

Using this guide

Welcome to the small group discussion guide for *Your Unfinished Business: Find God in Your Circumstances, Serve Others in Theirs*. This guide will help you dig deeper into the book's ideas.

Here's how you can make the most of the experience:

What's said in the small group stays in the small group. Sharing personal thoughts can be an experience in vulnerability, so help each other by keeping confidences (within legal boundaries of course).

Not everyone will say much. Sometimes, someone may want to listen more than speak, so don't create expectations that everyone has to speak all the time.

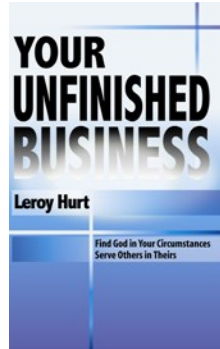
But don't monopolize the discussion either. At times silence can be a useful time for people to think things through.

If you're leading the discussion:

The guide progresses from awareness to application, beginning with awareness activities to warm-up and culminating with practical application.

This guide refers to the New American Standard translation for consistency with the book.

Feel free to tailor the material to the needs of the group.



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What's the book about? The number one question we have to answer is how to integrate faith and ideals into daily living. And the number one challenge for leaders is how to help people answer that question.

Our unfinished business too often seems a matter of figuring out what to do with our lives when it should be about fulfilling what we know our purpose to be. Stewardship as a way of life is how we can get from one to the other, and stewardship of our circumstances is the starting point.

Stewardship of our circumstances isn't only about what we do with our money, although that's what we often hear. Nor is it about positive thinking. Instead, it's how we integrate our faith and ideals into daily living, turning our circumstances into tools working toward a greater good. And that greater good is to turn them into beacons directing others to the God who calls everyone to Himself.

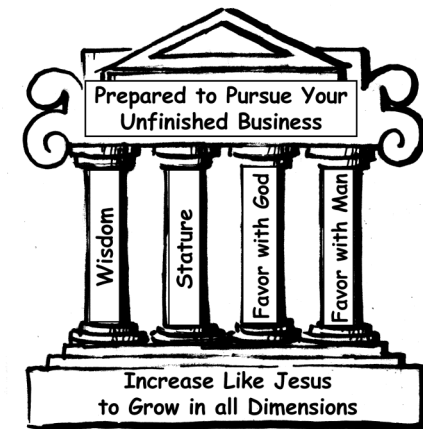
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DISCUSSION GUIDE

***YOUR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
FIND GOD IN YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES,
SERVE OTHERS IN THEIRS***

Chapter 5 Jesus' life shows how to make God's priorities your priorities



Consider

“Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.”

Winston Churchill

“Maturity is achieved when a person postpones immediate pleasures for long-term values.”

Joshua Loth Liebman, *Peace of Mind*

Can smart people have “What were you thinking?!” moments?

How can you tell how mature someone is?

Are the most popular people always the best examples?

Understand

Read the key verse below.

Who should our example be for achieving maturity?

Does increasing in wisdom mean being better educated?

Does increasing in stature mean being a better athlete?

Does increasing in favor with God mean you’ll gain many benefits?

Does increasing in favor with man mean everyone will like you?

Follow up:

Read Luke 2:41-51. Why do you think Jesus continued under His parents’ supervision instead of immediately launching His ministry?

Apply

“Everything has a purpose, and growth must be linked to the purpose. That’s the secret of prioritization — know the purpose and priorities fall into place. Jesus’...subsequent public ministry described later in the gospel suggest that He developed in the four dimensions of life in ways that supported His future work. You can prioritize the same way as you grow in the four dimensions of your life.”

- Chapter 5

What will you do to increase in wisdom?

What will you do to treat your body like a temple?

What must you do to get out of God’s way?

How are you earning the right to serve others?

Before your group meets:

Read the introduction and Increase Like Jesus section of Chapter 5: Jesus’ Life, pp. 75-91

Key verse. *Jesus kept increasing* in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52, NASB).