

PRAXIS

Gospel
identity



HOW TO USE

This discussion guide is designed for you, leaders, to guide your group through this Praxis video series. This series is structured as a conversation based around engaging questions intended to promote thought-provoking discussion throughout each episode. When these questions pop up on the screen, hit pause and turn the question to the group. **Each episode includes the following:**

BIG IDEA

We highlight the big idea behind the episode, emphasizing key scriptures or quotes, to give you and your group an idea of what will be covered in the video. Feel free to share this before pressing play, or after to summarize what was taught into a concise thought.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

If the video question does not invite participation, use these questions to promote further interest. These questions are simply reworded to present the idea in a different way. We invite you to be creative and present the questions in a way that engages your group.

DISCUSS

The video questions are created to encourage conversation and to allow the formation of thoughts and ideas – inviting participants to wrestle with and begin sharing their beliefs and experiences. This is just the beginning. The discussion questions exist to go deeper and to invite more intimate and transformational conversation.

CONTEXT

IN A CHURCH OR LARGE GROUP SETTING

This guide is designed to be used by a leader, so begin by identifying those leaders and getting a guide into each of their hands. If you are watching the episodes with more than 20 people, we would advise identifying multiple leaders and having them focus on a section of the group. When the video questions arise, have them turn to their “small group” and discuss the questions openly. Time dependent, ask each smaller group to share with the larger group what was shared. This invites more people to share without the intimidation of a large group setting. Whether you keep these groups consistent from week to week, or you mix it up, remaining the same for the discussion portion of each episode will allow for greater depth and increased transparency.

IN A SMALL GROUP SETTING

Every leader in the room should have one of these guides prior to beginning the video. It can be helpful to identify one leader as the facilitator, and others as helpers. The facilitator can guide the video question time, with helpers stepping in as needed based on the direction of conversation. Come discussion time, gathering into small groups where one or two leaders oversee a small group can invite quieter participants to engage and allow for greater depth of conversation.

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

While this discussion guide is designed with group participation in mind, the content is something we believe is valuable for every individual. We advise watching these episodes with a pen in hand and paper before you. Have your Bible handy and get ready to pause the video. You get to take this at your pace! When Scripture is referenced, open your Bible and read along – when questions are asked, hit pause and write out your answer. If questions arise in your mind that you are unable to answer, write them down to ask later.

GET READY

Take a breath, the pressure is off. We are not asking you to teach, or to have the answer to every question. Your role is to guide, facilitate, but most importantly to **listen** and **invite**.

Invite questions. Invite conversation.

This discussion guide was created to provide direction for the conversation, but not to limit or harness the group. During the video, listen to what the participants say. Do not feel the need to answer the question yourself. Be comfortable with silence. Give it fifteen seconds before you use a supporting question. Let them think.

“When will I know when to press play again?” Trust me, you’ll know. Conversation will end, or you may even have to re-focus the group if they go down a rabbit trail. If a valuable question or topic is sparked during the video, write it down and say you will return as a group to it during the discussion time.

When it comes time for discussion, follow the pace of the group. Let them naturally guide the conversation around what content stuck out from the video, or what questions were sparked for them. You are not confined to the questions in this guide. Pick the ones that stand out to you or add your own. This time will look different for each group and that’s intentional.

Listen and Invite.

GOSPEL IDENTITY

THREE EPISODES | PRAXIS SERIES 3

BIG IDEA

How does the truth of the Gospel, what Jesus has done for us, influence and shape who we are?

What happened in the garden of Eden still impacts us today, as we are all born sinful people, but how did this happen?

What does it mean for God to love us despite our brokenness?

And what did He do because He loves us so much?

Discover the great invitation we are given as loved, rescued people!

GOSPEL IDENTITY

EPISODE 1 | BROKEN

BIG IDEA

Brokenness is rooted in our independence. Through Adam, sin infected each person through the fall. But God loves us, even in our brokenness.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Genesis 3:21-23: And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife. Then the Lord God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made.

Genesis 3:14-15: Then the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Sin: The source of all brokenness; That which separates us from God and our intended purposes and design; Sin isn’t merely something we do, the Bible teaches us that it is part of who we are, or how we are.

