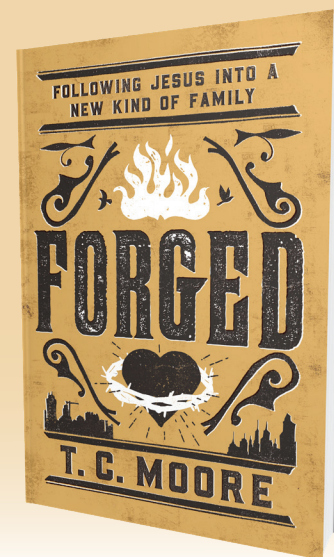


## *Forged: Following Jesus into a New Kind of Family*

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

by T.C. Moore



### CHAPTER 1: BLOWING UP THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

1. *Forged* begins with Moore's experience of fractured family. How does your own experience of family relate or not?
2. Moore argues that the concept of the "nuclear family" was short-lived and uncommon despite its popular appeal. How might the nuclear family have contributed to isolation and inequality?
3. In Mark 3, Jesus asks, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" How does Jesus challenge the concept of the "nuclear family"?
4. As Dr. Ada María Isasi-Díaz contends, why might "kin-dom" be a better application of Jesus's core teachings than "kingdom"?

### CHAPTER 2: BLOOD IN. BLOOD OUT

1. Why would Moore and countless other youth submit themselves to the violent ritual of initiation and join street gangs?
2. In the story of Jesus's "transfiguration" (Luke 9), Peter misses the point of the miracle by thinking instead about building a chapel. How does this relate to the difference between the Jesus Way and institutional churches?
3. What are some of the "red flags" of toxic institutional cultures?
4. Moore uses the example of the Disney movie *Encanto* to describe toxic family dynamics. What does the concept of "differentiation" have to do with being part of a family?

### CHAPTER 3: SETTING THE LONELY IN FAMILIES

1. Moore describes the miraculous way he was rescued from gang life through the story of his spontaneous baptism. What does baptism have to do with being welcomed into a new kind of family?
2. What's the significance of Jesus referring to God as "Abba"?
3. Early in his life, Moore was mentored by an important mentor-figure named Terry. Who are some of the important mentor-figures who have shaped your life?
4. On his way to the cross, Jesus entrusted his own mother to the care of a beloved disciple. What does this teach us about Jesus and our own callings as his disciples?

## CHAPTER 4: SHARING OUR LIVES

1. Why can't we just give people a manual on how to live out the Jesus Way?
2. A study of Syrian refugee children published in 2017 defies Western assumptions about resilience by suggesting that it is not an individualistic trait but the product of community care. What are some of the ways you've experienced resilience in your life?
3. Mark 3 says Jesus chose his disciples to be *with* him. What does it look like for us to be *with* Jesus today?
4. Moore saw himself as a link in a chain of people who have been transformed by Jesus through someone sharing their life with another person. What would it look like for you to share your life with someone else?

## CHAPTER 5: TRANSFORMING CONFLICT

1. Moore says not all conflict forges family. Some is traumatizing. What's the difference between conflict that is like "iron sharpening iron" and abuse?
2. In Matthew 18, Jesus gives his disciples a framework for working through conflict in community. What has been your experience of working through conflict with spiritual siblings?
3. What is the "porto-church," and why is it significant?
4. If all our efforts to restore relationship fail, Jesus instructs his disciples to treat others like "gentiles and tax collectors." How do we know Jesus isn't contradicting all his teachings about inclusive love?

## CHAPTER 6: SWIMMING LESSONS

1. David Foster Wallace, the talented novelist, gave a famous commencement address called "This Is Water." What does this have to do with culture?
2. Why is it particularly important for White Americans to understand the racialized "water" we swim in?
3. What is the relationship between ethnicity and race?
4. How does the concept of "cultural hybridity" help us to forge family in the Way of Jesus?
5. Moore contends that in Jesus, God became a particular human being: Jesus of Nazareth. What does Jesus's particularity teach us about ourselves and God?

## CHAPTER 7: IN THIS FAMILY, WE . . .

1. Chapter 7 begins with Moore's experience of evacuating New Orleans because of Hurricane Katrina. Through that crisis, forged family showed up for him and his biological family. How have you experienced support from non-biological family in times of crisis?
2. Moore and his biological family developed traditions in Boston that shaped and molded them. What are some of your family traditions?
3. Why are "rhythms" important for forging family?
4. Jesus gave his disciples a prayer to pray called the "Our Father" prayer. In what ways does this prayer form us as his disciples?

## CHAPTER 8: GIVING SPECIAL HONOR

1. A prayer vigil led by queer siblings in Christ challenged Moore to go “back to the scriptures with a Jesus-shaped ethical lens.” What does he mean by this?
2. In Matthew 19, Jesus identifies with eunuchs, who were sexual minorities and socially marginalized. What does this teach us about who is “fit for the kin(g)dom”?
3. According to Moore, what are the main differences between an *X-Men* kind of community and a *Guardians of the Galaxy* kind of community?
4. According to the apostle Paul, why do some members of Christ’s body receive “special honor”?
5. What does it mean to “leverage privilege”?

## CHAPTER 9: REDEEMING GRACE

1. How has Western culture contributed to our misunderstanding of “grace”?
2. What are the differences between a Santa Claus picture of grace and the picture of grace in the New Testament?
3. Jesus said he was establishing a “new covenant.” What does covenant have to do with grace?
4. Why was reciprocity important to the apostle Paul?
5. When were you given a gift that changed how you thought about yourself?

## CHAPTER 10: COMMUNITY OF MISFITS

1. In what context(s) have you felt like a misfit?
2. Why is it significant that Jesus didn’t choose the “best and brightest” to be his disciples?
3. How does the saying popularized by Moravians—“In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love”—make room for diversity?
4. Jesus told many parables, but in what way is the “parable of the dinner party” unlike all the others?
5. What would it look like in your life to make more room at your table for others?

## CHAPTER 11: LOVE IN PUBLIC

1. Moore describes the murder of George Floyd as a turning point for him away from neutrality. How can neutrality become sinful?
2. What is “bothsidesing,” and how does it obstruct the love of Jesus?
3. How does our social location affect our perspective of political engagement?
4. Jesus staged a public protest in the Jerusalem temple (Mark 11). Why do you think protest makes many Christians in America afraid and angry?
5. What would it look like for you and your community to be a “prophetic witness”?