

WE ALL CRAVE RELATIONSHIPS. Both Christians and non-

Christians desire to belong to a group—a family of friends they can trust with the truth about who they are. As a leader, you have the opportunity to foster something powerful—biblical community. You strategically invite your group to experience authentic friendships the way God intended. This means doing life together, encouraging one another in Christ, and loving one another through the happy and difficult times. Biblical community is the glue that will bind your group together, and it will absolutely baffle non-believers.

Before young adults change their worldviews, practice spiritual disciplines, or memorize Scripture, they have to belong. As you spend time with your group, pray with them and serve them in unexpected ways. You can give them the security they need to take risks in their faith. When you lay that foundation of trust and belonging, you enable God to transform the lives of your group members. No longer is Bible study just an isolated hour of teacher-student interaction; it goes deeper, building lasting community that influences our lives and the very threads of who we are.

NOTE: Before reading any further, take a few minutes to read the article "What Did I Sign Up For?" in the "Leader Guide and Tools" menu of this enhanced CD. It gives several helpful tips for planning and carrying out your group study sessions. Then continue reading through this leader guide.

DISCLAIMER: The suggestions, ideas, and questions provided in this leader guide serve as just that—a guide. Every group is different, and you'll need to adapt this content to the specific needs of your unique group. Always include hangout time during your session. Play music and provide light snacks. No one likes a set pattern, so feel free to mix it up to keep the experience fresh each session.

Be sure to re-read the specific session from the *Scouting the Divine* member book pertaining to the group meeting as you prepare to facilitate the discussion. Use it as a resource tool alongside the provided leader guide.

The member book will be your greatest tool to being an effective facilitator, so the more familiar you are with it the better. You may discover that a session provides more content than you can cover in one group meeting, especially if the discussion is rich. Consider carrying that topic over to the next time you meet.

BEFORE YOUR FIRST GROUP GATHERING

- > Read the Scouting the Divine member book included in the leader kit.
- > Read through the "Digging Deeper Articles"* found on the enhanced CD in order to familiarize yourself with the biblical ideas behind the upcoming sessions.
 - *Special thanks to *Biblical Illustrator*, a quarterly magazine devoted to exploring the background of Scripture, for permission to share these materials. For more information, visit *lifeway.com/biblicalillustrator*.
- > Preview all printed and multimedia features available for this five-session study. Multimedia options are listed and explained on the next page.
- Display the promotional poster (available in the "Leader Guide and Tools" menu of the enhanced CD) around your church and/or community announcing the start of this study.
- > Consider posting information on your church's Web site or your personal blog, Facebook, or MySpace.
- Distribute member books to study participants and encourage them to read and work through the introduction and first session before your first meeting time.
- Listen to the music available on the enhanced CD (see the "Music" section).
 You might also choose to download the remaining songs on the playlist via iTunes at threadsmedia.com/scoutingthedivine.
- > Use Session 1 in this leader guide along with the member book to prepare for your first discussion.
- > Read the background article "Shepherding" to help in your preparation. You can also e-mail this article to your group.
- > E-mail your group the audio file called "Meet Lynne the Shepherdess" found in the "E-mailable Audio Files" section of the enhanced CD.

 Encourage them to listen to it before the first group meeting.



MULTIMEDIA FEATURES

MUSIC AND PLAYLIST

A playlist of music that complements the topic and themes of the study is available In order to deepen your understanding of the biblical principles at the in the "Music" section of the enhanced CD. Five songs from the playlist come with your leader kit and are also located in the "Music" section of the enhanced CD. They are for you, the leader, and are playable on a CD player or a computer. Encourage your group members to visit threadsmedia.com/scoutingthedivine and download these songs via iTunes, or you can send your group members the playlist located in the leader tools section of the enhanced CD.

Track 1: "How He Loves" by Kim Walker Track 2: "New Way to Live" by Jason Gray Track 3: "Opening" by Sara Beth Geoghegan Track 4: "I Will Wait for You There" by Phil Wickham

Track 5: "Hope Now" by Addison Road

E-MAILABLE AUDIO FILES

These audio files are phone interviews with the people whose stories you and your group will read about in Scouting the Divine. Listening to Lynne, Joe, and Kristof will help you appreciate more deeply their insights into the themes of Scripture found in the study.

E-mail these files (located in the "E-mailable Audio Files" section of this enhanced CD) to your group between meeting times to provide a way to connect with the topic of the study. You and your group members can listen to them on a computer, CD player, and/or download them to an MP3 player. Then, when your group meets, discuss your thoughts about them together.

