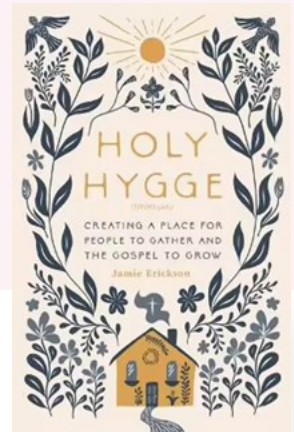




LEADER'S GUIDE

HOLY HYGGE
BY JAMIE ERICKSON



"Hygge appeals to our desire for slow living and shared moments. It embraces beauty and contentment. It's warm and inviting. Hygge is the opposite of hustle. It embraces simplicity. Hygge is a way of making home."

JAMIE ERICKSON

THEMES

Home and Belonging

Hospitality

Relationships

Atmosphere

Comfort

Contentment

Rest

Hygge

BOOK SUMMARY

In *Holy Hygge*, Jamie Erickson leans into the cozy Danish way of life – Hygge [HYOO-guh], a cultural liturgy that values slow rhythms, simple pleasures, savoured moments and deep friendships - and beautifully weaves these practices alongside the Christian faith. Although Hygge is essentially secular, Jamie shows how the seven tenets of *Hygge*, Hospitality, Thriving Relationships, Atmosphere, Comfort, Contentment and Rest, are qualities seen first in the Garden of Eden through Christ's example.

Although *Hygge* is a temporary fix - a bandaid and not an infinite source of lasting comfort or joy - by bringing Holy and *Hygge* together, we can practically reshape an atmosphere and learn how to live more contentedly, service-focused, and joy-filled lives.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TALKING POINTS



1

Q. "Before God made humanity, He made a home for them, He built a sacred place, and we can do the same." What did you most enjoy about *Holy Hygge*?

TALKING POINTS

"*Hygge* is a noun. It's something you share, something that inspires you. *Hygge* is a verb. It's something you do either by yourself or with others. *Hygge* is an adjective. It describes peace, Contentment, and joy. *Hygge* is a feeling, a concept, a lifestyle. In its most unsophisticated forms, *hygge* is a mindset – a way of making the mundane and necessary tasks of life more meaningful and beautiful" (p15).

Many of us will be attracted to the area of *hygge* in which we are gifted, crave, or desire. For example:

- If we are lonely, we may be drawn to the fellowship and community *hygge* provided.
- If we have the gift of hospitality, we may have been excited to learn new ways of using that gift.

2

Q. In the introduction, Jamie reminds us that Jesus is more than enough for us. Why must we remember this important truth while embracing *hygge*?

TALKING POINTS

"All we need is Jesus. Full stop." (p17);

- Jesus first displayed the qualities of *hygge* in the Garden of Eden; therefore, it is not a human idea.
- "To build a life-giving home, you need more than essential oils and a high-priced entry rug." (p16).
- "A half-truth is just as dangerous as a lie, for it gives you a false sense of security, making you feel you've covered all your bases and checked all the boxes, when in reality, its bedrock is sinking sand (p18).
- "The idea of *hygge* is compelling in our current culture of excess and isolation because it promises community, contentment, and rest. *Hygge* can cultivate all of those, but only when placed at the foot of the cross." (p24).

3

Q. In chapter 2, Jamie reminds us of the importance of hospitality. Do you enjoy providing hospitality to others? Or do you feel uncomfortable? Have any of those feelings changed since reading this book?

TALKING POINTS

"Hospitality was not a suggestion – a thing to do whenever they felt up to it – it was a command, give by God as a way to ensure that every outsider was welcomed" (p28) ;

- "To share a meal with someone was to share life with them. It was a gesture of intimacy. It helped create a bond of unity between strangers in a way no other physical act could replicate" (p29).
- "Discipleship happens around a table... As the Bread of Life, Jesus knew that inviting someone to the table was never just about eating" (p30).
- The conversation around a dinner table allows for sharing sorrows and celebrations (p37).
- Hospitality is an act of worship (p38).
- Danish table elements include candles, intimacy, potluck menus, rustic recipes and sippable drinks (p32-33).

Hospitality can feel scary or unmanageable for many reasons:

- "What if they say no?" (p39).
- "My house is too small" (p40).
- "Hospitality requires too much work" (p42).

Some of these fears can be alleviated by remembering our goal is to serve, not impress or entertain.

4

Q. "Hygge recognizes our basic need to feel connected... Hygge therefore encourages deliberate relationships" (p60). What did you learn from Holy Hygge about relationships? What will you do to foster deeper connections?

TALKING POINTS

"But while relationship with Christ is the most important antidote for both social and emotional poverty, it's not the entirety of God's plan for curing what ails us. He calls humanity into fellowship Him, but also others" (p63);

- "A *hyggelig* relationship is one in which participants feel equally valued and that their voice matters and will be heard" (p61).
- God sets the lonely in families – Psalm 68:6
- "The cure for loneliness isn't more relationships but deeper ones" (p65).

"Our social connections should fall into three categories: encouragement, discipleship, and evangelism. Any other relational investment will be a misuse of the love He so generously entrusted to us when He said, 'By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another' (John 13:35)." (p65).

Learning to relate to others better means learning to listen well and to use good questions (open-ended to encourage discussion).

5

Q. "Jesus cared enough to take care of Himself in order that He could care for others" (p87). How does *hygge* self-care and group care, differ from toxic worldly self-care? Why is this distinction important?

