

# Week 04

## LEADER GUIDE



## CONNECT

Ask: What's your favorite movie and why is that particular story so powerful to you?

## LEARN

Watch the video and fill in the blanks.

*"Clearly you are an epistle of Christ . . . written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God." 2 Corinthians 3:3*

Your life is a **STORY**.

Your story isn't just a list of facts and events. It's a weaving of those facts and events into a narrative that has meaning, one that connects with God's larger story.

There is an **ARC** to your story.

Two of the biggest clues to understanding your story are your **BLESSEDNESS** and your **BROKENNESS**.

As we look to Jesus through our blessings and our brokenness, our eyes are opened to see Him at work in our **STORY**.

As you reflect on your story, it is helpful to break it into different **SEASONS**.

There are different types of blessings:

- **VOCATIONAL** accomplishments
- **ACADEMIC** successes
- **RELATIONAL** achievements
- **SPIRITUAL** breakthroughs

*"I will bless you...you will be a blessing to all people." Genesis 12:1-2*

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." 2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

What are my **HURTS** ?

What are/or have been my harmful **HABITS** ?

What are my **HANGUPS** ?

What have been the personal, vocational, relational and spiritual places of **BROKENNESS** ?

God will never waste your brokenness. He can **RECYCLE** it into something beautiful in your life and for the benefit of others. "Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139:16

## DISCUSS

1. Consider this quote: "Most of us don't take the time to reflect on our story. Furthermore, even when we do, we are so enmeshed in our story that it can be difficult, virtually impossible at times, for us to perceive its meanings and patterns. We desperately need the perspective of the Letter Writer, to be our interpreter." **How easy was it for you to complete the Story portion of the GPS assessment? Do you ever find it difficult to discern the meanings and patterns in your story?**
2. **Do you see any connections so far between your gifts, passions, and story? Explain.**
3. Consider this quote: "Those that allow this false wall (between the sacred and the secular) to exist also tend to limit their list of spiritual development experiences to the sacred category." **In what ways do you do this? In what ways have you been freed from this?**
4. **Have you experienced any ways in which God redeemed brokenness or blessedness in your story to lead you toward related Kingdom service?**

5. **Rev. John reminded us in his sermon on 1 Corinthians 13 that we were created and called to love. In fact, within the Apostle Paul's discussion about spiritual gifts, he reminds the church that love is "the most excellent way" (1 Cor 12:31). 1 Corinthians 13 is one of the more familiar passages in the Bible and frequently recited at weddings. Is it a passage you associate primarily with weddings and marriage or the Christian life? What about spiritual gifts? Why?**
6. **Rev. John suggested 1 Corinthians 13 is a "call to action." If read as such, what are the implications for your life?**
7. **Rev. John said that "fabulous fades" but love endures forever. How is your life given to things that fade and how is it given to things that will endure forever?**
8. **As we near the end of the GPS study, do you sense God calling you to take any new steps in Kingdom service?**
9. **Have you awakened to any new gifts, passions, or interests?**
10. **Have you been affirmed in any gifts or areas of service?**

## FOR NEXT WEEK

- **If you haven't yet, take the online gifts assessment** by clicking on the blue "Online Gifts Assessment" box at the bottom of this page: <https://sjepc.com/gps-groups>
  - *Once you create an account through the provided church-specific assessment link you must login to your account at [www.giftpassionstory.com](http://www.giftpassionstory.com) to access your account and view or complete your assessment.*
- **Take some extra time to journal and talk to the Lord about your gifts, passions, and story.** *How do you think God wants to use your story in your current ministry or in a future ministry? Have you been focusing more on the greatest gift (LOVE) or the other spiritual gifts? What would it look like to be more focused on living a life of LOVE? Revisit 1 Corinthians 13 and journal some thoughts that come to mind in response to the passage.*

## **PRAY**

Ask for the Spirit's guidance as we continue the discernment process of our gifts and passions. Pray for one another to trust God's wisdom and purpose for how he has gifted and called each one. Pray for our congregation's spiritual fitness through the way we steward these gifts.