



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Part I: [re]flection

Icebreaker: Are you a horse or camel?

*Camels are traitorous: they walk thousands of paces and never seem to tire. Then suddenly, they kneel and die. But horses tire bit by bit. You always know how much you can ask of them, and when it is that they are about to die. — Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist**

1) Does the type of renewal described below, simply sound nice or is it something you must have? Explain.
re·new·al /rəˈnoʊəl/ - *a refreshing realignment and reignition with God's presence, purpose and power.*

2) How does the following excerpt from John Eldredge's book *Resilient: Restoring Your Weary Soul In These Turbulent Times* help you reflect on your need for renewal?

In case you've already forgotten what the pandemic was like, allow me to refresh your memory. Fear of death suddenly swept the world, death unseen and unpredictable, death by plague. In a matter of weeks, we found ourselves in various forms of quarantine and lockdown – schools, churches and businesses all closed their doors. The economy reeled. Everything that makes for a joyful, normal life was taken from us in a moment and withheld for many, many months.

Follow me closely now. To be suddenly stripped of your normal life; to live under the fear of suffering and death; to be bombarded with negative news, kept in a state of constant uncertainty about the future, with no clear views of the finish line; and to lose every human countenance behind the mask – may I point out that this is exactly the torment that terrorist regimes use to break down prisoners psychologically, and physically?

Folks this has had a traumatic affect ...

3) Many people are familiar with the Matthew 11:25-30 passage. Few believe it. Where are you with this passage and why?

4) The gateway to biblical renewal is often through crisis and/or change. Why do you suppose that is the case? Is there a crisis and/or change you are going through today or have recently gone through? Could this be a day you ask God for renewal?

5) Read and discuss Mark 10:35-52. Finally, answer Jesus' question: "What do you want me to do for you?" (vv.36,51)

Personal Challenge: Who in your life needs RENEWAL? Spend some time in your group praying for that person and then share how you will reach out to him/her this week.