

A Song of Trust Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. How often do you listen to music? Would you say that music is an important part of your life? Explain.
2. What is one thing that surprised you in 2024?

Read the following passage: Psalm 16.

The Psalms are an incredible collection of songs. They don't fit into one neat category. Some are instructional. Some are exuberant. Some are comforting. Some are pretty raw and shocking. Old Testament scholar John Goldingay writes:

The Psalms make it possible to say things that are otherwise unsayable. In church, they have the capacity to free us to talk about things that we cannot talk about anywhere else.

John Goldingay, Psalms: Volume 1

Psalm 16 is a song of trust. It shows us what it looks like to trust God. Three big ideas emerge: 1) We need to see God first; 2) We should be more impressed with a holy life than a happy life; 3) Trusting God is the only reliable path to joy.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Read Psalm 16:1. Explain why we might say that this psalm presupposes that life is hard. Do you expect life to be hard? Explain. How are your expectations about life impacting how you respond to life's challenges?
2. Read Psalm 16:2, 5-6, 8. Notice how David first puts his attention on God, and then makes comments about his life, particularly in verses 6 and 8b. Why is it important for us to put our attention on God before we try to make sense of our experiences?
3. Read the following explanation of why pilots experience spatial disorientation while flying and what they should do about it. How does this phenomenon relate to a life of faith?

After 10 to 20 seconds of constant angular acceleration of the inner ear's fluid, the sensation of motion transmitted to the brain can be false. The pilot can be in a turn and not know it. In addition, there is a fixed acceleration threshold, below which the [inner ear] cannot sense any rotation at all. This threshold is approximately 2 degrees per second; if the rotation is gradual enough, the pilot won't sense any change and will develop "the leans."

In all cases of spatial disorientation, the pilot must rely on the flight instruments when making control inputs - and must be patient until the false sensations dissipate.

Rogers V. Shaw, II, "Spatial Disorientation: Trust Your Instruments"

4. The ancient Israelites often envied their pagan neighbors and, consequently, were tempted to pursue their gods. In this context, David declared, "As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight." Do you know any people whose commitment to God "impresses" you? Although we all want to be happy, why might pursuing happiness above everything else lead to unintended negative consequences?
5. Read Acts 2:29-39. Describe Peter's prophetic reading of Psalm 16. Why is Jesus's resurrection good news for us?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:19. Why do you think Paul says this? How should our understanding of the afterlife impact how we live now? Do you think the way you are living communicates that you have great hope for the next life? Explain.

Pray