

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

## "GOOD NEWS AND GIVING LIVES" | PSALM 103: 1-2 | PASTOR BRIAN

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is a fun way to celebrate the end of the year?

### "Year End Review of 2021" (Psalm 103: 1-2)

The psalmist suggests that God has blessed people with so many benefits that they could forget some of them. What does that say about God's character/qualities?

The act of remembering what God has done naturally leads to a grateful heart which blesses God. What are other effects of remembering what God has done in our lives?

### "Ministry Highlights"

Pastor Brian shares many stories and highlights of different ministries at Calvary Murrieta. Which one encouraged you? Surprised you? Caused you to have questions?

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

The whole body of believers at Calvary Murrieta should celebrate what God has done this past year because all had a part to play, from donating money to praying to participating as mentors, teachers, musicians, greeters, hosts, and many other roles. Reflect on the role you played this past year and thank God for the opportunity to be part of Calvary Murrieta. Ask Him to show you what good works He has prepared for you to do in this upcoming year.

## Good News & Giving Lives

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-4 Dan: Missions Prayer. Biblical Counseling. Women's Min Mtg.
- B. Slide5 Wed Night: Come join me This Wed Night in a, "Guided Time with God, through **Prayer and Reflection, on Scripture.**"
- C. Prayer: The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.

### II. Slide6 Intro: Year End Review 2021

- A. Slide7 *Good News & Giving Lives*: Paul said to the church in Thessalonica, *We loved you so much that we shared w/you not only God's Good News but our own lives too!*
  1. We shared our message, we shared our lives.
- B. CM Vision Statement: **a Vision** looks out to the future and defines what we want to be; it is our aspirations and goals.
  1. It's not saying, *we've nailed it*, but articulating what we desire to nail.
  2. Slide8 #1 in our Vision Statement says, *We see a united body of worshipers enjoying God, loving unconditionally, giving freely, and attracting their neighbors to Jesus.*
    - a) So this is what you'd **expect to see** if we are aiming at those verbs.
    - b) **The Gospel** isn't only the *right words* being **spoken** but the *Rt life* being **lived**.
    - c) **Good News & Giving Lives**
- C. Slide9 Ps.126:3 **The Lord** has done great things for us; we are glad.
- D. Ps.65:11 **You** crown the year with **Your** goodness, And **Your** paths drip with *abundance*. [Let's just make sure we're on His path]
- E. Ps.103:1,2 *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!*  
2 *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and **forget not** all his benefits.*

1. We understand *Jesus blessing little children* ... **but** how do **we** bless **God**? David tells us in vs.2.

a) A person blesses God by *remembering* all that God has done and *thanking* him for it. If *God blesses people* with gifts, *people bless God* with gratitude.

F. I asked some of our leaders to send me updates from this year. **I pray** this will give you a good perspective about 2021. **I pray** this will bless you. **I pray** you will leave church today with *a beautiful and enthralling vision of God crowning the year of 2021 with His goodness, & seeing His paths dripping w/abundance* as Ps.65:11 said.

### III. Slide10 **YOUTH MINISTRIES**

A. Jasmine Boucher, Calvary Kids.

B. **VBS** - 200 kids attended and had a blast learning that *God hears, comforts, and saves us*.

C. **Harvest Festival** - hundreds of families attended and played games, ate yummy food and connected with each other

D. **Christmas Play** - 35 kinder -5th grade students sang and acted out the Nativity Story for the 1st time in decades at CM.

E. **Sun & Wed Volunteers** returned to the classroom and taught lessons that encourage kids to know who God is.

F. Looking forward to **winter camp, drama club, and a multipurpose room** in 2022!

G. **Shane, 678, Middle School Ministry**: has continued to flourish this past year. We have grown in number consistently on Sunday's & Wednesday's. **We have had fun** with video game nights, playing basketball, summer camp, and having bible studies.

H. **A couple highlights:** **1)** We started our first **Student Leadership**, where students help assist and serve in youth group weekly. **2)** We had a Missions Month where Pastor Larry shared with Rise High and 678 about the heart of **Missions here at CM**, learning about missionaries overseas, **and** how we can assist them *prayerfully and practically* – desiring to *Love God completely and Make Disciples globally*.

- I. **Cameron Seely, RISE HIGH:** This past year we have really grown closer together as a group. Our hope and prayer has always been to be a group that allows young people to feel like they are family, namely as the family of God. I feel like that has really become the culture. The most recent example of this was our **thanksgiving family dinner** we did last month. Students showed up in droves and even invited friends (both saved and unsaved). And in a time of *giving thanks* most of them communicated their thankfulness for **the family that RISE HIGH is to them**.
- J. Can't also go without expressing the wonderful devotion and time that our incredible *volunteer leaders and mentors* are to their small groups. **Real connections are being made in Christ in RISE HIGH and it's a joy to be apart of it.**
- K. **Jason Bell, Young Adult Ministry:** This year was a really healthy season for our young adult's ministry we saw not only growth in the number of those who attend YAMS, **but** also growth in our leadership team as well. **Our leadership team** has now grown to 10 members who are currently involved in making major decisions for our program, leading small group discussions, teaching, worship and even hosting our fellowship nights. We've also had some changes in *relationship status* as well (which is a big deal for young adult's).
1. This year We were blessed to witness the **marriage** of 2 of our most consistent young adults *Lauren and Sergio* (They starting coming to yams a year ago and have attended every service since, **except for** the one that was on the night of their *wedding rehearsal*).
  2. We were also excited to hear of the **engagement** of *Andrew and Alyssa*.
- L. **Most importantly we've seen *spiritual growth & lifestyle changes*.** We've had people tell us that they're *done with the bar and club scene* and that they have more fun hanging out at Yam's (that's probably because a typical Saturday night goes until 2am), we also have had a lot of positive feedback with our guys and girls small group, some people saying that its their favorite part of the night because its a time when they are *honest with themselves* and *real with each other* in a *safe place*. We've also been doing a **guys hangout** on Thursday which has been a great time of food and fellowship we've seen friendships develop and deepen even outside of

Yam's, and we have had awesome times of personal discipleship. Some our young adult have grown so much over the year and I couldn't be prouder of them. It has been truly a blessing to lead this ministry, & I cant wait to see what the new year brings

#### IV. Slide11 **COMMUNITY GROUPS**

A. **Andrew Paulsen**: We had 4 groups meet in the Spring and 5 groups meet in the fall and each session had 40-60 people, getting to know God and each other better, as they discussed the Sunday message, prayed, and had fun. Many people said they liked having someone to sit next to and talk with at church. Some said it helped them pay more attention to the Sunday message and learned more. Others liked knowing there were people praying for them through the week. Most said it was great getting to know more people at their own church at a deeper level. I loved watching the leaders grow in their confidence and ability to guide discussions and share their faith with the people who came and it was awesome visiting groups that had loud laughter and sweet prayers. I'm blessed to serve with such a great team.

1. **Kristyn Suemnick** (Administrative Assistant): I continue to be amazed at the work God is doing in CG's. God faithfully brings together groups of people that are SO very unique and different from each other and he binds us together in faith. I didn't grow up having "fellowship" with other believers, not like this, and seeing what it does for myself personally, my husband and I, and extending to our 2 young kids - it's pretty awesome. We all need fellowship and to be able to gather with others to share the joys and burdens of life. The value of community is greater than we realize and I'm grateful to be a part of it.

#### V. Slide12 **MOMS (Moms on a Mission)**

A. **Jessica Cernetic**: MOMS continues to be a blessing. One mom recently shared how she met moms through this ministry *that helped her through loss*, & now help her through *parenthood*. She's grateful for the friendships that have grown through MOMS.

1. Another mom *vulnerably* shared a prayer request of a very serious family struggle this year. She actually used the words “*giving up hope*” which broke my heart. I shared resources with her & so did one of our MOMS’ speakers, & I committed to standing in the gap to pray for this family. I received a heart-lifting text a few days ago that her child is making incredible progress. All glory be to God! He is so good & so faithful all the time & has truly blessed the **Moms On a Mission**.
2. \*Jessica asked, Please give a shout-out to the *Child Care Volunteers*, when we don’t have helpers the moms miss out, so a huge thank you!

## VI. Slide13 CALVARY CLASSES

- A. Andrew Lacasse: 48 people completed 1 of our Educational Classes.
- B. About 20 people were baptized.
- C. Men’s Ministry had about 170 men go through studies on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Many connecting with each and starting to serve in the church.
- D. We were able to help several dozen individuals and families in financial need (benev)

## VII. Slide14 CM CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

- A. Jen Bursch, *Head of Schools*. (Pre-school - 8th Grade, & ISP)
  1. This past year at CMCS we saw tremendous growth & financial stability.
  2. The School has been able to completely stabilize financially, is operating on a balanced budget, and is no longer financially dependent on the Church in any way.
  3. CMCS has welcomed so many new students and families throughout the year. We have been able to upgrade technology and improve our school facilities.
  4. We welcomed *Assistant Principal Christy Hartman* and she has been a huge asset to the school and our admin staff. We are grateful for our teaching staff, support staff, and administrators - each of whom fought

through some challenging times to keep our kids *on campus learning* in person, participating in chapel together as they learn more about Jesus, *and* engaging socially with other kids on the playground.

## VIII.Slide15 **Women's Min, Foster, Safe Fam, Justice, Community Outreach**

- A. **Kelly Bell, Women's**: Fun to see the women come back in person for Bible study. A number of women got saved at Xmas event. A lot of new ladies have been attending BS. Many Women have been listening to *Coffee with Kelly* for encouragement and have been responding.
- B. **Fostering A Hope Comm** (Kel & Charlotte). We were able to begin a support group for Foster/Adopt Parents. We have watched them begin to encourage and support one another, especially new foster parents, and new Safe Families for children host families, and we are excited and committed to learn better ways to support our foster community.
- C. **Safe Families: Paula Thompson**: Over the last year, **4** of our CM families have hosted children, approx **10 x's**. And we're excited that we have **a new host family** who have already opened their home for their **1st hosting**.
- Highlights**: how our church responds to the kids being hosted by families. Most recently, a 6 week hosting of a 14 year old. **From** our HS ministry, leaders and students including him in their activities, **to** getting to mountain bike ride with men in the men's group. **He felt accepted and like he belonged**. **I saw the body of Christ being the hands and feet of Jesus to this teenager who has been through hard times**. I believe lasting impressions were made and that **seeds** were planted in this boy's heart and mind, **and** I'm so thankful for our church helping to make this happen.
  - Another highlight is from a visit from a 21 yr old**, who we hosted 3-4 years ago for several months. What a blessing to spend some time with him and see him growing in his faith, and to have played a very small part in

his life. And instead of needing something from us, we were the ones being encouraged by him.

- D. **Justice**: We are excited to meet for **JM's Sun** in person again soon. Thank you to the *regulars* who have been faithful to come to our monthly meetings, to pray and get further educated on Anti-HT, and continue to learn more ways to be involved. We were excited to see the **Lick family** commit to **servicing in Belize** with *H.T. Institute* this year. We also are excited to see others find and step into their calling. I personally was able to experience **mentoring a girl**, and enjoying a closer partnership with *Rebirth Homes*. Thank you for those who have donated to **JM/ Children at Risk** we were able to donate funds for many victims and organizations throughout the year.
- E. **Community Outreach**: We are excited to strengthen partnership with our friends at **Mur Community Pantry**, as well as other orgs. Kelly also said, *watching are church community show so much generosity has actually been a huge highlight for me*. I plan to continue to find even more ways to reach our community.

## IX. Slide16 **WELCOME TEAM MINISTRY** (ushers, greeters, communion)

- A. **Tony Schaffner**: We are excited to have our welcome team back after a break for Covid, and we will be beginning a "*Starting Point*" class in January 2022 for those who are new to the church. (Ps: I love the new Welcome Center out front)

## X. Slide17 **GLOBAL MISSIONS**

- A. **Larry Hansen**: This is a look back at what was supported through the mission's department. It was a year of uncertainty, however you as a church body donated your *talents and treasures* so that many could be helped.
1. 1st, we have designated **11%** of all tithe dollars to be directed towards Missions. (National average is 3%, **.5% to the unreached!**)
  2. This year we were able to support 11 individual people that are serving in the field. **As well 8 other agencies**. We sent out **2 new families to Asia** and ask 3 new missionaries to candidate for a future missions field position.

3. The areas that we have **people or agencies** that we partner with were working in several different countries. Albania, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Belize, China, Cypress, Cambodia, Kosovo, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Peru, Thailand, Syria, Ukraine.
4. As we partner, we are focused on our **2 unreached people groups**, the **Rohingya and the Hani**. All while continuing to support the other **Calvary Murrieta missionaries**. We are involved in things like **literacy, education, providing emergency food, emergency medical care, health care training, discipleship of children and adults, anti-human trafficking, livelihood projects like poultry farming, sewing, carpet weaving, teacher training, in field medics in conflict zones, school building bible translation, supporting national leaders to lead their churches.**
5. This year we responded to emergency needs in **Haiti** after an earthquake **and** to a special urgent request to help evacuate personnel out of **Afghanistan**.
6. We developed a **monthly prayer night** specify for our missionaries, we received many request and got the privilege to see the Lord work on so many different continents.
7. **\$9400.00** goes out for regular monthly support. **\$112,800.00 annually.**
8. A total of **\$46,000** was sent out to meet other **non-designated needs** such as relief. **So we sent out roughly \$160,000.00 to the field this past year.**
9. **Also** individuals from our church also gave money that was sent directly to some of the ministries that we support. **Such as** purchasing cows for a dairy in Armenia. You funded an educational project for **Books Unbound** in one weekend. You sent support for a girl's home, tools for construction workers, and support for **nursing care** as one of our missionaries broke both of their wrist in Albania.
10. **CM hosted a missions conference** focused on the Rohingya for participants from around the globe.

