



DISCUSSION SERIES

Using the Guides



Thanks for using the *Theology & Discussion Guides*! We know you'll bring your best instincts and practices to discussion leadership. This "How To" is intended to help achieve theological learning outcomes intended for the podcast. We hope you enjoy!

Learning Outcomes: We hope that after completing the series participants will be able to...

- Appreciate God's work through the disciplines on these podcast topics, and **DISCERN** opportunities for faithful presence and obedience in their own work and study.
- Integrate theological insights with their own disciplines to **DEEPEN** their sense of God's presence in their work and study.
- **DIVERSIFY** the voices and perspectives from which they learn and by which they are formed—including voices and perspectives from within the small group community.

Methods & Design:

- Each guide centers on a biblical text so discussions can move from Scripture to theology. The text does not need to dominate the discussion, but it can set the direction of the discussion.
- We intend to engage different learning styles and temperaments with the modest range of elements in the guide (i.e., Listen, Reflect, Discuss, etc.). You should feel free to adjust these for your discussion group.
- These guides are planned with a 60-minute lunch break in mind. If you have more time, you could consider listening to the whole podcast episode, or adding other elements (e.g. worship).

Discussion Leadership:

- Encourage *personal* sharing. One of the integrations that we long for is the integration of the entire person—including bodily faithfulness, emotional wholeness, etc. Eliciting stories and experiences can be a helpful way to exercise this aspect of community formation. Sometimes, it can help to encourage applications that are tangible and measurable actions.
- Most episodes may not be in a single participant's own discipline. The guides should leave lots of room for participants to consider contextualizing for one's own discipline, but also to explore the general ramifications for Christian discipleship on each topic.
- Centered on God's Word, a community engaged in theological reflection has the opportunity to cultivate an imagination—a thrilling universe of what's possible—that is expansive instead of needlessly shrunken. In addition to learning concepts and content from the podcasts, we hope you will exercise faithful imagination for God's reign in our world.
- **REMEMBER:** Some of the topics are contentious. You may want to consider adopting group norms for your discussion (e.g. Using "I" statements, observing instead of criticizing, etc.). We desire for non-anxious presence, prayerfulness, and charity of spirit to be convictions about community building that are held as strongly as ones related to the podcast topic.

Theological Formation: Deepen. Diversify. Discern.