

God's Story

Study Guide

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How to use this guide.

This study guide is intended to assist you in engaging with God's Word and connecting the weekly sermon with your everyday life. We believe that discipleship happens in many ways throughout out life and this guide is designed to assist you in connecting with others around God's Word in each of those ways. Of course, you may feel free to use as much or as little as you like of this guide. Our intention was to include as much as possible to help connect with the discipling environments that we experience throughout our week.



Summary

The summary section is a snapshot of the passage in a few sentences. It is intended to give you a quick overview to get you mind set on what you are about to read.



God's Big Story

The God's big story section provides a context for the passage in the biblical story. It is intended to give you a connection point to where the passage fits into the rest of the Bible.



Sermon Thoughts

The section for sermon thoughts is provided so that you can record your notes from the sermon or write down your thoughts and questions about what you heard.



Read and Reflect

The read and reflect section is where we begin to study the Bible for ourselves. It is intended to guide you through observations about the text and an interpretation of its meaning.



Apply to Your Life

This section is intended to guide us in allaying the meaning of the passage in our everyday lives. It is a time to think about how the Bible goes with us to work, home or school.



Quiet Time

The quiet time section is a time of prayer and conversation with God around what the passage is saying to us in our lives. This is a time to unplug and have some quiet reflection.



Getting to the Gospel

This section helps us see how the passage connects us to the Gospel. It is a brief statement to give us a point in the Gospel Story to connect to.



Further Reading

This section gives other passages to follow up on or other tools that we could reference to assist us in getting more out of our study.



Discipling Relationship

The discipling relationship section is intended to guide us in connecting with two others that are committed to pursue obedience to the Scriptures. The questions are open-ended and static.

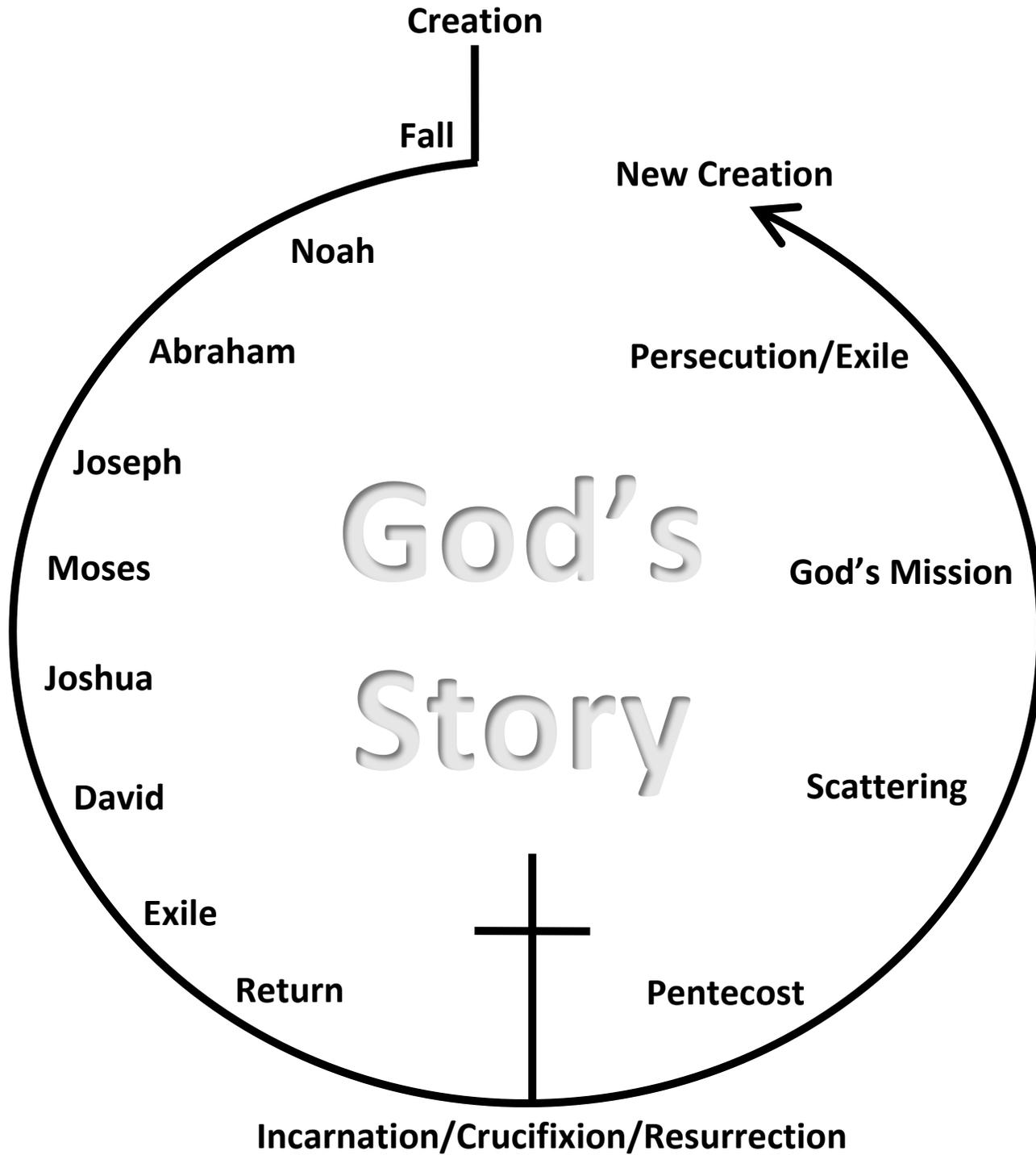


Gather and Discuss

The gather and discuss section is intended to guide Life Groups through a discussion of the passage. This is intended to bring together around 10-12 other people in considering the implications of the passage.

