

# Asking for a Friend

## Part 1

**Key Scriptures: Romans 9:1-13; John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9; Luke 14:26**

- 1. Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.**
  - What is a question you've always wanted to ask about the Christian faith but were hesitant to bring up? (No question is too simple or too complicated!)
- 2. Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.**
  - Read Romans 9:6-8. How does Paul's distinction between physical and spiritual descendants of Israel help us understand God's purpose for Israel?
  - Read Romans 9:10-13. What do you think Paul means when he says, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated"? How does this passage shape your understanding of God's choices?
  - Read John 3:16 and 2 Peter 3:9. How do these verses balance the concept of predestination with God's desire for everyone to be saved?
  - In the sermon, we learned about "election" for a purpose, not salvation. What special purposes has God called people to in Scripture, and how does that relate to us today?
  - Considering Romans 9:1-5, why do you think Paul was so heartbroken for Israel? How does this reflect our attitude toward people who don't know Jesus?
- 3. Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.**
  - How does the idea of predestination or free will make you feel about your relationship with God?
  - Can you recall a time when you felt unsure about your faith or had a deep question about God? How did you resolve it (or are you still seeking)?
  - Have you ever wrestled with the idea that God might use different people for different purposes, as He did with Jacob and Esau? How do you see God working through you?
  - How has your understanding of God's love expanded, especially in light of predestination and free will?
  - In your experience, how have you seen God use the difficult questions in your life to deepen your faith?
- 4. Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.**
  - Pray for clarity and peace in understanding God's will, whether it concerns predestination, free will, or personal purpose.
  - Ask God to give you the courage to ask tough questions and seek deeper knowledge of His Word and character.
  - Pray for those who are struggling with doubts or feel far from God, that they may come to know His love and purpose for them.
- 5. Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.**
  - This week, commit to studying Romans 9-11 more deeply and praying through any challenging passages or questions.
  - Reach out to someone in your life who may have questions about faith, and offer to explore the answers together.
  - Challenge yourself to engage in a spiritual conversation this week, whether it's asking a question you've been holding back or helping someone else wrestle with their own.