

Set Your Sail

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Based on "Set Your Sail" by Pastor Linda Hufton

1. SERMON RECAP

Pastor Linda Hufton opened the new year with a compelling call to examine the condition of each person's "ship" -- a metaphor for one's life, household, and circumstances -- before heading out into the waters of 2021. Drawing from the story of Gideon in Judges 6, she reminded the group that God's command to go forward does not change regardless of the circumstances surrounding us. Pastor Linda outlined five essential areas of preparation -- no leaks, solid structure, good provisions, a trained crew, and knowledge of sailing -- and challenged every believer to assess where their vessel needs attention before launching into the year ahead.

2. KEY SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 15:58

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

3. ICE BREAKER

Have you ever taken a road trip, a boat ride, or a flight and discovered mid-journey that something important was forgotten or broken? What happened, and how did you handle it?

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Linda used the image of a seaworthy ship to describe a life that is ready to move forward with God. If you were to honestly assess your own "ship" right now, what one word would you use to describe its current condition, and why?
2. Pastor Linda referenced Gideon, who was hiding in a winepress when the angel of the Lord called him a "mighty man of valor." God did not acknowledge Gideon's complaints or excuses -- He simply said, "Go." What does it say about God's character that He sees potential in people who feel least qualified, and how

does that speak to where your group members find themselves today?

3. Pastor Linda pointed to Haggai 1:6-7, where God urges His people to "consider your ways" because they were working hard but seeing little return -- essentially putting wages into a bag with holes. Where in life do people most commonly experience this kind of drain without realizing it, and what tends to be at the root of it?

4. She challenged the group to understand that being stable and disciplined in the practical areas of life -- managing a home, maintaining good work habits, handling finances responsibly -- is genuinely spiritual, not merely mundane. Do you agree with that view? How does your group's faith community tend to treat the connection between everyday faithfulness and spiritual health?

5. Pastor Linda quoted John 9, where Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." She observed that as long as we can look out and see believers still working, it is still day. How does that perspective change the way your group thinks about discouragement, cultural turbulence, or personal setbacks?

6. Of the five areas of ship preparation Pastor Linda described -- plugging leaks, building solid structure, being well provisioned, having a trained captain and crew, and gaining knowledge of sailing -- which one does your group find is most commonly neglected among believers today, and what tends to get in the way of addressing it?

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, each group member is invited to choose one practical area of their daily life that has been inconsistent or neglected -- such as a regular time in God's Word, a financial habit that needs attention, an area of the home that reflects disorder, or a relationship that has been left unaddressed. The challenge is to take one specific, concrete step toward shoring up that area before the group meets again. Members are encouraged to write that step down and share it with a trusted friend or fellow group member who can check in with them by the end of the week.

6. PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that each group member would have the honesty and courage to identify the genuine weak spots in their vessel, and that the Holy Spirit would give them clear, practical direction rather than vague conviction.
 - Pray for steadfastness across the congregation -- that believers would not be shaken by cultural uncertainty, discouraging news, or personal adversity, but would remain immovable and always abounding in God's work.
 - Pray for those in the group who are carrying a particularly heavy load as the year begins -- those facing financial strain, family difficulty, or a loss of purpose -- that God would meet them with the same steady encouragement He gave to Gideon: "The Lord is with you."
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7. MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 125:1

"Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever."