

## **Discussion Questions For Naturally Supernatural**

### **General Instructions:**

Here are questions that will help facilitate group discussion each week. Each group member should take a look at them ahead of time and come to the group prepared to share their thoughts with the rest of the group.

Group leaders: Use the discussion questions as you see fit. Change them if you like. They are just an aid to help you facilitate the evening's discussion. As the group shares, be careful not to get bogged down. Keep it moving. Take about 30 – 40 minutes for discussion. Give yourselves enough time for ministry.

Conclude each evening with ministry time. This is just as important as the group discussion. The focus should be on putting into action what you have learned from your reading. This will require you as the leader to perhaps try some new things and take some risks. Use the exercises in "Suggestions For Ministry Time" to help you. Have an exciting adventure over the next twelve weeks.

We've also included key Bible verses that go along with each week's topic. You can use them in any way you might want to as references to the subjects being discussed.

Remember we are here to assist you if you need help!

Mike Turrigiano and Ryan Wobbrock

## **Week One: The Kick-off (week of Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>)**

**Objective:** Forming group and making introductions

- Get acquainted
- Give out the book *Naturally Supernatural*
- Share an overview of the next eleven weeks together
- Group covenant
- Discussion:

Key verse: John 14:10

1. Who was your favorite superhero when you were a kid?
2. What comes to mind when you hear the term “naturally supernatural”?
3. How was Jesus naturally supernatural?
4. Do you think it’s important for a Christian to be a naturally supernatural person in our world today? Why?
5. How could becoming a naturally supernatural community here in the city help us in our mission to break the stereotype?

### **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Pray for God’s presence and guidance over the course of the next eleven weeks together. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your instructor and coach. Ask him for open hearts and minds to receive his truth and to put it into action in your lives.

## Week Two: Joining God In His Work (week of Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 15-50
- **Main idea:** Jesus announced the good news of God's kingdom in both word and deed. He invites everyday, ordinary people like you, to join him in this mission.
- **Key verses:** Matt. 4:17,23-25; 28:18-20; John 5:17-19
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word "kingdom"?
  2. In you're your own words how would you explain what our author says the God's "kingdom" is about?
  3. How is the "good news of the kingdom" good news to you?
  4. God has entrusted the ministry of Jesus to us! How does that make you feel?
    - a. Overwhelmed and scared
    - b. Like it's a burden
    - c. Like a failure
    - d. Excited and filled with anticipation
    - e. Other
  5. According to what you've read this week, what does a disciple look like? What kind of things does a disciple do?
  6. Gary Best talks about "seeing what God is doing" and "joining him in his work". Is this something you're comfortable with and practice or something you'd like to learn?
- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Jesus said that his Father was always at work. God is at work in your group tonight. 1) Go around and ask the group what they think God wants to do during ministry time. 2) Then pray as a group asking God to show you what he wants to do 3) Ask if anybody has an impression of what God wants to do or who he wants to minister to 4) Join him in his work and pray for each other.

### Week Three: God's Powerful Tools Part One (week of Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 51-65
- **Main idea:** We've been given divine tools, called spiritual gifts that enable you to do the kingdom work Jesus has asked you to do. They are for everyone that partners with God, not just for experts.
- **Key verses:** 1Cor. 12:4-11; Ro. 12:4-8; 1Pet. 4:10
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. How would you react if you witnessed a miracle?
  2. Have someone read the first two paragraphs on page 51 to the rest of the group. According to this, what is a miracle?
  3. Share your thoughts on the story that Gary tells at the beginning of the chapter and your reaction to his quote that "This miracle occurred largely through the obedience of a young girl who didn't fully understand what she was doing" (p. 57).
  4. Gary talks about the mysterious combining of God's grace and our faith, he calls a "divine partnership" (p. 58). What are your thoughts about this? Have you ever experienced this partnership?
  5. Can you relate to, or have you experienced, John Wimber's description of how he knew when he was anointed to pray for the sick (p. 60)? What was it like for you? What did you do?
  6. How do you respond to Wimber's "secret" of operating in spiritual gifts? (p. 61-62)
    - a. I'm waiting 'to get more' before I start praying for others and take chances in ministry opportunities.
    - b. I'm waiting for God to make the coast clear before I go for it.
    - c. I'm ready to move out of my comfort zone, take some risks and give what I have.