SESSION 1: "Meet Lynne the Shepherdess" SESSION 3: "Meet Joe the Farmer" SESSION 6: "Meet Kristof the Vintner"

VIDEO SEGMENTS

These video teaching segments will help you get each group meeting started by talking through some of the major points of Scouting the Divine.* Show the video segments (located on the DVD) at the suggested times during your group meeting.

SESSION 1: Encountering God as the Good Shepherd **SESSION 2: Reaching Out to the Marginalized**

SESSION 3: Recognizing That Everything Has Its Season SESSION 4: Discovering a Land Overflowing with Honey

SESSION 5: Experiencing God's Tender Care **SESSION** 6: Finding Ourselves in God

*Special thanks goes to Three Creeks Sheep Farm, Williams Honey Farm, and Green Top Vineyards, the beautiful locations that were generous enough to give us access for the filming of the teaching videos.

MORE LEADER TOOLS

DIGGING DEEPER ARTICLES

foundation of *Scouting the Divine*, these articles examine important cultural and historical elements of the biblical text. Be sure to study these as you prepare to lead your group. Also, they are in e-mailable format, so feel free to pass them along to your group.

WOMEN'S LEADER GUIDE

If you're leading a group of women through Scouting the Divine, check out the Women's Leader Guide for a step-by-step process on how to get the most from your group.

ONLINE FEATURES

You'll find topical articles, additional leader helps, blogs from Threads staff, and lots more at threadsmedia.com. At lifeway.com/bible you'll find several Bible translations, commentaries, word studies, and other resources to supplement your preparation.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

You may use the questions in the member book, those provided in the leader guide, or a combination of the two. There are most likely more guestions than you need, so pick and choose what best suits your group. The member book will be a helpful tool in guiding the discussion as it contains further insight into the open-ended questions. Along with key quotes from the member book, three types of questions are provided for each session, along with some specific points of action for you as a leader:

ENGAGE: Introductory questions that everyone can answer easily. These help break the ice and get the conversation started.

ENCOUNTER: Focus on God's Word and each other. These questions ask what the biblical text says or means about a particular topic.

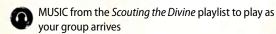
EXPRESS: Ask, "So what?" Express questions help identify how truth applies directly to our lives.

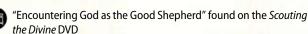
EQUIP: Designed to send your group out. Equipping begins with a creative prayer element that will re-emphasize the principles from your meeting time.

Before each group meeting time, set an open and comfortable environment. Have snacks and listen to music from the playlist as people arrive.

SESSION ONE: WITH THE SHEPHERDESS ENCOUNTERING GOD AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

FOR SESSION 1, YOU'LL NEED:





- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"Lynne began sharing tales from her shepherding experience, drawing rich parallels between shepherding and God. I found myself hanging on her every word" (p. 14).

- What did you want to be when you grew up? What's your current dream profession? Why?
- > When was the last time you met someone with an unusual or offthe-beaten-path type job? What was it? What intrigued you about that person's profession?
- > Have you had any experiences with sheep? If so, describe.
- Watch the teaching video "Encountering God as the Good Shepherd" located on the Scouting the Divine DVD. Then continue your discussion.

ENCOUNTER

"From Genesis to Revelation, the presence—and importance—of sheep in the Bible is unmistakable" (p. 19).

What was the most significant part of this week's study for you? Did anything in particular stick with you? If so, describe.

SHEEP GRAZE THROUGH THE PAGES OF THE BIBLE. YOU CAN'T GET VERY FAR IN SCRIPTURE WITHOUT SEEING A FEW OF THESE ANIMALS.

- What are your favorite Scriptures that mention sheep?
- Why do you think God chose these animals to play such a prominent role?
- > What characteristics of a sheep can you identify with?

SHEPHERDING WAS A COMMON JOB IN BIBLICAL TIMES. CAIN, ABRAHAM, JACOB, MOSES, AND DAVID WERE ALL SHEPHERDS.

READ JOHN 10:1-29.

- > According to this passage, what are some of the ways God helps us?
- > How do you discern the voice of the Good Shepherd in your life?
- > What kinds of circumstances or situations make it difficult for you to recognize the Good Shepherd's voice?
- > Can you think of a time when you know you heard God speaking to you? If so, describe.
- > What are the primary ways you hear from God in your spiritual journey?
- > What role does Scripture play in your life when it comes to discerning whether or not something is from God?
- > Jesus described what it means to be a good shepherd, but that insinuates that there are also bad shepherds. What are some characteristics of a bad shepherd?
- > How do you think bad shepherds treat their flocks?
- Have you ever experienced the care of a good shepherd when it comes to church leadership or a spiritual mentor in your life? If so, describe.
- > How can you become a more faithful sheep in Jesus' flock?

