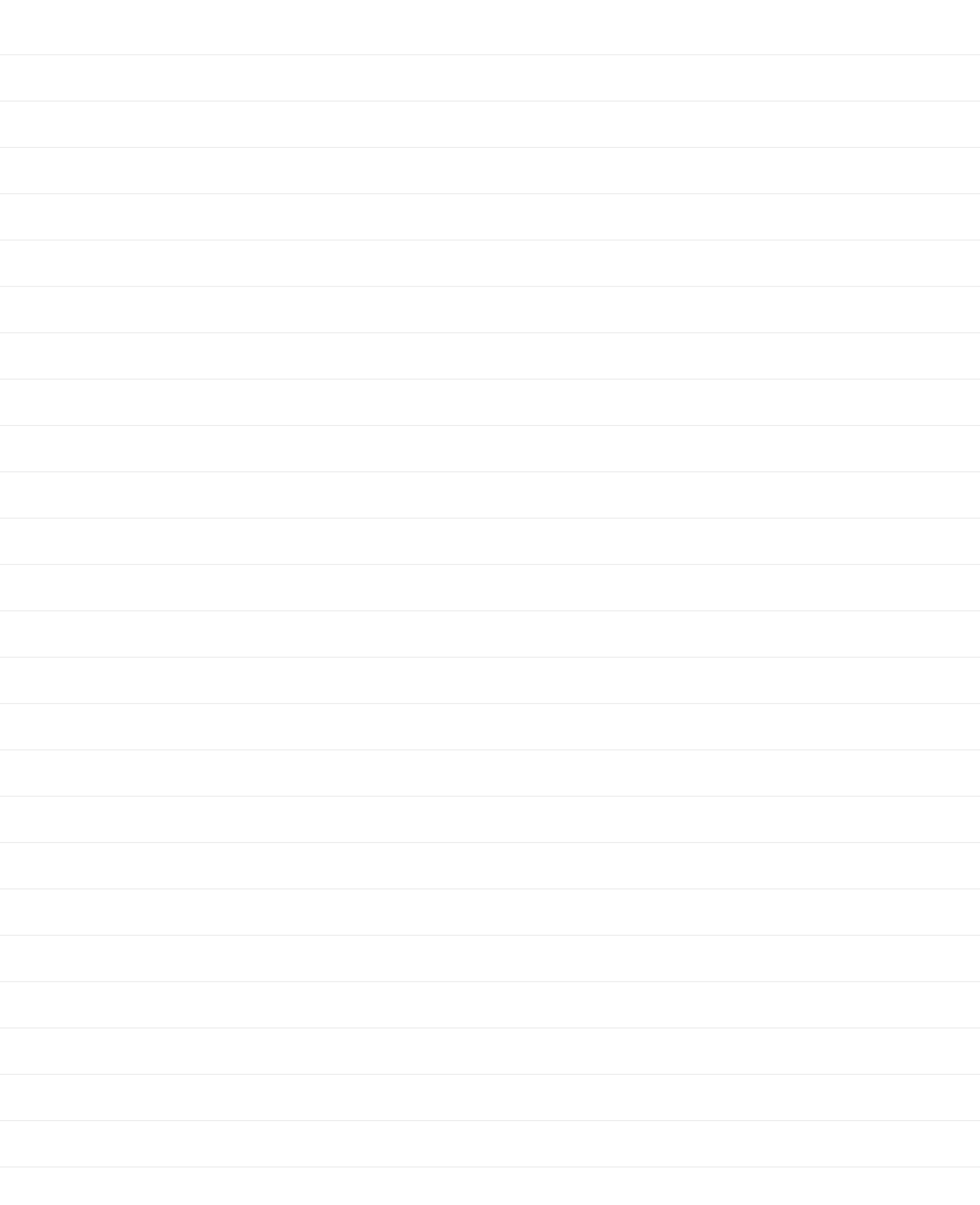
**The LifeGroup Calendar on page 145 is a tool for planning who will host and lead each meeting. Take a few minutes to plan hosts and leaders for your remaining meetings. Don't skip this important step! It will revolutionize your group.**



# WATCH THE DVD

Use the Notes space provided on the next page to record key thoughts, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Hear God's Story section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions and direct the discussion.





# HEAR GOD'S STORY







Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced on the DVD and the Bible passage below.

## **READ EXODUS 32:1-6.**

<sup>1</sup>When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.”

<sup>2</sup> Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” <sup>3</sup> So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. <sup>4</sup> He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

<sup>5</sup> When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.” <sup>6</sup> So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

## **THINK ABOUT IT**

**What does the response of the people tell us about their spiritual maturity?**

**Why was Aaron, Moses’ brother and a leader, so quick to give into their desire for an idol?**

**How could the people believe that an item made by Aaron was the same God who brought them out of Egypt? Can our feelings and our judgments be trusted when we’re disappointed with God?**

**What’s going on in verse 5? How can they worship both a golden calf and the Lord?**

“ We usually  
won't get to see  
what's happening  
'behind the scenes'  
with God. ”



# STUDY NOTES

Moses was on the mountain for forty days—about six weeks. Despite having been dramatically rescued from slavery in Egypt and led by God himself to this moment, it only took six weeks of separation for the Israelites to question both Moses and God.

