

# Leader's Corner

We desire for every small group to experience and own these 4 values:

## Seen

We create ways to notice and engage all people

## Safe

We cultivate communities of grace in order to produce authentic relationships

## Shaped

We train all people to become devoted disciples of Jesus

## Sent

We empower all disciples to make disciples

With these values in mind, the following is a guide to help each of us continue the journey towards healing and reconciling. Although this guide is created to help us maneuver our current surroundings, the hope is that it may also guide each of us in other areas of our life where we may be facing distressing situations and interactions.

### As we begin, remember . . .

*(You may want someone to read this out loud to the group)* Above all else, our hope rests and sits at the feet of Jesus. He is able. He is willing. He is able. He is willing and sure. Especially when we are not or cannot. And so we are a people who trust that Jesus is working, even now.

### Let's Begin . . .

- **With Prayer:** Lord, help us to recognize any defenses we may be holding. Give us courage to lower them and trust your love. With the help of your Spirit, give us insight into what we need to seek. Slow us down enough that we experience union with you and one another in this place. Amen.
- **With Truth:** Read Psalm 139:23-24 in a few different translations. As you read, do so with intentionality, inflection and with a slower cadence.

• *“Search me, O God, and Know My Heart”*

- Our words matter and are powerful. Jesus himself says our words reveal our hearts and what we treasure. As you reflect on the past couple of weeks and months, consider how your words reveal what’s in your heart:

- Particularly considering the conflict at hand, what has characterized those words (Truth? Grace? A critical spirit? Etc.)
- Are there any words you have spoken that, upon reflection, you should not have? Be specific.
- Are there any words that should have been spoken, but were not or have not been?
- Were there any times when you used words (or the absence of words) to control other’s impressions of you or to give wrong impressions regarding another person? Be specific.
- Be honest. What do all of these words (healthy, unhealthy, positive, negative, spoken, unspoken) reveal about your heart condition right now?

• *“Try me and know my thoughts.”*

- We are constantly bombarded with influences, messages, assumptions, and perceptions. All of these “words” are trying to invade our spirit and mind. If we are not careful, these messages can lead us down faulty thought avenues and ultimately away from the truth of the Gospel.

- Psalm 139 refers to anxious thoughts. What fears have been filtering through your thoughts lately?
- What “thought tapes” are playing over and over in your mind?
- Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify one or two root fears that seem to be underlying or driving your mind. Share them with those around you.

• *“See if there be any grievous (offensive) way in me.”*

- It’s been said that justification is best left to God, but all too quickly during perceived conflict, you and I magnify the offenses of others while minimizing our own.

- Read together Luke 18:9-14 and Matthew 7:1-6

- Pause again and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any “offensive ways” you have brought into this situation. Try to be as specific as possible and name them. “I’ve contributed to the conflict in the following specific ways. . .”

• **With Practice:**

• *“Lead me in the way everlasting!”*

- Read Psalm 139:23-24 again. Sometimes the most significant question we can ask during distressing, confusing, and even downright painful times is “What transforming work is God trying to accomplish?”

- Don’t rush through this. Listen. Reflect. How is God trying to transform you through this situation?

- Share your most significant “take-away” from this time of reflection with the group.

For Further Reflection . . .

• Read and reflect on 1 Corinthians 13

- How will these words transform your interactions this week?