EXPRESS

"Though rules and regulations can be aggravating, boundaries are essential to a sheep's survival—and our own. From a sheep's perspective, the fences only prevent them from enjoying greener grass; from a shepherd's perspective, the fences ensure their protection, provision, and a long, good life" (p. 20).

- > When in your life have you found rules and regulations to be particularly frustrating?
- > When in your life have you found rules and regulations to be particularly helpful?
- > Have there been times in your life when the rules ended up being blessings in disguise? Explain the situation.
- > Do you recognize God as the Good Shepherd of your life? Why or why not?
- Not only are we sheep of the Good Shepherd, but we are also called to be shepherds in the world. How can you become a good shepherd to those around you?



SESSION ONE: WITH THE SHEPHERDESS ENCOUNTERING GOD AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

EQUIP

PRAY So often we find ourselves talking more than listening—even in our prayer lives. Lead your group in a one-minute time of listening.

WRITE Ask your group to write John 10:11-18 on a note card or sheet of paper. Encourage them to display the passage somewhere in their office, house, or car so you can all be reminded that God is the Good Shepherd.

BEFORE NEXT TIME Re-read Session 2 in the member book, along with Part I of the *Scouting the Divine* trade book that came as a part of your leader kit as you prepare for your next discussion. Also, begin praying and looking for potential leaders in your current group who could lead another *Scouting the Divine* study in the future.

DIG DEEPER into the biblical background of *Scouting the Divine* by studying the articles found in the "Digging Deeper" section of the enhanced CD along with re-reading Session 2. This week focus on the articles called "Shepherding Practices of the First Century A.D." and "A Biblical Image of God and His Chosen Leaders." You might also want to pass along these articles to your group via e-mail so they can dig deeper, too.

FINALLY, consider leading your group in participating in one or more of the following activities in order to strengthen the relational dynamics of your Bible study:

> READ

- A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 by W. Phillip Keller
- The Sacred Echo by Margaret Feinberg
- The Way of the Shepherd: 7 Ancient Secrets to Managing Productive People by Kevin Leman and William Pentak

> WATCH

- Babe
- The Good Shepherd

> LIVE

Go on a sheep adventure. Find a sheep or even a flock of sheep in your community and take a field trip to learn more about these creatures. You may want to visit a local petting zoo or an actual farm. Talk to someone who interacts with sheep each day.

SESSION TWO: IN THE FIELDS REACHING OUT TO THE MARGINALIZED

FOR SESSION 2, YOU'LL NEED:



MUSIC from the Scouting the Divine playlist to play as your group arrives



"Reaching Out to the Marginalized" found on the Scouting the Divine DVD

- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"As we walked, Lynne described the sheep with the same tenderness of a mother describing her children, naming each one and telling all about them. Where I saw a flock of sheep, she saw individual animals with unique characteristics and guirks that made them even more endearing. I wondered if God sometimes sees us the same way" (p. 34).



Begin your group time by watching the teaching video called "Reaching Out to the Marginalized" located on the Scouting the Divine DVD. Then continue your discussion.

- > What does your name mean? Does it say anything about who you are?
- > What are some jobs that children, women, and the elderly can do that others can't?
- > Has anyone's profession ever aided you in understanding Scripture more clearly? How so?

ENCOUNTER

"All too often in my own life I've seen myself fighting God's activity, afraid the direction He's steering me in or the preventative care He's prescribing isn't in my best interest" (p. 39).

What challenged you most about this week's study?

KING DAVID WROTE PSALM 139 IN AN ATTEMPT TO EXPRESS HIS TRUST IN AND ADORATION OF GOD, READ PSALM 139.

- > How would you describe the tone of this chapter?
- > According to Psalm 139, how active is God in your life? Does that make you feel comfortable or uncomfortable? Why?
- > In this passage which of the verbs describing God's activity are most meaningful to you? Why?
- > Do you feel that God is as intimately involved in your life as Psalm 139 suggests? Why or why not?

> Just as Lynne knows her sheep, God knows us. How does it make you feel to know that God knows you so well? Excited? Fearful? **Encouraged? Intimidated?**

NOW READ PSALM 23.

