

..... QUESTIONS FOR
GROUP DISCUSSION

STRIPPED

When God's Call
Turns From "Yes!"
to "Why Me?"

INTRODUCTION

STRIPPED

I DIDN'T SEE IT COMING

God's Call
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HI FRIEND! I can't wait to start this journey with you! This book, *Stripped*, has meant more to me than any other project I've ever worked on. It is an overflow of what God is doing in my life. I have felt every single page of this book and have prayed that God would use it to radically change your life and help you find the freedom and joy you are looking for in your walk with Him.

This discussion guide is meant to make it easier for you to apply the truths of God's Word into your life. You can use it alone, or you can get together with some friends and hash things out together as God reveals them to you.

If you're ready, let's roll! The intro questions are meant to help you get to know the members of your group better.

1. What are your expectations as you begin reading *Stripped*? What do you hope to get out of this book?
2. Summarize the highlights—both good and bad—of your relationship with God if you have one.
3. Have you ever had a time in your life when you asked "why me?" How did you handle those times?
4. I started the intro with my all-time favorite quote by A.W. Tozer: "It is doubtful that God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply." What is your reaction to those words?
5. Take some time to pray, asking the Lord to reveal Himself to you through this book study.

CHAPTER 1

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CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

God's Call
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CONGRATULATIONS—you survived week 1! The intro wasn't so bad. I bet you didn't see that coming (ha ha). This week we'll be talking about God's call in your life. Get your phone out and get ready to answer some questions.

1. When did you sense God calling you and how have you responded?
2. In this chapter, I gave several biblical examples of people who answered God's call in their lives. Who was your favorite and why?
3. "God can speak anytime He wants to in any way He wants to." Describe a time in your life when you heard God speak to you.
4. On pages 34–35 I listed four things that keep some of us from hearing God's call in our life. Which one stuck out to you?
5. If you've never responded to God's call, what's keeping you from doing it right now?

CHAPTER 2

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ARE WE THERE YET?

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THIS WEEK we're going to talk about waiting. So what are you waiting for? Let's get started!

1. Why do you think waiting is so hard?
2. Talk about a time in your life—maybe even now—where you found yourself waiting. How did you feel about God during those times?
3. What have been some of the biggest lessons you've learned in the waiting seasons of your life?
4. Have you ever been tempted to take matters into your own hands instead of simply waiting on God? Give an example of this in your life.
5. Read Ezekiel 22:19–20. Are there some things in your life you think God is trying to strip you of? Make a short list.
6. What are some practical things you can do to help you wait well moving forward?

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CHAPTER 3

I'M TOO SEXY FOR MY SHIRT

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THERE'S NOTHING MORE UGLY THAN PRIDE, yet most of us struggle with it more than we'd like to admit. We're about to start talking about some things that must go, and this week, we're going to focus on my sexy shirt. Okay, maybe not. But let's talk about pride.

1. Samson. What a life. What are some new things you learned about Samson by reading this chapter?
2. I mention four ways that pride reveals itself in the life of Samson. How does your struggle with pride tend to reveal itself?
3. God sometimes strips His children through personal failure and loss. Talk about a time in your life when you failed and how it affected your relationship with God.
4. What is the cure for pride? Are you willing to embrace this cure?
5. In what areas do you need to be more dependent on the Lord?

CHAPTER 4

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PERFECTLY LONELY

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LONELINESS COMES OUT OF NOWHERE and can often be felt in the midst of a crowded room. Most people don't like to talk about loneliness but we're not like most people. Let's move forward this week and see how God strips people from our life to draw us into greater dependence on Him.

1. God loves people more than anything but they can sometimes be a problem. What are some ways you've mismanaged people in your life?
2. Proverbs 29:25 is one of my favorite verses. Describe what happens to the person who makes it a habit to fear other people.
3. "Pleasing man and pleasing God are mutually exclusive. You cannot do both." What do you think of this statement?
4. The wilderness is a lonely place. Has God ever allowed you to go through a wilderness of loneliness? Why do you think He allowed it?
5. How can you become rightly related to the people in your life? What are some practical ways for you to serve the people in your life?

CHAPTER 5

WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

Call
Turns From "Yes!"
to "Why Me?"

YOU ARE LOVED. You are dear. You are seen. Your future is secure. You are known. And you are never alone! Last week we talked about loneliness; it's now time to move out of our comfort zone. We're about to leave the comforts of home and step into the deep. Are you ready?

1. This was my favorite chapter to write in the book. What did you think of it?
2. What are the things that make you feel comfortable? Do you think you could live without them?
3. Have you ever been held back from running full throttle after the Lord because of the binding nature of a relationship in your life? What would it take for you to let that relationship go?
4. "God doesn't need our abilities as much as He needs our surrendered hearts." Is there anything you still haven't surrendered to the Lord?
5. Challenge yourself: Pick a couple of things that you don't think you can live without and ask the Lord to help you live without them until next week. Can you do it?

CHAPTER 6

THIS ISN'T WHAT I SIGNED UP FOR

“God’s Call
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WELL? Is this book what you thought it would be? We’re about to talk about expectations this week. Let’s throw all our preconceived notions out the window and let the Lord paint His Word on our hearts afresh.

