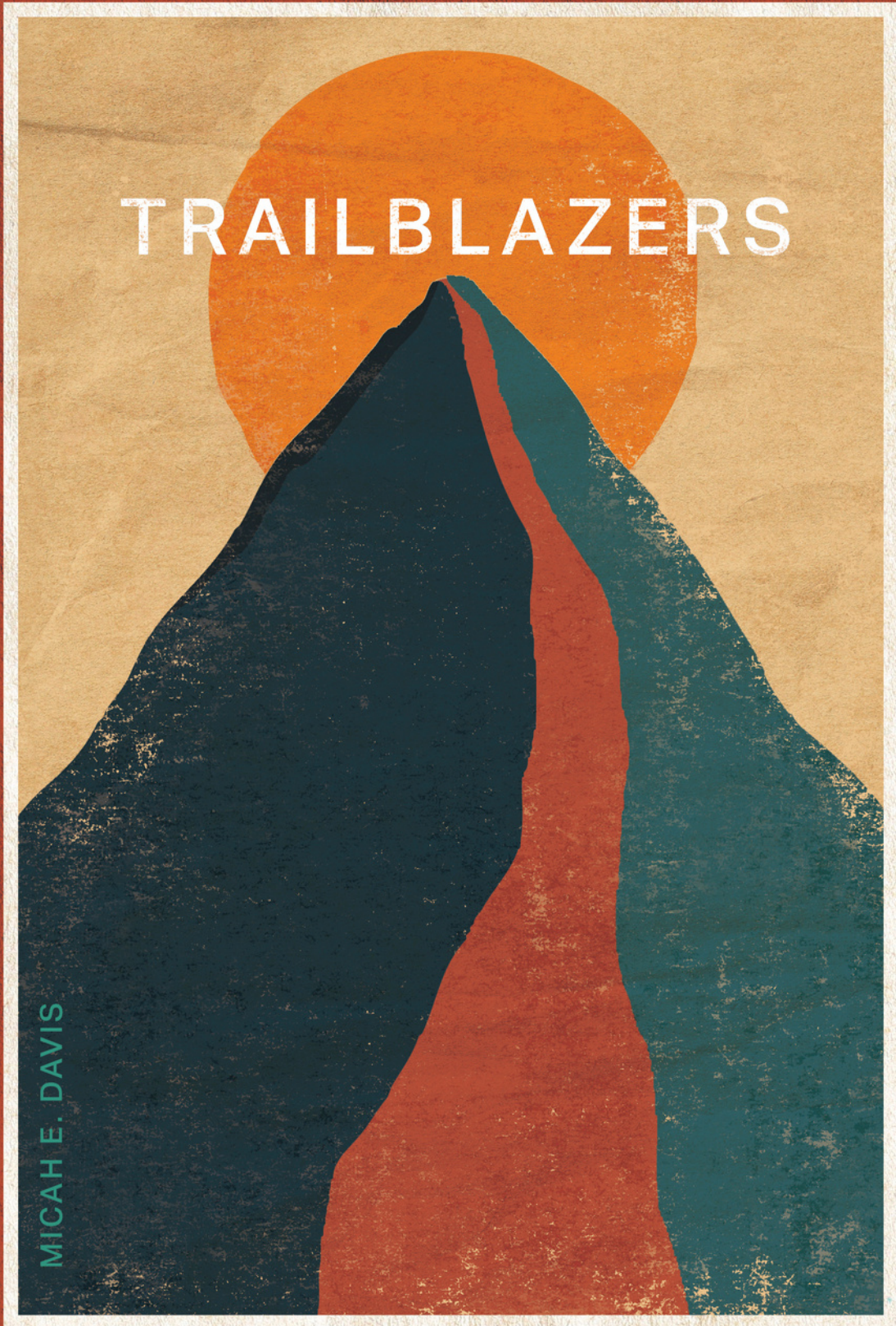


DISCUSSION GUIDE

TRAILBLAZERS

MICAH E. DAVIS



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NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Hello, my friend.

The purpose of this discussion guide is to bring to life the themes outlined in *Trailblazers*, within the context of community. My hope is that as you read and subsequently converse with one another, that you're able to think deeper, laugh harder, and live better. May this resource be an excavation tool that mines your soul for the purpose God has for your life.

Before each group discussion, read the chapter from *Trailblazers* that corresponds to that particular session. Use the following features to guide your group discussion about each chapter:

RELATE:

Before you dive into the study each week, spend a few minutes conversing with one another about day-to-day life.

Something our covenant community practices every week is an exercise we call, "High, Low, Funny." Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch the corresponding teaching for each chapter to gain further insight as you answer the questions below. Videos are available for streaming at www.tyndalechristianresources.com.

READ:

As you extrapolate themes from each chapter, you will look in depth at a particular passage of Scripture. Get curious!

What do you notice?

What feels challenging?

What feels inspiring?

What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

As you reflect on each chapter from the book, share with one another what portions had a particular impact on you.

Ask one another specific questions related to theme(s) of each session.

RESOLVE:

As each session wraps, resolve to live life a different way.

Take what you've learned and decide to apply the truth(s) that you have gleaned. Use the community around you to hold you accountable in the week to come.

RECITE:

Close each session in prayer. There is power in reciting communal prayers together. Each week, you'll be given a different prayer to recite that coincides with the theme from *Trailblazers*.



CHAPTER 1

BUILD A FOUNDATION OF INTEGRITY

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 1 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Genesis 45:1-11

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- How important is character formation to you?
- Who are some people with character you admire? Why?
- Do you feel that you've built a solid foundation of integrity? Why/Why not?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Lord Jesus,

Help us this week to build our lives on a foundation of integrity. May we choose to do the right thing, say the right words, and live the right way even when no one is watching. God, we know that integrity is forged over the long haul. Holy Spirit, fill us with a vision of an integrity-filled life. Let us live into that vision this day and beyond.

Amen.

CHAPTER 2

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 2 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Genesis 12:1-9

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- What doubts, fears, or lies often dominate your inner world? What's the script you tell yourself?
- Can you recall any fork-in-the-road moments throughout your life? How did you make the decision you made?
- What dream do you sense God has instilled within your heart? What do you need to do in order to begin pursuing it?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Father,

This life is full of fork-in-the-road moments. Give us prudence and wisdom to discern which direction to go. Jesus, fill our minds with the dreams, visions, and passions that you've instilled in the core of our being. Holy Spirit, protect us from any fears, doubts, or lies attempting to hinder us from developing the courage necessary to take the first step towards our God-given dream. Help us to be obedient to your leading this week.

Amen.

CHAPTER 3

FAITHFULLY FIGHT INSECURITY

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 3 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Exodus 3:1-14

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- We're living in a cultural moment that is rife with radical individualism. What do you feel when you hear the word *submission*? Why do you feel that way?
- What excuses do you often turn over in your head? Where do those excuses come from?
- Is there an invitation you sense from God to consecrate (set apart) the dream that he's placed on your heart? Share it with the group!

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Holy Spirit,

May you enliven us to reimagine what gospel-centered submission looks like. Rid us of any cultural or experiential strongholds and help us to grasp a picture of what life and life to the full can be when we surrender wholeheartedly to you. God, bring to mind the excuses that have held us back to this point. Jesus, sit with us as we tenderly examine these excuses and show us kindness and grace as we turn them over to you. Consecrate us and release us to fulfill your purpose on this earth.

Amen.

CHAPTER 4

DEVOTED AT THE RIGHT COST

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 4 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Joshua 2:1-12

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- Who in your life has exemplified loyalty in a way that's shaped or formed who you are today?
- What things in life are you tempted to pledge your loyalty to over Jesus?
- How have you seen God use what you perceive as a weakness for impact on those around you?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

God,

In a world dominated by upward mobility and domineering, you exalt the meek and humble. Help us to see loyalty as a genuine ingredient for the life you've called us to live. Jesus, increase in us our fidelity to you and to our neighbors. May we seek the good and well-being of others above ourselves this week. Holy Spirit, only you can impart to us such strength, drive, and devotion. So, we ask for it. Fill us with your presence.

Amen.

CHAPTER 5

LEARN TO BE ALONE

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 5 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Psalm 23

-
- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- What accomplishments, achievements, or accolades do you tend to hide behind?
- What apprehensions, fears, or struggles do you have with the practices of silence and solitude?
- You may not have a labyrinth to go walk, but walk through this exercise with your group: name your intention, sit in silence for two minutes, share what you sense the Lord saying to you, and say amen.

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

King Jesus,

Forgive us for the ways that we've allowed the noise of life to drown out your still, small voice. Create uninterrupted space this week for us to spend unhurried time with you. Holy Spirit, meet us in the quiet. Wrap your tender and loving arms around us. Allow your presence to fill the space that we inhabit together and allow the silence to serve as a catalyst for the experience of true intimacy with you. God, in times of silence, speak, for your servants are listening. You come where you are wanted. We want you here.

Amen.

CHAPTER 6

DECELERATE AND LISTEN

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 6 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: 1 Kings 19:1-21

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- How healthy do you feel your pace of life is on a scale of 1 to 10?
- Are you willing to slow down your pace (and perhaps your perceived impact) in order to attain the true purpose God has for your life? Why or why not?
- What are some best practices you feel led to implement in order to slow down? (i.e., master your phone, begin the day in quiet, a walk, Sabbath, etc.)

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Holy Spirit,

Bring to mind a word picture right now that represents our pace of life. If too fast, help us to acknowledge that and repent. If too slow, help us to acknowledge that and repent. If just right, embolden us to continue in our countercultural way of life. Jesus, you lived your life at the pace of grace. Help us to be attentive and obedient to that pace this week. May we live life as you would if you were us. God, show us the patience and grace required as we swim upstream in a world that seeks to constantly distract us. Meet us in the mess and deliver us into slowness.

Amen.

CHAPTER 7

ALWAYS CHOOSE TO BE BRAVE

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 7 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Esther 4

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- What “what-ifs?” most often run through your mind? What fears are those “what-ifs?” rooted in?
- How do you view God? Do you believe that He has your best in mind? That he’s in control? Be honest. Why or why not?
- Are you willing to commit to a twenty-four hour fast for the remainder of this study (six weeks)? Share the day that you will fast with the rest of your group.

RESOLVE:

What’s one practice you’ll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Lord Almighty,

We lay before you our “what ifs.” We recognize these questions to be rooted in fear and doubt. That spirit of timidity is not of you. So, Jesus, embolden us to trust your plan. Give us eyes to see as you see. Give us foresight into the forest of life. And even if you don’t, give us the courage to walk in anyway—not out of naivete but out of obedience. Holy Spirit, fill us with your Spirit as we fast from food. Replace our empty stomachs with clear minds.

Amen.

CHAPTER 8

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR DAY

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 8 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Daniel 6

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- Does discipline come naturally to you? Why or why not?
- What spiritual disciplines do you enjoy practicing? Which ones do you not enjoy?
- What is your current prayer rhythm? Does it need to change or stay the same?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Abba,

We are sorry for the ways we've confused effort with earning. We know that your grace is not earned, but we also know that your way of life is invitational. To take up our cross and follow you is no small feat. It requires a lifetime of work. So, Jesus, impart in us the drive to establish rhythms and practices that draw us closer to you. Holy Spirit, develop within us a hunger and thirst for your presence. Help us to marry the ways you've wired us with practices that bring joy, peace, and love to our souls.

Amen.

CHAPTER 9

UNCOMPLICATE LIFE, GAIN SUBSTANCE

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 9 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: John 1:1-8

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- Many of us have way too many things. How could you simplify your closet, your garage, or your kitchen this week?
- What if you committed to simplifying upward mobility and staying in one place? What impact could you have on your community? Dream about that with your group.
- Who do you dream about being like? (e.g. Francis of Assisi, Joan of Arc, etc.) Why?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Spirit of God,

We intercede on behalf of the many who live lives of simplicity due to our unjust, materialistic lives of excess. Help us to acknowledge the ways that we have failed to love our neighbors through unethical purchases. Jesus, give us the motivation to chase righteousness over wealth. Holy Spirit, impart to us wisdom to make wise choices with our resources. Help us to see how a blessed life is developed within a simple life. Create in us a desire to plant deep roots rather than develop wide influence. Help us to see the immense difference we can make when we choose to stay.

Amen.

CHAPTER 10

LOVE (PERIOD)

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 10 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: 1 John 3:11-24

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- Have you ever sensed the Holy Spirit prompting you to do something and have ignored it? What was that experience like?
- What is the difference between the world's definition of true love and Jesus's vision of true love?
- What would it look like for you to practically love your neighbor as yourself this week? Brainstorm with your group.

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

God of love,

You are Love itself. Only you know what perfect love actually entails. So, Jesus, on this day, give us a glimpse of you. Help us to seek and find ways to love others with an agape love. Crucify our lusts masked as love. Help us to surrender our desire in exchange for devotion. And increase in us margin to see and love people where they're at and for who they are. Holy Spirit, open us up to opportunities to love people well. Breathe your presence on us and allow others to experience you through us.

Amen.

CHAPTER 11

NEVER GIVE UP

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 11 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: John 21:15-17

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit speaking to you?

REFLECT:

- Think back to a time of failure in your life. What feelings did that stir up within you?
- By this point, you've been journeying together as a group for eleven weeks. It's time to get real. If you're in a group with both men and women, split into men-only and women-only groups and answer this question: "Is there anything unconfessed in my life that I need to repent of?" Share in the safety and love of the group. Finish your conversation by declaring, "[Insert Name], you are forgiven."

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

God of mercy,

We come before you broken but hopeful. What's been kept in the dark has come to light. In this moment, you see us, and you say, "My child, you are forgiven." Jesus, thank you for your mercy made possible by your sacrifice on the cross. Thank you for the blood that was shed for these sins I have confessed. Holy Spirit, this week, allow me to be merciful to others as you have been to me. I am made whole, in you. Hallelujah!

Amen.

CHAPTER 12

LEAN INTO BACKWARDS AMBITION

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 12 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- In what ways have you pursued selfish ambition throughout your life? Has it led to what you hoped it would?
- Who is your core? Your community? Your church?
- Character + Consistency = Clarity. What part of that equation needs your attention most in this season of your life?

RESOLVE:

What's one practice you'll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Christ Jesus,

You modeled for us what life within a core is like—bringing three men into an inner circle of confidence. You modeled life in community—intentionally discipling a group of men and women to become future leaders in your church. And you modeled life in the church by giving your life for it. Father, help us to do the same. Help us to fight for a core, community, and church family to be known by. Holy Spirit, divinely orchestrate conversations, interactions, and interruptions this week that make life in community a reality for each of us.

Amen.

CHAPTER 13

LIVE LIKE JESUS

RELATE:

Share the highlight of your week, the lowlight of your week, and something funny that happened to you.

REVIEW:

Watch Session 13 of the Trailblazers Video Collection.

READ: Ephesians 5:1-20

- What do you notice?
- What feels challenging?
- What feels inspiring?
- What do you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you?

REFLECT:

- In what ways are you seeking to “imitate God?” (Ephesians 5:1, NLT)?
- What do you need to release in order to embrace the life God has called you to step into?
- How has Jesus changed you over the course of this study? In what areas have you seen the most progress in your life? Celebrate with your group!

RESOLVE:

What’s one practice you’ll implement into your life this week?

RECITE:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

Thank you for the work that you have done in us and through us in our time together. May the time spent here become the nutrient soil for the seeds that have been cast. May we see days, weeks, and years from now the fruit of our investment in one another’s lives. Jesus, help us to name what we value in one another. Holy Spirit, give us power to call out purpose in one another. And Father God, grant us your tenderness to love one another as you love us. We thank you, God, for this time of growth, maturation, and development. Give us strength as we blaze the trail you’ve set before us.

Amen, amen, and amen.

