

The Edge of Everywhen

by A.S. Mackey

Eight-Week
Group Devotional
LEADER'S GUIDE

Materials needed:

The Edge of Everywhen for each group member

Whiteboard or notebook and writing utensil

Copy of devotional handout for each member (one page added weekly)

Three-prong folder for each member to add devotional pages (optional)

Art supplies (stickers, paints, etc.) to decorate journals in week six

WEEK 1 – Fear

Group members should read Chapters 1-5 of *The Edge of Everywhen* before beginning the group, if possible.

We meet Piper and Phoenix, a brother and sister going through an extremely challenging time in their lives. As Piper travels to her new home with a broken heart, she lets us know she's afraid of the unknown.

Invite the group members to read the following verses aloud and spend a few minutes summarizing them in their own words. Remind the group about the crucial need for confidentiality, and ask volunteers to share what they've written with the group.

Luke 12:24-26:

Hebrews 13:6-8:

Deuteronomy 31:8:

WEEK 1 – Fear

Ask group members to share a fear they are currently facing (e.g., an upcoming test, sickness in the family, parents not getting along, anxiety over friendships, new school jitters, etc.). Take time to pray for each need specifically.

Write group members' names on individual notecards and hand them out randomly so each person can pray for another group member throughout the eight weeks. (Be strategic, so that each member prays for someone they don't necessarily know very well.) Encourage everyone to pray for their assigned person daily and to ask God to give them a special word of encouragement for that person. Remind them to write down anything specific that God shows them about the person they are praying for.

Optional: Keep the pray-ee secret for all eight weeks; reveal who was praying for whom at the last group meeting.

Suggested prayer to close:

Jesus, Your Word says that you care for us, no matter what we might be going through, and the Bible tells us not to be afraid. We say that we trust you, even when things are really hard or when we don't understand everything that's happening. We want to know you better, and we ask that you reveal yourself to us this week in a new way. Teach us to trust you with our deepest fears. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WEEK 2 – Meeting with God

Group members should read Chapters 6–10 before beginning the group, if possible.

Optional: This week, you could meet in a special chapel, on a hillside, by a stream, or in a garden. Find any place that is exceptionally beautiful, peaceful, or secluded.

Briefly revisit the prayer needs from last week. Ask what God has done and write praise reports or additional needs on the whiteboard or in the notebook. Encourage members to share words of encouragement God has given them for one another. (If keeping the pray-ee secret, members will share their encouraging words for their assigned person with the leader.)

Piper has learned about “thin places,” where people can feel closer to God. Invite the group members to read the following verses aloud and spend a few minutes thinking about how these verses relate to “thin places.” Ask for volunteers to share what they’ve written with the group.

Luke 5:16; Mark 1:35:

Isaiah 2:2:

WEEK 2 – Meeting with God

Ask the group if any of them have a special place they like to go and meet with God. Encourage them to talk about their experience.

Remind the group members to continue to pray for their assigned person this week. Encourage them to seek out a “thin place” to be alone with God. Take a walk in a park or by a lake, spend time in silence in a neighborhood chapel, or take a bubble bath and put on some soft worship music. Any place with silence and solitude is good!

Suggested prayer to close:

Jesus, we want to know you better. Will you show us times and places this week that we can meet with you? In Jesus' name, Amen

To close, read Numbers 6:24-26 aloud over the group.

WEEK 3 – Praying for Our Enemies

Group members should read Chapters 41-45 before beginning the group, if possible.

Revisit the assignment last week to meet with God in what might be considered a “thin place.” Ask the group to tell about their experiences.

Gordon Guthrie is going through the worst experience of his life. But even after he was badly mistreated, he prays and asks Jesus to meet his needs. He also prays for his captors.

Ask someone to read Matthew 5:43-48 aloud.

Has there ever been a time when you’ve prayed for an enemy? What happened? Write your thoughts below and share them with the group. After the group members have shared, you may also wish to share.

Leader’s thoughts:

Remind the group members to continue praying for their assigned person and to continue to ask God to give them encouraging words to share. Ask them to think of one enemy they can pray for by name each day this week and to keep a journal of what God tells them.

Optional prayer to close the group:

Jesus, it’s really hard to pray for our enemies! But we know that you love every person deeply, including the people who may be mean to us or have hurt us. While you died for us so that we can live forever, you also died for our enemies. Fill us with grace to pray for our enemies and to bless them with a new awareness of your love. In Jesus’ name, Amen

WEEK 4 – Parables of Jesus

Group members should read Chapters 16–19 before beginning the group, if possible.

Revisit last week’s assignment to pray for an enemy. How did it go? Encourage the group to share about their experiences.

