Week 8 (Week of November 15) -Sharing Our Stories

Inspired by the Knieps and Timmermans sharing their stories, this week will be a little different. Rather than focusing primarily on discussion questions, we're going to spend time getting to know one another better by sharing parts of our stories.

Every person has a story. Some of us have experienced significant turning points, while others have seen God work through a series of smaller moments over time. The goal isn't to tell your entire life story or have everything figured out. We want to give others a better understanding of who we are and how God has been at work in our lives.

Start Here: A Few Thoughts Before We Begin

- Be authentic. You don't need to have a polished story or know exactly what to say.
- Share at a level that feels comfortable. It is okay to pass.
- Listen well. Give people your attention and resist the temptation to fix, compare, or jump in with your own story.
- Ask questions. Be curious about one another and give people opportunities to share more.
- Honor what is shared. Our stories are personal, and we want this to be a place where people can be honest and feel safe.
- Timing: Consider the amount of time that you have available to determine how much time to allot for each person. **Your group may decide to devote multiple weeks to this activity.**

As you listen: Let the conversation develop naturally. Here are some questions that can help you learn more about one another:

- What was that like for you?
- How did that experience shape you?
- Who was most influential in that season of your life?
- What do you remember most about that time?
- How did you respond to that experience?
- How did you see God working through that?
- Did that change the way you viewed God or your faith?
- What do you think people might not know about you just by looking at you today?
- Is there something from that season that still influences you now?
- What is something you wish more people understood about your story?

Sharing Your Story

As you think about your life, consider some of the key moments, relationships, and experiences that have shaped you. You might even think through your life in a timeline form, identifying a few significant seasons or turning points. Use these prompts to help tell your story. You don't need to address every question.

Family and Upbringing

- Where did you grow up? What was your family like?
- What was your childhood or home environment like?
- What did faith look like in your family?
- Who were some of the people who had a significant influence on you growing up?

Your Faith Journey

- Describe your early memories of God, church, or faith?
- How did you come to know Jesus? Was there a particular moment, person, or season that was significant?
- If you grew up in the church, when did your faith become personal to you?
- Were there people who played an important role in helping you understand or grow in your faith?

Significant Moments and Seasons

- What are some of the major turning points or seasons in your life?
- Have there been difficult experiences that significantly shaped who you are?
- Was there a season when your faith was challenged, grew deeper, or became especially important to you?
- Looking back, where can you see God at work in your story?

Where You Are Today

- What is God teaching you in this season?
- What are you thankful for in your life right now?
- Where are you experiencing a challenge or need for God's help?
- What is one thing you hope God continues to do in your life?

Pray Together

As you hear one another's stories, take time to thank God for His faithfulness and pray for the things people have shared.

- Thank God for the people and experiences He has used to shape each person's life.
- Pray for those who are walking through difficult or uncertain seasons.
- Ask God to continue working in each person's life and drawing them closer to Jesus.
- Pray that our group would become a place of genuine relationships, where we know and care for one another well.

Keep in mind

We don't share our stories because we have everything figured out. We share them because our lives matter, our stories matter, and God has been at work in each of them. As we become more familiar with one another's stories, we have greater opportunities to encourage, care for, pray for, and walk alongside one another.