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Paul commands, "Eagerly desire spiritual gifts" (1Cor. 14:1). Have you been asking for spiritual gifts? James tells us we "don't have because we don't ask." (Ja. 4:2) Pray for one another and ask the Lord to give you his spiritual "tools". Ask him to release the gifts of his Spirit in your lives.

## Week Four: God's Powerful Tools Part Two (week of Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 65-81
- **Main idea:** We can begin using spiritual gifts by imitating Jesus. The key to this is developing child-like faith and being willing to take risks.
- **Key verses:** John 5:17-19; 8:28-29; Mt. 18:3
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. How would you rate yourself as a listener? Has God spoken to you? What form does it usually take (an impulse, a voice, a thought, a picture)?
  2. What are the two main ingredients (according to Gary) in cooperating with God's action? (P, 65-66)
  3. How active do you think you are in these areas? Are there practical ways you can improve in these two areas as individuals? As a group?
  4. These two ingredients form the basic framework of the Vineyard prayer model. How can this aid you in being a naturally supernatural person?
  5. Gary gives us advice on how to best imitate Jesus. (p. 69-70) How can this help us guard against impulsiveness and pride?
  6. According to the story found in Mark 6:30-44, what's the "raw material for a miracle"?
    - a. Simple obedience
    - b. Childlike dependence
    - c. Seeing and/ or hearing what God wants to do
    - d. Humility
    - e. Faith
    - f. Taking risks
  7. Can you reconcile yourself with the fact that you will sometimes feel and look stupid if you do what is outlined in this book? (Mt. 10:39) Try to be as honest as possible about this with your group.
- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**
  - 1) Pray for any group members who may be struggling with things that will hinder them imitating Jesus such as: pride, hearing and/ or seeing, obeying, childlike dependence, risk-taking, etc. 2) Ask if anybody in your group needs prayer, putting into practice the two-step prayer model. Focus in on listening to the Spirit's voice and then obeying him.

## Week Five: Seeing What God Sees Part One (week of Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 83-97
- **Main idea:** Spiritual gifts are not confined to a church service, they work out in the market place as well.
- **Key verses:** 1Cor. 12:3-31; Ro. 12:3-8
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. Would you say you're a competitive person? Why or why not?
  2. How can competition, independence stymie the exercising of spiritual gifts and hurt ministry in a church community? (p. 85-87)
  3. Wimber suggested a way that spiritual gifts received "in the moment" can become so much a part of our experience of serving that they can eventually become our "ministry". (p. 93-96) How would you say each of the following factors contribute to this transition?
    - a. A servant's heart
    - b. Repeated faithfulness
    - c. Practical experience
    - d. Expectant faith
    - e. God's grace
  4. What are your thoughts about the analogy of being "God's mail delivery personnel"? (p. 96) Does it relieve any pressure to produce an outcome during ministry? Why or why not?

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Take time to learn to "hear" and to "see" what the Lord is doing and how to take some risks. Remember, your group is a safe place. Its perfectly fine to try and not get it right. Ask the Spirit point out what he wants to do and who he wants to minister to in your group right now -

1) Ask the group to quiet themselves (in the Vineyard we call this "dialing down") and tune into the spontaneous thoughts or pictures that the Spirit might "project onto" their minds. 2) Then ask the members to take a risk by sharing what they think the Lord may be saying or showing them. 3) Match-up the words, impressions or pictures with group members by asking, "Is that word (impression, picture) for anyone here?" or "Can anyone relate to that...?" 4) Conclude by practicing the two-step prayer model by praying for the members who responded to the words, impressions, etc. that where shared.