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Read and Reflect

Read Genesis 1:1-27

In these verses we see God speaking the expanses of the universe and the details of the earth into being. As God displays his power to create something from nothing he also displays his goodness toward his creation. God creates good things because God is a good God.

Write down the verses that you see God declaring his creation as “good.”

Is there a part of his creation that he does not declare as “good?”

Why do you think that it is important to know that God is good?

Read Genesis 1:28-2:17

In these verses we see God giving mankind dominion over the creatures of the earth. We also see God giving mankind a land to live in and be responsible for its well-being. Finally, we see God commissioning Adam and Eve to fill the earth by multiplying.

How does mankind display dominion over the creatures of the earth?

In calling mankind to multiply and fill the earth, how are they being encouraged to be a reflection of God?

Why does God have the right to give land to mankind?

Read Genesis 2:18-25

God has declared all of his creation as good except when he looks at Adam and sees that he is alone. God is not only the creator of elements and animals but he is also the creator of relationships. Community is God’s idea and it reflects his nature and goodness.

How does God respond to seeing Adam is alone?

What are the ways Eve is described in these verses?

How is God’s goodness displayed in his creating Adam and Eve for each other?

See also pages 49-54 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

How do we reflect or show God's goodness to the people around us? To those we have to reach for? To those in our lives that are hard to love?

How does your image look like God? How is it different?

What are you doing with what God has given you domain over or what He has trusted you with? Do you know your mission? What is one step that are you taking today?

Where does your story with God start? When did you know God was working in your life?

How is God known to you? How are you making him known to others?

How can you better respond to things that are not good and restore their goodness? How can you practice responding more like God?



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel begins with the goodness of God. Only a good God would be concerned for the sin of a wayward and rebellious people. All that God will do through his Gospel begins with the fact that he is good.



Further Reading

Psalm 8

Psalm 104

Job 38

John 1:1-3

Romans 8:18-30



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How has God been good to you?

What are some ways you enjoy God's design of the earth? of people? of relationships? of community?

What are some ways God's care is seen for each of His creations?

Why did God create everything? Why did God create people?

What makes people special among his creation?

What makes you a special creation of God?

What has creation taught you about God?

In what way, if any, does your image of God change when you think of Him as creator of the universe?

What is a time you've experienced God creating something in or through you? What happened?

What is the relationship between creation, Jesus, and God? What do these passages tell you about God's heart for people?



Read and Reflect

Read Genesis 3:1-5

In these verses the serpent is described as “crafty.” Eve, then Adam, interacts with this serpent and through deception and rebellion their hearts are spun away from the goodness of God and placed on their own desires.

The serpent was able to deceive Adam and Eve by creating doubt. Where do you see evidence of the doubt over God’s commands being created?

How does doubting the words of God effect their relationship with God?

What do Adam and Eve desire?

Read Genesis 3:6-24

Through doubt and deception we see Adam and Eve being led into disobedience of God’s commands. They immediately withdraw from God and begin to place blame on one another for what they have done.

Where was Adam when Eve was being deceived by the serpent?

How did their eyes being opened effect their relationship with one another?

How did their disobedience effect their relationship with God?

How is hope exposed in the cursing of the serpent? *Verse 3:15*

Read Genesis 4:1-16

The deception and rebellion of Adam and Eve did not stop with them but continued into the lives of their children. Here with Cain and Able we see the effects of sin take an even darker turn.

Why would Cain become angry at God’s favor of Able?

How does Cain’s response reflect his relationship with God?

What was Cain's punishment for the murder of his brother? How does this reflect the effect of sin in our lives?

See also pages 55-59 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

How would your lives change if the concerns of others and the will of God came before your own?

How does the Holy Spirit help you?

Why do you continue to sin?

Why did Adam and Eve give in to the serpent's temptation? What motivated them to disregard God's instructions?

What are some instances you've seen of those same motivations playing out in our world? And perhaps in your own life?



Quiet Time

Spend time in prayer this week using this as a guide.

Adoration: Spend time praising God for who he is and what he has done.

Confession: Tell God the wrong that you have and the sin you have committed. Ask for his mercy and forgiveness that only he can give.

Thanksgiving: Spend some time reflecting on all of the good things in your life and thanking God for giving them to you.

Supplication: Spend time asking God for his help on behalf of yourself and others.



