

# THE HEALING NAMES OF JESUS

GROUP EXPERIENCE GUIDE

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# BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

It is essential to have a community with whom you can weather difficult times, which is why I wanted to offer a group experience for readers. This guide contains instructions on how to create a safe, supportive environment for participants as well as content breakdowns and supplemental materials for each week.

The group experience is designed to last seven weeks with each session lasting ninety minutes, although larger groups may need to allocate more time for sharing. Adjust the schedule and timing according to the needs and schedules of your group.

## TIPS FOR SETUP

### Assign a Group Facilitator

Because of the nature of the material in *The Healing Names of Jesus*, it will be important to assign a group facilitator who is both compassionate and attentive to participants. The group facilitator's role is to introduce each week's material and offer guidance to make the overall experience a positive one. All required teaching materials can be found within this guide.

### Create a Safe Environment

Participants are more likely to engage with the content and share when the group environment is both confidential and free from judgement and when each participant is given time and space to share.

On day one of the group experience, ask participants what rules, guiding principles, or needs would help them feel safe when sharing their thoughts and experiences. Some participants may not feel ready to share yet, preferring to be present and listen. That's okay! Do not force or pressure anyone to share. You will also want to casually monitor the amount of time that each person spends sharing to ensure that the group's conversation isn't inadvertently monopolized by any singular participant(s).

It is critical that participants understand and remain aware that confidentiality is key to maintaining a safe group environment. Participants should also be discouraged from offering advice or counseling to other members. While their intentions may be good, this material is meant to support and guide people through their journey, not replace the value and experience of professional counseling.

### Have Resources Available

It is a good idea to compile a list of local mental health resources should someone in the group need additional support or develop suicidal thoughts or ideations while journeying through *The Healing Names of Jesus*. This also helps to prevent other participants from feeling responsible for the mental health of other members in the group.

### Be Creative

Visuals can often enhance the group experience and make it more meaningful. You may want to set up a place online, be it a social media group, an email chain, or something similar that allows group members to post

images of things they see throughout the week that remind them of a name of God that has been (or will be) covered. Members may also be encouraged to bring visuals to each week's group session. However, do not require members to go beyond their comfort level.

## WEEKLY FORMAT

Each week, participants will read five devotions, complete the activities, and bring their reflections to the group. Additional material and discussion questions are provided within this guide. Participants are further encouraged to take note of things that remind them of the names covered throughout the week, even taking pictures if that helps bring the concepts to life!

### **Sample Weekly Meeting Format**

- Open with prayer, asking God to unite your group.
- Review each week's discussion questions, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to share.
- Read the "Final Thoughts" section together as a group. If time permits, invite participants to share any final thoughts they may have with the group.
- Close your time together with prayer.

Remind members that they are encouraged to post pictures online and use #healingnamesofjesus so that others can gain from their insight and experience.

# WEEK ONE

## **Introduction** **Lamb & Shepherd** **Lion of Judah** **Son of Man** **Paraclete**

Open with prayer, asking God to reveal new things as you begin your time together.

### **Introduction**

- What was it like to read Jenita's story?
- What elements of her story did you relate to?

### **Lamb & Shepherd**

- When you read Psalm 23, which verbs did you underline most? What words, phrases, and concepts stood out to you?

- In your darkest valley reflection, what did the Shepherd do in your story? What things, if any, do you wish he would do?
- Describe the image you used for the green pasture. Share a picture if you have one.

## **Lion of Judah**

- In your circle drawing, what did you identify as the core of who you are? What are your biggest emotional threats?
- Describe how you envisioned the Lion. Share a picture if you have one.