- > What parallels or similarities do you see between Psalm 23 and Psalm 139?
- > In this passage which of the verbs describing God's activity are most meaningful to you? Why?
- > Describe a time when God made you lie down in green pastures or led you beside quiet waters.
- > Describe a time when God restored your soul.
- > In what ways has God guided you in paths of righteousness?
- > Describe a time when you felt like you were walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Did you sense that God was with you? Why or why not?
- > How does God comfort you?
- > Have you ever felt like you had to face enemies and God went before you and prepared a way? If so, describe.

READ JAMES 1:27.

- > How would you define true religion?
- > Why do you think God is concerned with the poor and oppressed?
- > What are you doing in your life to care for those in need?

EXPRESS

"There was something unmistakably peaceful about being with the flock, watching the slow but steady movement of their jaws as they chewed on grass, and feeling the warm sun on my cheeks" (p. 43).

> Where do you feel the most at ease and peaceful?

SO OFTEN WE FORGET TO STEP BACK FROM OUR BUSY SCHEDULES AND TAKE TIME TO BE ALONE WITH GOD. READ MARK 6:30-33.

- > How many times a week do you spend alone time with God?
- > How many times a week would you like to spend alone time with God?



SESSION TWO: IN THE FIELDS REACHING OUT TO THE MARGINALIZED

> How does regular alone time with God affect your spiritual life?	
> What usually distracts you from spending time with God?	
EQUIP PRAY Encourage the group to write down their prayers throughout the week so that later on they can look back on the intimate conversation with God.	
WRITE Lead your group to spend some time thinking about the ways God has been active in your lives. Ask each person to make a timeline, writing down various years of their lives and the ways God revealed Himself during those years. Help your group recognize that God has been with them every step of the way.	
BEFORE NEXT TIME Re-read Session 3 in the member book, along with Part II of the <i>Scouting the Divine</i> trade book that came as a part of your leader kit as you prepare for your next discussion. Continue to pray for and search out any future leaders in the midst of your group.	
DIG DEEPER into the biblical background of <i>Scouting the Divine</i> by studying the articles found in the "Digging Deeper" section of the enhanced CD along with re-reading Session 3. This week focus on the articles called "Tares," "First-Century Agricultural Practices," and "The Soils of Israel." You might also want to pass along these articles to your group via e-mail so they can dig deeper, too.	
IN ADDITION, e-mail your group the audio file called "Meet Joe the Farmer" found in the "E-mailable Audio Files" section of the enhanced CD. Encourage your group to listen to it before they return.	
FINALLY, consider leading your group in participating in one or more of the following activities in order to strengthen the relational dynamics of your Bible study:	
 READ God Knows Me! by Joel Anderson Safe in the Shepherd's Arms by Max Lucado The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis 	
> WATCH • "Shaun the Sheep and Flock Dance": http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=U8DFwb3zIDk • Gran Torino • Faith Like Potatoes	

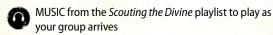
local ministry or outreach.

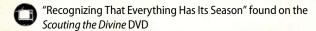
Express your care for those in need by volunteering together as a group at a

> LIVE

SESSION THREE: ON THE FARM RECOGNIZING THAT EVERYTHING HAS ITS SEASON

FOR SESSION 3, YOU'LL NEED:

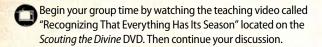




- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"This Nebraska native sprawled out on our oversized chair as afternoon turned into evening, talking about anything and everything. Lunch leftovers became dinner. Our conversations circled around life, God, and relationships, with too many almost-pee-your-pants bursts of laughter to count" (p. 51).



- > Have you ever had someone enter your life unexpectedly and never really leave?
- > Who in your life lights up your day with their energy and enthusiasm?
- > What adjectives first come to mind when you think of farming? Why?

ENCOUNTER

"My legs were too short to reach the pedals, so Joe and I shared a seat and began making laps around the farm. As he drove, we talked about life, faith, and even the Bible" (p. 55).

- > What did you find the most meaningful in this week's section?
- > What was the toughest truth to internalize in this section?

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER IS FOUND IN MARK 4:1-20. READ THIS PASSAGE.

- > Have you ever thought about hearing Jesus' teaching firsthand? What do you imagine it was like?
- > Consider each type of soil in the parable. How have you seen those types of soil in other people's lives? Your own?
- How would you describe the soil of your own heart right now?

> What are some effective ways of preparing the soil of your heart for God's Word and work in your life?

GLEANING WAS A VERY IMPORTANT PRACTICE IN BIBLICAL TIMES. READ RUTH 1–2.

- > Define "gleaning" in your own words.
- > What would be a modern example of gleaning?
- > Have you ever gleaned in some way? How?
- > What was the formal relationship between Ruth and Naomi?
- > What was the informal relationship between Ruth and Naomi?
- > Have you ever been willing to follow someone no matter where he or she went?
- > Why was gleaning so important to Ruth and Naomi?
- > Why was Boaz's generosity important to these two women?
- > Do you think Ruth and Naomi would have survived apart from Boaz's generosity? Why or why not?

JUST AS BOAZ WAS GENEROUS TO RUTH AND NAOMI, WE TOO ARE CALLED TO GIVE GENEROUSLY. READ 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-12.

- > What does it mean to you to sow sparingly? Sow generously?
- > Can you think of a time when you've chosen to sow sparingly? Sow generously? What were the circumstances of each?
- > What are some ways you can practice cheerful giving?
- > What are the benefits of becoming as generous with others as God is with us?

EXPRESS

"Through my time on the farm, I was reminded that everything in life has its season. Though I may be tempted to wish I were living in another season of life, the best possible life begins with contentment and a recognition that God has me at the right place at the right time" (p. 63).

Return to page 56 in the *Scouting the Divine* member book. Look again at the quiz regarding spiritual disciplines.

> Which of the spiritual disciplines listed are the easiest for you?



SESSION THREE: ON THE FARM RECOGNIZING THAT EVERYTHING HAS ITS SEASON

- Which of the spiritual disciplines listed are the most difficult for you?
- > What makes a spiritual discipline easy or difficult for you?
- > Of the spiritual disciplines you've practiced, what are some of the most rewarding experiences for you?
- How hard is it for you to be consistent when it comes to practicing spiritual disciplines? Why?
- > What choices do you need to make to become more consistent in your practice of spiritual disciplines?

> LIVE

- Have everyone in the group select the one spiritual discipline they struggle
 with most. Encourage them to practice that spiritual discipline this week and
 share what they learned through it next time you meet.
- Consider feeding the hungry through gleaning. Visit endhunger.org to get started.
- Go out and purchase a small plant. You can find one at a local hardware store
 or garden store. You may choose a spice, a fruit tree, or something fun for your
 décor. Nurture and take care of the plant. Water it. Fertilize it. As you're caring
 for the plant, remember how much more God cares for you.

EQUIP

PRAY Spend some time leading your group to reflect on the work God has been doing in their lives. What areas are ripe for growth? What areas are rocky? Do you need to forgive others or receive God's forgiveness? Spend time prayerfully considering how God may want to grow those in your group.

WRITE Ask group members to draw a picture that represents the current state of the soil of their hearts in their journals. Then ask them to draw a picture that represents how they want the soil of their hearts to be.

BEFORE NEXT TIME Re-read Session 4 in the member book, along with Part III of the *Scouting the Divine* trade book that came as a part of your leader kit as you prepare for your next discussion. This week, ask your future leaders to prayerfully consider leading a new group after your *Scouting the Divine* group concludes. Assure them you will help them in any way you can.

DIG DEEPER into the biblical background of *Scouting the Divine* by studying the articles found in the "Digging Deeper" section of the enhanced CD along with re-reading Session 4. This week focus on the articles called "The Body" and "The Promised Land." You might also want to pass along these articles to your group via e-mail so they can dig deeper, too.

FINALLY, consider leading your group in participating in one or more of the following activities in order to strengthen the relational dynamics of your Bible study:

> READ

- Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster
- Drops Like Stars by Rob Bell

> WATCH

- "Farming in Nebraska": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVoF8-0zVmo
- Wall-E
- The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

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SESSION FOUR: IN THE HIVE DISCOVERING A LAND OVERFLOWING WITH HONEY

FOR SESSION 4, YOU'LL NEED:



MUSIC from the *Scouting the Divine* playlist to play as your group arrives



"Discovering a Land Overflowing with Honey" found on the Scouting the Divine DVD

- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"My best friend, Leif, introduced me to Cross Bar X in Durango, Colorado, a few years ago, and to this day I remain grateful. While we were dating, Leif kept telling me about this special place where he served as a counselor for three summers. For him, the camp was a place of restoration and healing" (p. 67).



Begin your group time by watching the teaching video called "Discovering a Land Overflowing with Honey" located on the Scouting the Divine DVD.

