

Island Group Discussion Guide

Abide • Connect • Share

Week of October 5, 2025

THRIVING IN BABYLON • WEEK 9

WHAT GOD WANTS • MATTHEW 10:16-18, JEREMIAH 25, HEBREWS 11



OPENING PRAYER TIME

Begin your meeting with 10-15 minutes of prayer using these prompts:

- Thank God for His presence with us today and His desire to work in our hearts
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discussion and give us wisdom
- Pray for hearts that seek God's will above our own plans
- Invite Jesus to help us understand what true obedience looks like
- Ask for courage to be faithful even when we don't see results
- Pray for our church to be salt and light in our community

DISCUSSION

- **Ice breaker:** Have you ever experienced a moment when everything in your life changed in an instant? What happened and how did you respond?
- **Read Matthew 10:16-18.** Jesus is sending us out "as sheep in the midst of wolves" to represent Him. What does it mean to be both "wise as serpents and innocent as doves"?
- The sermon warned against "*this attitude of holiness without holiness*" - becoming pious and looking down on people in sin rather than loving them. Have you seen this attitude? How is it different from being truly holy?
- **Read Romans 10:13-15.** The message explained that "preaching" means "*we make Jesus known*" - it's the overflow of our relationship with Jesus. How does this change your understanding of sharing the gospel?
- We heard that "*the problem is so many of our people are looking, but when they see the church, they don't see Jesus.*" Why does this happen? How can we change this?
- **Read Jeremiah 25:1-13.** What strikes you about this warning to God's people? Why didn't they listen? Note that verse 9 calls wicked King Nebuchadnezzar "my servant" - what does this teach us about God's sovereignty?
- The sermon gave us the right question to ask when life changes: "**What does God want?**" Why is this so different from asking "What am I going to do?" or "How will I deal with this?"



- **Read Hebrews 11:13-16, 39.** These heroes of faith "did not receive the things promised" but "were longing for a better country." How does this challenge our expectations of what God should do for us?
- Here's the takeaway: "**Our job as followers of Christ is not to win the battle. Our job is to follow God's plan.**" Why is this so hard to accept? What about when God's plan seems wrong, means suffering, or conflicts with your plan?
- Larry Osborne wrote: "*Even when God's way seems to lead nowhere, it's still the right path to take. He's always right. Even when we think he's wrong, that's why we call him God.*" **Application question:** What area of your life are you struggling to trust that God's way is right?
- Jeremiah faithfully proclaimed God's word for 40 years, but nobody listened. He lived in poverty, was imprisoned, and was rejected by everyone. Yet in God's eyes, Jeremiah was a success. What does this teach us about success?
- **Success as measured by God involves obedience and faithfulness.** Daniel and his friends served "as salt and light" with "hope, knowing that God was in control" and "humility, knowing that God would lift up the humble" and "wisdom, godly wisdom." While Babylon thought they were conquering the Hebrews, God was actually using His faithful people to expose that godless culture to the God of the Bible. Have you seen God use a difficult situation to spread the gospel?
- **Read Proverbs 3:5-6.** The emphasis was on "ALL of your heart" and "lean not on your understanding." **Application question:** What does it look like to trust God with ALL your heart rather than leaning on your own understanding?
- Larry Osborne wrote: "*Sometimes the culture responds to godly living and sometimes it doesn't. It's out of our hands.*" Why is this actually freeing rather than discouraging?
- Instead of asking wrong questions ("What am I going to do?"), we should ask God-centered questions: "*What is God going to do? How is God going to deal with this?*" How does this shift in perspective lead to hope, humility, and wisdom?
- Island Church's three core values were reviewed: **Grow/Abide** (relationship with God), **Connect/Gather** (relationship with others), and **Share/Go** (reach the world). We can't point anyone to a place we haven't been. **Application question:** Which area needs your focus most? What specific step will you take this week?
- **Application question:** The closing challenged us: "*It's time to stop thinking that we've got it figured out, that we've got a plan that's going to make it, and instead, we just need to be obedient and trust God and be faithful.*" What "plan" do you need to surrender so you can simply be obedient?

CLOSING PRAYER TIME

Share prayer requests and concerns with the group. Be sure to write these down and send them to all group members so everyone can pray throughout the week, including those who were absent today.