



ZIMZUM DISCIPLESHIP VIDEO #2:

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF STORY

SMALL GROUP SESSION 2 - HEARING PARABLES IN A NEW WAY

GATHERING

Opening Prayer:

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Begin with brief check-ins and the opening questions below:

Opening Questions:

How has it been practicing zimzum discipleship and lectio divina? What have you noticed when you have lingered with scripture using lectio divina? Have you been able to find space in your life to pray through scripture?

Reading with *Lectio Divina*

1. Read the text below from Luke 15:1-10 slowly aloud. Sit for a time and notice where your heart takes you.
2. Share a word or phrase that you noticed. Next, meditate on that word or phrase for 4 minutes. Or perhaps imagine taking on a role in this narrative and playing the story over again in your mind during this time.
3. Pray the passage aloud slowly again, or simply pray the word or phrase that has taken your attention.
4. Consider together how this passage might lead you to live more faithfully as a disciple of Jesus, and let the Spirit guide you as to next steps for contemplatively living this passage.

Reading: Luke 15:1-10 (The Message Bible)

By this time a lot of men and women of questionable reputation were hanging around Jesus, listening intently. The Pharisees and religion scholars were not pleased, not at all pleased. They growled, "He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends." Their grumbling triggered this story. "Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home call in your friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!' Count on it—there's more joy in heaven over one sinner's rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue. "Or imagine a woman who has ten coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and scour the house, looking in every nook and cranny until she finds it? And when she finds it you can be sure she'll call her friends and neighbors: 'Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!' Count on it—that's the kind of party God's angels throw every time one lost soul turns to God."

Content Study

- Watch a short video from Dr. Amy-Jill Levine on parables at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvYi9Z9-OOY
- Reflect on the video together. What did you notice? What caught you?

Reflection Questions

- Dr. Amy-Jill Levine says that we like to find the meaning in parables because we like to box God in and tame God. What do you make of this statement from her?
- The parables of Luke 15 focus on lost things: a sheep, a coin, a son. In the video, Dr. Levine describes the lost son being the older brother out in the field whom the father didn't have time to call. She asks, "Whom have we not counted?" Reflect on that question and her interpretation of this parable together.
- Read the parable of "The Pearl of Great Price" found in Matthew 13:45-46. In Dr. Levine's reading, Jesus says that God's kingdom is like a merchant who finds the most important thing in his life and becomes the owner of a pearl and is no longer a merchant. She asks: "Do we know when enough is enough?" How would you answer her question?
- It's easy to think that we know the stories and meanings of scripture already. Today's video suggests that there are always new ways to hear God's word. What are ways that you can hear scripture in a new way, or as "a new song in a different key"? How can you incorporate this more into your life?

Final Reflections

- What has captured your heart or your imagination in today's discussion?
- Where have you seen God—or Love—recently?
- What might you intentionally do over the next 2-4 weeks to bring you closer to God?

Closing Prayer

Almighty and Eternal God, you sacrificially withdrew from a place within yourself in order to create the entirety of the cosmos so that you might be in relationship with us and all of creation. Help us to embrace zimzum discipleship and make space in our own lives, that we might more faithfully follow in the way of Jesus who gave of himself for the salvation and healing of the whole world. All this we ask in the name of the Risen Christ, who dwells endlessly with you and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*