- Is there a special charity or organization that you love? Describe it to the group.
- > Have you ever noticed similarities among the charities or organizations you're most passionate about?
- > What emotion stirs when you think of bees or beekeeping?

ENCOUNTER

"The first mention of the promised land as a place overflowing with milk and honey is in God's conversation with Moses near the burning bush. But in this account the 'overflowing' of the honey isn't caused by heat but by an abundance of its treasured presence in the land promised to the Israelites" (p. 79).

- What was the most challenging part of this week's study?
- What was the most encouraging part of this week's study?

MOSES HAD THE SURPRISE OF HIS LIFETIME WHEN HE MET GOD REVEALED THROUGH A BUSH. RE-READ EXODUS 3:1-9.

- > How did Moses respond to this unusual encounter?
- How would you respond if you saw a bush on fire but not burning up?
- > Do you think Moses was startled more by his encounter with the living God or by what God said?

- > What were the characteristics of the promised land?
- > Would you have chosen these two characteristics to describe a lush and rich land? Why or why not?
- > What adjectives would you use to describe the promised land to someone in modern terms?

EXPRESS

"As Gary described all of the inner workings of the hive, I was given a glimpse of how within a bee community everything comes together for the good of the hive. The parallels between the hive and the body of Christ surfaced" (p. 73).

REFER BACK TO THE LIST OF JOBS THAT ARE TAKEN CARE OF IN A HIVE IN THE "THE WONDER OF THE HIVE" SECTION.

- > Which are your favorite bees?
- > Reflecting on this section, how has your perspective of bees and beehives changed?
- > What kinds of spiritual growth and change can happen in a community when believers work together?
- > Have you ever been part of a Christian community that truly sweetened other people's lives by working together? What were the circumstances?
- > Have you ever seen yourself as a crucial part of a community like each bee is to a hive? Why or why not? Why is it important to do so?

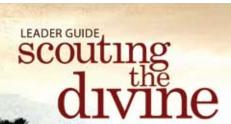
REFER BACK TO 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-26.

- > How does your Christian community fit into this analogy?
- > Where do you personally fit into this analogy?

EQUIP

PRAY Ask God to show you and your group how you can be more content where He has you right now. You may feel like others are doing more or better things, but God has you right where you are for a reason. Ask Him to awaken you to a new level of contentment in your life.

WRITE In reflecting on the prayer above, take a few minutes to write a personal definition for contentment, along with some helpful habits you can incorporate into your life in order to move toward being content.



SESSION FOUR: IN THE HIVE DISCOVERING A LAND OVERFLOWING WITH HONEY

BEFORE NEXT TIME Re-read Session 5 in the member book, along with Part IV of the <i>Scouting the Divine</i> trade book that came as a part of your leader kit as you prepare for your next discussion. This week, check in with your future leaders and begin to help them prepare the necessary publicity for their own <i>Scouting the Divine</i> group. Offer to give them your notes to help them get started.	
DIG DEEPER into the biblical background of <i>Scouting the Divine</i> by studying the articles found in the "Digging Deeper" section of the enhanced CD along with re-reading Session 5. This week focus on the articles called "Wine in the Roman World" and "Wine in Ancient Israel." You might also want to pass along these articles to your group via e-mail so they can dig deeper, too.	
FINALLY, consider leading your group in participating in one or more of the following activities in order to strengthen the relational dynamics of your Bible study:	
> READ From the Land of Milk and Honey (a devotional cookbook) by Jennifer Cote The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd	
> WATCH • Bee Movie • The Secret Life of Bees • "Honey Bees—Life Cycle": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSk_ev1eZec	
> LIVE Consider purchasing three different types of honey and performing a taste test with your group. Can you taste any differences? Talk about what you smell and taste as you try it. Then reflect on the amount of labor that went into producing a single teaspoon. What is God calling you to do? How much work will it really require?	

SESSION FIVE: AMONG THE VINEYARDS EXPERIENCING GOD'S TENDER CARE

FOR SESSION 5, YOU'LL NEED:



MUSIC from the Scouting the Divine playlist to play as your group arrives



"Experiencing God's Tender Care" from the Scouting the Divine DVD

- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"I wanted to find someone who had some sort of biblical framework in their background who could appreciate the wonder of Jesus' first miracle—turning water into wine—as well as Jesus' frequent use of a vineyard as the setting for His parables. I hoped to find someone who had taken Communion to comment on the beauty of the Son of God instructing His followers to drink the fruit of the vine in His remembrance" (p. 85).



