

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMARY

In the final message of our series, Chosen for a Purpose: Living as Exiles on Mission, Peter McCarroll explores what it truly means to stand firm in a world full of pressure, anxiety, and subtle cultural idols. Drawing from 1 Peter 5:5b–11, Peter reminds us that true resilience doesn't come from working harder, sleeping less, or pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. Instead, the big idea of the message is simple yet challenging: You don't stand firm by holding it all together. You stand firm by handing it all over. By examining three invitations—letting God handle our reputation, letting God carry our load, and staying spiritually awake—we discover that God's grace meets us in our suffering, restoring and strengthening us in his timing.

SHARE

Think back to a time when you tried to carry a heavy load or fix a stressful situation entirely on your own. What prompted you to try and handle it independently, and what was the physical or emotional toll of doing so?

READ

Let's read 1 Peter 5:5b–11 aloud together.

DISCUSS

Feel free to pick/choose what is most helpful for you. Remember, the goal is to have rich, relational, authentic, Jesus-centered discussions.

1. What stood out to you the most about the sermon?

2. In the Greek text, the command to "cast all your anxiety on him" in 1 Peter 5:7 is grammatically tied directly to the call to "humble yourselves" in verse 6. Looking closely at the phrasing, why do you think Peter frames self-reliance and carrying our own burdens as a form of pride rather than mere responsibility?

3. Peter noted that in a church full of capable, hard-working people in places like Markham, self-reliance often masquerades as responsibility. Where do you find it most difficult to surrender control, and what would it look like for you practically to hand that specific area over to God this week?

4. Peter shared a personal story of how his reputation and professional identity as a pastor fell apart, leading to a profound sense of failure before God rebuilt his vision in an unexpected way ("in due time"). How does knowing that God cares for your reputation change the way you handle public or private disappointment?

5. Peter warned that comfort makes us spiritually sleepy rather than safe, pointing out how the devil prowls like a roaring lion looking for isolated believers. Based on verses 8 through 9, how does staying connected to the broader family of believers help us resist the enemy's whispers of accusation and inadequacy?

NEXT STEPS

- As we wrap up Week 6 of Joining God in the Neighbourhood, the workbook invites us to reflect with the question: "Jesus, what are You inviting me to continue?" Choose one everyday, normal rhythm of mission to keep practicing in your neighbourhood this week—whether it is taking time to notice someone, engaging in a meaningful conversation, or praying for a neighbour. Additionally, identify one heavy burden you are currently carrying and make a deliberate choice to cast it onto God in prayer rather than holding onto it alone.

PRAY

Spend time praying together as a group:

- Spend time in guided, group-oriented prayer. Begin by inviting members to voice brief, specific anxieties or burdens they are carrying, and then take turns praying over one another, asking the God of all grace to restore, strengthen, and establish each person.

CONNECT

Be on the lookout for local community outreach opportunities, neighbourhood initiatives, or upcoming church workshops that our small group can come alongside and support together. Keep an eye on announcements for ways to plug into serving through **The Hub**.

CLOSING

Close your time by reading 1 Peter 5:10–11 aloud over one another as a reminder that God isn't finished yet: "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen."