

# BIG IDEA SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Small groups that focus on the Big Idea for the week can use this guide to apply the message to life and take action. Feel free to use whatever parts of this guide best fit your group personality and time frame. Do NOT feel like you have to use every question. All verses, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version (NIV).

## 5.16/17.09 // FIREPROOF MY MARRIAGE: MARRIAGE PARASITES

**BiG IDEA: Identify any parasites in your life and in your marriage and turn to God to break free of them.**

### // Ice Breaker \_\_\_\_\_

**Option 1: What bad habit did you have as a kid, or do you have now?**

**Option 2: Have you ever had to take drastic actions to get rid of something, like Caleb did in *Fireproof* when he smashed his computer?**

### // Questions for Discussion \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Which fact provides you the most comfort and hope? Why?**

- **Temptation is common to all believers**
- **God is faithful and will not allow us more than we can bear**
- **God will provide a way out**

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

**2 You have never been tempted by something you didn't have the power to resist with God's help. How do you feel about that statement? Have you ever felt like it wasn't true?**

**3 Temptations come from 3 main sources: the Devil, the world, and the flesh (sinful nature). Where do you think most of your temptations come from? What are some ways or tools we can use to win over these temptations?**

1 John 5:4

...for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

Galatians 5:16-17

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

**4 Temptations are seemingly endless. Yet, they could be broken down into 3 main categories. What kinds of temptations do you think fit into these categories?**

1 John 2:16

For everything in the world—(1) the cravings of sinful man, (2) the lust of his eyes and (3) the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.

**5 What are some things that Jesus was tempted by? What can we learn about dealing with temptation from Jesus?**

Matthew 4:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup>"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

<sup>7</sup>Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup>"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

**6 What temptation have you gained victory over? How could you, or do you, avoid or get rid of some temptations you've dealt with in the past or in the present?**

**7 What is a common temptation that you have not really had to struggle with?**

**8 What temptation continues to be a constant struggle to overcome? What temptations are you unable to avoid? What plan do you have for fleeing?**

2 Timothy 2:22

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**9 Is "Just Say No" an effective enough strategy for dealing with temptations and habits? Why or why not?**

1 Corinthians 6:12-13

<sup>12</sup>"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. <sup>13</sup>"Food for the stomach and the stomach for food"—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

Romans 7:21-23

<sup>21</sup>So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. <sup>22</sup>For in my inner being I delight in God's law; <sup>23</sup>but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Romans 8:7-9

<sup>7</sup>The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. <sup>8</sup>Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.

**10 How do you base your decisions on what you will view or allow into your mind, in terms of movies, music, magazines, TV shows, websites, etc.?**

Philippians 4:8

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things."

**11 Do you have a fellow Christian that you could confide in and confess to and help you stay accountable? Someone who will pray for you and support you?**

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

**// Application** \_\_\_\_\_

**Commit to memory I Corinthians 10:13**

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

**If you're dealing with parasites, trapped in some sinful habits, read Romans 6-8 over and over for one month.**

**If you're having trouble receiving God's forgiveness, claim 1 John 1:9 as God's truth to you—to deny that it's true is sinful itself!**

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteous.

**God forgives us over and over when we sincerely confess it. But that's not an excuse to continue in the habit. Do whatever it takes to do what Jesus said: "Go now and leave your life of sin." (John 8:11) If you're addicted, seek help now! Check into rehab. Get involved in the recovery group (Southpoint has one called "Living in the Light"). Do a 12-step program, and get a sponsor. See a Christian Counselor (Southpoint can recommend one to you). Read a Christian book on what you're dealing with.**

**// Prayer \_\_\_\_\_**

**Pray for God to break the power of harmful habits, for deliverance from evil.**

**Pray that we would commit our marriages to God, and that he would bring healing and hope to struggling marriages.**