

Group

Real. Bold. Love.

SeaSide ESCAPE™



Participant Guide



Bask in God's Presence



Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:

Relational—Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential—What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read.

Applicable—The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Learner-based—Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.



SeaSide Escape Participant Guide

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Are you ready for a relaxing beach retreat? You've come to the right place! Here at SeaSide Escape, we'll enjoy time with each other as we bask in God's presence.

You'll use this guide throughout SeaSide Escape, so keep it handy. It includes all the Scripture passages you'll use, discussion questions, and instructions for most of your activities. Plus, we've added song lyrics, pages for journaling, and more—all created for you to keep long after this retreat is over.

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Genesis 12

¹ The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

⁴ So Abram departed as the Lord had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

⁷ Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸ After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the Lord, and he worshiped the Lord. ⁹ Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

¹⁰ At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt, where he lived as a foreigner. ¹¹ As he was approaching the border of Egypt, Abram said to his wife, Sarai, “Look, you are a very beautiful woman. ¹² When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife. Let’s kill him; then we can have her!’ ¹³ So please tell them you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you.”

¹⁴ And sure enough, when Abram arrived in Egypt, everyone spoke of Sarai’s beauty. ¹⁵ When the palace officials saw her, they sang her praises to Pharaoh, their king, and Sarai was taken into his palace. ¹⁶ Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her—sheep, goats, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

¹⁷ But the Lord sent terrible plagues upon Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸ So Pharaoh summoned Abram and accused him sharply. "What have you done to me?" he demanded. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?" ¹⁹ Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' and allow me to take her as my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and get out of here!" ²⁰ Pharaoh ordered some of his men to escort them, and he sent Abram out of the country, along with his wife and all his possessions.

Genesis 16

¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal. ³ So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

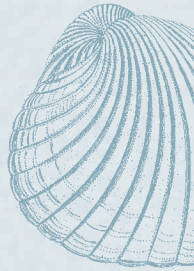
⁴ So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt. ⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong—you or me!"

⁶ Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.

⁷ The angel of the Lord found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. ⁸ The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied.

⁹ The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority." ¹⁰ Then he added, "I will give you more descendants than you can count."



Doubter's Dilemma

- ✳ The object of the game is to get the most cards.
- ✳ Each person will begin with 6 cards.
- ✳ The person wearing the most blue will begin. She is the Drama Queen for this round.
- ✳ The Drama Queen will make a statement about herself that is either a fact or fiction. For example, "I have three dogs and a cat."
- ✳ Each person in the group must decide if she believes the Drama Queen's statement or not. Those who believe do not need to do anything. Those who doubt her should place one of their Doubt cards on the table.
- ✳ At this point the Drama Queen reveals if she was stating a fact or fiction.

If the Drama Queen's statement was *fiction*:

- Those who doubted her take back and keep the cards that they placed on the table.
- Drama Queen must give each of the doubters (who were, in fact, correct in their doubt) one of her own cards.

If the Drama Queen was telling a *fact*:

- Drama Queen keeps the cards of those who doubted her.

- ✳ Play continues, with the next person to the left becoming the Drama Queen.
- ✳ Play until one person runs out of cards. Then see who has the most cards; she wins this round. Redistribute the cards and play again if time allows.



I Have My Doubts

✿ What made you most likely to doubt someone in the Doubter's Dilemma game?

✿ What kinds of doubts bother you most?

✿ How do doubts become like “baggage” in our lives?



Dear Cousin Ada,

The last time I had a chance to write to you was when we were in Canaan. Famine has forced us to leave the area and head to Egypt—I just hate being hungry! Makes me long for my mother's fig and honey cakes.

Anyway, as we are getting closer to Egypt, Abram has started to worry. I don't mean to sound vain, but remember how I won the Miss Sandy Desert contest all those years ago? I still have a bit of that beauty left, I suppose, because Abram worries that if the Egyptians see me, they will kill him so one of them can marry me instead. This is terrifying to consider! What kind of danger are we getting into here?

Abram's plan is that I should tell everyone that we're brother and sister. After all, we do have the same father, but different mothers.

I will obey my husband, but it makes me wonder. God did tell Abram, "I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt." If this is true, why should we doubt that God will protect us?

I'd better go. The camels are spitting, and I need to help water them before we leave.

With love, Sarai

- ✳ How can you relate to Sarai? When have you had feelings similar to those that she must have experienced?

My Doubts