11. Our **graphic arts department** created several necessary **prayer guides** for partnering agencies.
12. Our **Calvary Kid's** hosted a Sunday highlighting refugees.
13. Our **Middle & HS ministries** spent the month of August focused on Missions, **and** participated in "**A Taste of Missions**" outreach in San Diego serving refugees.

## XI. Slide 18 **MINISTRIES, BC, CR, DC, GS.**

- A. **Dan Effinger, Biblical Counseling:** 15 counselors persevered through COVID restrictions. **Even while the church was shut down counselors remained faithful to their ministry and care for counselees.** Our volunteer counselors provided **1,350 hours** of counseling services to CM and our community!
- B. **This was a letter from one of our counselees.** "Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and from whom all blessings flow. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am writing this in hopes that another with challenges in one's **recovery** can become a blessed and highly favored follower and disciple of Christ. My heart is overflowing with love and gratitude for the counseling ministry at Calvary Chapel Murrieta, mostly for my counselor \_\_\_\_\_. You see, I am suffering from PTSD. God is the reason I am here today & my hope and faith is continually increased & restored by God due to a greater blessing of receiving the biblical counseling from your church's' ministry. For 35 years I tried secular counseling to no avail. I am truly blessed for the guidance and care of all involved with your counseling ministry and I promote it to others in need. Which, by the way is how I heard of Calvary Murrieta's *Biblical Church Counseling*. Although I did not chose my counselor, God had a plan for me to have this person as my counselor. **I am grateful for the empathy, endless patience and prayers for me but mostly for the Godly counsel.** During my 2 years of counsel I learned biblical coping and communication skills not attainable thru pure secular counseling. I learned that my past is not who I am. It is not my identity. My Identity is in Christ. I am a loved child of God. And He is the author of my story. And my story isn't finished yet. The 'gap' that was always missing in previous counseling is fulfilled in my journey to

recover. I am thankful for the personal discipleship and the tools given to me by my counselor that I can carry with me to use in any challenges that come my way. I can say without a shadow of doubt that my counselor and all involved in the counseling ministry were put in this position to fulfill Christ's greatest purpose to be a blessing to others and making believers and disciples of Christ. Although I am not a member of Calvary Chapel Murrieta I tithe to this church in hopes that this ministry can continue to bless those in need. I believe that God put my counselor and this ministry in my life for a season and I wanted to let you know that I've learned skills for a lifetime! Thank you for providing this type of counseling for the community. All glory and honor to God. Amen!"

- C. **Celebrate Recovery** continued through the year and completed (2) step studies with over 20 individuals working through various struggles and recovery. During this past year we added 6 new people to the leadership team.
- D. **Divorce Care** Completed 2 sessions. Through the faithfulness of those attending they discovered God's faithfulness and care. They were encouraged by the care and compassion of Rick and Loraine Deleon, as well as those who were going through the same type of hurts in the loss of their marriages.
- E. **Grief Share** completed 2 sessions and the tireless efforts of Pastor Des and his wife Jan and their leadership team blessed all who attended.

This letter is from an individual who attended ...

1. THANK YOU for walking with us through the grief. I've thought about the things I am grateful for these past several days as Thanksgiving approaches. One of the greatest blessings in dealing with grief has and will always be the grief group that you all both lead and participated in. I believe I am doing better in terms of *grief to joy* for my mom but I have my moments and seasons where it is very hard. I still struggle with my son which has a continuum of loss and grieving. Having learned so much from the Grief Share group, I continue to apply as much as I can to *moving toward joy*. So if I may leave you with some words, I just want to say Thank you for such kindness, generosity and love. You have given

me something so precious and beautiful that I can't really explain it in words.

F. **End:**

1. *We loved you so much that we shared with you not only **God's Good News but our own lives, too.*** Calvary Murrieta, It is wonderful to serve along side you, as we continue to *find what God is doing and join Him in it!* [Invite up worship team]
2. I would like to *pray a blessing over you* adapted from **Numb.6:24-26** ... *May the Lord bless you* (CM family) *and protect you* (in all of 2022). *May the Lord smile on you* (He loves you so much) *and be gracious to you* (refreshing you, like dew to a plant). *May the Lord show you his favor* (sensing his approval & support of you) *and give you his peace* (enjoying His quietness of Spirit).

G. Come join me **Wed Night** in a, *Guided Time with God, through **Prayer and Reflection, on Scripture.***

H. Keywords: community, fellowship, disciple, forgiveness, God, Glory, gospel, Jesus, missions, prayer, relationship.