## Leader's Guide

Session 2: The Whispering Spot	
<u>OPEN</u>	
<b>Leader:</b> Open the session with prayer. Pass out the Participants' Handout to everyone in the group. Begin by following up with the Deeper Walk section from session one. What exercise did everyone choose? How did it go?	
What is your favorite place? How do you feel when you go there?	
Why is that certain place more special to you than other places?	
In the previous session, we discussed what it means to hear God's voice. Since God is everywhere, we can hear from Him whenever He chooses to speak. But sometimes He uses specific places to communicate with us, and that's what this session is about.	
VIEW	
Show Session 2: The Whispering Spot (10 minutes)	
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REVIEW	
Mark shared several instances from the Bible where God spoke to someone. What is your favorite story of God speaking to someone in Scripture? Why is that your favorite story?	
<b>Leader:</b> If you're leading a group that's unfamiliar with the stories of the Bible, consider starting off the conversation by sharing your own favorite story. Some examples may include: God instructing Noah to build the ark, God calling Abraham, or God speaking to Moses through the burning bush.	
Stories of God speaking to His people flood the pages of Scripture. Mark mentioned one story about Jacob who realized God's presence while he was on the run from his brother, Esau.	
<b>Leader:</b> Some background might be necessary before diving into the next passage. Read Genesis 25–28 beforehand for background on Jacob and Esau. Jacob was on the run from his brother when he had his dream at Bethel. God shows Jacob that He is with Jacob.	
Read Genesis 28:10–16. How does God reveal His presence to Jacob? Why do you think Jacob was unaware of God's presence in that place before the dream?	
Whether we're aware or not, God's always with us. When we become followers of Jesus, God gives us the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God lives in us every moment of every day. When are you most aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Why do you think that is? Why do you think we can sometimes forget about God's presence with us through the Spirit?	
We don't always keep God's presence in mind, even though He's everywhere all the time. When is it easy to be aware of God's presence? When is it difficult? Why do you think that is?	
Are there certain places that make you feel more connected with God? Why do you think that is?	
Have you ever had a place set aside for your time with	

God? How did God use that place in your life?	
Read Psalm 46:1–11. This psalm shows the power of God. When wars wage and the earth fights against us, God is our help. We can be still and marvel at His might. What does it mean to be still and wonder at the majesty of God? What might it look like for you to slow down and marvel at who God is?	
What kinds of things keep you from being still and quiet before God?	
When do you find moments of silence in your daily routine? How do you use those silences?	
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3 of 8

## **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

As we saw in Mark's teaching, spending time alone with	
God is an important part of the Christian walk. He talked	
about solitude, silence, and place, and how each of	
those elements can contribute to how we commune	
with God. We can look to the life of Jesus and see His	
rhythms of silence and solitude. Jesus often withdrew at	
significant moments of His ministry to pray. Let's read	
two passages that show this pattern in Jesus's life.	
Read Luke 4:40–44 and Luke 5:12–16.	
What happened before Jesus left to pray alone in	
each of these passages? How do you think Jesus felt	
after healing many people?	
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With the context of these verses in mind, why do you	
think Jesus took time to withdraw and pray?	
How do these passages show the value of rest and	
solitary prayer to Jesus? What about to us?	
Jesus knew to rest and speak to the Father after	
exerting energy—especially when it came to His	
ministry. What's your attitude toward rest? Do you	
think of it as selfish? Unnecessary? Essential? Rare?	
Why do you think you have that perception of rest?	
When have you felt the need for rest? What wore you	
out? Did you end up resting? Why or why not?	
can the year and approximation of the year.	
Why do you think we often choose activity over rest?	
What's difficult about resting?	
Do you consider time to slone with God rectful? Why	
Do you consider time to alone with God restful? Why	
or why not?	
What does it look like to rest in God's presence and	
allow Him to rejuvenate you?	
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Jesus also withdrew to pray for other reasons. Read	
Luke 6:12–16.	
Based on this passage, why do you think Jesus spent	
an entire night alone praying? (He sought God's	
guidance in choosing the Twelve Disciples.)	
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What was so important about choosing the twelve?	
(They were to be the leaders of the early church,	
carriers of the gospel, and Jesus's closest companions.)	
Just as Jesus faced weighty decisions, we also	
encounter difficult choices in life—who we'll befriend,	
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how we'll spend our time, who we'll invest in. What are	
some of the biggest decisions you've made in your	
life? How did you make the decision?	
How was God involved in your decision-making?	
riow was ood involved in your decision-making:	
When faced with a serious decision, do you seek	
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God's counsel first? Why do you think that is?	
What does it look like to ask for and listen to God's	
guidance? What do you do when you need God to	
guide you?	
guide you.	
How might silence and solitude be part of seeking	
God's counsel?	
Read Luke 21:37–38. If you glance before and after	
these verses in your Bible, where do these verses fall	
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in the story? (They fall right before Jesus is arrested	
and killed.)	
Read Luke 22:39–46. According to verse 39, Jesus	
made it a habit to go up to the Mount of Olives during	
His time in Jerusalem. Why do you think Jesus chose	
that place? How might have praying at the Mount of	
Olives prepare Him for what was going to happen?	
om to propare time for innating going to mappen.	
Jesus knew that He would suffer and die to bring	
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salvation to many. He went to the place He knew He	
would be betrayed and taken—He knew that place	
would be important. What did He pray on the Mount of	
Olives? (He prayed for God to remove the cup of	
, , ,	
suffering from Him. He then prayed that God's will	
would be done, not His.)	
In this prayer, Jesus commits Himself fully to God's plan.	
Why do you think it was important for Jesus to pray	
right before His death? How did those prayers prepare	
Him for what was to come?	
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Jesus shows us that we need to take time away to be	