Getting to the Gospel

Verse 3:15 is called “the first Gospel” because it declares God’s plan to destroy the effects of sin that has come through the deception of the serpent by the sending of one of the seed of Adam and Eve.



Further Reading

Psalm 139

Jeremiah 23:23-32

Romans 1:18-2:11



Gather and Discuss

What is sin? What does it mean to sin? Who does sin hurt? Why do we sin?

Why does sin separate us from God?

What is God’s plan to fix what sin broke?

How can we be saved? How were you saved?

What is true repentance?

What gives us the ability to say no to sin?

What have you learned about people and relationships?

How did Adam and Eve's relationship take a hit as a result of their sin?

In what ways have you seen or experienced relationships broken as a result of disobeying God? What happened?

What helps you obey God? Especially when you're facing temptation, what's helpful in resisting it?

What are the costs and benefits of confessing our sin?

How can you make confession a regular practice to keep your relationship with God open and honest?



Read and Reflect

Read Genesis 6:1-8

In these verses, the spread of humanity is displayed. But as humanity spread so did corruption and wickedness. God makes a declaration that he regretted making mankind. However, there is a glimmer of hope.

Why did God regret making mankind?

What was God going to do in response to mankind's wickedness?

What is hopeful about Noah?

Read Genesis 6:9-8:19

Noah is obedient to God's call and God's mission on the earth. No longer is God creating by himself but he is calling mankind to join him in his work. Noah follows God's instructions and provides a means of salvation.

How is Noah described? Why is this significant considering what we have read so far?

What was Noah's continued response to God's commands? *See 6:22; 7:5, 16*

How does Noah's behavior toward God compare to the behavior of the dove?

Read Genesis 8:20-9:17

God's response to Noah's obedience is to make a covenant with him on behalf of all mankind. God makes a promise and gives a sign of that promise stating that he will honor the covenant because of the faithfulness of Noah.

What was Noah's first act after leaving the ark?

How does God respond to Noah's actions?

What was the covenant God makes with Noah? What is the sign? What will the sign do?

Can you find the theme of dominion, seed and land in these verses?

See also pages 61-69 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

What can I do in my surrounding world to keep it from getting that dark again?

What does God's covenant mean to my daily life?

How do God's promises affect my daily decisions?

Would you be able to display the same level of obedience that Noah did?

What does obedience to God look like in my life?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

God will not look upon wickedness and corruption without a response. However, God's response is not destruction but salvation. God will make a way for the faithful to be saved. The question is, will we accept God's way of salvation?



Further Reading

Psalm 14

Isaiah 54

Romans 3:9-30

1 Peter 3:18-22



Gather and Discuss

Why does God hate sin?

What things have you seen sin destroy?

How is our world today similar to that of Noah?

How is our world today different to that of Noah?

How did God's covenant with mankind change our world?

How can we live more obedient to God and honor Him more at the same time?

How can we share what we learned from Noah with those around us?



Read and Reflect

Read Genesis 12:1-14:24

Abram is called out of Ur by God and told that he will be made a great nation. God promises blessing and provision. Abram is obedient to God's call but remains nomadic and does not settle for very long in the land of God's promise.

What was God's promised blessings of Abram? (v. 12:2-3)

What did Abram do when he came to the land of Canaan? Why?

How does Abram respond to the Pharaoh in Egypt? What does this suggest about Abram's character?

How does Abram respond to Lot being taken? What does this suggest about Abram's character?

Read Genesis 15:1-17:27

God makes a covenant with Abraham to bless all nations through him. This covenant explains how God will bring the promised blessing of Abram into being. Abram attempts to take God's blessing into his own hands but God once again reminds Abram that the blessing of all nations will come from the LORD alone. God not only reminds Abram of the covenant but changes his name to Abraham and Sarai name to Sarah, they now carry a constant reminder of God's blessing.

What is God's promise to Abram when he makes the covenant? (v. 15:17-21)

What does Abram have to do to receive the promise?

Why does God need to remind Abram of the covenant in chapter 17? What is the sign of the covenant?

How do we see the theses of dominion, seed and land presented in this covenant?

Read Genesis 18:1-22:24

Abraham's life, especially his life with God, is marked by key choices. Abraham chooses to intercede on behalf of Sodom and rescues Lot. Abraham once again lies about his relationship with Sarah to a king. Abraham also faces the toughest choice of sacrificing his promised son, Isaac.

What was Sarah's response to the reminder of God's promise of a son? Why did she respond this way?

What was Abraham's response to God's intentions to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?

Why would Lot and his wife need to be told not to turn back toward Sodom? What does the response of his wife display about her?

After waiting so long for the son of promise, what does Abraham's response to God's test of sacrifice show? Where were Abraham's heart centered?

See also pages 81-88 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Is there someone in your life you want to intercede on behalf of? Explain.

Do you relate more to Abraham when he is doubting God or being faithful to God?

How can I be more obedient in my walk with God?

How can I be more faithful in my relationships with God and with others?

