

## Think Soberly 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. Choose three words to describe yourself.
2. What's one thing that was emphasized in your family growing up?

**Read the following passages:** Romans 12:3-8.

Although many people struggle with identity and self-esteem, or even succumb to self-loathing, on the whole, we still tend to overestimate ourselves. Studies have shown that professors overrate their teaching ability, students overrate their academic ability, drivers overrate their driving skills, and people, in general, overrate their popularity and friendliness. It can be difficult to think of ourselves with sober judgment. But to walk in God's will for our lives, it is helpful to have an accurate assessment of ourselves. To this end, we should consider the following questions:

- What is my background?
- What is my temperament?
- What has God redeemed in my life?
- What are my gifts and talents?

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

1. Read Acts 9:11-16. What was God's mission for Paul? What aspects of Paul's background might have prepared him for this mission? What are some ways God could use your background for His purposes in the present? Consider, in particular, questions like the following.
  - What cultures and communities do you understand?
  - Whom do you have influence with?
  - In what fields do you have experience?
  - What have you learned?
  - What have you been trained in?
  - What has your family experience prepared you for?
2. Read Galatians 1:13-14 and Acts 26:4-5. What can we learn about Paul's temperament from these passages? How do you think his basic temperament was beneficial in the mission to which God called Paul? What kind of roles do you think your temperament would work well in? What are some ways you think you could play a valuable role in the church? In your workplace? In your family? Consider questions like the following.
  - Are you most energized by actions, by ideas, or by relationships?
  - Are you highly in tune with the emotions of those around you?
  - Do you prefer to plan ahead or figure things out as you go?

- Are you more drawn to the details or the big picture?
  - Are you more prone to keep the rules or bend the rules?
  - Do you like to have a lot of different friends or just a few close friends?
  - Do difficult decisions keep you up at night?
  - Do you prefer to examine the data or to use your imagination?
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:12-16. How does Paul describe the change he went through? Why did Paul think his story could be helpful to others? What are some things that God has turned around in your own life? What are some concrete ways you have experienced God's redemption? How do you think your experience might prepare you to help others?
  4. Often in the New Testament one person speaks to the gifts or calling of another. Why is this so often helpful? Can you think of any occasions in which someone has spoken to the gifts in your life? Explain. Do you look to do this for others?
  5. Read Romans 12:6-8 again. Do you think you might have any of the gifts Paul mentions in these verses? Are there any areas outside of what Paul mentions here in which you think you may be gifted to serve God's people and God's mission?
  6. What are three ways you think God wants to work through your life?
  7. What can you do this week to bring clarity to how God wants to work through your life?

## **Pray**