

Application Discussion Guide: The Wound of Love

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42 (NIV)*

May 11, 2003: "The Wound of Love" by Rich Vincent - Pastor Singles Ministries CPC.
Pastor Rich led us on an expository journey verse by verse through Psalm 55 describing King David's response when he was betrayed by a close friend. He then masterfully drew the parallel of David and Jesus when they were both similarly betrayed.

Editor's Note: For a copy of the slides used in the sermon, return to the website and download and print the "notes."

This week's discussion guide is uses an "Open Bible Discussion " approach with a...

Leaders Guide,
Participant Guide, and
Background Information.

Try it out and let us know how this approach works for you.

Your fellow co-laborers in Christ,

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Open Bible Discussion: Leaders Guide

Here are some things we recommend you consider doing as the leader of your small flock group for this week's application discussion of Rich Vincent's sermon on Psalm 55.

Prepare for the discussion: Email your SFG members and ask them to come prepared for your SFG discussion. Ask them to prayerfully read Psalm 55 again, slowly...drink it in. Then review the "Background Information" provided with this guide, and reread the psalm again, and write down several insights that God brings to their minds as they reflect on the scripture. Bring your insights to your SFG meeting as well, however, during your discussion, hold back on what you gained and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them to share the same or similar conclusions. If they don't, then share yours insights.

Here is why.

- A. *Adults learn best from what they discover for themselves.*
- B. *Adult learners remember what is immediately relevant to them.*
- C. *Adults learn best from a dialogue with their peers.¹*

Open with Prayer: As you begin your SFG discussion time, open in prayer. To help focus your discussion on application, pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate your hearts and minds to the truths of God's word, and show us how we might apply them to our lives."

Here is why. Several participants in our recent leadership training group found from their visits with other flock groups, as part of their training, that those groups that began with prayer had far better outcomes than those that did not. We are in partnership with the Holy Spirit. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you in your group.

Open your Bibles and read the scriptures together: After your opening prayer, have everyone open their Bibles to Psalm 55 and have each person read a verse beginning with the person next to you and continuing around the group.

Here is why. God speaks to us through his word. Making it the focus of your discussion will yield similar results as the groups that prayed before starting their discussion.

Facilitate the discussion: With your Bibles open, begin your discussion by asking your group to...

Take a few minutes now and look over the psalm again, and as you feel led, share with us what insights come to mind as you read God's word?

Process their input and begin facilitating the discussion, as the Lord leads.

Use the "Participant Guide" provided with this guide, as you feel appropriate.

¹ From facilitation tips on page 224 of the Appendix to *Character Witness* by Christine Wood.

Open Bible Discussion: Participant Guide

Subject: Psalm 55 as taught by Rich Vincent on Mother's Day.

Pray for God to illuminate your heart and mind as you read Psalm 55, slowly...drinking it in. Then jot down your responses to the following questions and prepare for a lively discussion as we gather together for our next flock group meeting.

- A. Given David situation, what did he do in v1-2a? What is God's response in v16-19.
- B. What was troubling David as he opened his prayer in v2b-8? What was going on in his mind, how did he feel about it, and what did he want to do? Was it the rebellion or the betrayal that seemed to be troubling him at this point?
- C. In light of what was going on in David's life with open rebellion and betrayal...
 - a) Have you ever had a similar experience?
 - b) Did you have similar thoughts, feelings and a desire to flee?
 - c) Did you take it to the Lord in prayer, or stew about it and complain to others?
- D. In v9a, to whom did David seem to direct his prayer? What was his desire for the counsel of his close friend. [Cross reference 2 Samuel 15:31b].
- E. When you have found yourself in similar circumstances, what were your desires for those who were at the root of the problem?
- F. In v9b-11, what did David see happening by the rebellion in the city of Jerusalem? No doubt in similar circumstances you have found yourself vocalizing to God the results of what was going on?
- G. In v12-14, to whom does David focus his prayer? What is his lament? What was/is your lament in a similar situation?
- H. To whom does he focus his attention in v15? What is his mood?
- I. What is/has been your mood toward those who have done you wrong? Is it ok to be angry? How should we vent our anger?
- J. How did David describe "his companion" in v16-12? Have you had such encounters?
- K. Through it all, what is David's conclusion in v20-23? What sense of direction do you find that would help you deal with similar situations now and in the future?

What should we do with our cares?

What does v22 seem to say that we should do in contrast to v6-8.

What is God's promise to us?

What is in store for wicked, bloodthirsty, deceitful, etc.?

What should be our focus?

Background Information

As you prepare for your application discussion on Psalm 55 it might be helpful to know that, although it is not mentioned explicitly, Ahithophel was the most probable candidate for being the "close friend" mentioned in verse 13.² You may recall from reading 2 Samuel, that David's son, Absalom, led a rebellion against him. After finding that many people were rebelling against him and following his son, he knew there would be trouble, left Jerusalem to avoid its destruction and went back to the caves of the earth to hide. As David left his city, weeping, word was brought to him that Ahithophel, a member of his cabinet and close friend, had gone over to Absalom's side to advise them on how they might overthrow David.

His best friend had betrayed him and it hurt him deeply.

But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up. Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness." 2 Samuel 15:30-31 (NIV)

And that is exactly what happened.

When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb. 2 Samuel 17:23 (NIV)

In like manner, the religious leaders of Israel during the time of Jesus' ministry, rebelled against him and conspired with one another how they might do away with him. And Judas Iscariot, one of his twelve disciples, went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.

Jesus in his foreknowledge knew that this would happen, but it still hurt.

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Luke 22:47-48 (NIV)

But through it all, Jesus forgave him, yet when Judas came to realize what he had done, he went out and hanged himself.

When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."

So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. Matthew 27:3, 5 (NIV)

² According to J. Vernon McGee's "Thru the Bible" commentary.