



## GROUP DISCUSSION

- ❑ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.
- ❑ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.
- ❑ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.
- ❑ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

## SOLID FAITH

What you believe impacts how you live. We all have faith in something. The question is, is, “Does that faith stand on solid ground?” These days many view faith with skepticism. People say that faith is just a “leap in the dark” or that you need to abandon reason in order to embrace faith.<sup>1</sup> But God's Word shows us that biblical faith is more than wishful thinking or blind trust. It's “a confident trust in the eternal God who is all-powerful, infinitely wise, eternally trustworthy...”<sup>2</sup>

In this series, we'll be looking at stories of faith from Matthew. This week, your group will discuss a time when a leper showed great faith in Jesus and how his faith then gives us confidence today to trust in God's power, character, and plan.

**Q:** *What one word best describes faith for you? Explain.*



## DEEPER DIVE

Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.

# JESUS AND THE LEPER

If you lived in Jesus’s day, the last thing you would want is leprosy. This terrible skin disease made you an outcast in society. You were forced to live separated from others; and if you ever did encounter someone outside your leper colony, you had to alert them by saying, “Unclean! Unclean!”

One day a leper noticed a crowd following Jesus and this leper, an outcast who was unwelcome anywhere, had the audacity to approach Jesus with a request. Let’s take a closer look at their encounter.

♀: *Have someone read Matthew 8:1-4. Imagine yourself as the leper. How would you see yourself and your circumstances before and after encountering Jesus?*

♀: *Where do you see faith from the leper? What does Jesus’s response tell you about His character?*



## REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Select 2–3 questions from this section to answer.

# TRUST, TRUST, TRUST

The leper demonstrated the key to faith—trust. Faith is trust in God in the following ways:

- *God’s Power.* The leper needed a miracle. Up to that point, only one person throughout Israel’s history had been healed from leprosy. But the leper believed Jesus could heal him. Faith is believing that nothing is impossible for God.
- *God’s Character.* Jesus touched the leper which was scandalous, because the law stated that touching a leper would make you unclean. But Jesus showed compassion to the leper that day and, instead of becoming unclean, He made the unclean clean. Faith is believing that God is good, loving, kind and always does what’s best.

- *God's Plan.* The leper knew that Jesus didn't have to heal him, which is why he told Him, "If you will, you can make me clean." God has a plan for everyone and His plan is bigger than we can fully comprehend. Faith is believing that God's plan is for His glory and your good. He may not grant every request but everything He does is leading you closer to Him.

♀: *What makes it difficult to trust God in faith? What helps you trust God more?*

♀: *How could you trust God more in your current life phase? What would need to change for you to do that?*



## PRAY

Praise God because He is good, all-powerful and loving. Ask Him to reveal any areas in your life that need His healing touch. Pray for more faith that trusts Him to do what's best for you, for your good, and His glory. Ask Him to reveal one person with whom you can share this week's story, which reveals God's power and compassion in Jesus.

### ENDNOTES:

1. *Crossway Bibles, The ESV Study Bible (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2379.*
2. *Ibid.*