

## Responding to God Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Generally speaking, do you make decisions quickly or slowly? Explain.
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, how “out-doorsy” are you?

**Read the following passage:** Luke 7:37-38.

“...with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” This saying is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, each time in a slightly different context. Sayings like this were well known among Jewish rabbis. They teach the principle of reciprocity: What you put into something determines what you will get out of it. Wisdom sayings, including this one, rarely hold true 100% of the time in a broken world like ours. A more nuanced way of putting the principle might sound like this: The principle of reciprocity is true in the world sometimes, with the people you are close to frequently, and with God, always. The Gospels apply the principle in three contexts: what we do with Jesus’s message, whether we will be people of condemnation or people of grace, and how generous we will be towards others.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Can you think of any times in your life in which the principle of reciprocity has held true? Explain. Can you think of other times in which the principle seemed not to hold? Explain.
2. Generally speaking, do you tend to think of yourself as being in control of what happens in your life, or not in control of what happens in your life? Explain. What do you think the Bible teaches about this?
3. Read Mark 4:1-9, 13-20. What type of soil best represents how you’re responding to Jesus’s message in this season of your life? What would you like to change in how you’re responding to God?
4. Many of the people we read about in the Bible had multiple “restarts” in their lives. Are there any areas of your life that you think could use a restart? Explain.
5. Read Matthew 7:1-2. Jesus’s teaching in this passage suggests that there are two contrasting ways of orienting ourselves in this world. We can be people of condemnation, or we can be people of grace. What does it look like to be a person of grace? How do grace and truth work together?

6. How can we be confident that God is for us?
7. Do you find it difficult to be generous with your time or money? Explain. How can we become more generous people?

**Pray**