with God. Even though Jesus was fully God, He still needed to be strengthened, guided, and sustained by the Father. How has Jesus's example shaped the way you view solitude with God?	
Mark talked about finding a specific place where God speaks to you. Do you currently have a place you can go and be alone with God? Where is that place? When can you go there?	
As we saw in Jesus's story, a specific place isn't always necessary to hear from God—Jesus communed with Him all over Israel. What mattered was His intentionality in taking time to be alone with the Father. What keeps you from spending time with God? How could you fight against the temptation to not spend time with Him this week?	
<b>Leader:</b> If you feel led, now might be a good time to talk about how you spend time with God. Explain the difficulties of forming a habit, what you've learned, and how to accept grace when you fall short.	
When you do spend time with Him, what does that time look like? What's one thing you could do this week to spend intentional time alone with Him?	
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## **LAST WORD**

We've discussed what it looks like to practice the discipline of silence and solitude. Mark talked about finding a place to get alone with God. Developing this discipline takes time and effort—it doesn't happen overnight. And this discipline looks different for every Christian—avoid falling into the comparison trap. Allow God's grace to guide you as you grow in spending time with Him.

We're going to spend the next few minutes praying in silence. If you have any distractions around you like your cell phone or tablet, please put them somewhere out of the way. Use this time to pray about what's on your mind—confess any sin, talk to God about what we learned in this session, or surrender your worries to Him.

**Leader:** Organize this time of prayer in a way that best suits your group. If the room allows, let the group members spread out. Encourage them to write down together and closing in prayer.

prayers if that helps them stay focused. Use five to ten minutes of silent prayer before bringing everyone back rightnow MEDIA

## **DEEPER WALK**

<b>Leader:</b> Encourage your group to pick at least one of the following suggested applications to put into practice this week. You may even invite them to circle the one they choose. Follow up at the beginning of the next session to see how it went.	
Read: Read chapter 3 from Mark's book Whisper.	
<b>Get Alone:</b> Take at least fifteen minutes this week to be completely alone with God. Silence any distractions or noises. Use that time to pray—confess sin, lay down burdens, read a Psalm, thank God, praise Him, listen.	
<b>Rest:</b> Develop rhythms of rest this week. Take moments to rest at the beginning and end of each day, set aside a day for Sabbath, or schedule a personal retreat.	
<b>Study:</b> Read Psalm 46 this week. Every time you read the psalm, ask why God says to be still and know He is God. Write down what you learn and consider sharing it with a friend.	
<b>Pray:</b> Ask God to teach you how to slow down and sit in His presence. Pause throughout your day to pray and remind yourself that He is always with you.	

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8 of 8