Begin your group time by watching the teaching video called "Experiencing God's Tender Care" located on the Scouting the Divine DVD. Then continue your discussion.

- When you think about Communion, what is the most meaningful aspect of this sacrament to you?
- > Do you enjoy taking Communion? Why or why not?
- > Of all of Jesus' miracles, which amazes you the most?

ENCOUNTER

"Interestingly, when Jesus performed His first miracle, He bypassed any restrictions of time" (p. 91).

- What challenged you the most about this week's topic?
- What did you enjoy most about this week's study?

JESUS PERFORMED NUMEROUS MIRACLES INVOLVING FOOD. READ JOHN 6:5-15.

- > Why do you think His miracles involved food so many times? What is the significance of the food?
- How would you feel if you were the boy who gave Jesus the bread and fish?
- > Do you think the boy felt like giving up his meal was a big sacrifice? Why or why not?

- > Do you think the boy ever expected the miracle that resulted?
- > What do you think the boy told his extended family members and friends about what had happened afterward? How do you think they responded?
- > If you were in the crowds that day, how do you think you would have responded to the free food? How about to the miraculous nature of the food?

ANOTHER ONE OF JESUS' MIRACLES INVOLVED TURNING WATER INTO WINE. IN FACT, IT WAS HIS FIRST MIRACLE. READ JOHN 2:1-11.

- > What parallels do you see between the miraculous multiplication of food in John 6 and the miraculous transformation of water into wine in John 2?
- > Who do you think was most surprised by the miracle?
- > Why do you think this was Jesus' first miracle?
- > What could Jesus' refilling and replenishing of the wine symbolize?

WEDDING BANQUETS IN JESUS' TIME WERE INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. WHEN JEWS GUESSED WHAT HEAVEN WOULD BE LIKE THEY ASSUMED IT WOULD BE SIMILAR TO WEDDING BANQUETS. READ REVELATION 19:6-10.

- > Who is being wed in this passage?
- > What beverage do you think will be served at the wedding supper of the Lamb?
- > What do you imagine the wedding supper of the Lamb will be like?

EXPRESS

"The vineyard stretched down a slope before leveling across the plain. Each row revealed a stout, L–shaped vine that looked perfect for kindling. Planted equidistant from each other, the vines simply reached up from the earth with a solo branch running parallel to the ground. All other signs of growth had been removed" (p. 92-93).

> How often do you find yourself judging something or someone before you see what's under the surface?

WE ARE CALLED TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER—NOT JUDGE ONE ANOTHER. READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-17.

> What are we asked to clothe ourselves with?

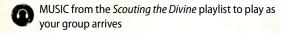


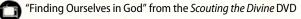
SESSION FIVE: AMONG THE VINEYARDS EXPERIENCING GOD'S TENDER CARE

> How can you more graciously respond and react to others?	> LIVE
> Are there people in your life who are hard to accept and love?	Go out and buy some different types of grapes. Have a taste test among participants. Encourage them to describe the unique flavors, colors, and shapes of the grapes. Remember that each grape was cultivated and grown
> What are some ways you can love them wholly and completely?	into what it is today.
EQUIP	
PRAY Ask God to fill your lives with joy and celebration. Ask God to renew your sense of gratefulness for Him and all He's doing in your lives.	
WRITE Encourage your group this week to spend half an hour writing out everything they can think of that they should be thankful for today. Remind them to include the little things, like good weather or a safe ride to work. Then ask them to reflect on the length of their lists.	
BEFORE NEXT TIME Re-read Session 6 in the member book as you prepare	
for your next discussion. Set up a coffee or lunch appointment with each	15.
of your future leaders. At that meeting, pray with and for them, along with talking them through any specific apprehensions or fears they have about	
being in leadership.	
DIG DEEPER into the biblical background of <i>Scouting the Divine</i> by studying the articles found in the "Digging Deeper" section of the enhanced CD along with re-reading Session 6. This week focus on the articles called "Vines and	
Vineyards of the First Century" and "The History of the Sabbath." You might also want to pass along these articles to your group via e-mail so they can dig deeper, too.	
IN ADDITION, e-mail your group the audio file called "Meet Kristof the Vintner" found in the "E-mailable Audio Files" section of the enhanced CD. Encourage your group to listen to it before they return.	
areoutage your group to instant to reserve they return.	
FINALLY, consider leading your group in participating in one or more of the following activities in order to strengthen the relational dynamics of your Bible	
study:	
> READ	
Authentic Faith by Gary ThomasThe Ragamuffin Gospel by Brennan Manning	
> WATCH	
"How to Prune Grapes: Spur Type": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw wZBQat8Vg&feature=related	
Bruce Almighty	
• A Beautiful Mind	v2.