## **Son of Man**

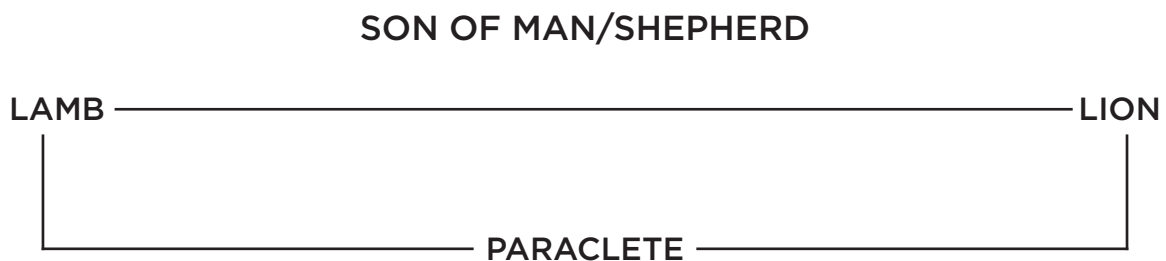
- On page 31, what one or two things did you circle, and what does it mean to you that Jesus experienced those things too?
- Who can you reach in a unique way because of your life experiences?

## Paraclete

- What did you notice about the tone of your thoughts towards yourself?
- Think about the words you would use to calm a child. What words come to mind? How can you translate those words to reflect how the Spirit speaks to you?

We have come to understand the incredible dimensions of Jesus this week. He was compared to two animals that couldn't be more opposite, and in the midst of the contrast, we were reminded that he became fully human so that he could fully relate to us. As our Shepherd, he holds the compassion fully gained from being one of us. How incredible!

The Holy Spirit, our Paraclete, carries those attributes of Jesus and brings them to life so that we can experience him spiritually, even though we cannot physically see or hear him. A visual representation of this relationship may look like this:



We read stories of Jesus' lifetime in which he was gentle and slow to anger but also angry and quick to defend the vulnerable. Because the Paraclete lives within you, you also have the potential to exhibit this range of traits, both as a person of compassion and gentleness as well as a person of boldness, who defends the hurting and guards the truth.

Close with this verse: "The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1 NIV).

Remember to share your journey with others by posting pictures using  
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## WEEK TWO

**Almighty God**

**Redeemer**

**Vine**

**Doctor**

**Friend**

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

### **Almighty God**

- What did you notice most about the turning point(s) in your life?
- When you read the speech that God gave to Job, what stood out to you most?

### **Redeemer**

- What differences and similarities did you find between Simon and the woman in Luke 7:36–50?  
As you compare the lists, what makes them noteworthy?

- Read Luke 7:50. What do those words personally mean to you?

## **Vine**

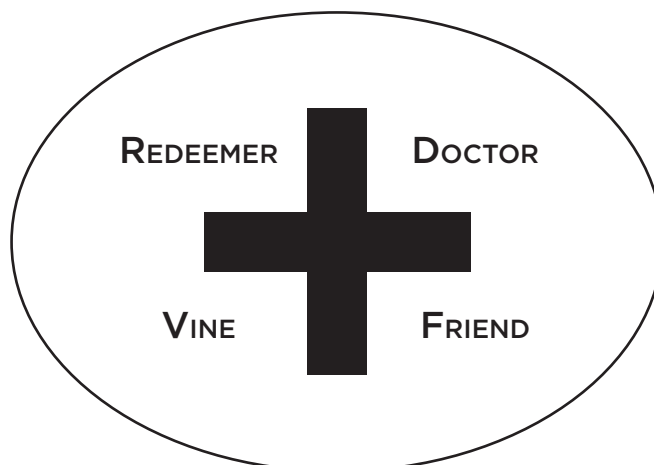
- What was it like to envision the titles of your sin nailed to a wooden cross?
- Share any moments in which this name came alive to you this week.

## **Doctor and Friend**

- When you consider your emotional, mental, and physical health, what do you notice? In which of these areas do you feel healthy, and with which do you struggle?
- We are given a picture of how to ask others for help so that we can stay healthy. Is it difficult for you to ask for help? Why or why not?
- As a group, identify how each member can pray and support the other members this week.



Jesus shows us four dimensions of who he is:



All four of these elements encompass how he, in conjunction with the Spirit and the Father, makes up the Almighty God! Our Jesus, the One who is our redeeming friend and the doctor who nourishes our souls, is also the all-powerful God of the universe. It is incredible to think that as we spend time with our closest friend, we are spending time with the One who created the cosmos, who knows all of history and every language, and who controls all of nature. Just reread his résumé in Job!

Set aside time to admire the moon and the stars. Reflect on how the One who controls the cosmos is the same God who desires one-on-one time with you.

