



Small Group Discussion Guide



PREPARATION

STUDY

Spend the week studying Luke 22:47–53. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools to enhance your preparation.

DETERMINE

Determine which discussion points and study questions will work best for your group.

PRAY

Pray for our pastors and this week's message, the upcoming group time, your group members, and their openness to God's Word.

LANDING POINT

Jesus can restore my deepest wounds when I turn to Him in faith and trust.



GROUP DISCUSSION

❑ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.

❑ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.

❑ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

❑ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

REBUILDING AND RESTORING

We live in a broken world full of broken people. We can't escape the fact that, sooner or later, we will be wounded in this life. Your wound might have been inflicted twenty years ago or it might come next week. Whatever wound you carry, God wants you to give it to Him.

This week your group will discuss how Jesus restores the wounded with His touch. Only He can restore what you have lost or what was damaged when you were wounded. There is no wound so deep that Jesus's healing touch cannot reach it.

Q: *What are some ways people can wound others?*

Q: *In what ways do wounds affect us?*



Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.

BETRAYED BY A FRIEND

There was something strange in the air that night. After celebrating Passover, Jesus and His disciples went to the garden of Gethsemane. His disciples could tell something was weighing heavy on their Master. They saw the agony on His face. Jesus spent time in prayer with the Father. When He finished, something in the distance caught Jesus’s attention. He saw the light of torches and heard the rumbling of a crowd. The chief priests, officers, and elders were headed their way, led by Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus’s disciples. The disciples were confused. Why was Judas leading this crowd?

READ: *Luke 22:47–53. Split into pairs and retell the story in your own words.*

HEALING THE ENEMY

Judas approached Jesus, his hands trembling with nervousness. He leaned in to kiss Jesus on the cheek, and Jesus said, “Will you betray me with a kiss?” He knew Judas had betrayed Him and the Jewish leaders had come for Him. When Peter saw what was happening, he took a sword and lopped off the ear of one of the chief priest’s servants. “Stop!” Jesus said. He wasn’t about to start a war with the sword. He had a different battle to fight at Calvary. The chief priest’s servant screamed in pain. Blood spilled from the side of his head. Jesus touched his ear and instantly his ear was healed. Then Jesus said, “Did you come to arrest a thief? You could have arrested me in broad daylight, but you choose to come in secret in the darkness?”

🗨️: *What does it feel like to be betrayed by someone close to you?*

🗨️: *Imagine yourself in Jesus’s position. What emotions would He have experienced?*

🗨️: *How did the Jewish leaders show cowardice in the story?*



Select 2–3 questions from this section to answer.

God wants to restore your wounds with His touch. For Him to do that, you need to take three steps: 1) identify the wound, 2) identify its message, and 3) respond with faith and trust.

IDENTIFY THE WOUND

There are three kinds of wounds—physical, relational, and spiritual. We see each of these wounds in our story. First, Peter physically wounded the chief priest’s servant, and Jesus restored his ear. Physical wounds can be abuse, an assault, bullying, or even malpractice that has left you disabled. Second, Judas relationally wounded Jesus when he betrayed his friend. Jesus loved Judas, and His disciple betrayed him with, of all things, a kiss. Many of us can relate to what Jesus felt, because we have been wounded by someone close to us. These wounds can break your heart and shatter your trust. Third, the religious leaders arrested Jesus and made sure He was put to death. They were supposed to be the good guys. Sometimes those who are supposed to love, protect, and help you are the ones who wound you spiritually. The sad truth is that, even in the church, wounds are inflicted. Spiritual wounds can feel like the greatest grievance, because God’s people should know better.

Q: *What’s the biggest wound you have received, and who inflicted it?*

IDENTIFY THE MESSAGE

Our wounds aren’t just painful memories from the past. They come with a message. In his book *Wild at Heart*, John Eldredge writes that “every wound, whether it’s assaultive or passive, delivers with it a message. That message feels final and true, absolutely true, because it is delivered with such force. Our reaction to it shapes our personality in very significant ways.”¹

What message is your wound sending? Maybe it’s “You can’t trust anyone. Never let anyone in” or “You don’t have what it takes” or “You’re unlovable.” If you can identify the wound and its message, you’re moving closer to the third step, which is responding in faith and trust.