1. Disappointment occurs when our destiny doesn’t line up with our dreams. Talk about some of the disappointments in your life.
2. In what ways do you feel like God has failed you in your life? Be honest please.
3. Read pages 118–120. I mention four wrong expectations. Which of these has been a particular struggle for you?
4. What are some lies of our culture that you have believed that may have contributed to your sense of missed expectations?
5. Resolve to readjust some wrong expectations in your life. Tell someone about your resolve.

CHAPTER 7

DON'T STOP BELIEVING

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WHEN IT BOILS DOWN TO IT, it all comes down to faith. Do you believe God? Do you believe His promises? Let's dig deeper into what we really believe, not just what we say we believe. The fruit of faith is a life of peace. I want it. Don't you?

1. Faith is easy when the waves are still and the sun is shining, but not so easy in the storm. Talk about a storm in your life when it was hard to believe.
2. Check out the definition of faith on page 136: faith is believing God's Word and acting on it, no matter how I feel, knowing that God promises a good result." Which part of this definition has been the hardest for you and why?
3. I talk about four reasons we lose our faith. With which did you identify the most?
4. I also talk about four ways to live by faith. In which areas do you need the most help?
5. What's up with your feelings? Why is it important to put aside your feelings when you're walking by faith?
6. Faith is not a one-time process, it's a daily decision to take God at His word and trust Him. In what specific ways do you need to trust Him more today?

CHAPTER 8

ALL EGGS IN THE BASKET OF PRAYER

Prayer
Turns From "Yes!"
to "Why Me?"

I'VE BEEN PRAYING FOR YOU. Do you believe me? I mean it, although I can understand your skepticism. Prayer is something we often talk about more than we practice. Let's start this week's discussion with prayer, all right?

1. Why do you think prayer is a problem for many Christians?
2. What do you think of the story of Hannah? Have you ever gotten desperate enough to pray? Describe your experience.
3. What are some reasons God may not have answered your prayers the way you wanted Him to?
4. Think about something you're praying for right now. Be honest: Are you actually praying about it, or just talking about praying about it? Okay. Now what do you think God may want to change in you through this difficult circumstance?
5. What if you really did believe the truth that God wants to answer your prayers? How would that change your prayer life?

CHAPTER 9

BREADCRUMBS OF GRACE ALONG THE WAY

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I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT GRACE! Grace is the difference between the Christian who survives the stripping process and the one who feels kicked to the curb. Grace is the difference between the joyful Christian and the miserable one. Without grace we're through. Let's turn our eyes and hearts to God's grace this week and find our joy restored!

1. Talk about where you see God's grace in your life.
2. Grace changes everything. How has God's grace changed you?
3. Has God ever done something in your life that is simply unexplainable in human ways? What was your reaction in those times?
4. I mention five problems that keep us from accepting grace. What is the most common reason you have a hard time accepting God's grace?
5. Okay, so you've received God's grace. Now think about ways you can give it out to others in your life as you move forward!

CHAPTER 10

HOLD ON TO YOUR HORSES

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"OF ONE THING I AM PERFECTLY SURE: God's story never ends with ashes," said Elisabeth Elliot and what a great truth this is! I hope you've been strengthened by reading *Stripped*. I hope you've been spurred on to go on to the end. It's not over, my friend. We're just getting started. Our best days are ahead. So hold on to your horses as we talk about endurance this week.

1. What has stood in the way of your endurance lately?
2. What do you turn to when you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel? What's your safety mechanism or the place you tend to go for comfort? Does it please God?
3. Striving for human measures of success can destroy your joy in Christ. Do you tend to be performance oriented? Do you find yourself happier when people praise you? What are some godly success measures we need to be enduring for?
4. We've covered a lot of biblical ground in this book. Who is one of your favorite biblical examples of endurance and why?
5. Do you have balcony people in your life? Are you someone else's balcony person? How can you become a better cheerleader for others to help them go on in endurance?

CHAPTER 11

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MORE THAN ENOUGH

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WE JUST FINISHED TALKING ABOUT ENDURANCE and we've got just one more chapter to go. On this final week, we're going to spend some time fixing our eyes and minds on Jesus. He is more than enough. He is everything you need. I am really praying that this week will be a time of worship and praise for you as we come to the end of our time together.

1. Do me a favor and read Habakkuk 3:17–19 one more time out loud.
2. Take some time and talk about this awesome passage of Scripture. Why does it fill your heart and give you joy?
3. "We live right beneath the surface of enough—always striving but never quite admitting that enough is, well, enough." In what ways are you striving for more in your life?
4. Regardless of your present circumstances, if you know Jesus Christ, you can rejoice in four things that I list on pages 209–12. Now spend time rejoicing in what God is doing in you! Make a list of ways that God has been working in your life the last month and share it with the group.
5. I end the book with these statements: "You heard Christ's call and you answered yes. May your yes be stronger right now than it was on that day." Is this the truth in your life? If not, why not?

CONCLUSION

WORLD CHANGERS

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AS WE CONCLUDE *Stripped: When God's Call Turns from Yes to Why Me?* we will look at real-life examples of some pretty awesome world changers. Talk about your favorite one and give reasons why you loved that example.

Finally, take some time to complete your story on page 235. What's it going to be? Are you going to be a world changer? God longs to use you to make a difference in the world. Do you want Him to?

I'd love to hear from you! Email me at lina@livingwithpower.org, or visit my website livingwithpower.org and linaabujamra.com. I'd love to hear more about you and how this book made a difference in your life!