## Week Six: Seeing What God Sees Part Two (week of Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 97-131
- **Main idea:** We can partner in a practical way with the Holy Spirit by utilizing Jesus' simple two-step naturally supernatural prayer model.
- **Key verses:** 1Cor. 14:1-3; 24-25, Heb. 5:14
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. Ask: "What does the saying, 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater' mean? How does this apply to prophecy?"
  2. How does Gary connect the gift of prophecy with the task of joining God in his work by praying for others?
  3. As we unpack the two-step prayer model in more detail, what are the ingredients or aspects of Step 1 (Listen) and Step 2 (Obey)? (p. 117-120)
  4. How does listening involve more than just our ears?
  5. Concerning obedience, Gary writes, "When we believe that God has told us what he wants to do, faith is released at some level within us, we can confidently speak to the condition and the evil plan connected to it... When God has spoken, the only way we will grow in faith to see his work realized is to take the risk of speaking our what we believe he has said." (P.120)
    - a. On a scale from 1 to 10 (10 being highest) where would you say that you are in terms of obedience when you've heard God speak (or think you've heard God speak)?
    - b. What do you find most intimidating and difficult about risk-taking?
  6. According to the author of Hebrews, how do we grow in our ability to discern when God has really spoken and when it's just our imagination? Can you put this advice into layman's terms? (p. 122)
  7. What is your reaction to Gary's story about his dad and his statement that "God can heal powerfully without any external indications."? (p. 127)

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Encourage your group members to share their doubts and insecurities that crop-up as they try to listen to God and step-out to pray for others. Pray for group members that want God's help to overcome these things.

As you pray listen and watch by keeping your eyes open. Stop to periodically ask the person you're praying for questions in order to keep your prayers on

track. Simple questions such as, “Is anything happening?” or “Is the Lord saying anything to you?”

Practice the prayer model on whoever needs prayer in your group.

### **Week Seven: Empowered By God’s Spirit (week of Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>)**

- **Reading:** Pages 133-156
- **Main idea:** We can’t be naturally supernatural people without the empowering that comes through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is an experience with a person not some kind of energizing force.
- **Key verses:** Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:4-8
- **Discussion Questions:**

1. Based on the reading of the first section (p.133-138), how would you rate your expectations for the Holy Spirit’s involvement in your life? What are your expectations? Why?
  - a. I have low expectations
  - b. I have medium expectations
  - c. I have high expectations
2. How is carrying out the Great Commission is a “divine partnership”? (p.136) What is God’s part? What is our part?
3. According to Gary’s highlighting of Romans 8:9 (p. 143), what’s the key issue for empowered living? How might this help us relate to the Spirit as a person rather than as a force (p. 148)? How do you think your view impacts your expectations of, and interaction with, God?
4. Read p. 149 together. What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and what are the implications for being a disciple? How important is this to you?
5. What was your reaction to Gary’s description of self-focus and selfishness in experiences with the Holy Spirit and the tendency to treat Him as a means to an end? (P.150)

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Do the group exercise, following the instructions on p. 155-156

### **Week 8: Thanksgiving week no groups (week of Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>)**

\*Sermon:

## Week Nine: Bringing The Kingdom To People Part One (week of Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 157-186
- **Main idea:** Christ is liberating the world. He defeated evil by disarming Satan and overcoming his strategies that had created humanity's bondage.
- **Key verses:** Lk. 4:18-19; Matt. 12:22-29; Acts 10:38
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. Has God given you a chance to practice what we've been learning? Did God bring someone across your path this past week that may have presented you with an opportunity to "see what he is doing" and "join him in his work"?
  2. In your own words what is the Good News of the kingdom of God and how does having a firm grasp of what it is we've been called and authorized to do keep us on track in the midst of the battle?
  3. What do you think Gary means when he says, "In the same way, we must take care to recognize that the central focus of our ministry is to bring the Good News of God's kingdom to the lives of people rather than treating specific, isolated problems... The mission of Jesus, one that has been given to us... Kingdom ministry is co-working with God to bring people together: Within themselves, with one another and with God their Creator." (p. 161)
  4. Contrast the mission and the methods of Jesus with that of Satan. (P.165-185).
  5. Are there ways that you have been influenced by Satan's deception? Has that resulted in separation from God in any way? Is there any bondage that has come to you as a result of the deception and separation?
- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Pray for one another using your authority given by Jesus, if something has come to mind during the discussion time. Purpose to catch God's heart for the person you are praying for. It's always helpful to pray, "Father show us what you want to do tonight?"

