

## Studies/Books with a Thumbs Up – Revised 1.23.19

Here's what your fellow small group leaders have to say about their recent Bible/book studies.

### Bible Studies – Books of the Bible

#### **Chan, Francis – *James* (on RightNow Media)**

"James was chosen because of a desire to not just read the Word but DO what it says. We are looking to grow deeper by finding ministries to plug our faith into. James is a good book for coming face to face with the reality that Christ wants an active faith with deeds."

Feedback from a Couples' Small Group (April 2017)

"We covered 2 sessions for the study of James each time we met. James encourages us to live our Christian faith and gives guiding principles. Very applicable to everyday living."

Feedback from a Couples' Small Group (May 2017)

#### **Greear, JD – *Ephesians* (on RightNow Media)**

Ephesians on Right Now Media by JD Greear was terrific.

Feedback from Men's Small Group (Summer 2018)

#### **Moore, Beth – *Daniel***

"It was great for our current situation of always wanting/needing more. It puts things in perspective in a Biblical sense and reminds us of how to hold our ground instead of being swept away by society's standards. It was challenging in terms of time commitment, but very good for our outlook on materials things. I think we all felt convicted, but not embarrassed or judged."

Feedback from a Women's Small Group (Summer 2018)

#### **Moore, Beth – *Here and Now***

"Beth Moore is great at teaching about the book of Revelation and how we can apply in modern day."

Feedback from a Women's Small Group (May 2015)

#### **Moore, Beth – *General Endorsement***

"I love the Beth Moore videos and corresponding work books. She is so passionate and really brings it to life."

Feedback from a Women's Small Group (July 2015)

"We find Beth Moore and other DVD-led studies with homework workbooks a great way to keep us engaged in the weeks that we aren't together and also very accessible and easy to discuss since the video leads or moderates the discussion."

Feedback from a Women's Small Group (June 2017)

#### **Proverbs**

"We read a chapter out loud and then discuss it. Proverbs is very practical and has great wisdom as we head off to work."

Feedback from a Men's Small Group (April 2017)

**Shirer, Priscilla – *The Armor of God***

“This is a powerful study.”

Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (June 2016)

**Bible Studies - Topical**

**Blackaby, Henry – *Experiencing God***

“Experiencing God has had the greatest impact of all our studies thus far. The materials were very effective and led to great discussion. It is a big undertaking to get through it all and we needed to take a break with another study part way through the year.”

Feedback from a Men’s Small Group (June 2016)

**Calhoun, Adele & Tracy Bianchi – *Women & Identity (LifeGuide Bible Studies)***

“We did the questions on our own and then discussed together. We liked the short time commitment.”

Feedback from a Moms’ Small Group (May 2017)

**Keller, Tim – *The Prodigal God***

“We are finding this to be a much deeper understanding/dive into a story we all felt we knew well.”

Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

**LifeGuide Studies: *Women & Identity; Motherhood***

We only meet once a month and are moms of young kids with full-time jobs and even fuller plates. These were quick and could be done as a group even if someone wasn't prepared ahead of time.

Feedback from a Moms’ Small Group (Summer 2018)

**MacArthur, John – *Twelve Extraordinary Women: How God Shaped Women of the Bible and What He Wants to Do with You***

“This is a great book for a group willing to dig deep into the Word and history of the time.”

Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (April 2017)

**MacDonald, James – *Lord Change My Attitude***

“This was a favorite of everyone – a healthy amount of prep was required but worth the effort.”

Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

“We loved it. Very convicting and promoted great discussions.”

Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (April 2017)

**TerKeurst, Lysa – *Twelve Women of the Bible***

“It worked well if you did the homework or not. The video was 15-20 minutes so a group could meet for less than two hours and get it done.”

Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (May 2017)

## **Spiritual Development/Christian Living – Books/Videos**

### **Barton, Ruth Haley – *Life Together in Christ***

“I think this is particularly good for groups wanting to grow closer. Ruth Haley Barton uses the account of Jesus and the disciples on the road to Emmaus to look at a shared commitment to the attitudes, practices and behaviors that open us to Christ in our midst.”

### **Batterson, Mark – *Draw the Circle***

“It teaches you to pray God’s word back to Him and pray God-sized prayers.”  
Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

### **Buchanan, Mark – *The Rest of God***

*The Rest of God* is proving to have excellent, challenging discussion. It is not only about Sabbath, but about knowing the character of God that allows trust and rest.  
Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (Summer 2018)

### **Chesterton, GK - *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox***

“The favorite book of the group...an incredible wealth of information.”  
Feedback from a Men’s Small Group (June 2016)

### **Downs, Annie – *100 Days to Brave: Devotions for Unlocking Your Most Courageous Self***

Inspired discussions about steps each person was taking in their lives. Provided words and encouragement to take the next steps whether it was confronting a coworker, dealing with death, taking steps to find a new job to find balance. When members of our group were struggling we could refer them to the text and the scripture passage. A lot of the verses that are chosen for each chapter are jumped out at us in ways they never had before, and Annie’s personal touch and voice is both gentle and unrelentingly encouraging.  
Feedback from a Moms’ Small Group (Summer 2018)

### **Furtick, Steven – *Crash the Chatterbox: Hearing God's Voice Above All Others***

“LOVED IT!”  
Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (April 2017)

### **Geoffrion, Tim – *Saying Yes to God***

“Develops a thirst and need to seek the H.S. in practical and inspiring ways...to grow in how to even say ‘yes’ and listen well. It’s a great way to have dialogue and a practical guide in listening/developing a spirit led life.”  
Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (Summer 2018)

### **Johnston, Ray – *The Hope Quotient***

“It’s a rich text full of warnings for challenges along with readily accessible tips.”  
Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (June 2016)

### **Lewis, C.S. – *Screwtape Letters***

“*Screwtape* was one of the best we have done as a mens’ group. The letters could be taken one or two at a time and required reading them a few times to fully understand them. More often than not they spoke into what we were experiencing in our lives at the time.”  
Feedback from a Men’s Small Group (July 2015)

**Moore, Russell – *Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel***

“...good timing during our current political environment and tensions amongst community.”

Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

**Nelson, Heather Davis – *Unashamed: Healing Our Brokenness and Finding Freedom From Shame***

“It is great! Very in-depth and super personal. Not good for a new group and not good for a group that does not want to be personal. But great for a group that wants to be open with each other. We have had more in-depth sharing and vulnerability (that is one of the key words) in the past 6 months than in the past 2 years.”

Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

**Ortberg, John – *All the Places to Go***

“It did a great job tying together a lot of ‘life’ topics, such as jobs, family planning, etc. The learnings from that book come up in our group conversations and prayers all the time.”

Feedback from a Couples’ Small Group (April 2017)

**Ortberg, John – *Soul Keeping***

“I would strongly recommend the book as I think it is possibly his best for me.”

Feedback from a Men’s Small Group (June 2016)

**Ryken, Phillip – *The Ten Commandments***

“I think everyone was especially convicted from the Ten Commandments study. Made us realize how much we need Jesus because there is no way we can obey these commandments. We are all the worst of sinners and need our Savior!”

Feedback from a Mixed Adult Small Group (Summer 2018)

**Sauls, Scott – *Jesus Outside the Lines***

Many small groups discussed this book in 2018, and we had a lot of positive feedback about the good conversation it generated.

**Smith, James Bryan – *The Good and Beautiful God***

“*The Good and Beautiful God* was fantastic. Applicable to anyone at any stage, somewhat different.”

Feedback from a Men’s Small Group (June 2016)

“It was very applicable to our personal and business lives. Would suggest it to a group that is ready to look deeply at their faith practices.”

Feedback from a Women’s Small Group (June 2016)

“We especially like his story-telling style with applicable, relevant examples that were relational in perspective.”

Feedback from a Mixed Adult Small Group (May 2017)

**Stanley, Andy – *Five Things God Uses to Grow Your Faith (on RightNow Media)***

“Loved this video-led study guide. Andy is so funny, yet real in his stories of real life and relating it to Biblical teachings.”

