

This guide is intended to help you be better prepared to engage in making disciples in your small group. They are based off of the Sunday sermon listed in the top right corner. If you missed Sunday, make sure you take the time to listen to the sermon before your small group meeting. You can find the messages on our website.

Prayerfully considering these questions will help equip you to practice mutual ministry with your family at Vertical. While it's not likely that all of these questions will be asked during your small group meeting, we believe that your personal walk with Christ will be strengthened as you meditate upon the truths that God is teaching you through His Word.

1. Suffering is presented in the sermon as an opportunity to grow closer to Christ. Share personal experiences where suffering has led to a deeper understanding of Christ's love and sacrifice.
2. What kind of trials are you in right now? Where are you setting your mind? What is true about God in your situation?
3. How are sadness and grieving gifts from God?
4. What is your plan for "aiming up" when your next bout with suffering comes?
5. The Israelites complained and wanted to return to slavery in Egypt when God let them suffer in the wilderness. What things are you tempted to run to suffering? What does Yahweh want you to do?
6. Why does Yahweh let you suffer in this life? What is He trying to accomplish?
7. Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and Caleb responded with trust in God's word in the face of the Israelites' lack of faith. How can you cultivate a similar response when faced with doubt or fear in our own spiritual journeys? Consider Numbers 14: 6-9 in your discussion
8. Consider God's command for the Israelites to enter the Promised Land. God calls us to step out in faith, even when faced with the unknown. Are there areas in your life where God is asking you to trust Him and move forward despite not seeing the full picture? How can you exercise faith when God's plans require you to step into unfamiliar territory?
9. Discuss the Israelite spies sent to Canaan, their observations, and the differing reports brought back to the people. Consider how the Israelites faced uncertainty and fear. Reflect on times when you've encountered doubt and how it impacted your faith journey. Ask yourself, "do I focus on the obstacles or God's promises?"
10. The sermon mentioned the temptation to revert to old habits when faced with suffering. Share ways in which you have successfully resisted this temptation and maintained your faith during difficult times.

11. Discuss how suffering can bring us closer to Christ and transform us. How can we, as a community, support each other in embracing Christ-like resilience in the face of trials?