

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus, we invite You to search our hearts today and to speak clearly through Your Word. Help us receive Your correction the way James and John did—seeing it not as shame, but as loving coaching from a good Savior who made us for more. Ignite in us a fresh, passion for the Lord and show us where our zeal has drifted into offense, retaliation, or apathy. As we talk and listen, give us a specific step to move forward in obedience, perseverance and joy. Amen!

ICE BREAKER

Jesus called James (and John) “the Sons of Thunder” (which would have also made a great name for a wrestling tag team). Have you ever been given a nickname? If so, what was it? If not, what would your WWE name be?

SERMON OVERVIEW



[SCAN FOR
SERMON CLIP](#)



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In this week's message, Pastor CJ invites us into the raw and authentic journey of James, one of Jesus' original disciples. Through Luke chapter 9, we witness a transformative moment where James and his brother John, fueled by righteous indignation, ask Jesus if they should call down fire to destroy a Samaritan village that rejected Him. Their knee-jerk reaction reveals something profound about our own spiritual lives: passion for God is essential, but unchecked passion can lead us astray. We discover that Jesus doesn't cancel our enthusiasm; He calibrates it. The message challenges us to examine whether our zeal is rooted in redemption or retaliation, in God's glory or our wounded pride. What makes this teaching especially encouraging is the reminder that God chooses passionate, imperfect people and patiently refines them. James eventually became the first disciple martyred for his faith, proving that God doesn't discard us when we get it wrong. Instead, He faithfully walks with us, shaping our fire into something that truly honors Him. The call for us is clear: bring bold enthusiasm to our faith, but remain teachable when Christ corrects our course.

READ SCRIPTURE

LUKE 9:51-56

CONNECT RELATIONALLY

1) The sermon described James as a reactionary disciple. When you face frustration, rejection, or criticism, what is your natural reaction: withdrawal, confrontation, defensiveness, or something else?

2) The analogy of a basketball “heat check” described how momentum and confidence can sometimes lead to poor decisions. When have you experienced something similar in your spiritual life - where too much enthusiasm or emotion led you to act without stopping to discern His will?

3) What emotions arise in you when you think about God rebuking or disciplining you? How does seeing it as loving correction (Hebrews 12:5–6) change your attitude toward conviction and spiritual “coaching”?

**GROW
SPIRITUALLY**

4) In Luke 9:51–56, James and John respond to the rejection of Jesus by asking if they should call down fire from heaven. How does this passage shape your understanding of what success and failure in evangelism means? How might it correct some assumptions you've held about what our response should be when people don't respond to the gospel favorably?

5) Jesus rebukes James and John but does not dismiss them. What does it reveal about their spiritual maturity that they received Jesus's rebuke rather than defending themselves or becoming discouraged? What does this teach us about how Jesus corrects His followers and always works through imperfect people?

6) Pastor CJ emphasized that passion itself is not the problem. What are some of the positive ways passion and zeal can strengthen a person's faith and influence others? How would you define Godly passion versus misguided passion? What key truths help you distinguish between the two?

**LIVE
GENEROUSLY**

7) In what areas of your life might your zeal be functioning without grace, and how could you recalibrate that passion to honor God more effectively?

8) Jesus responds to the rejection in the village by simply saying, in effect, "Let's move on." Is there a situation, conflict, or offense in your life right now where the healthiest step may be to move on? What has kept you from doing so?

9) Pastor CJ used the basketball analogy of "points off turnovers." How can believers learn to recover quickly from mistakes instead of letting a single failure turn into discouragement or a loss of momentum in faith? How can we ensure a "bad play" doesn't become a "bad game?"

**TAKE
ACTION**

Based on our conversation today, how is the Holy Spirit inviting you to take a next step in practical application? Please answer this statement:
I am feeling convicted to take the following action (keep it simple):

Please ask each member to share their step if they have one. It is ok if you are still discerning and need time to process, pray and ponder.

**PRAY
TOGETHER**

Please take a few moments to ask each member to share a joy or praise and an area of concern. Ask someone to pray over these requests, and please distribute them to all group members so you may continue to intercede for one another between your meetings.

**ENGAGE
TOGETHER**

Easter Egg Hunts - Across all of our campuses we put on community Easter Egg Hunts as a way to connect with our neighbors and invite them to attend one of our Easter services. This is a tremendous way for your small group to serve together and help introduce new families in our community to the hospitality of our church. It takes a lot of volunteers to put this on so please consider how you and your group can help.