

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

## It's time

### *How does each sermon connect to this theme?*

As summer days stretch on in the month of August, perhaps it is appropriate to turn our minds again to our Chief Apostle's year beginning theme - **It's time to do good!** As we look back on the first half of the year and plan our lives approaching autumn, Thanksgiving, and Advent, it might behoove us to consider what good we have done and what good we still can do this year. Doing good does not just happen. It is rarely convenient. And it takes time and intention. So this month, our theme is *It's time* - it's time to do good! Each sermon will reveal good actions that we can take time to consider and reorient ourselves to.

On the first Sunday, the 9th and 10th commandments lead us in understanding what it means to *desire rightly*. The second Sunday continues this theme with an unfolding of the 8th commandment; the motivation behind and cost of lies and how we can *embrace truth*.

The third Sunday invites us to join the Israelites on the threshold of Canaan - who do we relate to in the story? The people, the 10 spies, or Caleb and Joshua, who show us how to *trust His promises*.

The fourth Sunday asks us to evaluate how we *value Scripture*, and encourages us to take the time to make study of the Bible an important part of our lives.

Finally, on the fifth Sunday, we will join Lydia in learning what it means to *profess your faith*, through her example of an open heart, an open faith, and an open home.

The midweek service, taken from a sermon by our Chief Apostle, urges us to put away our excuses and not hesitate, because *it's time to do good!*

All these behaviors are a way we can do good and spread goodness around us in our families, congregations, and communities.

**It's time - do good!**

## AUGUST 2025

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**August 3**

It's time:  
desire rightly

**August 10**

It's time:  
embrace truth

**August 17**

It's time:  
trust His promises

**August 24**

It's time:  
value Scripture

**August 31**

It's time:  
profess your faith

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

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BASED ON THE DIVINE SERVICE GUIDE FOR AUGUST 3

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## IT'S TIME: **desire rightly**

### *Where are we in the Bible?*

The 10 Commandments are viewed as either the original kernel or a summarization of the Mosaic Law which God gave the Israelites at Sinai (recorded in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5). *But, are they for us as well?* Since the beginning the church has taken the Decalogue (the “ten words”), with some modifications, to also be of importance for Christians. New Testament writers quoted them, church fathers appealed to them, Reformation catechisms taught them, and in more modern times they have been printed in prayer books and posted on walls in many churches and homes.

We can see God’s nature through the 10 Commandments, expressed as moral imperatives, embedded in the actions and interactions of daily life. Embedded in the law is godly love, as it is the defining ordinance of relationships in the kingdom of heaven. The commandments provide boundaries, yet give freedom. They are words of prevention, but also protection. They are both foundational and profound, inner-directed and outward-reaching. They affirm our dependence on God and each other.

### *What are the key themes based on the Bible verse, its context, and the DSG?*

1. What does the word “covet” mean?
2. Desiring rightly versus unhealthy cravings
3. A call to contentment and celebration

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#### **Exodus 20:17**

You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

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#### **FOUNDATIONAL READINGS:**

Scripture

**Exodus 20:1-21**

Catechism

**5.3.10-5.3.10.5**

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#### **Discussion Questions**

Discuss why the 10 Commandments are important for Christians.

When does coveting become sinful?

Give some examples of desiring rightly. Why is this challenging?

How did the sermon inspire or instruct your understanding of the Bible verse and/or its context?

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

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BASED ON THE DIVINE SERVICE GUIDE FOR AUGUST 10

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## IT'S TIME **embrace truth**

### *Where are we in the Bible?*

The language of the eighth commandment evokes images of a courtroom, where witnesses are called to speak for or against the condemned. Court decisions shape social life, reconciling differences and distributing rewards and demerits. To be just, a society must be shaped by truth, centrally by truthful testimony and just decisions in the court. But these words also demand truth-telling in every setting, not merely in the court of law. Martin Luther expanded the definition of this commandment to prohibit betrayal, slander, and the spreading of rumors. Good morale living in a society requires honesty and fair dealing. People of God should be people of truth, since we have come to know the truth through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

### *What are the key themes based on the Bible verse, its context, and the DSG?*

1. Why do humans lie?
2. What is the cost of lies?
3. Embracing truth

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#### **Exodus 20:16**

you shall not bear false witness  
against your neighbor.

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#### **FOUNDATIONAL READINGS:**

Scripture  
**Exodus 20:1-21**

Catechism  
**5.3.9-5.3.9.6**

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#### **Discussion Questions**

Why do humans lie?

What is the cost of listening to lies? What is the cost of telling lies?

Consider what it means to embrace the truth. How can you bring truth to a world distorted by lies?

What is one new thought you left this divine service with?

