



## Week Two

### Opening Prayer

God, thank you for the chance to gather and reflect on the ways you invite us to both receive and give encouragement. Help us to see new ways to elevate others and honor you. Amen.

### Talk It Over

This weekend we continued our series inviting all of us to be the kind of people who serve as hero makers. In a culture that pushes us to rise as the hero, these ideas stand in contrast to cultural norms. Hero makers in this context are people who build platforms for others to stand on, encourage others, help others win, and focus on the team win.

**Note to Group Leaders:** If your group used the discussion guide last week, see if any of the answers to the following questions have changed or if anyone spent time reflecting on these during the week.

- Who is your favorite fictitious superhero? Why did you pick them as your favorite?
- Who is your favorite real-life hero? What is it about this person you respect so much?
- Who in your life has served as a hero maker for you?

### Read Proverbs 11:25 (NIV) and John 14:27 (NIV)

Power is not just something that we all have but it is also something we all respond to. When we hear about our own personal power or influence we can respond with resistance, anxiety, excitement, or varying emotions. What we looked at this weekend was the idea of sharing our power or influence in order to elevate or encourage others. This is not a passive stance but an empowered one.

- Do you tend to protect your power or share it with others?
- What response does the idea of personal power evoke in you?

### Read: Hebrews 10:24 (NIV) and 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

Our world is full of hurting people. We all struggle at times with the demands and pain that comes with living in 2019. We see increases in anxiety, depression, debt, and over-scheduling, *And* we see people (including ourselves) in desperate need of a kind word or an encouraging talk.

- Who have you encouraged this week?
- Did someone encourage you this week?
- Sometimes you can be the observer watching something encouraging unfold. Did you see or experience something that encouraged you recently? Share that with us.

### Read Proverbs 10:11 (NLT), Acts 9:26-27 (NLT) and Luke 4:18 (The Voice)

So how do we do this? Even if we are encouragers naturally how can we do better? We can speak life-giving words, embody hospitality, and use Jesus as the model. Let's take a closer look:

## **Speak Life-Giving Words**

Our words can bring life or they can cause pain. Sometimes being an encourager means we take the time to really think about what we want to say, how we want to make people feel, and how we can best do that in our everyday lives.

- If you take an honest inventory of your spoken words, how are you doing with speaking life-giving words?
- How are your thoughts when you are not with people? Do you see how your thoughts impact your spoken words?

## **Embody Hospitality**

Hospitality is not just hosting people. It's about welcoming others and sharing space. It communicates "I see you and you belong". Hospitality connects us. In true hospitality, we make a point to be a mirror for others, allowing them to feel their worth through our eyes, posture, and attitude.

- Is hospitality something that comes naturally for you? If you struggle with it, does this definition help you see it more clearly in your life?
- Consider how many people you interact with throughout any given day. Do people walk away from your encounter a little more encouraged than before they saw your smile, kind word, or caring gesture.?
- What are some simple ways to begin embodying hospitality?

## **Use Jesus as the Model**

Jesus came for the sick. We see over and over again in scripture. He constantly went toward those who were hurting, in the margins, and forgotten. Using his model as a way to encourage is simply trying to see people through his eyes. How can we look at what he has shown us and implement that into our lives in order to embody and consistently model his love for others.?

- What would it take to help you see things differently and respond with encouragement to those around you?
- Do you allow Jesus space to guide your day and interactions? What do you experience when you are able to do that?
- With all of this discussion can you see ways to shift from striving to be a hero in order to be a hero maker?

## **Closing Prayer**

God, we desire to be hero makers. We want to bring your love and encouragement to others. We want to be a light for so many that are hurting in our sometimes dark world. Be with us during the week, speak to us, and help us to feel your presence in the next week as we go about our days.

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## **How To Use this Discussion Guide**

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.