

# LAUNCH RETREAT: DISCUSSION GUIDE



# SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

In this session, Jay Pathak discusses calling - and how we can discern God's call for our lives. After watching this session together, use the following discussion questions to guide your coaching session.



# SESSION 1: CALLING - HOW TO DISCERN GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

## *Discussion Questions*

1. **Jay says we often focus on not messing up when we are new to faith. Then, over time, we focus on who God might want us to be or what God might want us to do in our lives.**

Can you relate to this progression Jay described?

If so, what would you say is your “big question” about God’s plan for your life right now?

If not - what comes to mind when you think about the idea that “God has a plan for your life?”

How does this idea of God’s calling relate to why you are engaging in VLE?

2. **Jay says that God is a very good leader who is very good at telling us, his sheep, what he wants for us and our lives. Yet, we can struggle to feel confident that we are hearing God or that we are not hearing answers to the questions we are asking or the direction we are looking for.**

What came to mind when Jay was talking about the difficulties of hearing God’s voice or feeling confident in His will? How can you relate to what Jay shared?

What is an area where you do feel confident that you’ve heard God directing you recently? Share more about how you have experienced that and how you think God is directing you.

- 3. Jay shares that it's also important to follow other people's vision—that sometimes God calls us to help in others' vision. As a part of a church, each of you is significantly following the vision of another leader. Jay asks,**

Are you following people and the vision God has entrusted them?

Would you want people to follow you the way you follow your leaders?

What part of following others' vision is easy for you? What is difficult?

- 4. Jay says God speaks to us in new ways when we leave our comfort zones and begin doing things. In this process, we will begin to see fruit in what we are doing and receive outward affirmation of our calling from others.**

Have you experienced this process in your life in any way? Where have you seen fruit and received confirmation/affirmation from others as you step out into your calling?

If you have not experienced this yet, what feelings or thoughts come to mind as you think about this?

- 5. In his final prayer, Jay prays for God to give us eyes to see 1. what area of our lives we are not entrusting Him with, 2. what risks we can take, and 3. who we should help.**

Spend time in prayer about these three items.

## SESSION 2: INTRODUCTION

In this session, Christina Lowery and Jay Pathak discuss the importance of our individual stories and how God wants to grab ahold of us in a way that will shape or transform our stories. After watching this session together, use the following discussion questions to guide your coaching session.



## SESSION 2: THE POWER OF A STORY

### *Discussion Questions*

1. **Christina shared her story and how it changed when it intersected with the Vineyard story.**

Think about your story, and the point in which your life intersected with the Vineyard - maybe it happened at birth or, perhaps, like in Christina's case, it happened in adulthood. What is one way you see your life being changed or shaped by your encounter with a Vineyard church?

What got you to the place where you are now, embarking on this new Vineyard experience in VLE?

2. **Jay says good stories include a struggle fueled by a desire for something more. Bad stories, in contrast, are comfortable, safe, and predictable. He says we innately desire something more because we were created to be part of God's overarching story.**

Think about what you were taught about what kind of life you should strive for. Would you say you were taught to desire a "good story," or were you raised to value a life Jay says is predictable, comfortable, safe... and makes for a "bad" story? How would you describe the "story" you were raised to value?

Where would you say the "ache, hunger, or desire" for a better life/story Jay describes shows up in your life today?

- 3. Jay says the New Testament clearly marks people who have surrendered their lives and stories to Jesus—sacrifice, risk, humility, a commitment to be connected to people and not be alone, repentance, hope, and loss. He says it’s the same for us. If we are called, it will cost us. Yet, many American Christians don’t seem to be living these stories. They are instrumentalizing the things of Jesus to provide comfort, safety, and the ability to get the success they want.**

What about you? Where do you seek comfort? What are you prepared to sacrifice for?

What part of this teaching excites you? What makes you feel anxious or afraid?

- 4. Jay teaches that the way to change your story and receive God’s calling is to consecrate yourself - to set yourself apart so you can be receptive to what God is doing.**

What would it look like to set yourself up or prepare yourself for an exchange with God, an encounter that will make you into a different kind of person over these next nine months?

How can others pray for you in this?