

## Life Group Discussion Guide: True and False Worship

**Scripture Focus:** Jeremiah 7:1-11

**Supplemental Focus:** "Religion vs. Relationship"

In this passage, Jeremiah stands in the gateway of the Lord's house to deliver a blistering message: religious rituals cannot mask a life lived in disobedience. This guide helps us apply the **Up, In, and Out** vision to ensure our faith is more than just "temple talk".

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### Ice Breakers

- What is one "unwritten rule" or tradition in your family that everyone follows without questioning?
  - If you could design a billboard for our city, what one sentence of advice would you put on it?
  - What is a physical place where you always feel most at peace or "at home"?
  - Jeremiah stood at the gate to speak; if you had to give a speech to a large crowd, would you be nervous or excited?
  - **In:** What is something that the group doesn't know about you yet?
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### UP: Knowing Jesus Intimately

Focus: Our vertical relationship with God and moving beyond mere ritual.

1. In Jeremiah 7:4, the people repeat "This is the temple of the Lord" as a safety net. What are some "religious things" we rely on today instead of relying on Jesus himself?
  2. The Lord tells the people to "thoroughly reform your ways" (v. 5). What has God been revealing to you lately about areas in your life that need his reforming touch?
  3. Jeremiah 7:11 asks if God's house has become a "den of robbers." How does this challenge your view of what it means to "know Jesus intimately" versus just "going to church"?
  4. What is something you are pretty sure God has asked you to do regarding your private worship or prayer life that still needs to be done?
  5. What is a small step you can take toward honest, authentic obedience to God's Word this week?
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### IN: Being Known Authentically

Focus: Intentional friendship and "doing life" together with transparency.

1. The passage warns against deceiving ourselves (v. 8). How can we as a group help each other stay honest about our spiritual health?

2. Jeremiah 7:5-6 lists social justice and kindness as marks of true faith. Who in this group has modeled "intentional friendship" or kindness to you recently?
  3. Being "known authentically" means sharing the messy parts. What is something currently heavy on your heart that feels "messy" or unresolved?
  4. In light of God's call to reform, what is a growth area or a "win" in your character that you are currently celebrating?
  5. How can we pray for one another this week to ensure our "group life" is a place of genuine communal support rather than just a social hang-out?
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### **OUT: Making Jesus Known Practically**

Focus: How the "rubber hits the road" in our treatment of others.

1. Verses 6-7 highlight the treatment of the "foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow." How can we as a group practically look "OUT" to the vulnerable in our specific neighborhood?
2. If our faith is "practicing the mission of the church together," how should our conduct at work or school change based on Jeremiah's warning?
3. Who is someone the Lord brings to mind when you think about people who have been hurt by "religion" and need to see the real Jesus?
4. How might we get to know the tangible needs of our neighbors this week so we can be a blessing to them?
5. Who are you currently praying for to begin a relationship with Jesus, and how can we support that mission as a group?

Building on the call in **Jeremiah 7:6** to care for the "foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow," here are five practical action steps for your group to move **OUT** and be a blessing to your local community.

### **Practical "OUT" Action Steps**

- **Support Local Foster Families:** Jeremiah mentions the "fatherless" [Jeremiah 7:6]. Your group could contact a local agency to provide a "Parents' Night Out" or put together "first-night" bags with pajamas and toiletries for children entering foster care.
- **Neighbor "Prayer Walk":** Walk through a specific neighborhood where group members live. Ask God to show you the needs of the people behind the doors and look for natural opportunities to introduce yourselves.
- **Blessing the "Foreigner":** Many communities have local nonprofits serving refugees or international students. Your group could volunteer for an afternoon or donate specific household items to help a new family get settled.

- **The "Invisible" Neighbor:** Identify a person in your sphere—a coworker, a lonely neighbor, or a single parent—who may feel overlooked. Commit as a group to pray for them by name and find one tangible way to serve them this month.
- **Community Cleanup:** "Reforming your ways" can include caring for the physical space God has placed you in [Jeremiah 7:5]. Spend a Saturday morning picking up litter at a local park or helping an elderly neighbor with yard work to show Jesus' love practically.

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### **A Note for the Leader**

The goal of these steps is to ensure your group doesn't become the "**us four and no more**" tribe. By consistently looking **OUT**, you help the group "make the rubber hit the road" when it comes to their faith