Is there something in your life that you need to sacrifice that you have been holding onto?



Quiet Time

Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Using the prayer of Jesus to the Father as a guide:

Pray to your Father. Thank him for all the good that you have seen him doing in your life. Recognize him as a loving Father that wants good for you, his child. (James 1:17)

Give praise to God. Recognize God's holiness and authority in your life. Read Psalm 111 as a prayer from the heart toward God.

Pray for God's Kingdom to be manifest here on earth. Pray for the poor, the sick, the oppressed, the unjust treatment of others and the persecuted church. (Matthew 6:33)

Pray for a reminder to rely on God's provision for you. Thank God for all of his good gifts and all of the blessings that he bestows upon your life. (Philippians 4:19)

Pray for forgiveness of sin. Confess your sins to your Father and ask that he would respond to you with grace, mercy and forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)

Pray for your relationships with those that have sinned against you. Ask your Father that he would mend the broken or hurting relationships in your life through love and forgiveness. (Matthew 18:15-20)

Pray for spiritual growth. Your Father does not want perfection, he wants transformation. Pray that you would seek your Father's good and perfect will for your life. (Ephesians 6:10-20)



Getting to the Gospel

God's promises are true and sure. Even through the most unlikely paths God will bring his promises to fruition. God would not hold back his son but would see his promise of salvation through sacrifice through to the end.



Further Reading

Psalm 105

Ezekiel 22

Hebrews 6:13-20

Galatians 4:21-31



Gather and Discuss

How is Abraham's sacrifice of his son foreshadowing of the cross?

Why is Abraham known for his faithfulness even though he has big moments of doubts?

What is the difference and similarities between faithfulness and obedience?

How can we remind ourselves of God's faithfulness and His promises?

What were the consequences of Abraham and Sarah's doubt?

Why do you think God still kept His promise even though Abraham and Sarah tried to take matters into their own hands?

Why do we continually try to do it all on our own and refrain from trusting God? What is the root? Need for control? Impatience?



Read and Reflect

Read Genesis 37:1-36

Jacob has practiced deception and disloyalty in pursuing the blessing of his father, Isaac. So, when Joseph (the younger son) appears to be the favorite of his father, Jacob, the brothers respond with brutality and deceit.

What do we know about Jacob's dealings toward the blessing? (Genesis 27)

How did Jacob (Israel) treat Joseph?

What was the difference between Jacob's (Israel's) response and the brothers'? What did they do as a result?

Read Genesis 39:1-41:57

Joseph is sold into slavery and ends up in Egypt. Joseph is betrayed by Potiphar's wife and sent to prison. Joseph catches the attention of the Pharaoh for interpreting dreams and is then placed into a position of power that will bring him face to face with his brothers.

How did Potiphar's wife treat Joseph? What was his response? What was the consequence?

How was Joseph able to interpret dreams?

How did Pharaoh learn of Joseph? What was his response?

How was Joseph's appointment by Pharaoh a positive effect on God's promise?

Read Genesis 42:1-50:26

Joseph rises to a position of power in Egypt as he is put in charge of storing food for the coming famine. The famine stretches to the land of Canaan and results in Joseph's brothers coming to Egypt for relief. Joseph has an opportunity to exact justice and return the harm dealt to him but chooses to forgive and responds with mercy and grace.

Why did Joseph's brothers come to Egypt?

What was Joseph's initial response?

How did Joseph end up treating his brothers?

What does Joseph's response reveal about his character?

See also pages 114-137 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Would you have been able to forgive like Joseph forgave his brothers?

When was the last time you had to forgive someone for something big?

Have you ever denied someone forgiveness? Why or why not?

Is there a time in my life I related to the brothers and mistreated someone and needed their forgiveness? What was their response?

Has God used something evil for good in your life? Explain.

Do I have any unforgiveness or bitterness or pride that I need to take to God today?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

God will see salvation come to his people that have been effected by sin and he will see his purpose through by his own hand through the faithfulness and even the unfaithfulness of his people.



Further Reading

Psalm 37

Proverbs 7



Gather and Discuss

Do you think that it is possible to forgive someone before they even apologize?

Why is it important to forgive? What are some ways it affects our daily lives?

What impact does forgiveness have on our lives long term?

Is forgiveness a one-time thing or does it take time? Are there degrees or levels of forgiveness?

How does our forgiveness influence the other person?

Where is pride displayed in the story in each of the characters?

How do we keep from getting bitter when evil is done to us by no means of our own?

How do we avoid getting in situations that could be used for evil against us? What boundaries need to be set up in our lives?

How does God's sovereignty (his knowledge and control) affect or relate to our forgiveness of others?

How do we apologize and make things right after we hurt someone?



Read and Reflect

Read Exodus 2:1-523

Moses is born into dangerous circumstances, yet, by the hand of God, is rescued. Moses finds himself in the wilderness running for his life for forty years when he is called by God to go on a mission. Moses reluctantly returns to the people but does not get the response he had hoped.

What does the birth account of Moses reveal about the Egyptian treatment of the Hebrews?