Video Quote – Brody Jespersen: “This is the Good news: God sent someone to fix things so that we could have a perfect relationship with Him, like the first humans did in the beginning. And his name was Jesus. We are broken, but we don’t have to stay that way!”

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Where do you see brokenness in the world?**
 - How would you define brokenness?
 - What brokenness are you experiencing in your own life?

- **Share a time you didn't take responsibility for your own actions, what happened?**
 - Why do we hesitate to take responsibility for our actions and wrongdoings?
 - What happens when we don't take responsibility for our actions?
- **Share your experience with a power struggle - whether morally with God, or personally in a relationship, what happened?**
 - What is a power struggle? How would you define it?
 - What should we do when faced with a power struggle? What is the appropriate way to respond?

DISCUSS

- What stands out to you about the story in Genesis 3? What do you notice about Adam and Eve? What about God?
 - Why do you think we want what we aren't supposed to have?
 - Why do we want to be in control? How has your desire for control influenced and impacted your relationships?
 - How has God provided for you even when you've totally blown it or messed up?
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NEXT STEPS

Take some time to reflect on your own sin struggles. What sin do you need to confess to God and ask forgiveness for? Spend time praying individually, or as a group – admitting your brokenness, and declaring God's constant love over you.

GOSPEL IDENTITY

EPISODE 2 | LOVED

BIG IDEA

You are loved the most by the one who knows you the best. He loves you because of who you are, not because of what you have done. There is nothing you can do to make God love you less.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 3:16-19: I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

The depth of God's knowledge of us: Psalm 139

Story of the prodigal son: Luke 15:11-32

Romans 5:8: But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Romans 8:38-39: And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Where are the places you feel the most loved?**
 - How has being loved by others impacted you?
 - How has being unloved by others impacted you?
- **How is something we know transformed once we experience it? What changes? Share a time this happened to you.**
 - What is the difference between knowing something in your head and knowing something in your heart?
 - Share a time you experienced something you had always known to be true, but never personally encountered.
- **How is God's love different than human love?**
 - If you were to explain God's love to a friend, how would you describe it?
 - How do bad experiences with receiving love from family or friends, affect how we receive and interpret God's love?

DISCUSS

- **Reflect on Ephesians 3:16-19. How does a believer become rooted and established in God's love? What does this look like lived out?**
 - **Read Psalm 139 together. How does the depth of God's knowledge of you make you feel?**
 - **How does God's love impact you?**
 - **Have you ever asked, "how could God allow me to go through so much hurt, and yet love me?" or how can he love with all of the things I've done to contribute to the brokenness in the world?" What led you to ask these questions? Has your answer to these questions changed?**
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NEXT STEPS

What is one thing you can do to become more rooted and established in God's love?

GOSPEL IDENTITY

EPISODE 3 | RESCUED

BIG IDEA

You are not only rescued from something, but rescued to something. This gives you purpose and a responsibility to help others and share your faith.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

John 10:10: The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Adam and Christ Contrasted: Romans 15:12-19: When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. Yes, people sinned even before the law was given. But it was not counted as sin because there was not yet any law to break. Still, everyone died—from the time of Adam to the time of Moses—even those who did not disobey an explicit commandment of God, as Adam did. Now Adam is a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come. But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Powerful example of the church in action: 1 Thessalonians 1:6-9

2 Corinthians 5:19-20: All of this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Have you ever found yourself in need of rescue? What happened?**
 - What decision(s) did you make that led to you requiring rescue? How did you feel about needing help or rescue?
 - How can our desire for independence lead us to needing rescue?
- **What are we called to as redeemed people?**
 - What does it mean to be part of God's plan for rescue?
 - What is our role in God's plan to redeem man?
- **In what ways has your church experience been like that of a cruise ship or battleship?**
 - What has shaped your experiences with the church?
 - In what ways do you have a consumer perspective on church?
 - In what ways do you have a contributor perspective on church?

DISCUSS

- **Reflect on 2 Corinthians 5:19-20. What does this mean for us? What is our responsibility as Christ's ambassadors?**
 - **What do you think it means for us to have a consumeristic view on church and Christianity? How can we resist this view?**
 - **Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-9 together. What can we learn from this community?**
 - **Why must we turn to God, then turn from idols, rather than the other way around? Why is this specific order crucial?**
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NEXT STEPS

How can you more intentionally turn towards God?