

TIPS FOR GROUP STUDY

Wonderlust was designed to be an interactive journey for readers. If you've decided to gather a group of "adventurous souls" to study the book together, I'd like to offer a few tips to help get you started.

Small groups, like individuals, have unique personalities and needs. Don't be afraid of giving your God-inspired creativity a workout by using the chapters in an unconventional way to meet those needs. The "physical journey" of travel is all about discovery, stretching your personal comfort zone, and learning something new. Its corresponding "spiritual journey" should certainly yield nothing less. So go ahead, be adventurous...

1. Advertise your group study, or make invitations for friends, that resemble airline ticket or luggage tags. Promote the study as "Your Ticket to Spiritual Adventure."
2. If you're meeting together as a group for the first time, spend most of your initial session getting acquainted. Ask the group, "What was the most memorable trip you've ever taken—and why?" Review group guidelines, such as how long the sessions will last, what you hope to accomplish each week, practical courtesy in encouraging the reticent and quieting the "over talkers," and offer a reminder that what is shared in the group, stays in the group.
3. Consider time constraints and commitment levels, as well as the size of your group, when determining how much material you will cover each week. Since the chapters are brief, you can choose whether group members should read the chapter(s) assigned on their own before the next meeting or if you will read a chapter aloud as a group.

Possible Group Study Reading Schedules

- Choose chapters individually by topic, tailoring your study to your group's interest and time available. This is not a book that must be read cover-to-cover or with every chapter in sequence for readers to get the overall point. Every chapter stands on its own as an individual journey. This makes *Wonderlust* equally useful for a long-term small group study or a single evening group event.
- Host a monthly "Mom's Getaway" evening, complete with snacks typical of the country you've chosen to discuss that particular evening. Read the chosen chapter aloud and discuss how it relates to where you are right now in your lives.
- Cover one chapter each week over the course of the school year.

- Cover three chapters every week to use as a ten-week study.
- For a six-week study, divide the book into continents (with Italy being declared its own continent, because it is mentioned in so many chapters!). Have group members read the first chapter in each “continent,” encouraging them to read the additional chapters as their time allows. The continents are arranged so that the topics discussed will become increasingly more personal and spiritually challenging as the weeks go by. For Week One, have everyone read “Our Itinerary,” as well as Chapter One. For Week Six, have everyone read both Chapter 13 and Chapter 18. This reading schedule works well for groups that include new believers and/or individuals who are still seeking to understand who God really is. Week Six provides a natural starting point for an open discussion about what it means to make a commitment to Christ.

Wonderlust Six-Week Study Chapter Division

WEEK ONE—South America

Our Itinerary
 Chapter 1—Acceptance (The Inca Trail)
 Chapter 26—Strength (The Amazon River)
 Chapter 28—Mystery (Machu Picchu)

WEEK TWO—Italy

Chapter 3—Victory (Gubbio)
 Chapter 10—Identity (Assisi)
 Chapter 20—Integrity (Orvieto)
 Chapter 29—Perspective (Florence)

WEEK THREE-- Europe

Chapter 5—Faith (Bruges, Belgium)
 Chapter 8—Influence (Mittersill, Austria)
 Chapter 16—Responsibility (St. Petersburg, Russia)
 Chapter 23—Perseverance (Albertville, France)

WEEK FOUR—North America

Chapter 2—Worship (Arizona)
 Chapter 4—Healing (Colorado)
 Chapter 6—Wonder (California)
 Chapter 11—Creativity (New Mexico)
 Chapter 12—Trust (Alaska)
 Chapter 14—Surrender (Hawaii)
 Chapter 17—Encouragement (Colorado)
 Chapter 19—Truth (Churchill, Canada)

Chapter 22—God’s Presence (California)

WEEK FIVE—Asia

Chapter 7—Communication (Chiang Mai, Thailand)

Chapter 9—Remembrance (Angkor Wat, Cambodia)

Chapter 21—Wholeness (Bangkok, Thailand)

Chapter 24—Contentment (The Golden Triangle)

Chapter 25—Prayer (Turkey, Almost...)

Chapter 27—Humility (Beijing, China)

WEEK SIX—Africa and Beyond

Chapter 13—Forgiveness (Morocco)

Chapter 18—Eternal Life (Luxor, Egypt)

Chapter 30—Home (From Phoenix to Heaven)

4. When your group has completed the book, take a weekend trip or overnight retreat as a group. Go with your eyes and heart open to the lessons God has to teach you on this mini-journey. Schedule time alone with God, as well as together. Conclude by sharing how God personally used your trip as a “Journey Toward _____.”
5. Use *Wonderlust* as a selection for your book club. Have members bring a dessert or appetizer representative of the country described in their favorite chapter. Munch freely while you discuss the personal journeys the book led you on. If you’d like me to join your group discussion via phone, you can schedule a Group Chat by emailing vickikuyper@hotmail.com.