

Life Group Discussion Guide: The Providence of God

Scripture Focus: Jeremiah 24:1 – 25:11

Core Theme: Trusting God's sovereign hand in both blessing and discipline, and the vital necessity of listening with a heart for action.

The framework of **Up, In, and Out** helps us practice the mission of the church together. This week, through the vision of the two baskets of figs and the warning of the seventy years, we explore how God's providence works for the good of those who listen, even in the midst of discipline.

Ice Breakers: Getting Started

- When you go grocery shopping, are you someone who meticulously picks out the "best" fruit, or do you just grab whatever is on top?
- Have you ever been "disciplined" for something (as a child or at work) that ended up making you a better person in the long run?
- What is the longest period of time you've ever had to wait for something significant?
- If you were sent to a foreign country for a year, what is the one thing from home you would miss the most?
- **In:** What is something that the group doesn't know about you yet?

UP: Knowing Jesus Intimately

Focus: Our vertical relationship with God and growing in it together.

1. In the vision of the figs (Chapter 24), God designates the exiles as "good figs" whom He will "set His eyes on for good." How does this change your view of difficult seasons or "exiles" in your own life?
2. God promises, "I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord" (24:7). What has God been doing lately to soften your heart or help you know Him more intimately?
3. Jeremiah 25:3-4 emphasizes that God spoke "persistently," yet the people did not listen. How would you describe your current "listening" relationship with Jesus?
4. What is something you're pretty sure God has asked you to do—a specific "action" from His Word—that still needs to be done?
5. What's a small step you can take towards trusting God's providence, even if you are currently under His "discipline" or a season of waiting?

IN: Being Known Authentically

Focus: Intentional friendships and "doing life" together as communal beings.

1. The "good figs" were sent away together for their protection and eventual return. How can our life group serve as a "basket of good figs" where we protect and encourage one another?
2. Being "known authentically" means sharing the hard stuff. What is something currently heavy on your heart regarding a "discipline" or a hard lesson you are currently walking through?
3. Life groups at OPCM are not just hangouts; we are communal beings designed for friendship. How can we better "do life" together so that no one feels like they are "exile" alone?
4. What is a "win" or a celebration in your life where you clearly saw God's providence providing for you?

OUT: Making Jesus Known Practically

Focus: Consistently looking out to neighbors and friends to make the "rubber hit the road".

1. Jeremiah 25:5 calls the people to "Turn now, every one of you, from his evil way." Who is someone the Lord brings to mind who needs to hear the message of God's restorative mercy?
2. How can we look "OUT" to neighbors who feel like they are under a "seventy-year" season of hardship (25:11)?
3. How might you get to know the needs of your neighbors who don't understand that God's discipline is actually a sign of His love and providence?
4. Assuming you had the skills, how would you explain the "Providence of God" to a friend who feels like their life is currently falling apart?
5. We are called to "make disciples of all nations". How are we practically living out a life of "listening and doing" in our workplaces this week?