

STUDY GUIDE
GROUPS / INDIVIDUALS

SIX SESSIONS

Uninvited

Living Loved When You Feel Less Than,
Left Out, and Lonely

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Living Loved



Live from a deep assurance that you are fully loved, and you won't find yourself begging others for scraps of love. Live loved.

Recommended reading prior to the meeting:
Uninvited book, chapters 1–3

WELCOME!

Welcome to Session 1 of *Uninvited*. If this is your first time together as a group, take a moment to introduce yourselves to one another before watching the video. Then let's get started!

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION:

Basic Definitions (10 minutes)

Use this discussion if time permits or if your group meets for two hours.

Choose one of the following questions to answer:

If you were to write the definition of *love*, what would it be?

If you were to write the definition of *rejection*, what would it be?

VIDEO:

Living Loved (25 minutes)

Play the video segment for Session 1. As you watch, use the outline below to follow along or take additional notes on anything that stands out to you.

Notes

Jesus' words on the Mount of Beatitudes were a proclamation that He had come and prophecy was being fulfilled.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus announced good news for the poor, the mourning, the rejected. The Messiah has come, and if we remain in Him, we can live loved.

This week's statement to hold on to: Live from a deep assurance that you are fully loved, and you won't find yourself begging others for scraps of love. Live loved.

Rejection never has the final say. With Jesus you are forever safe, accepted, held, loved, invited.

God is in our midst and will quiet us with His love.

The "live loved" quest: To get to a place of stable emotions, stable love instead of a downward spiral in response to circumstances.

When giving is from a heart whose real motivation is what we're hoping to get in return, it's not really love at all.

Living loved is sourced in the quiet daily surrender to the One who loves us.

The ballerina longs most for her instructor's approval. Her daily return to her instructor is the key to her seemingly effortless soaring. Likewise, we need to return often to our Instructor, our Creator. His hand is daily poised to continue making us and to complete the good work He began in us. We need to spend time getting refilled by God in His abundant love.

God waits every day with every answer we need, every comfort we crave, while we're out looking for love everywhere else. God wants us to slow down enough to receive from Him.

“Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might *be with him* and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.” (Mark 3:13–15 NIV, emphasis added)

We don't need to manipulate our hearts to feel loved. Instead, we settle in our souls that God created us because He so very much loved the thought of us.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

Video Debrief (5 minutes)

1. What part of the teaching had the most impact on you?

Blessedness: What Does the Bible Say? (10 minutes)

If your group meets for two hours, allow 20 minutes for this discussion.

Remember, Jesus giving the Sermon on the Mount is a fulfillment of prophecy, because Isaiah 61:1 says, “*The LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor*” (NIV). The use of the word “poor” here really means the poor in spirit, or those who are afflicted, humble, meek. Jesus came to tell us that He had good news in the midst of hard realities. Read Matthew 5:1–16 aloud, changing readers every few verses, and listen for the way He speaks to our hearts that are so desperate for acceptance.

¹Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ²and he began to teach them.

He said:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

¹³“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:1–16 NIV)

2. Who does Jesus say are the blessed? What surprises you about this list?

- Why might we call these people blessed, even though their circumstances might not be producing happy feelings?

“Blessed” translates the Greek word *makarios*. It could be rendered as “happy” or “fortunate” if those words aren’t taken in a shallow, emotional way. “*Makarios* is a state of existence in relationship to God in which a person is ‘blessed’ from God’s perspective even when he or she doesn’t feel happy or isn’t presently experiencing good fortune.” Jesus isn’t exhorting His hearers to live a life worthy of blessing. He is saying that the people He speaks of are already blessed. “Negative feelings, absence of feelings, or adverse conditions cannot take away the blessedness of those who exist in relationship with God.”¹ Jesus is telling His hearers that they can be blessed even when they don’t feel good. They can live as loved, blessed people regardless of their circumstances.

¹Michael J. Wilkins, *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 204.

- In what sense are you blessed right now?

- How would your daily life be different if you lived convinced, deep down, that you are blessed, that the kingdom of heaven belongs to you, that your hunger will be satisfied, that you are loved by the Maker of the universe?

3. Read Matthew 5:11–12.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11–12 NIV)

- What does God’s Word say about times when we feel left out, lonely, or less-than?

4. Read Matthew 5:14–16.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14–16 NIV)

- Do you see yourself as the light of the world? Why or why not? How does your perception of yourself affect how you treat others?

5. On the video, Lysa said that the Creator may have planned the migration of birds for the very moment when He was going to point to the birds to illustrate His message. That’s how important His hearers were to Him. Do you believe that God loves you so much that He would do the same for you?

