



Searching for Agabus

Discussion Guide

Chapter 1 – Deep Longings for Freedom

1. Pastor Walrond writes about what we give up by conforming to others' expectations of us. Have you had a time when you had to lessen yourself, to shrink yourself down to be accepted? Did you realize it at the time?
2. How has the pressure of social media affected you? What do you notice about others' relationship to social media?
3. Who do you think you might be if you released yourself from others' approval? How might you be? Would you move through the world differently?

Chapter 2 – Future Memories

1. Pastor Walrond recalls losing his grandfather and how it led him to question God. Do you have a memory of the first time you questioned or cried out to God?
2. At his grandfather's funeral, Pastor Walrond saw how his grandfather's life and service to others had touched those around him. Do you have any mentors or role models you admire whose life's work has been one of quiet service to others?

Chapter 3 – A Famine in the Land

1. This chapter introduces Agabus the prophet. What were the roles of biblical prophets?
2. The hunger for attention is rapacious, but Pastor Walrond asserts that the hunger for authenticity is greater. Do you see evidence of this in your life? How do you define authenticity?

Chapter 4 – The Road to Authenticity

1. In this chapter, we learn the story of Joseph, whose abusive father and condoning mother left him with deep wounds that he carried into adulthood, where he remained afraid of commitment and convinced of his own unworthiness. With therapy and time, Joseph began to understand why he was the way he was and addressed his wounds and beliefs of unworthiness. How does the name Agabus relate to this message? What does it mean to embrace the belief that we are God's joy?

Chapter 5 – The Birth of Insecurity

1. After a traumatic hospital stay following serious surgery that left him, at age ten, with a large facial scar, Pastor Walrond grew angry and afraid. He began to believe that he wasn't damaged—he was damage. All of us have origin stories for our deep wounds, our hidden pains, like Joseph from the previous chapter. Take five minutes to journal or remember a dark night of the soul. What age were you when this happened? Did it change you?
2. As we experience trauma, disappointment, sadness, grief, and more, we develop coping mechanisms to move away from those painful feelings. We create personas, bad habits, and untruths to shield ourselves from our pain. How might the story of Agabus help release you from these insecurities?

Chapter 6 – The Beauty of Anonymity

1. Anonymity is the opposite of fame. It is something we can choose to be. By choosing anonymity, choosing to be fully ourselves, we can experience profound awakening, bliss, boldness, and joy. Is there a moment you can remember when you felt you could be fully yourself? How did it feel? Why do you think you were able to feel that way in this moment?

Chapter 7 – The Danger of Looking for Likes

1. In the opening Scripture passage, Jesus says to his disciples that when they follow him, the world will hate them. How do you think these words would be received today?
2. Pastor Walrond uses the metaphor of inkblots to show that what other people think about you is not really about you—it's about them. Have you ever used others' perceptions of you to define what you think about yourself?
3. Do you think social media holds power in your life? Do you remember a time before social media?

Chapter 8 – A Reason for Rejoicing

1. What inspiration can we draw from the opening Scripture passage in this chapter? Should Jesus have softened his words to the seventy he sent out "into the midst of wolves"? Is there something to be learned from getting the hard truth here? How might their journey serve as an example for ours?

Chapter 9 – Honor the Assignment

1. Have you ever been so focused on the destination that you didn't stop to recognize the joy of the journey? What are some ways you can slow down, pay attention, and enjoy the ride?
2. What was Agabus's assignment? Did Paul listen to him? What happens when we attach ego to our assignments?
3. Do you find yourself trying to measure success through comparison? Has social media exacerbated this problem?

Chapter 10 – The Goal of Life

1. Pastor Walrond was once asked, "What is the goal of life?" Over time, he has come to realize that the answer is simple: to live. What do you make of this assignment? What might it mean for you?
2. How does Pastor Walrond frame the darkness in the creation story of Genesis? What might this have to do with the darkness we experience in our own lives?

Chapter 11 – Dare to Live

1. Have you ever felt a moment when your greatest fears collided with your greatest dreams? How did you respond? Did you realize at the time, or later, that this was what was happening?
2. Have you found ways to better listen to your inner voice?
3. If you were to “get busy living” today, right now, what would you do?

Chapter 12 – Into the Silence

1. Take five minutes and try to sit in comfortable silence. Once you are done, reflect: How did it feel to do this exercise? When is the last time you sat quietly for this long, without music or reaching for your phone or writing the never-ending to-do list in your head?
2. What would it look like to “disappear into the silence,” as Pastor Walrond recommends? Would you take a break from social media? Would you try something new, without anyone watching? Would you turn inward or outward?