



INVITATION

8

CHAPTER SUMMARY

WEEKLY WIN

Participants understand that God designed them with a purpose for a purpose.

BOTTOM LINES

- Your uniqueness finds its fullest and best expression when connected to God's divine purpose in the world.
- The church began as a growing gathering of men and women who believed Jesus was the Son of God.
- We have the opportunity to do for others what others did for us by joining our generation's Jesus gathering.

BEFORE THE MEETING

PRAY

Pray for each group member to finish well. Pray that this will be a starting point God will use as a new chapter in their lives.

LEADER DEBRIEF

Address the following:

- Evaluate the previous meeting with your co-leaders.
- Decide who will facilitate each part of the discussion for the next week.
- Determine if you want to do anything special for your last group meeting as a way to celebrate your time together. Feel the freedom to be creative.
- Review the Ending Well section during the Wrap-Up for this week and decide together how you want to end well.

CONTACT GROUP MEMBERS

Engage in a conversation with your group members individually by email, phone, or text. Acknowledge the growth you've seen. Talk about next steps after Starting Point. If you're not sure what options are available, talk with church staff.

You can use the email template provided for Week Eight at startingpoint.com/leaders.

SCHEDULE SOCIAL GATHERING

Schedule your second social gathering. The gathering will be about encouraging your group members and recapping the Starting Point experience.

DISCUSS SECTION ONE: NEW PURPOSE

SECTION WIN

Participants understand that Christians believe meaning in life is found by discovering and embracing the role God has for us.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: When have you felt the need for deeper meaning in your life?

Many participants were driven to Starting Point by circumstances that ignited or reignited a desire for meaning. Having heard their stories by this point, you may be able to draw from past discussions.

Question 2: How would seeing yourself as a unique part of something bigger impact your life?

Some participants don't see themselves as having much to offer. Encourage them by sharing your observations. Consider sharing how Paul, in his letters to the Jesus followers in Corinth and Ephesus, compared the church to a body, where everyone has a unique contribution to make.

Question 3: What do you think of the idea that God has a plan for your life?

Some participants may be encouraged by this idea but may have a hard time accepting it's true. It may be helpful to share from your own experience.

DISCUSS SECTION TWO: EKKLESIA

SECTION WIN

Participants understand the original definition of the church was not a place but *an assembly of people with a unified confession*.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: What do you associate with the word "church"? How is it different from Jesus's word "ekklesia"?

This discussion gives you an opportunity to hear about any obstacles to faith bad church experiences have created. Affirm those experiences, express empathy, and encourage group members to move forward.

Question 2: The church is not just a building or an institution. It is meant to be a gathering of people who follow Jesus in authentic community with one another. How has your experience in this Starting Point group given you a picture of that?

The win of Starting Point is for people to explore faith and experience community. This question gives participants the opportunity to reflect on how their experience of community in this group has impacted them.

Question 3: Do you feel like the church has drifted from what Jesus originally intended? If so, how?

This discussion allows participants to compare their church experiences to Jesus's original definition.

DISCUSS SECTION THREE: YOUR NEXT STEP

SECTION WIN

Participants reflect on what these eight weeks have meant to them and talk about specific next steps.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: If the church is supposed to be a continuation of the movement Jesus began, how could your unique abilities and talents play a role?

Affirm and suggest some possible options. Since God knows these people best, we encourage you to spend time praying for each group member in preparation for this discussion. Ask him to guide you in this process.

Question 2: What feels like the best next step for you in your faith journey?

Use this discussion to encourage community as a vital part of continuing spiritual growth. Be prepared to help them get connected to a new group or to take an appropriate next step.

Question 3: What will you take away from this Starting Point group experience?

Be careful to not take their answers too personally or to make it about your skill and ability as a facilitator. All you can do is create an environment that is conducive to God doing what only he can do—create life change.

WRAP-UP

REVIEW THE BOTTOM LINES

- Your uniqueness finds its fullest and best expression when connected to God's divine purpose in the world.
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ENDING WELL

Thank group members for coming and for sharing. Here are some ideas for ending your group well:

- Using the Story Cards, ask your group to share about one of the following:
 - "Pick a card that represents what the past eight weeks have meant to you."
 - "Pick a card that represents your relationship with God."
- Ask your group to share any "aha" moments from Starting Point. Some group members may be intimidated by the chapter title "Invitation." Let them know that next week's discussion is about church, not about pushing a decision.
- Review the questions your group members wrote down in Chapter One in response to Question 2 of Section Three: "What one question do you hope to have answered by the end of our eight weeks together?" Ask if they feel like their questions were answered, or if their questions changed during the eight weeks. (Since these questions were anonymous, don't specifically address anyone in the group.)

- Ask your group members what they plan to do now that Starting Point is over. Accountability helps people determine their next steps and then take them.

** Due to time constraints, you may want to save these conversations for your last social.*

SOCIAL GATHERING

If you haven't already done so, set a date for your last social gathering. Cover any details related to it—location, food, time, and date. This will be a time of celebration and remembering your Starting Point experience.

PRAY

This is a great time to thank God for bringing your group together. You may want to see if other people want to pray