Feedback from a Moms’ Small Group (May 2017)

**Stedman, Ray – *Let God Be God: Life-Changing Truths from the Book of Job***

We would highly recommend this. Many of us were apprehensive about tackling Job. Stedman does an excellent job of explaining what's happening. It's a must read for every believer."

Feedback from a Men's Small Group (April 2017)

**Strobel, Lee – *The Case for Christ***

"This is an excellent apologetics study. We all learned so much and our discussions were lively. The book is essential to the discussions; the study guide is not enough. We watched the DVD as well and found it very valuable. Highly recommend for group study."

Feedback from an Adult Mixed Small Group (July 2014)

**Tchividjian, Tullian – *One Way Love***

"*One Way Love* was an amazing book about grace and we all appreciated the fact that what we learned and discussed could be applied to all areas of our lives including parenting. We had broader discussions beyond parenting and we liked that after many years of reading only parenting books."

Feedback from a Moms of Teens Small Group (May 2015)

**Wright, NT – *Heaven is Not Our Home***

"Great discussions about our faith and living out our Christian faith."

Feedback from a Couples' Small group (May 2017)

**Marriage – Books**

**Keller, Tim – *The Meaning of Marriage***

"Would definitely recommend the study! The book/discussion is great, and the study questions are just ok—but they help spur discussion. It's a great book for a group of already-married couples, but also helpful for dating/engaged couples. It's also been great to gauge where the group is spiritually before deciding what to do for the next study. "

Feedback from a Couples' Small Group (May 2015)

**Pickering, Glenn – *TAG: You're It!***

"We enthusiastically recommend the book *TAG: You're It!* by Glenn Pickering, as a means of strengthening and enriching marriages. It identifies the dysfunctional games that couples play and teaches a better way to relate to each other."

Feedback from a Men's Small Group (May 2015)

**Thomas, Gary – *Life Long Love***

"Open discussion on marriage that we could relate too."

Feedback from a Couples' Small Group (Summer 2018)

**Parenting – Books**

**George, Jim – *A Dad After God's Own Heart***

It inspired lengthy and deep conversations about our faith and raising children to know and follow Jesus in our world. It both challenged and reinforced our Christian values and thinking in a respectful way. It made us really reflect and think before answering some of the questions.

Feedback from a Men's Small Group (Summer 2018)

**Johanson, Tim – *GIST: The Essence of Raising Life-Ready Kids***

“Wonderful book about parenting. I would recommend it to any group.”

Feedback from a Moms in the Middle Small Group (April 2017)

“*GIST* was the best parenting book we have used so far and everyone in our group found sage advice and highly recommends this book.”

Feedback from a Moms of Teens Small Group (May 2015)

“Since the author of *GIST* had spoken at the fall Moms of Teens large group, we liked reading a book by a local author. One of the parents in our group had a personal connection with the Gist author and we were able to use one of his study guides as well.”

Feedback from a Moms of Teens Small Group (May 2015)

**Kendrick, Stephen & Alex Kendrick – *The Love Dare for Parents***

“We used both the study guide and the book. Both are loaded with wonderful parenting advice, biblical teaching, tips, words of encouragement, parenting tips biblically based with scripture references and prayers along the way. For a group who is looking for just the study guide – great. For a group who wants more reading and a study guide – perfect fit. Again so many good golden nuggets in both the book and study guide to reflect on in women and men’s groups.”

**Sanford, Tim – *Losing Control and Liking It: How to Set Your Teen and Yourself Free***

“It was probably my favorite parenting book. It was a fantastic book.”

Feedback from a Moms in the Middle Small Group (Summer 2018)

**Short Studies or Discussion Starters**

**Willow Creek Talks (available through Clare Anderson at [clarea@cpconline.org](mailto:clarea@cpconline.org))**

“The Willow Creek talks can be a great break and discussion starter.”

**Beth Moore – *Loving Well***

**RightNow Media**

“I would strongly recommend RightNow Media as a resource to utilize as there are a variety of material convenient for busy families with limited study time (we have people watch on tv, listen to in the car on the drive home, etc.)”

Please visit [cpconline.org/rightnow-media](http://cpconline.org/rightnow-media) to set up your free account.