²⁶“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” ²⁷Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” (Matthew 6:26–27 NIV)

- Write down what this passage says about God’s deep love for you.

6. Read Matthew 7:9–12.

⁹“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹²So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 7:9–12 NIV)

What do these verses say about God’s love for you?

Living Loved in a Sea of Feelings (10 minutes)

If your group meets for two hours, allow 20 minutes for this discussion.

7. Let’s take a small assessment and then look at Zephaniah 3 together. Which of the following experiences, if any, do you have on a regular basis?
- I am often a slave to my runaway emotions and assumptions.
 - I don’t think rejection is currently affecting me, but I have had deep hurts in my past.
 - The moods of other people greatly affect my mood.
 - I easily feel rejected.
 - I’m afraid of telling other people “no” for fear that they may be disappointed in me and eventually reject me.
 - I find myself assuming people are thinking the worst of me.

- I have a nagging feeling of disappointment in my soul that I'm aware of when I slow down.
- I keep moving fast, and that distracts me, so I honestly don't know what I might be feeling if I got still and quiet.

Too often we allow our rejections to scream louder than the truth of God's Word. Read Zephaniah 3:17 as a group: "The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing" (ESV).

- What do you think it means to be quieted by God's love?

There are two groups of people this verse can give deep assurance to:

- 1) Those whose past or present rejections scream so loudly that it's impossible to live loved when they are constantly feeling the sting of others' hurtful words.
- 2) Those who aren't currently feeling rejected but whose past hurts and rejections are affecting them more than they realize. Or those who are typically confident yet can't understand why they shy away from certain groups of people and situations that give them some sense of not being fully welcomed in as they are.

Either way, here's the assurance: Whether the scripts of rejection are screaming or whispering in your mind, all can be quieted by His love. And not just gentle whispers of love but "loud singing" where God Himself exults over you. He wants His voice of love to be the loudest reality in your life.

This reality doesn't rise and fall on your ability to feel loved. It rises and falls on your belief that He is more powerful than the rejection you've faced. There are things in you that need to be quieted. It's His promises, not your performance, that quiets them.

8. Have you rehashed your hurts more than you've rejoiced in God's love? How can Zephaniah 3:17 help you change that pattern?
 - What is a daily way you can dwell in the deep assurance of His love so His voice is the loudest in your life?

Say this out loud together:

“Yes, we’re going to **deal** with our rejections, but we’re not going to **dwel**l on them. We will dwell on the loving declarations of God’s love. Therefore, we can live loved.”

It’s easy to live loved when I feel loved.

But some days I’m just not feeling it.

When life karate chops my feelings into words like *hurt*, *brushed aside*, and *left out* on Monday and then on Tuesday morning the lady at the gym smirks at me, how in heavens am I supposed to be jolly and not assume the worst? For real, it does not come naturally to me to think in those moments, *Girl, I am not picking up that negative vibe you just laid down, because I live loved.*

No way, no how.

I’m going to get in a funk, because that’s what I do. I will feel put off, and then I will put on that ratty robe of rejection and wear it all day long.

But I don’t want to keep being a slave to my runaway emotions and assumptions. I don’t want my days to be dictated by the moods of other people. And I really don’t want the rejections of my past feeding my propensity to feel rejected today.

I want the kind of emotional stability I read about in the Bible: “The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing” (Zephaniah 3:17 ESV).

I love the thought that God is in our midst and that He will quiet me by His love.

Yes, please. I’ll take an extra-large order of that every morning.

I want to believe it’s possible for me not just in the middle of Bible study but in the middle of life.

So I decided to go on a “live loved” quest. I determined to be a one-woman experiment in whether or not it is actually possible to live from a place of being loved. I wanted to get to a place where my immediate reaction to off-kilter interactions with others wasn’t a downward spiral of wonky feelings, but stable love instead.

Uninvited, pages 32–33

This week’s statement to hold on to: Live from a deep assurance that you are fully loved, and you won’t find yourself begging others for scraps of love. Live loved.

9. Think about the past twenty-four hours. What got in the way of your living loved? Did anything help you live loved? If so, what?

10. What mental picture represents living loved to you?

11. On the video, Lysa said we can be like the ballerina who moves with such grace that she seems to fly because she returns every day to her instructor, who in love tweaks and trains her in the quiet studio. Jesus promises to be our Instructor. He promises to continue His good work in us until it is completed (Philippians 1:6). How is His love training you? What part do we play in the training process? Consider the passages in the quotation box below.

I needed to reconnect with the One who knows how to breathe life and love back into depleted and dead places. Jesus doesn't participate in the rat race. He's into the slower rhythms of life like abiding, delighting, and dwelling—all words used to describe us being with Him.

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7 NASB).

“Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4 ESV).

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall remain stable *and* fixed under the shadow of the Almighty [Whose power no foe can withstand]” (Psalm 91:1 AMP).

Did you catch the beautiful filling promised in each of those verses? When we abide, delight, and dwell in Him, He then places within us desires that line up with His best desire for us. Therefore, He can give us whatever we ask, because we will only want what's consistent with His best. He can fully satisfy our hearts, because they are consistent with His heart. He can promise us stability, because we're tapped into His consistent power.

12. Lysa says, “Living loved is sourced in the quiet daily surrender to the One who loves us.” Write down some ways that you might go about that quiet daily surrender. What actions are involved? What attitudes are displayed?

How dangerous it is when our soul is gasping for God but we’re too distracted flirting with the world to notice. Flirting will give you brief surges of fun feelings but will never really pull you in and hold you close. Indeed, the world entices our flesh but never embraces our soul. All the while, the only love caring enough to embrace us and complete enough to fill us, waits. . . .

We just have to turn to Him. And sit with Him. No matter what. Even if our toes bloody from the constant wear and tear from desperately running to Him. Get to Him daily.

How it must break His heart when we walk around so desperate for a love He waits to give us each and every day.

Uninvited, pages 35–36

OPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION:

Flirting with the World (20 minutes)

If your group meets for two hours, include this activity as part of your meeting. Allow 20 minutes total—5 minutes for the individual activity and 15 minutes for the group discussion.

Individual Activity (5 minutes)

Complete this activity on your own.

1. Read the excerpt from the *Uninvited* book above. Review the past forty-eight hours of your life and make some notes about times when you flirted with the world. For example, consider times when you:
 - Gave the first moments of your day to things other than checking in with what God might say to you in His Word
 - Checked your social media to see how many likes you had received on your posts
 - Watched television programs or advertisements that stimulated unreasonable desires in you for possessions, romance, or achievement

- Worried about problems, talked to people about them, and tried to solve them yourself, instead of praying about them
- Bought products you didn't really need
- Interacted with another person with a goal of getting his or her approval

These notes are just for you; you won't have to share them with the group unless you choose to do so.

2. What do you typically do or turn to when you don't feel loved?

Group Discussion (15 minutes)

1. How do you tend to feel after you've been flirting with the world?

2. What do we do if flirting with the world feels good but spending time with the Lord feels dry?

The irony is that flirting with the world ultimately leaves us empty, even though it can feel good at the time. The only thing that truly nourishes our souls is the love of God. If you've been flirting with the world, take heart. As we go further in the study, you'll find yourself developing the habit of living loved, and the world won't seem so compelling.

3. How can you live loved this week? What is one step you can take toward that goal?

Becoming a Group that Lives Loved (8 minutes)

If your group meets for two hours, allow 18 minutes for this discussion.

13. The five remaining sessions in *Uninvited* will take you further on the path toward living loved instead of stumbling down the road of rejection. In addition to learning together as a group, it's important to be aware of how God is at work among you in the time you spend together—especially in how you relate to one another and share your lives throughout the study. As you discuss the teaching in each session, there will be many opportunities to speak life-giving—and life-challenging—words, and to listen to one another deeply.

Take a few moments to consider the kinds of things that are important to you in this setting. What do you need or want from the other members of the group? Use one or more of the sentence starters below, or your own statement, to help the group understand the best way to be good companions to you throughout this *Uninvited* study. As each person responds, use the chart on pages 22–23 to briefly note what is important to that person and how you can support and encourage her.

It really helps me when . . .

I tend to withdraw or feel anxious when . . .

I'd like you to challenge me about . . .

I'll know this group is a safe place if you . . .

In our discussions, the best thing you could do for me is . . .

NAME | THE BEST WAY I CAN ENCOURAGE AND HELP THIS PERSON IS . . .

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NAME

THE BEST WAY I CAN ENCOURAGE AND HELP THIS PERSON IS . . .



INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY:

What I Want to Remember (2 minutes)

Complete this activity on your own.

1. Briefly review the outline and any notes you took.
2. In the space below, write down the most significant thing you gained in this session—from the teaching, activities, or discussions.

What I want to remember from this session . . .

(If you want to share what you're learning and see what others are saying about *Uninvited* on social media, use the hashtag #Uninvitedbook!)