Jesus was a master storyteller, and He often made His points by telling stories. Stories are memorable; they can be easily shared from person to person, and they use everyday language to teach deep spiritual truths.

- Have the group read the following three parables aloud:
- Parable of the Sower – Matthew 13:3–8
- Parable of the Hidden Treasure – Matthew 13:44
- Parable of the Pearl – Matthew 13:45–46

Ask the group what they believe Jesus was trying to teach by telling these stories. What was the point of each?

Leader’s thoughts:

Have each group member think of a short story/analogy—much like these three parables—that may teach a non-believer about the love of God. Or have them work in twos or threes to come up with parables of their own.

Suggested prayer to close:

God, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, your Word is a story about a love more powerful than anything we’ve ever known. When we read the stories of Jesus, open up our understanding so that we can know you better. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

WEEK 5 – Thankfulness

Group members should read Chapters 20–24 before beginning the group, if possible.

Obtain a copy of *The Hiding Place* by Corrie ten Boom from the library and bring it to the meeting. Read the portion in which Betsie gives thanks to God for the fleas and the portion in the next chapter, where Corrie realizes why the fleas were a blessing.

Gordon has an encounter with a soldier in which he is suddenly thankful for not having a shower in many months.

Ask someone to read 1 Thessalonians 5:15–18 aloud. Leader's thoughts:

Ask the group for testimonies that will uplift, not bring down, the members. Ask if anyone has ever had a bad experience that ended up being good. Have they gone through a terrible ordeal that, when they looked back later, turned out to be the best thing that could have happened to them?

Optional prayer to close the group:

Jesus, your Word tells us to give thanks in all circumstances. Will you help us to do that? We ask that when we're having a tough time with something this week that you interrupt our thoughts with your presence and remind us to thank you, even if we can't see the reason and even if it doesn't make sense. Give us hearts to trust that you are working, even in the worst times. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WEEK 6 – Fun Week!

Group members should read Chapters 25–29 before beginning the group, if possible.

Revisit any particularly engaging/difficult/emotional topic from Weeks 1–5, if desired. Remind the group members to continue to pray for their assigned person weekly. Make note of answered prayer, praise reports, or new prayer needs on the whiteboard or in the leader’s notebook.

Option 1: Bake snickerdoodles as a group. Encourage each group member to take some home and share with a new neighbor, a person living alone, their mail carrier, a classmate, a teammate, etc.

Option 2: Do an art project. Group members may decorate their folders with stickers, markers, stencils, paint, etc.

While the group is baking and/or decorating their folders, ask them to share how God is answering their prayers. Make note of praise reports or additional needs on the whiteboard or in the leader’s notebook.

Leader’s thoughts:

Optional prayer to close the group:

God, thank you for bringing this group together. Thank you for teaching us about who you are. Your word says that where two or more are gathered in your name, you are there in the midst of them, including happy times where we share cookies and enjoy the company of friends! Thank you for your constant presence. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

WEEK 7 – Reconciliation

Group members should read Chapters 30–34 before beginning the group, if possible.

In *The Edge of Everywhen*, Aunt Beryl has been estranged from Gordon and the children for many years because of past hurts. As the story progresses, Piper’s heart softens toward Aunt Beryl, and Aunt Beryl’s heart softens toward the children.

Encourage a group member to read Matthew 5:23–24 aloud.

What does it mean? Leader’s thoughts:

Ask the group how this verse affects us in our daily life. What does the word reconcile mean? Encourage the group to ask God to show them specific people in their lives with whom He wants them to be reconciled. How can we pray for those people specifically?

Leader’s thoughts:

Suggested prayer to close:

God, You do not desire that we have broken relationships with friends or family. Will you teach us how to be peacemakers this week? Show us how to forgive friends or family members who have said or done hurtful things. We ask that you give us eyes to see people as you see them. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

WEEK 8 – Wrap Up / Looking Ahead

Group members should read Chapters 35–39 before beginning the group, if possible.

If you've kept the pray-ee's secret throughout the study, today is the big reveal! Encourage the group members to share anything specific that God has shown them about their assigned person.

What has been the verse or prayer that has been most impactful or significant for you during these eight weeks? Encourage each group member to share.

Leader's thoughts:

What do you think God is calling you to do differently going forward, if anything? Encourage each group member to share and to continue praying for one another.

Leader's thoughts:

Suggested prayer to close:

Jesus, we are so thankful for your Word and for your presence! Give us a hunger to know you better, to pray for our enemies, to trust you with our fears, and to see others as you see them. Teach us your ways, that we can point others to you in all we do and say. In Jesus' name, Amen.