

Apr 16, Small Group Leader's Guide
Read Hebrews 10:19-25

1. Why was it completely revolutionary for the writer of Hebrews to claim that anyone could now have free and open access to God? According to the writer of Hebrews, how could anyone even draw near to God?

Access to God was exclusively restricted to the Jewish high priest, a male descendant of Aaron from the tribe of Levi. For any person to now access God was world-changing. It was made possible because Jesus, the superior high priest offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice to atone for the sins of humanity, once and for all. It is therefore now only through having faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross could anyone draw near to God.

2. In the sermon, Orvin described the priesthood of the new covenant like a society of gardeners who tend the Garden of heaven on earth. How does this shape your own identity and vocation as a royal priest of God?

Allow some thoughtful and creative reflections in the discussion that relate the ministry of the priest as intercessors, teachers, and exemplars of living the kingdom of heaven with the different skills of a gardener who cultivates and tends to the growth and fruit of the earth.

3. If you could imagine a small garden of heaven growing in and around the neighbourhoods, businesses, industries, residences, and communities around Little T, what would it look like?

Let each person "dream" of a transformed City of Toronto, particularly if each could share how their own workplaces or industries would change if it were to be touched by the new growth of heaven.

4. The writer of Hebrews encouraged Christians to draw near to God, to hold fast to the confession of hope, and to consider how to stir each other to love and good works. What would this look like in your small group and in our church?

Drawing near to God includes personal and group worship, the study of Scripture, prayer, and songs. Holding fast to the confession includes the Sunday liturgy, the celebration and remembrance of the Eucharist, the rehearsing of the Gospel drama. Stirring one another includes encouragement, praying for each other, entrusting to one another deep personal things for the sake of bolstering each other towards the faith.