## Week Ten: Bringing The Kingdom To People Part Two (week of Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 186-206
- **Main idea:** As disciples of Jesus we are to use the same weapons that he used to break down the devil's strongholds, at times even engaging in power encounters with evil spirits.
- **Key verses:** Matt. 10:1, 7-8; 2Cor. 10:4
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. Gary reminds us that as disciples we're called to be heralds of truth, ambassadors of reconciliation and 'freedom fighters' that set captives free, just like Jesus was.
    - a. What's your reaction to this challenge?
    - b. Which role are you attracted to the most?
  2. Have you had any experience in praying for those oppressed by the demonic? Have any of these experiences left you discouraged, disillusioned or cynical? Share briefly.
  3. Kingdom ministry is about spiritual warfare – about God's rule coming against the power of darkness.
    - a. How does your involvement on God's side make a difference?
    - b. How would living out this truth affect your relationship with Jesus? The way you live at home? The way you live among your friends and neighbors? Life in your workplace?

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Invite the Holy Spirit to continue to equip the members of your group to be co-workers with Jesus. Ask the Spirit to give you his tools for kingdom ministry, releasing his spiritual gifts among you and to make them operational as you bring the kingdom to the marketplace of your daily lives.

As you pray watch for the indications of the Spirit's presence on members of the group. This is the hand of the Father at work. Bless what the Spirit is doing. Listen for further instructions from him.

## Week Eleven: The Key To Persevering Part One (week of Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>)

- **Reading:** Pages 209-231
- **Main idea:** We experience the kingdom as a mixed bag. This can be frustrating and discouraging. Learning how to live our kingdom mission is a lifelong undertaking that involves living in the tension of “living between the times”.
- **Key verses:** 2 Cor. 6:5-10
- **Discussion Questions:**
  1. What opposition have you faced to keep you from persevering? Share it with the group.
  2. (p. 213-217) Did you find the concept of the “already and not yet” of the kingdom helpful? In what ways? How can it help us persevere? How can it help us face the frustrations and failures, experienced in kingdom ministry?
  3. We love to be in control. There are times when praying that we’re tempted to use power plays in order to make something positive happen.
    - a. How is Gary’s comparison of power vs. authority a helpful preventive? (p. 219-223)
    - b. How does the pattern set by Jesus help? (P.224-225)
  4. In your own words explain Gary’s perspective of the “weakness of authority” (2Cor. 12:9)? Do you find this helpful? In what way? (P.226-228)
  5. Read the last paragraph found on page 231 aloud. How is this the secret of being naturally supernatural?
- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Pray aloud in unison Gary’s prayer found on page 233.

Ask: “Is there a current situation in which you are feeling ‘powerless’? Share it with the group and let the group pray for you.”

## Week Twelve: Debriefing (week of Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>)

- **Objective:** To bring positive closure to your group's experience together.
- **Discuss:**
  1. What did you think of the book Naturally Supernatural? Would you recommend it to a friend?
  2. What was something new or helpful that you learned about:
    - a. Yourself?
    - b. Jesus?
    - c. The kingdom of God?
    - d. Praying for others?
    - e. Being naturally supernatural?
  3. How did participating in this group personally benefit you? How were you challenged as a follower of Jesus?
  4. Discuss whether or not you want to continue to meet as a group next semester (February – April 2008).

- **Suggestions For Ministry Time:**

Invite the Holy Spirit to break into your group with the power and the presence of the kingdom. Ask the Father to show you what he is doing in your group tonight. Let him speak to you; to the group. Listen for God's heart and "invitation" for individual members of the group. Speak them out in prayer as you minister to one another. Don't be afraid to take risks.