



Invitations to Dinner with Jesus

video course by Bishop Joe



Session One: Invitation to fast in the desert

Bible Study Leaders Guide

Welcome and Prayer

5 min

Welcome everyone and invite a moment of stillness.

Opening Prayer (or adapt as needed):

Gracious Lord, we thank You that in the deserts of our lives, You are already there. Be with us now as we reflect on Jesus' time in the wilderness. Help us to listen for Your voice, to know Your love, and to trust in Your care. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Watch the Video

10 min

Play Bishop Joe's 10-minute video (or read aloud the transcript if video isn't available).

Initial Reflections

5 min

- What stood out to you from Bishop Joe's message?
- Was there a particular phrase or image that stayed with you?

Scripture Reading

5 min

Read Luke 4:1-13 aloud.

Discussion Questions

25 min

- Bishop Joe draws a parallel between Jesus' time in the desert and Israel's journey through the wilderness in Exodus. What similarities or patterns do you notice between the temptations Jesus faces and the challenges Israel encounters in Exodus chapters 16, 32 & 17?
- How does Jesus and the people of Israel each respond to their moments of testing? What differences stand out to you?
- Bishop Joe says, "We all find ourselves in the desert, and Jesus comes looking for us there." Have you experienced a "desert time" in your life?
- In those times, what were the "whispers" of doubt or temptation you heard?
- When we hear the lie that "God does not love you and He cannot be trusted," what truths from Scripture can we turn to in response?
- Are there particular verses, prayers, hymns, or saints' words that have helped you hold onto God's love during difficult times?

Prayer Response

5-15 min

Take some time to respond in prayer. Below are a few suggestions of different ways you could invite your group to respond in prayer. Pick one that is most appropriate for your group or pray to close your time together as you normally would.

The Litany

Pray together sections I, II III, IV & VII from the Litany, taken from Common Worship. <https://daily.commonworship.com/prayers/litany.html>

Desert Stones: Lay down the lie. Pick up the truth.

- Invite people to take a small stone and hold it quietly. Reflect on one “lie” that has been whispered to you in difficult times (e.g., “God does not care about me”).
- Silently surrender this lie, and in its place, speak a truth from Scripture (e.g., “Nothing can separate us from the love of God”).

Prayer Prompt: Lord Jesus, I give You this burden. Replace it with Your truth and love. Amen.

Silent Candle Reflection: Be still in the light of God’s love.

- Light a candle and sit quietly for a few moments.
- Let the flame remind you: God is present, even in the wilderness. His love is steadfast.

You may wish to pray with the words of John 1:5: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”

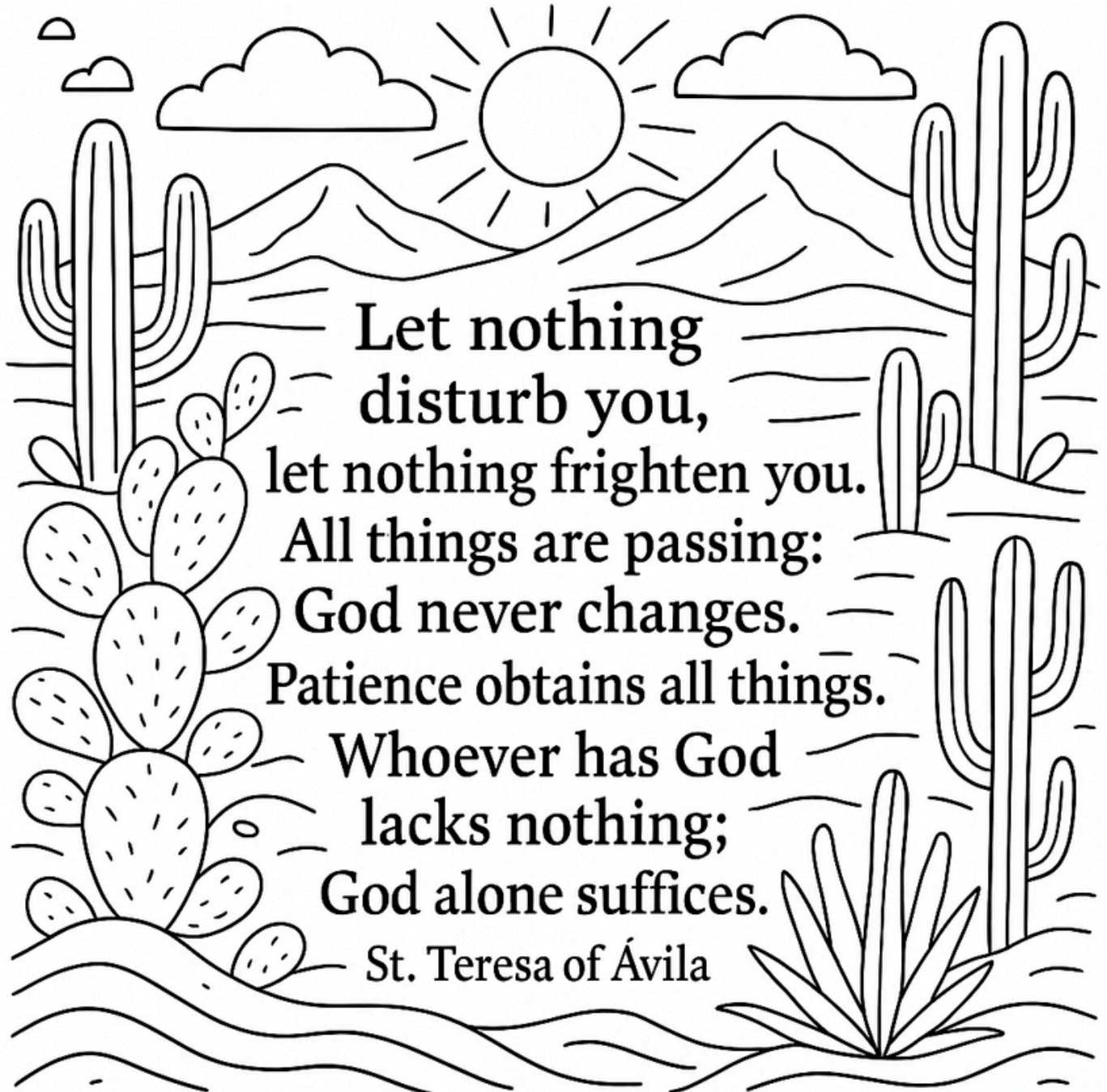
“Shaped in the Wilderness”

Give each person a portion of playdough or kinetic sand. Invite them to prayerfully shape or form something that expresses one of the following:

- A lie or temptation they are letting go of.
- A symbol of God's truth or love that sustains them.
- A shape representing their prayer for trust or strength in a “desert” time of life.

Pray in Colour: The words of Teresa of Avila

Praying in colour is a simple, creative way to connect with God through drawing and colouring. Play some quiet music and invite people to draw/colour with their thoughts and prayers using blank paper or the printable doodle on the following page.



**Let nothing
disturb you,
let nothing frighten you.
All things are passing:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
Whoever has God
lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.**

St. Teresa of Ávila