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

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BASED ON THE DIVINE SERVICE GUIDE FOR AUGUST 17

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## *Where are we in the Bible?*

Israel has been freed from slavery in Egypt and is now journeying toward the Promised Land. After receiving the law at Mount Sinai, the Israelites are camped at the edge of Canaan. God instructs Moses to send twelve spies to scout the land He has promised to give them. The spies return after forty days with a report: the land is rich and fruitful, but inhabited by strong people and fortified cities. Ten of the spies spread fear, while only Caleb and Joshua, express trust that God will give them victory. The people rebel in fear and unbelief, refusing to enter the land. Their lack of faith impacts the history of Israel (CNAC 1.1.2). God responds by declaring the consequences, sentencing the unbelieving generation to wander in the wilderness for forty years, a year for every day the spies were in the land (Numbers 14:34).

## *What are the key themes based on the Bible verse, its context, and the DSG?*

A new perspective to bring to this sermon might be asking the congregation to relate to specific characters in the story:

1. The 10 - fixating on the negative
2. The people - rebelling, rejecting, and reverting
3. The 2 - undistracted and trusting

# IT'S TIME: **trust His promises**

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## **Numbers 14:8**

If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey.

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## **FOUNDATIONAL READINGS:**

Scripture  
**Numbers 13-14**

Catechism  
**1.1.2**

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## **Discussion Questions**

Share with the group which characters you identified with in this story.

Discuss how you have dealt with new or unknown situations in your life.

How can we remain undistracted when surrounded by negative noise?

How did the sermon inspire or instruct your understanding of the Bible verse and/or its context?

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

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BASED ON THE DIVINE SERVICE GUIDE FOR AUGUST 24

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# IT'S TIME: value Scripture

## *Where are we in the Bible?*

Luke's purpose in writing his Gospel is to provide believers with *certainty* (Luke 1:4) about what they have been taught concerning Jesus and the Christian faith. This is why the Bible was written, so that the truth of gospel could be preserved and foster a faith never seen before. To accomplish this, Luke drew upon the work of earlier writers like Mark, as well as other sources, to show Theophilus how Jesus fulfilled, or *accomplished* (ESV) what the Scriptures had promised. This word "fulfilled" (v.1) carries a deeper meaning than something merely "happening"; it points to God's plan being completed in Jesus.

In verse 2, Luke emphasizes the reliability of his sources. These accounts were rooted in the right time, from the beginning of Jesus' ministry and came from the right people, *eyewitnesses* who personally knew Jesus. Furthermore, these testimonies were passed down through trustworthy means, shaped by oral tradition (vs. 8:39, 9:10) and carefully organized by those who were ministers of the word.

Luke's goal was to offer a clear, *well-ordered narrative* that would give believers a strong foundation, enabling them to trust the truth of the Gospel with confidence.

## *What are the key themes based on the Bible verse, its context, and the DSG?*

The value of hearing and reading the Word of God:

1. Comfort
2. Edification
3. Orientation
4. Admonition

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### **Luke 1:1-2**

Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us.

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### **FOUNDATIONAL READINGS:**

Scripture  
**Luke 1:1-4**

Catechism  
**1.2.4, 1.2.5.2, 1.2.5.3**

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### **Discussion Questions**

What value does Scripture have in your life? Sum it up in one word and then explain your word to the group.

"Scripture is not a magic book that will answer all of our questions."  
Discuss this point.

How is reading the Bible individually different from the preached word of God in the divine service?

What is one new thought you left this divine service with?

# SERMON SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

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BASED ON THE DIVINE SERVICE GUIDE FOR AUGUST 31

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## IT'S TIME: **profess your faith**

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### *Where are we in the Bible?*

Acts 16 narrates Paul's second missionary journey. He is accompanied by Silas and also recruits Timothy, a young believer highly spoken of by the local Christians. The three men travel from town to town strengthening the churches in both faith and number. They are directed by the Holy Spirit to avoid certain areas (16:6-7), leading them to Troas, where Paul has a vision (16:9). In response to this vision, Paul and his companions sail to Philippi. On the Sabbath, they "went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there" (16:13). At this point we are introduced to a woman named Lydia, who opens her heart, openly professes her faith, and open her home. (*Note: Purple dye was created in the coastal city of Tyre; Lydia lived in Thyatira, known for its trade, especially in textiles, so she most likely just sold the cloth, but did not make it.*)

### *What are the key themes based on the Bible verse, its context, and the DSG?*

1. An open heart *through worship*
2. An open faith *through profession*
3. An open home *through hospitality*

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### **Acts 16:14-15**

Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

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### **FOUNDATIONAL READINGS:**

Scripture  
**Acts 16:1-15**

Catechism  
**4.5.3, 1.4, 4.2.1.5**

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### **Discussion Questions**

Share what you know about Lydia.

Discuss how Lydia's and Paul's departure from their comfort zones were professions of faith.

What is important about hospitality?

How did the sermon inspire or instruct your understanding of the Bible verse and/or its context?