SESSION SIX: WITHIN THE VINE FINDING OURSELVES IN GOD

FOR SESSION 6, YOU'LL NEED:





- Your copy of the Scouting the Divine MEMBER BOOK
- A copy of this LEADER GUIDE

ENGAGE

"Kristof exhibited an unmistakable attentiveness when it came to the Bible. Though he never used them, he brought an Eastern Orthodox book on prayer and an Orthodox commentary for our conversation on Scripture" (p. 103).

- Begin your group time by watching the teaching video called "Finding Ourselves in God" located on the Scouting the Divine DVD. Then continue your discussion.
- > What are your favorite books or resources to use alongside the Bible? Why?
- What books have been most meaningful to your own faith journey?
- > What experience have you had with vines or growing grapes?
- > What do you love about Jesus?

ENCOUNTER

"The vines, your vines, are a perfect portrait of abiding. The vine is the source of everything for the branch—every nutrient, every life-giving drop of water, every hint of growth—so the branch is completely dependent on the vine. But even in those moments when I grow wild or unbalanced, God is faithful as a vinedresser to perform all the small cuts I need to remain fruitful. In that place where I am abiding in Christ under the watchful eye of the Father, the things I ask for will naturally be rooted in all God has planted and created me to be" (p. 115).

- What was most meaningful to you in this section?
- > Which of the six sessions in the Scouting the Divine study was the most meaningful to you?

RETURN TO THE SECTION ON THE PROVERBS 31 WOMAN.

- > What do you find particularly encouraging about the Proverbs 31 woman?
- What do you find most challenging about her?

- > Imagine that there was a Proverbs 31 man. What would be some of his characteristics?
- > How would the characteristics of a Proverbs 31 man differ from the Proverbs 31 woman? What characteristics would be the same?
- > Do you think that if this woman (most biblical scholars believe Proverbs 31 is a compilation of several women) did everything listed she still had time to sleep? Why or why not?
- > How busy is your life right now? Too slow? Just right? Running on overdrive?
- > How do you find a healthy balance of busyness?
- > What traits would you like to embrace in your own life (regardless of gender)?

READ JOHN 15:1-8.

- > What do you think it means to "abide"?
- > Why is Jesus' illustration of the vine and branches an appropriate one for abiding?
- > What does your life look like when you are abiding most in Christ? When you aren't abiding, what changes?
- > What characteristics of the Proverbs 31 woman would help a person abide in the Vine?

EXPRESS

"Unknowingly, Kristof had touched on something I was learning in my own spiritual life—just as the land needed a Sabbath, I did, too" (p. 106).

WE AREN'T THE ONLY ONES WHO NEED TO TAKE A BREAK EVERY ONCE IN AWHILE. READ GENESIS 2:1-3.

- > Why do you think God chose to rest on the final day of creation?
- > What precedent does God's choosing to rest establish for our lives?
- > Does rest come easily for you? Explain.
- > What spiritual significance do you find in the Sabbath?
- > How do you observe the Sabbath?
- > How does observing the Sabbath change your outlook on life? God? The upcoming week?



SESSION SIX: WITHIN THE VINE FINDING OURSELVES IN GOD

EQUIP

PRAY Have everyone in the group dedicate time this week to pray for another group member. Have them either write down prayer requests or share them out loud. Keep the members of your group on your mind through the week.

WRITE One of the reasons we write is so we won't forget. To that end, ask your group to gather up what they've learned during their time *Scouting the Divine* and spend enough time writing in the notes of their member books so they won't forget.

FINALLY, celebrate what has happened in your group by hosting a dinner party for the members. Talk through the most meaningful parts of your Bible study together. Or consider leading them in participating in one or more of the following activities:

> READ

Wholly Jesus by Mark Foreman

Jesus Driven Ministry by Ajith Fernando

> WATCH

- "Wine Making—Red Wine": http://youtube.com/watch?v=6GwpoCdtytA&feature=related
- The Pursuit of Happyness
- Slumdog Millionaire

> LIVE

Encourage your group to visit *threadsmedia.com* and spend some time looking through the small group studies there. Ask group members for recommendations as to which one you will do next.

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