Close with this verse: “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?” (Psalm 8:3–4 NIV).

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## WEEK THREE

### Alpha & Omega Carpenter & Cornerstone Generous Host The Way & The Wind

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

#### Alpha & Omega

- Take a moment to reflect on the questions below and then share what you know to be true for yourself. What do you notice, and how does it impact you? When you consider the past, of which do you see more?

|   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| <b>Regrets</b><br><b>Failures</b><br><b>Hurts</b> | <b>OR</b> | <b>God's Victories</b><br><b>God's Interventions</b><br><b>Grace</b> |
|---|-----------|--|

- When you look at your present, which do you tend to see?

|   |           |   |
|---|-----------|---|
| <b>Mistakes</b><br><b>Stressors</b><br><b>Tasks</b> | <b>OR</b> | <b>Opportunities</b><br><b>Connections with Others</b><br><b>Hope</b> |
|---|-----------|---|

- When you look at your future, which do you tend to see?

|   |           |   |
|---|-----------|---|
| <b>Assumptions</b><br><b>Threatening Uncertainty</b><br><b>Fear</b> | <b>OR</b> | <b>God's Promises</b><br><b>Exciting Possibility</b><br><b>Love</b> |
|---|-----------|---|

- God calls himself the beginning and the end and all of the space in between. What does it mean to you that he has walked your whole life and knows every twist and turn?

## **Carpenter & Cornerstone**

- Reading through the words on page 72, with which do you most relate to and why?
- As you read about this name, did your definition of success change? Describe your journey through the meaning of that word.

## **Generous Host**

- As you read the domains of our lives—our minds, emotional health, physical health, and spiritual wellness—in which ways do you have a hard time seeing God as generous and why?
- As you read Jenita's description of God's generosity in her life, what came to mind about God's generosity in your life?

## The Way & The Wind

- Imagine the Spirit as the wind, offering an unforeseen path. To what surprising places has he brought you?
- Combine the images of either the bridge or the path with the wind. How do they weave together in your life story?

The two common themes among all five of these names are the ideas of self-concept and direction. Jesus showed us, as both the carpenter and the cornerstone, that meaning and purpose can be found in both a quiet life and a public one.

Sometimes, God might not seem generous, and you might think the Spirit's wind cannot be blowing in the right direction. You might feel that God can't possibly mean for you to go through a particular challenge, so you wait for the path to lead you *over* the challenge instead. Perhaps the hardest element of our journey is holding the motivation and inspiration to move forward in one hand and the truth that God already has a plan for you in the other. Nothing is merely chance. God has the power to redeem even the darkest choices, deepest sins, and painful experiences.

As you move forward, let every clock remind you that your Alpha and Omega wants you to know that the harshness of this world will come to an end. For now, you are meant to be here; you have a purpose. Watch for his hand in your life and look forward to seeing him in person!

Close with this verse: "I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalm 73:23–26 NIV).

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## WEEK FOUR

**Artist**

**Fisherman**

**Lord of the Sabbath**

**Shield**

**Brother**

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

### **Artist**

- What was it like to picture yourself as a piece of art that inspires God?
- Is there a place in creation, a song, or an artwork that brings this idea to life for you?  
Describe it to the group.

### **Fisherman**

- What are your talents, gifts, and skills? If you are unsure, describe activities that you enjoy and consider how God made you unique.

- When you think about the concept of discipleship, what do you see as your role in our group? Do you value your role? Speak a word of encouragement to each person in your group.

## **Lord of the Sabbath**

- As you thought about your schedule, what did you notice? Is it realistic? If not, what changes could you make?
- If it's hard for you to stop, what makes it most difficult?
- Discuss what your perfect Sabbath looks like. What elements do you find most restful?

## **Shield**

- Different types of shields were discussed regarding this name: the shield of faith, the shield of God's guidelines, and the shield offered through unity with other believers. Which one(s) do you find hard to hold on to? Why?
- How might you tighten your grip on each of these shields?

## Brother

- When reading about Carter, what stood out most in the analogy of Jesus as our older brother?
- When you think of your future home with Jesus, what do you think he is putting inside your new home that he knows you will love?

The five names from this week encompass the values of individuality and community.

