



Guide for Group Discussion

PRINT THIS OUT and give copies to members of your church, temple, mosque, sangha, ethical society, or bowling league to prepare for a discussion that brings fresh light to old paradoxes about faith. And for a truly rich experience, invite people with different beliefs. The goal will not be to change anyone's mind, but simply that everyone can leave saying, "At least I felt they heard me for a change."

Suggested format

Give people the questions at least a week before your meeting. Ask them to read the first section of *The Bishop and the Seeker*. Then find someone in your organization known for his or her even-temperedness and open-mindedness, and ask that person to be a facilitator. Focus on asking people to tell the *story* of their faith journey rather than tell their beliefs.

A few questions to get you started: feel free to add your own.

1. Some factors that drew Teri to alternative spirituality and New Thought were personal empowerment, non-judgment, surrender, and reliance on intuition.
 - Which, if any, of those values do you share?

 - What support sources do you have for developing or expressing those values?

2. Some factors that drew Teri to Highview Christian Fellowship were the humility to work well in a group, discernment of proper boundaries, gumption to take action, and recognition of the need to balance intuition against an outside standard.
 - Which, if any, of those values do you share?

 - What support sources do you have for developing or expressing those values?

3. Do you believe that it's possible or desirable to integrate the values from the two communities? How or where have you seen that done?

4. A major topic was the role in making decisions of reason, scripture, and gut feelings. Which of these do you rely on?
 - If you rely primarily on **gut feelings**, how important do you think it is to distinguish fleeting emotions from genuine inspiration or divine guidance?

 - If you rely primarily on **scripture**, how do you know when you have the right interpretation?

 - If you rely primarily on **reason**, how do you guard against self-serving rationalizations or ego needs?

5. What techniques or qualities did Bishop Thomas and Teri call on to get through the rough spots in their dialog? Discuss any situation in your life where these approaches might help you work through conflict.

6. What is similar in the way Teri and Bishop Thomas experience God in their daily lives? Do you think the similarities are enough for people like them to be able to work together for good, or do you think their differences will always get in the way?

7. What issue or quality in the book would you like to learn more about or have more of in your life? How might you get started toward that?

Please join the online discussion for this book at BishopandSeeker.com