TALKING POINTS

Popular and toxic self-care mottos such as 'You deserve it!' and 'You're enough!', often focus on indulgence and self. This kind of self-care ignores the impact it might have on others or dismisses sin and unhealthy habits because 'we're awesome just the way we are'. There's nothing inherently sinful about taking a bubble bath, watching a movie or getting a massage, but when these things take God's place in providing rest for our souls, they've become an idol. Ultimately, no matter how encouraging it is to hear "You're enough!" or "You're perfect just the way you are!", it's not the truth; Jesus had to die to fix our imperfection, and it's only through the blood of Christ and His "enoughness" that we'll see the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Self-care is understanding the physical, spiritual, emotional and mental abilities your life demands and creating enough room in your life to keep up. It's creating balance in all four of those areas in order that one doesn't overtake or drown out the rest." (p90). This type of self-care is focused on worship and obedience right where we are and keeping ourselves ready to serve God and others.

6

Q. "The life of Christ shows us that a home should provide an atmosphere where heavy-hearted people can unleash their burdens, find refuge, and be fully fueled and supported" (p113). Discuss how form and function are essential to creating a life-giving atmosphere.

TALKING POINTS

Form and function ("they were to make spaces that were purposeful and pretty" p108) are both equally important:

- "For Creator God, the bare minimum was not the goal of His creativity. But then again, neither was beauty alone. He knew the first home would need both form and function" (p107).

- "An atmosphere cannot just be "pretty", you need the presence of Jesus to make it life-giving, and it needs to have a purpose.
- Beauty was God's idea; our beautiful spaces can and should point others toward Him.
- Beauty is not about the latest trends, perfectly spotless display homes or entertaining, but true beauty in a home is simpler spaces designed to be welcoming and comfortable and a place for others to feel truly at home.

7

Q. "Often called their language of consolation, *hygge* helps them carry grief and joy at the same time, while not being overcome by either" (p132). What has *Holy Hygge* taught you about comfort?

TALKING POINTS

"*Hygge* is comfort in moderation. It is a rational voice that declares, 'If you choose not to find joy in the snow, you will have less joy in your life but still have the same amount of snow'" (p132);

- Predictability is important. There is "safety and pleasure in knowing what was, what is and what will be" (p132)—traditions, keepsakes, habits, rhythms, and routines all help.
- *Hygge Liturgies* for comfort include; Prayer, Praise, Forgiveness, Sharing and Providing.
- *Something to ponder*: "How can we provide comfort when we might be sitting in the discomfort of a winter season ourselves?" (p135).

"As He comforts you, comfort others. In doing so, you'll be declaring to the world that sanctuary is possible. Hurt will not win" (p145).

8

Q. Do you struggle with feeling content? How did the *Contentment* chapter help you see your life or circumstances differently?

TALKING POINTS

Humans have been feeling discontent since Eve questioned whether God was good enough in the Garden;

- Discontentment is a weapon satan wields over humanity.
- Jesus tackled satan's ploys of stirring discontentment within Him by remembering *whose* He was (p151).
- The wilderness can be a place of preparation (p151).
- "True contentment is deeply connected to rootedness – to know who and whose you are" (p153).
- Living a slower life allows us to live more gratefully and not take the sweet things in life for granted. This naturally cultivates more contentment (p153).
- "That longing for something better or best is a remnant of Eden – a chronic case of heart-burn that's been plaguing humanity since that first forbidden bite" (p155).
- Envy is a thief of contentment (p155).
- Feelings can't always be trusted (p162).
- "At the end of the day, you can only control two things: what you give to the world and your attitude about what the rest of the world has given you" (p163).

9

Q. *Hygge* is a secular Sabbath in a world craving rest. Discuss.

TALKING POINTS

"Our physical and mental busyness has spiritual repercussions. We're asphyxiating our souls" (p175):

- "We are rest-avoidant because, at some point, some well-meaning someone had us all believing that the central aim of our lives is to be useful to God, but it's not. We're meant to glorify God. That's our purpose. The end" (p176).
- We can feel as though the outcome of our kingdom work is up to us, but it's freeing and brings rest to know it's up to God (p177).
- "We can't have an open door all the time. Learning when to close it to the outside world to provide restoration for those inside is just as important for kingdom work as learning when and how to open the door" (p177).
- "Sabbath rest is a tithe of time allowing you to release the burden of a completed to-do list to God and receive the gift of His favor for your obedience" (p187).
- "True rest implies worship and restoration, savoring the presence of the Lord. But rest is not limited to prayer and praise. It involves relaxation too. Rest is not leisure or entertainment. Instead, restful activities should fill in all the desolate places of your mind, body and emotions. They should refuel and repair your soul" (p184).
- "Be careful not to allow your desire to rest warp into a demand for it" (p197).

10

Q. "Regardless of its imperfections, would your home reflect the One who can draw the shepherds [the lowly ordinary people] of the world?" (p197).

TALKING POINTS

"While I wait for that someday place [heaven], I'm here in this one, faithfully prioritizing the people who call this house their own and opening the doors wide and to invite more in." (p198).

If our homes do not reflect Jesus, come up with some practical suggestions to help make our houses, *Hygge* homes. You can refer to Jamie's Appendix *Hyggelige Activities for Gathering People and Growing the Gospel* on page 203.



Disclaimer: Thanks for supporting this ministry! We pray that our Heavenly Father blesses both you and the women you lead. This Leader's Guide has been prepared by Blossoming through Books and is protected by copyright law. Please seek express permission from Blossoming through Books before making copies by contacting blossomingthroughbooks@gmail.com. Please share your experience and feedback with us!