

LEON EVANS



No
Greater
Story

Small Group
Notes

A Note from Leon

Dear Small Group Leader,

Thank you for creating a space where people can explore faith, wrestle with Scripture and grow together, especially over a good cuppa and a custard cream.

These sessions are built to work alongside *No Greater Story*, reflecting the structure of the book and the themes we see in Isaiah – in the classroom (the theology), the living room (where we get inspired), and the playground (where we live it out).

While it's not essential for your group to read the book, I'd encourage you to invite them to read along if they can. It will help stir deeper conversation and personal reflection throughout the series.

The questions in each session are designed to go beyond surface discussion – they're meant to challenge, provoke and ultimately lead everyone to see more of God's redemptive plan.

Don't worry about having all the answers. Your role is to guide the conversation with grace, prayer and openness to what the Holy Spirit wants to do.

I'm praying these weeks will bring a real blessing as you journey together.

God bless,
Leon

SESSION ONE

The Creator



God at the Beginning

Theme:

Your story begins with God. He is the author, the playwright, the originator who is writing something greater than you can see.

Key Passage:

Isaiah 40 v.25-31

Opening question:

If someone wrote a book about your life so far, what might the title be?
(Try to have some fun with this)

The Classroom

Read Isaiah 40 v.25-31 and then choose a few of these questions for the group:

- What are some of the common objections or difficulties people have about the idea of God being the creator?
- What are some of the arguments and reasoning we can use to highlight for people that there is no real battle between science and faith, that they are not mutually exclusive?
- What do verses 25-26 tell us about God's power and creativity?

Verse 27 suggests that people sometimes feel forgotten by God. Have you ever felt like that? How does this passage challenge that feeling?

- What does it mean that God 'gives strength to the weary' (v.29)? How have you experienced this in your own story?
 - What do you think it means to 'hope in the Lord?' (v.31)
 - What is the difference between trying to write your own story and trusting God as the author of your story?
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The Living Room

- Have you ever felt, or are you currently feeling, like your story wasn't turning out the way you expected? How does knowing God is the creator bring you comfort?
 - In what areas of your life do you need God the creator to bring order out of chaos, a sense of control where there appears to be none?
 - What would it look like to trust the author of your story more fully this week?
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The Playground

Spend some time praying for one another that the creator would continue to create in each of our lives; he is the potter and we are the clay.

Ask God to continue to shape us and invite Him by His spirit to bring His creative energy into our lives.

As you finish, here are two bits of 'homework':

1. Encourage the group to explore some of the ideas in the playground section from part one of the book, *No Greater Story*, and the extra resources available on the linked website.
2. Find one way you can engage with creation this week – climb a tree, smell a flower, take a long walk, notice an animal, look up and count the stars . . . as you do, remind yourself God is the creator and He's got this!

Extra resources

Visit this site to find links to practical resources and ideas to take things further.



www.springharvest.org/resources/no-greater-story

SESSION TWO

The Redeemer



God in the Middle

Theme:

Nobody gets the story they really want, but in Jesus, our stories can be redeemed and find purpose and meaning when they become part of God's greater story.

Key Passage:

Isaiah 53 v.1-6

Opening question:

Have you ever had a moment in your life when you felt like your story had taken a wrong turn? What was that like at the time?

The Classroom

Read Isaiah 53 v.1-6 and pick a few questions for the group:

- What comes to mind when you hear the words 'redeemer' or 'redemption'?
 - What do these verses tell us about Jesus' role in redeeming our stories?
 - Verse 3 says Jesus was 'despised and rejected.' How does it change our view of suffering to know that Jesus experienced suffering too?
 - How have you experienced Jesus in the middle of your story, your pain, your mess, your doubt?
 - How does verse 5 ('by his wounds we are healed') speak into our brokenness and failure?
 - Verse 6 says, 'we all, like sheep, have gone astray.' In what ways do people try to write their own stories away from God?
 - What does it mean for you personally that Jesus has taken on your brokenness to redeem your story?
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The Living Room

- Where right now are you struggling to believe that your story could be redeemed?
 - How should we live differently knowing Jesus has redeemed our story through his work on the cross?
 - We are grateful that Jesus is the 'suffering servant' but Isaiah was written with many layers of meaning, historical as well as prophetic. What could it mean for us as a church if we adopted the posture of a suffering servant in order to see our communities redeemed?
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The Playground

As you come to pray, thank Jesus for stepping into our broken stories and bringing redemption.

Pray for those who are struggling in the middle of something; pain, mess, doubt, fear, disappointment or whatever it may be, that Jesus would meet them there.

As you finish, here are two bits of 'homework':

1. Encourage the group to explore some of the ideas in the playground section of section two in the book and the extra resources available on the linked website.
2. This week, take some time to write down some of the key milestones of how you came to faith in Jesus and give God thanks for your story. Then, surrender your story to Him again, trusting that He is working in all the messy parts now and in the future.

Extra resources

Visit this site to find links to practical resources and ideas to take things further.



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SESSION THREE

The Perfecter



God at the End

Theme:

Every great story needs an ending. God's story ends with hope, restoration and everything being made new.

Key Passage:

Isaiah 65 v.17-25

Opening Question:

What book or film have you read or watched where you loved the ending? What about one where you were totally frustrated or disappointed with the ending?

The Classroom

Aristotle said good storytelling has an ending that is both 'unexpected and inevitable.'

- Why, as human beings, are we so hard wired to know the ending of any story do you think?
- When you think of 'heaven,' what do you think of? What comes to mind?

Read Isaiah 65 v.17-25.

Isaiah talks about the ending of the story culminating with the new heaven and earth.

- Work through these verses that highlight the distinctives of the new heaven and earth. Ask the group: what impacts you?
- What does verse 17 mean when it says, 'the former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind'?
- How does this passage contrast with the brokenness we see in our world today?
- What do verses 21-22 reveal about God's desire for his people? How does this challenge the way we think about our future?
- What would it look like for you to live today with this future in mind?

The Living Room

- How does knowing the ending of God's story give us confidence to trust Him with our own stories?
- If you knew the ending of your story would be filled with hope and restoration, how would it change the way you approach the challenges you face now?
- What is one way you can live today in light of God's greater story?

The Playground

As you come to pray, thank God for the promise that He is making all things new.

Pray for a renewed perspective to live with hope, knowing that all your stories are part of something eternal and something greater.

Pray for those who are struggling to believe this truth right now; pray for hope and reassurance.

As you finish, here are two bits of ‘homework’:

1. Encourage the group to explore some of the ideas in the playground section in part three of the book and the extra resources available on the linked website.
2. This week, write a letter to your younger self. What would you say to that person about life, faith and God?

Did you enjoy *No Greater Story?*

If you've gained great value from the book, *No Greater Story* by Leon Evans, then please do leave an online review so others can be encouraged to access this resource.