Q: *What message did that wound give to you?*

RESPOND WITH FAITH AND TRUST

The Good News is that Jesus restores the wounded. Jesus gave His life to restore you from your greatest wound, sin. Your sin inflicted a wound so deep that only the Son of God has the power to do something about it. If Jesus has the power to restore you from your greatest wound, He can heal all the other wounds you carry.

One day Jesus will fully restore you and take away the pain and heartache of all the wounds you've ever carried. Until that time, Jesus asks you to respond to your wounds with faith and trust. Believe He has the power and desire to restore you. Trust that, however long the process takes, He will be with you and guide you through it with His comfort, grace, and love.

As you go through the process of restoration, remember to be:

- *In Prayer.* Go to the Father, the “God of all comfort” (2 Corinthians 1:3–5). Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what you cannot see. Ask for wisdom throughout the process.
- *In God’s Word.* We search the Scriptures to find something more than answers. We search them to find a Person—God. Immerse yourself in God’s Story.
- *In Worship.* Avoid fixating on the wound. Fix your gaze on Jesus and praise Him for who He is and what He does. Let Him turn your pain to praise.
- *In Community.* Don’t hide the wound from others. Invite others to walk alongside you in the process.

Q: *Describe what it looks like to respond to your wounds with faith and trust.*

Q: *Why is it not helpful to fixate on the wound?*



LEAD

Select 1 question from this section to ask your group.

LEARNING TO FORGIVE

As you move forward toward restoration, refrain from retaliation against those who have wounded you. Jesus told Peter to put down the sword, and we should put ours down as well. One of the biggest steps you can take toward restoration is to give the offender to God. Learn to forgive them and love them. This is radical. It bucks against our natural inclinations. That doesn't mean you disregard or downplay the offense. What it does mean is that you become like Jesus to those who have wronged you. Even in His darkest hour, Jesus was able to say:

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

♀: *Does forgiveness always lead to reconciliation? Why or why not?*

♀: *Is there anything keeping you from giving your wounds to God today? If so, what is it?*



PRAY

Go before the Father honestly about any wound (or wounds) you have received from others. Give them to Him. Praise Him that He has the power and desire to restore you. Ask for wisdom and comfort as you allow Him to restore you.



FOLLOW UP

Midway through this week, send a follow-up email to your group with some or all of the following:

- Read Romans 12:17–21 and consider how you could apply Paul's instructions in the way you respond to those who have wounded you.
- Ask the group to share any stories or lessons learned where they see God at work in their lives.



CHARACTERS IN THE STORY “Unlike earlier references to the ‘chief priests’ (vv. 2, 4; 19:47), Luke here introduces the high priest, who plays an important part in Jesus’s trial (v. 54). John 18:10, 13, 24–25 provide the name of the high priest (Caiaphas; see Luke 3:2; Acts 4:6), his servant (Malchus), and the disciple who struck the servant (Simon Peter).”²

THE REAL ENEMY Jesus was opposed by the Jewish leaders, but His main opponent was Satan. That’s why Jesus referred to the “power of darkness” (v. 53) when He rebuked the leaders. This reminds us that, while people may oppose us and wound us in life, our fight is ultimately not against flesh and blood. It’s against the spiritual powers of darkness that wage war against our souls to keep us from God (see Eph. 6:10–18).

WHEN YOU’RE THE OFFENDER If you have wounded others, God calls you to repent and seek forgiveness from those you have hurt. A genuinely repentant person:

1. Accepts full responsibility for their actions.
2. Welcomes accountability from others.
3. Doesn’t continue in the hurtful behavior that caused the wound.
4. Doesn’t get defensive about being in the wrong.
5. Doesn’t minimize hurtful behavior.
6. Doesn’t get resentful if others doubt their sincerity.
7. Makes restitution where it is necessary.³

ENDNOTES:

1. John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart Revised and Updated: Discovering the Secret of a Man’s Soul*, Rev ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 74.
2. D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2130–2131. Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 655.
3. Steve Cornell, “How to Move from Forgiveness to Reconciliation,” *The Gospel Coalition*, March 29, 2012, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-to-move-from-forgiveness-to-reconciliation/>.