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you hear His good news for the poor in spirit, to help you know in your heart of hearts that you are blessed right now, no matter what other people say or do. Ask Him to help you lived loved as you go through your day.

BETWEEN-SESSIONS PERSONAL STUDIES

Every session in *Uninvited* includes six days of personal study to help you make meaningful connections between your life and what you're learning each week. In this first week, you'll start observing times when you feel rejection so that you can eventually notice patterns in your experience and responses. You'll also have a chance to read the chapters of the *Uninvited* book that relate to this week's teachings. You'll alternate between days when the emphasis is looking at your life and the Scriptures and days when the emphasis is the book chapters.

Personal Study



DAY 1: STUDY AND REFLECT

1. Feelings of rejection come from disappointment. We want to receive one message, but we get another. We want people to tell us they love us and want what we have to offer, but they send (or seem to send) the opposite message.

To stay centered in God's love even when we're rejected, it's helpful to start by paying conscious attention to the messages of rejection we have received. We need to know the kinds of situations that have led us to feel rejected, and we need to know the messages we have heard from those situations.

In the chart that follows, record your major experiences of rejection, whether as a child, a teen, or an adult. (You will have opportunity to add new notes to this chart as the week progresses.)

WHO SENT THE REJECTING MESSAGE?	WHAT WAS THE MESSAGE YOU RECEIVED?	ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 (5 BEING THE WORST), HOW PAINFUL WAS THE MESSAGE?
Examples: My mother	She was preoccupied with caring for my sick brother and so didn't make time to be with me or listen to me. I got the message, "Your brother is important, but you're not."	5
My boss	He praised a colleague's work but overlooked my contribution. I got the message, "You don't count. You're invisible. Your contribution isn't valued."	3

WHO SENT THE REJECTING MESSAGE?	WHAT WAS THE MESSAGE YOU RECEIVED?	ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 (5 BEING THE WORST), HOW PAINFUL WAS THE MESSAGE?



2. How would you summarize the overall message you have received from your experiences of rejection?

Negative self-talk was a rejection from my past that I had allowed to settle into the core of who I am. I talked about myself in ways I would never let another person. Hints of self-rejection laced my thoughts and poisoned my words more than I cared to admit.

Self-rejection paves the landing strip for the rejection of others to arrive and pull on up to the gates of our hearts. Think about why it hurts so much when other people say or do things that make you feel rejected. Isn't it in part due to the fact they just voiced some vulnerability you've already berated yourself for?

It hurts exponentially more when you're kicked in an already bruised shin.

Uninvited, page 7

3. When have you gone into an encounter at work or church or somewhere else with the messages of self-rejection already braced to make you feel like an outsider?

4. You're not stuck with those messages of self-rejection forever. To overcome the effects of rejection, you can rehearse the truth of God's Word until it replaces any negative thoughts or feelings. For instance, if you are struggling with the message that you don't matter, then a passage like Ephesians 1:4–5 would be helpful to rehearse:

⁴ Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. ⁵ God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (NLT)

Copy this passage below, using the word "me" in place of "us" to personalize it for yourself.

Now read the personalized version aloud.

Write the personalized version someplace where you will see it during the day. For example, put it on your phone so that you can glance at it frequently. Ask God to write this verse on your heart so that you will believe it and live by it. If you really want to overcome strong messages of rejection, make a plan to read aloud the personalized passage five times a day for the next seven days. Read it aloud with conviction.

Write out a prayer to God using Ephesians 1:4–5 as a basis. “Loving Father, please help me to know that . . .”

My whole life I've searched for a love to satisfy the deepest longings within me to be known, treasured, and wholly accepted. When You created me, Lord, Your very first thought of me made Your heart explode with a love that set You in pursuit of me. Your love for me was so great that You, the God of the whole universe, went on a personal quest to woo me, adore me, and finally grab hold of me with the whisper, “I will never let you go.”

Lord, I release my grip on all the things I was holding on to, preventing me from returning Your passionate embrace. I want nothing to hold me but You.

So, with breathless wonder, I give You all of my faith, all of my hope, and all of my love.

I picture myself carrying the old torn-out boards that inadequately propped me up and place them in a pile. This pile contains other things I can remove from me now that my new intimacy-based identity is established.

I lay down my need to understand why things happen the way they do.

I lay down my fears about others I love walking away.

I lay down my desire to prove my worth.

I lay down my resistance to fully trust Your thoughts, Your ways, and Your plans, Lord.

I lay down my anger, unforgiveness, and stubborn ways that beg me to build walls when I sense hints of rejection.

I lay all these things down with my broken boards and ask that Your holy fire consume them until they become weightless ashes.

And as I walk away, my soul feels safe. Held. And truly free to finally be me.

DAY 2: READ AND LEARN

If you have an experience of rejection, record it on the chart on pages 25–26. Be sure to write down the message you took away from the experience. Also, read aloud your personalized version of Ephesians 1:4–5 several times during the day.

Review chapters 1–3 of the *Uninvited* book. Use the space below to note any insights or questions you want to bring to the next group session.

DAY 3: STUDY AND REFLECT

Continue to make notes about your experiences of rejection on the chart on pages 25–26. Read aloud your personalized version of Ephesians 1:4–5 a few times during the day.

1. Isaiah 61:1–11 is a powerhouse of promises that Jesus Christ is fulfilling for you. Feast for a moment on this passage:

¹The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.
⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.
⁵Strangers will shepherd your flocks;
foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.
⁶And you will be called priests of the LORD,
you will be named ministers of our God.
You will feed on the wealth of nations,
and in their riches you will boast.
⁷Instead of your shame
you will receive a double portion,
and instead of disgrace
you will rejoice in your inheritance.
And so you will inherit a double portion in your land,
and everlasting joy will be yours.
⁸“For I, the LORD, love justice;
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the LORD has blessed.”
¹⁰I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations. (NIV)

- Review verses 1–7 and circle the phrase “instead of” every time it appears.

- Use those same promises to fill in the blanks here so you can be reminded of what Jesus will fulfill in you:

Crown of _____ instead of _____

Oil of _____ instead of _____

Garment of _____ instead of _____

Instead of your _____ you will receive a _____

Instead of _____ you will rejoice in _____

- Review Isaiah 61:10 and write it out below as a declaration of truth in your life.

- Go back through Isaiah 61:2b–9 and write below additional promises that you long to see fulfilled in your life. (Example from verse 4: He will rebuild and restore my devastated places.)

- How can truly believing that Jesus came to fulfill Isaiah 61 help you to live loved all day, every day?

2. What makes Isaiah 61 possible is the reality of Isaiah 53. We'll make notes about this later this week, but for now, read Isaiah 53 with a heart of thanksgiving.

DAY 4: READ AND LEARN

Continue to make notes about any experiences of rejection on the chart on pages 25–26. Read aloud your personalized version of Ephesians 1:4–5 a few times during the day.

Read chapter 4 of the *Uninvited* book, “Alone in a Crowded Room.” Use the space below to note any insights or questions you want to bring to the next group session.

DAY 5: STUDY AND REFLECT

Continue to make notes about any experiences of rejection on the chart on pages 25–26. Read aloud your personalized version of Ephesians 1:4–5 a few times during the day.

Jesus knows what it’s like to be rejected. He came into the world to save His people, but they rejected and ultimately crucified Him. Here is Isaiah’s prophecy concerning Him:

³He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:3–5 NIV)

1. How did Jesus experience rejection during His earthly life? See, for example, Mark 2:23–3:6 and 3:20–22.

2. Go through the Isaiah 53 passage and circle words or phrases that indicate His suffering. List those below.

3. Who did Jesus suffer for and what did that punishment bring to us? Fill in the blanks below.

He took up _____ pain (v. 4) and bore _____ suffering (v. 4)

He was pierced for _____ transgressions (v. 5)

He was crushed for _____ iniquities (v. 5)

Something to note:

Our pain and suffering are often brought on by things done *to* us.

But transgressions (meaning willful disobedience) and iniquities (meaning continued disobedience without repentance) are things done *by* us.

Jesus covered it all—all that has been done *to* us and *by* us.

His punishment brought us _____ (v. 5)

His wounds brought us _____ (v. 5)

4. Jesus knows our heart, our feelings, our past, our emotions. But sometimes it's helpful to just acknowledge those thoughts and feelings. Take a few minutes to tell Jesus about your experiences of rejection. Tell Him the messages you have received and how they make you feel.

After you've been thoroughly honest with Him, thank Him for His willingness to become human and suffer rejection on your behalf. Thank Him for forgiving the times you have rejected Him. Allow Him to minister to your soul in the place of your pain, and allow yourself to experience His forgiveness. You can write your prayer here.

DAY 6: READ AND LEARN

Continue to make notes about your experiences of rejection on the chart on pages 25–26. Read aloud your personalized version of Ephesians 1:4–5 at least three times during the day.

Read chapter 5 of the *Uninvited* book, “Hello, My Name Is Trust Issues.” Use the space below to note any insights or questions you want to bring to the next group session.