However, they didn't know what was going on during those weeks. During Moses' time on the mountain with God, he received instructions for how the people were to worship, what the tabernacle should look like, and how the people should live as the chosen people of God. This is pretty big stuff, and certainly worth waiting a few weeks for! But because the people didn't know what they didn't know, they jumped to conclusions, assumed Moses and God had abandoned them, and decided to worship other gods.

## THINK ABOUT IT

**We usually won't get to see what's happening "behind the scenes" with God. Even when He has heard our prayer and is answering it, even when He's working on our behalf at this very moment, it can seem as if He is not listening and not caring—and so we, too, assume the worst and stop our worship. What can we learn from this story? Are you willing to wait and see how God might be working?**

# CREATE A NEW STORY

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then think about practical steps you can take in the coming week to live out what you've learned.

## THINK ABOUT IT

Are you praying and waiting on God for something? Is there an area of life where you feel like God isn't following your agenda?

What emotional reactions do you have to God in this situation?

What's the difference between accepting a disappointment and sweeping it under the rug?

Why isn't it our default to talk in healthy ways about our emotions when we feel hurt by God? Would you be open to talking to God about these feelings?

Take a look at the Circles of Life diagram to the right and write the names of two or three people you know who need to know Christ. Commit to praying for God's guidance and an opportunity to share with each of them. Perhaps they would be open to joining the group? Share your lists with the group so you can all be praying for the people you've identified.

Also consider someone—in this group or outside it—that you can begin going deeper with in an intentional way. This might be your mom or dad, a cousin, an aunt or uncle, a roommate, a college buddy, or a neighbor. Choose someone who might be open to “doing life” with you at a deeper level and pray about that opportunity.

This week how will you interact with the Bible? Can you commit to spending time in daily prayer or study of God's Word (use the Daily Devotions section to guide you)? Tell the group how you plan to follow Jesus this week, and then, at your next meeting, talk about your progress and challenges.

Stack your hands just like a sports team does in the huddle and commit to taking a risk and going deeper in your group and in your relationships with each other.

Ask, “How can we pray for you this week?” Invite everyone to share, but don't force the issue. Be sure to write prayer requests on your Prayer and Praise Report on page 154.

Close your meeting with prayer.

**FAMILY**  
(immediate or extended)

**FAMILIAR**  
(neighbors, sports teams,  
kids, school, and so forth)

**FRIENDS**

**CIRCLES  
OF  
LIFE**

**FUN**  
(gym, hobbies, hangouts)

**FIRM**  
(work)

**FOR** ADDITIONAL STUDY





If you feel God nudging you to go deeper, take some time before the next meeting to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own and jot your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

### **READ ROMANS 5:1-5.**

**This passage gives us an alternative to bitterness, anger, or making bad choices when we don't understand God. What does it mean to "glory in" these sufferings?**

**How does suffering produce perseverance?  
How does perseverance lead to character and hope?**

**How does the hope of salvation help us avoid disappointment? Can we trust God's love?**

### **READ 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18.**

**How are we renewed inwardly?**

**Do you believe that the glory to come in eternity is greater than today's problems?  
Does that change how you relate to God?**

**How can you fix your eyes on what is unseen?**

# DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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DAY

1

## ISAIAH 40:31

But those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.

**Reflect:** It's okay to feel discouraged  
or even angry and upset with God.  
But those emotions will drain you if  
you don't deal with them. Consider  
this week's challenge to "do business  
with God" and renew your strength  
by connecting with Him.

DAY

2

## LAMENTATIONS 3:25-26

The Lord is good to those whose  
hope is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;  
it is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the Lord.

**Reflect:** It may not feel like it, but  
this verse says God actually blesses  
those who wait on Him and stay in  
relationship with Him. Ask God to  
help you seek Him and put your hope  
in Him.

DAY

3

## PSALM 27:13-14

I remain confident of this:  
I will see the goodness of  
the Lord  
in the land of the living.  
Wait for the Lord;  
be strong and take heart  
and wait for the Lord.

**Reflect:** This can be hard to read  
when we're feeling abandoned,  
forgotten, or confused by God. Do  
you believe you will still see God's  
goodness in your life? If not, what  
needs to change?



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DAY

4

**JAMES 5:7-8**

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

**Reflect:** The Israelites couldn't wait six weeks for Moses to return. We've been waiting our whole lives for Jesus to return. Yet the farmer knows the seasons will change, and we can "stand firm" because the Lord's return and His blessing are just as certain.

DAY

5

**2 PETER 3:9**

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

**Reflect:** Perhaps God's timing may involve something beyond you—for instance, perhaps He is waiting for someone else to believe in Him. Ask God to help you change your perspective on His timing, and wait patiently just as He is patient with us.

DAY

6

Use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.