**Individually:** You are unique. You have value, and there are people whom you are destined to reach. You may not yet understand how incredible you are, but you have a special role as a fisherman and as one of our crew. We need you. During your rest time, meditate and spend time talking to the Great Artist in his creation.

**Community:** You are part of a crew and a community of other fishermen! You are in a family in which your older brother, Jesus, is also your shield. He designed you to stand with your family, shields locked, against our enemy, Satan. Spend some of your rest time with other members of your spiritual family.

Close with this verse: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings” (1 Peter 5:8–9 NIV).

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## WEEK FIVE

**I AM**

**Warrior**

**Bread & Living Water**

**Potter**

**Word & Light**

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

**I AM**

- What stood out to you as reasons why God chose this description for himself?
- What “I AM” names of God came to you personally? In what ways has God proven himself to you in your past?

**Warrior**

- When considering the armor of God, where do you feel weak, and where do you feel secure?



- What battle(s) are you currently facing, and what kind of support do you need?

## **Bread & Living Water**

- What did you notice when you looked at your daily spiritual nourishment? What is your spiritual meal plan?
- Share something that has given you special, meaningful, spiritual nourishment. It may be a song, a place to pray, a poem, a specific Bible verse, or something similar.

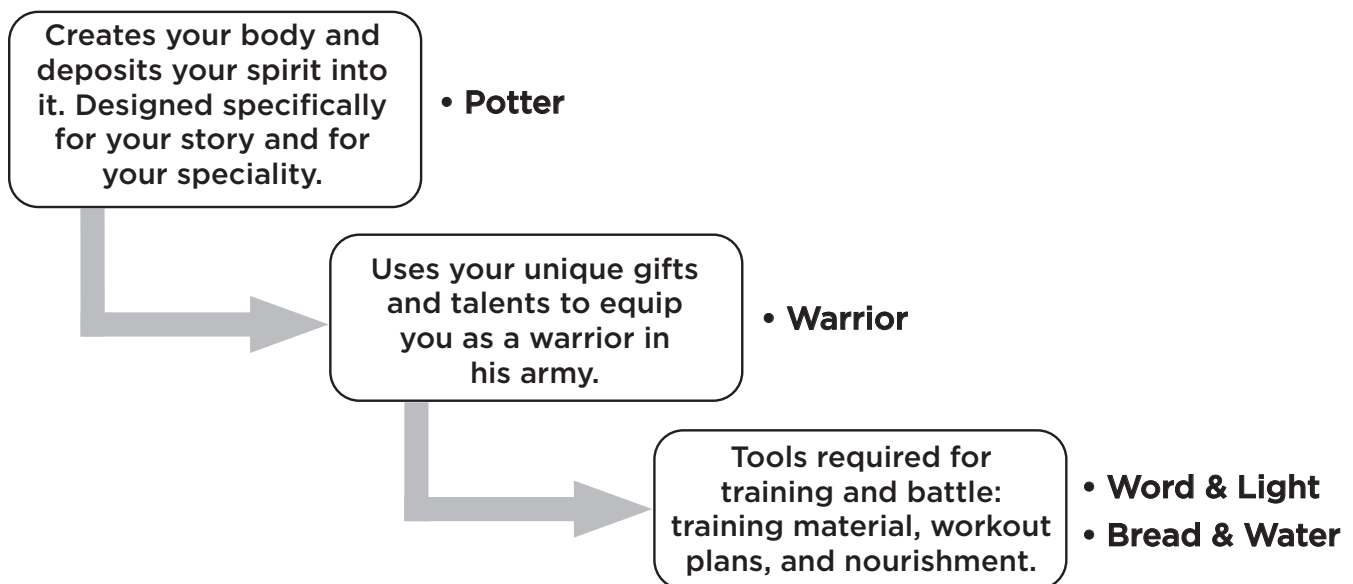
## **Potter**

- How has your physical appearance and health impacted your mental and emotional health?
- What role has your body played in your life story?

## Word & Light

- When you read the story in Luke 7:36–50, what stood out most to you?
- Share your thoughts on the process of being vulnerable and authentic. What makes it difficult? What elements from past or present circumstances tend to hold you back?

