



LOVE
YOUR
CHURCH



send

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions in conjunction with the videos and worksheets in the small group kit for *Send* by Jim Essian.

JIM ESSIAN

SESSION 1

Read Habakkuk 1:1-4, 12-13

1. What catches your eye in these verses? In what ways do Habakkuk's complaints still ring true today?
2. How do the ideas in these verses affect our sense of hope and expectation about what God can do? How have they affected you personally?

Read Habakkuk 2:14

3. What do you think it means for the earth to be "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord"? (You may like to have a look at page 18 and consider the questions in the third paragraph.)
4. Do you have a vision for seeing God's glory come to a particular community, place, or area of life? What are you longing for specifically?
5. What do you think it looks like to live by faith in regard to that thing? (See pages 21-22 for more on this.)
6. What is the role of the local church in all of this? How could you pray for your church in light of what you've read?

SESSION 2

1. Have you ever felt like an “exile” or misfit because of your faith? What happened?

Read Acts 9:31

2. How did God use the physical exile and scatteredness of his people to build up the church? (Re-read pages 30-31 for more help on this.) How can this encourage us when we feel out of place today?
3. What do you think it means to walk in the fear of the Lord? When we do this, how might it change our view of what happens to us in our lives?
4. Read the verses about the work of the Holy Spirit, listed on page 36. Do any of these surprise you or jump out at you? Which do you most need to hear today?
5. Think of a time when you clearly saw God at work in your church or community, or in yourself or another individual. What role do you think the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Spirit played?
6. How do you feel about the idea of being part of a church that multiplies? Does this challenge you, excite you, worry you? Pray for one another in the light of what you’ve discussed.

SESSION 3

1. Consider your preconceptions about church planting. If someone asked you to be part of a church-planting team, what would your instinctive reaction be and why?

Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 14:21-23

2. What did Paul and Barnabas (“they” in the Acts passage) do in order to carry out Jesus’ instructions? Why do you think it was important to appoint church leaders (elders) and organize the new Christians into churches?
3. “Planting new churches is the best way to reach new cultures” (page 49). If you’re in an established church, consider what kinds of people you tend to reach with the gospel, and what kinds of people you’re not reaching. Are there “new cultures” that you aren’t connecting with?
4. What could it look like to have more of a “sending culture” in your church generally? (Look back at “Anchor #1” on page 52 to prompt thoughts on this.)
5. How can we cultivate an abundance mindset and avoid a scarcity mindset? (Look back at “Anchor #3” on page 54 for help.)
6. What do you think about church planting as a result of reading this chapter? What leaps out at you as a great reason to plant, or a great comfort and motivator?

SESSION 4

Read Acts 8:1-8

1. How do you think you would have felt during the events of verse 1? How would your perspective have changed after that?
2. Why do you think it is so important to remember that the church has a global mission? What is the result when we forget?
3. The heading on page 68 reads “Senders: Pray. Care. Fund.” Praying and funding are probably very familiar concepts when we think about sending missionaries. But what about caring for those we send, even after they’ve gone? What do you think it looks like to do this well?

Re-read pages 70-71

4. What are you most encouraged and most challenged by here?

Read Revelation 5:6-14

5. Take some time to pause over the words here. What makes Jesus (the Lamb) so worthy? How can you praise and pray in the light of this passage?
6. Do you have missionaries connected with your church? What could you do to encourage and support them this week?

SESSION 5

1. Take some time to discuss the place or places where you live. How would you describe it and the people who live there? What is specific or special about this community? What is difficult or a problem there?

Re-read the section "Right Hand, Left Hand" (pages 76-78)

2. How do you respond to this metaphor of two hands working together? How is your church doing at employing both "hands"?
3. How could you pray for the area where you live—for its flourishing? Identify a few key areas of need and spend some time in prayer now.
4. How does your faith in the gospel affect the way you do your work (including unpaid work)? In what ways is God using your work to contribute to the flourishing of you and others? (Re-read the quotation from Timothy Keller on pages 81-82 if you get stuck.)
5. How do you feel about getting involved in working for justice in your city? If you are already doing this, how have you seen the Lord at work? If you are not, what could you consider trying?

Read Acts 17:26-27

6. This passage shows us that wherever we are is where God has sent us. Spend some time worshiping God for his good plans and surrendering yourselves to his work in your local area.

SESSION 6

1. Think about your life so far. In what ways have you seen God’s providence at work—his plan working itself out through the seemingly unforeseen circumstances of your life? In particular, how has he enabled you to serve and love others?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Romans 12:4-8

2. What gifts are mentioned here? Can you think of an example of each one?
3. In pairs, work through the questions in the section “Discerning Your Gift.”
4. What has God already called you to? (It might be your family, or a specific ministry within your church or community, or something else.) How would you describe that call? How do you think you are doing at responding to it?
5. If someone came to you and said that they felt called to something, how would you respond? Use the questions on pages 99-100 to come up with your ideal response.
6. Is there anything you need to go away and think about, or do, in response to what you’ve read in this chapter? Pray for one another now as you consider God’s call on your lives.

SESSION 7

1. Read Acts 20:17-38. What was the relationship like between Paul and the elders at Ephesus? What was good about this? What was hard about this?
2. When a small group splits or members of a church leave to plant a new congregation, what might be difficult about that—both for those leaving and for those being left behind?
3. Look at the advice Paul gives to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28-32. How could these words both warn and encourage those who face the uncomfortableness of going or sending?
4. Why is it helpful to allow ourselves to grieve the losses we feel when someone leaves, or when we leave, a community? If there are losses you have felt personally, you might like to share them and grieve together now.
5. Has anyone been sent out from your church or small group? What small steps can you take this week to encourage and support them, even though you're not together anymore?
6. This concept of gospel goodbyes is a challenge to our desire for security and stability. What do you find hard or confronting about this idea? What comforts can you find in the chapter you've read? (Look particularly at pages 108-109 for help with this.)

SESSION 8

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “revival”? Are there any ways in which this chapter has altered your thinking about that word?
2. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 slowly. What is Paul praying for here? What is “big” about his prayer?
3. How would you pray this for yourself? In what ways do you long to know the love of Christ more, be more filled with him, or anything else Paul mentions?
4. How would you pray this for your city or your church?
5. What do you think people in your church fear risking? Money, time, relationships? What would it look like in your church to have more of a culture of giving, and of assuming that the Lord will do more than you ask or imagine?
6. What is one thing that has struck you in this book that you want to take away and keep with you? How do you hope that God will change you, your church, and your community as a result of reading this book?
7. Spend time in prayer together. You might like to start with some prayers based on Ephesians 3:14-21. Lift up one another to Christ and ask for his Spirit to work powerfully and abundantly in you. After you have prayed more generally, you may like to share specific requests about individuals or communities to whom you feel God is sending you or others you know.