### THE GREAT I AM: THE ONE WHO KNOWS ALL



These names construct an overview of the process of how the Potter starts with a vision of what your body needs to be and do and provides the resources and tools for your training and nourishment.

As we go through this life, we experience challenges and battles, but God has already seen everything you will experience throughout your life and knows what lies ahead. Press into the nourishment and tools that he has provided. Keep training! Trust that the body you have been given was meant to be yours; it has a purpose that you may not yet be aware of.

Close with this verse: “The Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline...He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time” (2 Timothy 1:7; 9 NIV).

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## WEEK SIX

**Fire**

**Rock**

**High Priest**

**Exorcist**

**Mother Hen**

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

### **Fire**

- Reread page 145. Which attribute(s) of fire stood out to you most and why?
- Describe one of the most powerful ways in which God has moved in your life, specifically as it relates to the various aspects of fire.

### **Rock**

- Name one of your fears and describe how it has influenced your life.

- How does the name “Rock” contrast with the messages from the world around us? What makes us different?

## **High Priest**

- What thoughts about yourself did you experience this week in reference to being a priest in God’s service?
- In what places and in which ways can you be used in your priestly duties?

## **Exorcist**

- What thoughts and feelings came up for you when you read about Jesus’ power over Satan?
- What lies has Satan told you? What truths do you prefer to focus on and believe?

## Mother Hen

- Describe a time when you felt like God was figuratively covering you in a difficult situation.
- What situation(s) are you currently facing that require his protection?

All five names from this week relate to the power of the God. When combined, these names provide an overview of the many facets of his abilities.

**Fire:** power to draw you into fellowship

**Stone:** power to mentally protect you from troubles

**Priest:** power to offer you unlimited forgiveness and freedom from shame

**Exorcist:** power to free you from Satan's lies

**Mother Hen:** power to emotionally guard you from troubles

The word *Gospel* means "good news." You have been saved spiritually. The incredible application is that you now live with access to elements provided by God to help you navigate this world. Keep studying the Bible. It is the key to understanding everything that God has to give.

Close with this verse: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16 NIV).

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## WEEK SEVEN

### **Dove** **The Family** **Closing Thoughts**

Open with prayer, asking God to bring you closer together as a group.

#### **Dove**

- What coincidences have transpired in your life that were likely not coincidental at all but rather the work of God?
- What olive branches do you feel God is presently extending to you? Depression can make it difficult to recognize them. As you think on it, consider verses, people, or even animals that bring hope to your life.
- The Spirit used a dove to represent hope symbolically and linked it to God's sacrifice for sin. What connection might those two symbols have?

#### **Family**

- When you read the story in Luke 15:11–32, what stood out to you? What does this passage tell us about our God?

- Describe how your family experience impacts your understanding of God's family system.
- As you think about the Trinity and its determination to save you, what emotions does that understanding evoke? What truths come to life?

## Closing

- As you look back on the 31 names, which one(s) stood out to you most and why?
- What tool(s) have you found most helpful?
- How do you see God utilizing your story in the future?
- Take time to pray over each member of your group. For each person, center your prayer around the name(s) of God that they have chosen as most meaningful to them. For example, the name that means the most to me personally is the Lion of Judah because I am often afraid. I pray to my Lion of Judah whenever I feel fear coming. Adapt each person's prayer to their name(s) of choice.

The world's view of love is selfish and centers on consumption instead of giving. In God's family system, each member is called to love sacrificially, and when every member loves sacrificially, every member is loved unconditionally. It is this family, this system of peace and true love, into which you were adopted.

Two key components of God's perfect family system are peace and sacrifice. The Father, Son, and Spirit live and work as one. God as three persons means that the love within this system can never be broken. What's incredible is that we are called to love *all* of humanity with the same commitment and passion that God loves us. And when we are able to see others the way that God sees them, our love for others flows naturally.

As a group, bring this family system to life by loving each other unconditionally. You are the picture of this family. You are called to bring this love to life to those around you. Continue to do this for the group members sitting around you now. For this last and final name, take a picture of yourself because *you* represent Jesus to the world.

Close with these verses:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37–39 NIV).

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends” (John 15:9–14).

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