Why does Moses flee to the wilderness? How long is he there? What is he doing?

Why was Moses reluctant to the call of God? How does God respond to Moses self-doubt?

What was the response of the Hebrew people to Moses?

Read Exodus 6:1-12:51

Even though the people of God have rejected Moses, God will display his might to the people and to the Pharaoh. God will convince Pharaoh to release his people and he will use Moses to help the people see that it is God alone that will make their deliverance certain.

God gave Moses two missions. Who was he to talk to? What was he to say to each?

What did God do in response to Pharaoh's hard heart?

What were the people of God to do on the night of the last plague?

What was this night called? Were the people supposed to repeat this meal? For how long?

Read Exodus 13:1-20:21

Pharaoh finally relents and allows the people of God to go free. However, making the journey to the promised land will not be possible without constant guidance from the LORD. With the fickle hearted Pharaoh on their heels the people of God journey through the Red Sea split before them to a mountain where they will learn more than they have ever know about their God.

How did God guide his people from Egypt to the Red Sea?

What was the response of the people to Moses?

What happened to Pharaoh and his army at the Red Sea?

What did God give to his people at Mt. Sinai? How did he deliver it to them?

See also pages 146-177 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Describe a time that God rescued you.

Have you ever found yourself lost or without aim or direction? What happened? How did you get out?

Has God ever called you to something you were scared to do or felt unqualified for?

Why is it so easy to doubt God the first time he asks something of us?

How do our words about faith and trust in God show in our actions?



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

God will deliver his people. Just like he made a way out of Egypt, God has made a way for his people to be set free from sin by the sacrifice of the spotless lamb provided by God. The greater sacrifice, Jesus, covers all of those that will be found in him so that they may not die but have eternal life.



Further Reading

Deuteronomy 4:32-40

Leviticus 16

Psalm 77

Psalm 78

Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-23



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

Moses had a speaking problem, so God gave him a helper. Do you have a helper in an area of need? If so, who and what need do they help you with?

What would you do if you were faced with someone with a hard heart like Pharaoh?

Have you ever had to help guide someone else through something? How did you point them in the direction of God?

Is there something that you need to be led out of? What do you need to be delivered from?

What sort of real life situations does God provide a way out of?

How has God provided a way out for you or someone you know?

How does this story of Moses delivering people and providing a way out point to the Gospel and to the cross?



Read and Reflect

Read Joshua 1:1-2:24

As Israel prepares to enter the land it is not Moses but Joshua that is commissioned to lead them through their toughest test of faith. Joshua is a faithful follower of God but even he is going to be put to the test to remain strong and courageous.

What is Joshua called to remain focused on to keep him “strong and courageous?”

What does Joshua’s officers’ response in verses 1:16-18 say about his leadership and character?

How does the interaction between the two spies and Rahab display God’s involvement?

How does their report back to Joshua give strength and courage?

Read Joshua 3:1-6:27

The Nation of Israel enters the land by crossing the Jordan. Finally the feet of this new nation has entered the Promised Land. Israel takes time to remember all that the LORD has done in bringing them here before displaying faithful obedience to God’s commands.

How are the Nation able to cross the Jordan?

What did they do to remember God’s provision and guidance?

What was God’s instructions for conquering Jericho?

How did Joshua respond to Rahab? What does this say about his character?

Read Joshua 24:1-28

The army of Israel has successfully taken the Land of Promise. The LORD has shown himself mighty and faithful while Israel struggles to remain faithful to their God. Joshua leads the Nation as they respond to the LORD by renewing the covenant made by God with their fathers.

How does verses 1-13 recount the story of God?

What does verses 14-15 suggest will be a problem for this people?

What did Joshua do to remind the people of their choice to serve the LORD?

See also pages 389-431 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

What are some ways you ever feel like your faith is being tested over and over again? How do you handle that?

What has been your toughest test of faith? What happened?

How has God shown you in your life that He is mighty?

How has your faithfulness grown or changed since you first started following God?

Israel took time to reflect on what God had done for them. What has God done in your life?



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

Joshua reminds us that even in the face of amazing signs and wonders of God, as people we are prone to turn toward other forms of worship. The hearts of mankind are wicked and rebellious. If God is going to save his people, he will have to save them from themselves.



Further Reading

Psalm 135

Psalm 136

Numbers 13

Judges 1:27-2:15



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How do we remain faithful when the world around us is not?

What are some ways that we remind ourselves to be strong and courageous?

How involved is God in your day to day life?

Do you feel like he is more of a helicopter parent or does he exhibit a hands off attitude with you?

How do you respond to God's involvement in your life?

Does God provide even when we don't follow his instructions or just when we're obeying him?

Does our behavior change God? Why or why not?

Do we have to remain faithful for God to remain faithful?

How much of what God does for us is dependent on our own actions and intentions?



Read and Reflect

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

After the people demand a king from Samuel and unwisely choose Saul to lead them, God sends Samuel on a mission to find the king of his own choosing. Saul finds that God is less interested in the outward appearance and more interested in the heart of his king.

Why was Samuel sent to find a new king?

Who had chosen the new king? How?

What was Samuel focused on as he looked at the sons? What was God focused on?

What was David doing while his brothers were presented?

Read 1 Samuel 17:1-58

The first evidence comes to light as to why God chose David over Saul. There stands a giant of the Philistine army threatening God's people. Saul refuses to advance his army while David, as soon as he hears his taunts, goes to face him alone.

Why was Goliath such a threat to the people of Israel?

Why was David at the battle? What does this say about David's physical stature?

What was David's response to hearing the taunts of Goliath?

What did David put his trust in when facing the giant? What does this say about David's heart?

Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17

As king of Israel, David has become the most successful and wealthy in the region. But David's heart remains after God and he desires for God to have a house built that will display honor and worship. God responds to David's heart with a Covenant that will establish the throne a David forever.

What makes David want to build the ark of God a house?

How does God respond to David? What will God build?

How does God describe the relationship between him and David? What does this say about David?

How long will this Covenant last?

See also pages 517-555 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Have you wanted something that went against God's desire or plan for you? What happened?

Do you relate more to Saul or David in your relationship with God right now?

How has your relationship with God changed over time? How have you changed over time?

Have you done a heart check recently? What did you discover about your own heart's intentions?

Have you ever demanded something of God or from God? What happened?



Quiet Time

Spend time in prayer this week using this as a guide.

Adoration: Spend time praising God for who he is and what he has done.

Confession: Tell God the wrong that you have and the sin you have committed. Ask for his mercy and forgiveness that only he can give.

Thanksgiving: Spend some time reflecting on all of the good things in your life and thanking God for giving them to you.

Supplication: Spend time asking God for his help on behalf of yourself and others.



Getting to the Gospel

God establishes his kingdom on the earth and will see to it that his presence is known upon the earth as it is in heaven. God will send his own son to face down the giant of sin and death, slaying him on behalf of his people.



Further Reading

Psalm 1

Psalm 45

Psalm 146



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

What is free will? How do we have free will if God is all-knowing and all-powerful?

How do we align God's will and God's plan and God's desires with our own?

How do become more Christ-like in our acceptance of God's plans for us?

How does our heart change?

How do we have a heart like God?

Children often demand their parents do certain things for them, but God is the perfect parent. How does He respond differently or the same as our own parents?

We teach kids to say please and thank you. We teach them to make requests, not demands. How do we practice that with God? Do we practice that in our walk with God? Do we show God respect and appreciation?

Do we give God the full authority over our lives? Why or why not?

How can we increase in our giving God authority over our lives?



Read and Reflect

Read 2 Kings 17:6-41

The once united kingdom has been split into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. Israel is the kingdom to the North. The major enemy of Israel is Assyria. They have been in battle for many years. Because of the unfaithfulness of the people of Israel, the kingdom is weak and overwhelmed.

Why did Israel fall into the hands of Assyria?

Who is responsible for the conquering of Israel? (verse 17:20)

What happened to Samaria after the king was removed? (verses 17:24 and 41)

Read 2 Kings 24:10-25:21

After the Northern half of the kingdom fell to the Assyrians the LORD continues to warn the Southern kingdom. Sadly, the kings remain rebellious against God and the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, invades and captures the people of Judah. He carries them to Babylon where they will live as Babylonians.

How were the king's possessions and the temple possessions treated differently?

What does this suggest about the way the people of God will be treated in Babylon?

Why was Judah and Jerusalem being carried into exile? (verse 24:20)

What is a sign that hope may yet still remain for the people of God in Jerusalem? (verse 25:12)

Read Daniel 1:8-21 and Esther 4:1-17

Although the people of Judah have been carried into exile in Babylon, God continues to be at work among his people. He raises up servants to lead the people into faithfulness. He displayed his presence through signs and works. He still spoke through visions and dreams.

What caused the king of Babylon to choose Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

Why would the king change their names?

Although their names are now like Babylon, what do they refuse to do?

How does God respond to their faithfulness?

How is Esther's story similar? How is it different? (verses 4:11-16)

See also pages 857-858 & 1586-1587 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Have you ever experienced a dark time in your walk with God?

What was your brick wall with God?

What kept you focused on sin, what were your idols?

Where did you see God's grace?

How did you turn towards God instead?

Did someone step in and point you back to God?



Quiet Time

Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Using the prayer of Jesus to the Father as a guide:

Pray to your Father. Thank him for all the good that you have seen him doing in your life. Recognize him as a loving Father that wants good for you, his child. (James 1:17)

Give praise to God. Recognize God's holiness and authority in your life. Read Psalm 111 as a prayer from the heart toward God.

Pray for God's Kingdom to be manifest here on earth. Pray for the poor, the sick, the oppressed, the unjust treatment of others and the persecuted church. (Matthew 6:33)

Pray for a reminder to rely on God's provision for you. Thank God for all of his good gifts and all of the blessings that he bestows upon your life. (Philippians 4:19)

Pray for forgiveness of sin. Confess your sins to your Father and ask that he would respond to you with grace, mercy and forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)

Pray for your relationships with those that have sinned against you. Ask your Father that he would mend the broken or hurting relationships in your life through love and forgiveness. (Matthew 18:15-20)

Pray for spiritual growth. Your Father does not want perfection, he wants transformation. Pray that you would seek your Father's good and perfect will for your life. (Ephesians 6:10-20)



Getting to the Gospel

God goes with his people and even though they may suffer the consequences of sin, his promise through his Covenants are true and sure. God is a God of rescue, redemption and restoration.



Further Reading

Daniel 9:1-27

Psalm 106

Jeremiah 29

Amos 1:1-9:15



Discipling Relationship

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What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How does God's plan move forward even in the dark times? How is that possible? What does that mean for us?

When things fail, what is our first natural human response?

When things fail, what would Jesus' supernatural and perfect response be?

How can our reactions look more Christ like?

Why do we still rebel against God after all He has shown up and done for us?

Is it more disappointing to God when we sin while in relationship with him or while we're still lost in ignorance? Why or why not?

Is grace shown more to the lost sinner who doesn't know God or to us, who walk with Him? Why or why not?

Are the consequences more dire for the lost person or the child of God whose name is already written in the book of life? Why or why not?

Can Christians who are in relationship with God, still hit brick walls in their faith?

Can Christians ever get their name removed from the book of life? Can they ever sin so much that God changes his mind?



Read and Reflect

Read Ezra 1:1-11 & Nehemiah 1:1-2:8

God prepares the Promised Land once more for his people as he moves the heart of a king, a priest and a cupbearer to rebuild the city and re-inhabit the Land. God's hand is shown as preparations are made and God's heart is displayed as he is moved about the plight of his people.

Why did king Cyrus decide to rebuild Jerusalem?

What did he do in response? How does this show God's activity among his people in exile?

What caused Nehemiah to seek rebuilding in Jerusalem?

What does this show about God's heart for his people?

Read Ezra 3:8-13 & Nehemiah 3:1-32

The rebuilding begins on the temple and the city walls. Many people join together to recreate and make the city inhabitable for the people of God. This work is taking place in the midst of opposition and completion is against the clock. Finishing quickly could make the difference between life and death.

What is Ezra focused on rebuilding? What does this suggest about him and his priorities?

What is Nehemiah focused on rebuilding? What does this suggest about him and his priorities?

What does Nehemiah include in his account in addition to the work that was done?

Read Ezra 6:1-8:36 & Nehemiah 6:15-13:31

The work is completed and the people are secure. They can build houses and begin to worship the LORD in the temple once more. More people return from Babylon and the law of God is read and a covenant of renewal is made by the people of God.

What was brought back to the temple from Babylon? (Ezra 6:5) Why is this significant?

What is significant about the celebration of the Passover in Ezra 6:19-22? How does this connect with the celebration of the first Passover?

How long did it take to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem? Why was it important to finish quickly?

What was the response of the people that heard the law read in Nehemiah 8:9-12? What does this show about the people?

What is the focus of the covenant with the people in Nehemiah 10:28-39?

See also pages 799-847 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

When is a time you've seen God's hand displayed in your life or that He has made His heart known to you?

How does seeing God's heart for you and others motivate you to change your own heart?

Have you ever experienced a time of restoration or rebuilding in your own life? Explain.

Have you witnessed God restore, renew, or redeem in the life of someone you know?

How does experiencing it for yourself or witnessing it in the life of someone you love change your perspective on God's heart?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

God is the God of restoration, renewal and redemption for his people. What he has done with the temple and the city walls are a foreshadowing of what will be made available to every heart and every soul.



Further Reading

Haggai 1:1-2:23

Zechariah 12

Psalm 33



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

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What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

What does restoration, renewal, and redemption mean to us as Christians?

Can we restore or renew or redeem things on our own?

Why do we really need God to move in our lives?

What does it look like when we let God take control and surrender our need to do those things ourselves?

How does our life change when we live faithfully?

What daily choices can we make to live faithfully?

Does God really show His hand to us? Does He send signs of His plans to let us know what is coming or where to go in our daily lives?



Read and Reflect

Read Luke 1:5-25

God breaks his silence in the privacy of a personal conversation. He goes to Zechariah as he is preparing for worship and tells him that his wife, Elizabeth will have a son. John will be his name and he will prepare the way for the promised Messiah. Then Zechariah is made unable to speak. He cannot even share that God is no longer silent.

What was Zechariah doing when the angel appeared to him?

What was the angel's message to him?

What reason did Zechariah give for why this could not happen to him?

Why did Gabriel cause Zechariah to become mute?

Read Luke 1:26-33

While Elizabeth is still carrying John and Zechariah is still mute, Mary is visited by Gabriel. Mary is a virgin and she is still unmarried. Gabriel tells her that she will conceive a child without her husband and that he will be named Jesus.

Why is it significant that Joseph's connection to David is mentioned?

What do you find significant about Gabriel's greeting to Mary in verse 28?

How does Jesus fulfill the promise given to David in 2 Samuel 7:13-15?

Read Luke 1:34-56

Mary responds to the news of the coming of a son, given by God, by way of a miracle, in an incredible manner. She did not respond like Zechariah with doubt and second guessing but with a humble strength. Mary does not understand the reasoning but she has faith in the promise.

What was Mary's response to Gabriel?

How did Mary respond to the news of Elizabeth being revealed to her?

What does Mary's song in verses 46-55 say about where her heart is focused?

See also pages 1942-1947 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Is there a pivotal moment in your life where God showed up? Is there a point in your life where your life turned? Explain.

Have you experienced a time in your life where you followed God without knowing the reasoning? How did you handle that?

How does the birth of Jesus impact your daily life?

Describe a time in your life when you needed to be silent? What did you learn from it? Have you spent time dwelling with God? Explain.



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel is foretold throughout all of the Old Testament and now the prophecies make clear that it is so close we can see it. God is not just breaking the silence but he is coming. He will dwell with his people. Not in a tent but face to face.



Further Reading

2 Samuel 7:1-17

Isaiah 7:10-17

Psalm 83

Psalm 89



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How can we trust God without knowing His reasoning?

How can we build a relationship with God? How can we build trust with Him?

Why is it important to trust God when we don't know the reasoning?

Why is it important for us to be silent sometimes? How can silence be used or important?

How would you have reacted or responded differently than Mary and Joseph? or Elizabeth and Zechariah?

How can we spend more time dwelling with God?

How do the prophecies and promises of God impact us today? How do they point us to the cross?

Why is it important that Jesus came as a baby and grew up on earth as a man?



Read and Reflect

Read John 1:1-5

The Word was in the beginning. The Story of God was all about Jesus. The Word that is God made all things. This Word was at creation calling into existence the form of the earth and the creatures that call it home.

How is the Jesus (the Word) described in John 1:1?

How is the activity of the Jesus described in verses 2 and 3?

Is the inclusion of the Jesus in the creation of the world surprising to you?

What makes the Jesus different from Adam (mankind) according to verse 5?

Read John 1:6-13

The Word has a witness in John. He has been sent by God to proclaim the truth of the Word and prepare the way for him to come. The coming of Jesus has implications for everyone. Some will reject and some will receive. But everyone will respond.

What was John's reason for being sent by God?

How does the world respond to the one that made it in verse 10?

What happens to those that do receive Jesus and believe in him?

Read John 1:14-18

God takes on flesh and walks among us. Jesus struggles with the sin corrupted world alongside us and he prepares a path for us to overcome the sin of this world through him. It is grace that he has come and grace that he will provide as a way of salvation. We can see the God that has never been seen.

What are some ways Jesus is described in verse 14? Why are these significant?

How does verse 17 show us the connection with the Story of God?

What is the purpose of the coming of Jesus in verse 18? Why is this significant?

See also pages 2019-2020 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Have you had a moment where you felt face to face with God? Explain.

What do you know about the fullness of God?

How has God displayed himself in your life?

What are some ways that the story of God connects to your life?

How have you prepared a path for Jesus in your own home? How?



Quiet Time

Spend time in prayer this week using this as a guide.

Adoration: Spend time praising God for who he is and what he has done.

Confession: Tell God the wrong that you have and the sin you have committed. Ask for his mercy and forgiveness that only he can give.

Thanksgiving: Spend some time reflecting on all of the good things in your life and thanking God for giving them to you.

Supplication: Spend time asking God for his help on behalf of yourself and others.



Getting to the Gospel

Jesus is the Gospel. He has come so that we might know the love of the Father for all of humanity and call those that would follow him to himself. In Christ, God will make known the way of salvation, the door that all may enter into his presence and the good shepherd that leads and guides his people.



Further Reading

Philippians 2:1-11

Colossians 1:15-23

Isaiah 49:8-26

Psalms 43



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

Where and when do you feel most “face to face” with God? Explain.

What are some ways that we can get to know God more fully?

How can we open ourselves to see God displayed in our lives?

What are some ways we can spend more time in the Word? Do we spend enough time in the Word? How much time do you feel is enough? What would help you spend more?

Why is Jesus called the second Adam? Why is that important? What does that mean to us?

How can we prepare the way for Jesus to return?

Do you tell people about Jesus? How do people respond when you talk to them about Jesus?

Why did God take on flesh? Why send Jesus as a human?



Read and Reflect

Read Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus shows us what a life that is blessed by God looks like. He points us to a life of humility, hunger for righteousness, and heart that is pure as the marks of one that is born of the Kingdom. This loving King shows us what his Kingdom is truly like and calls us to turn from all other kingdoms to embrace it.

What are some of the qualities that Jesus says will lead to the Kingdom of Heaven?

Why would these be surprising for the religious people listening to Jesus?

Do you think that the qualities given by Jesus contrast with our ideas of being blessed? Why or why not?

Where does Jesus teach that blessing ultimately exists?

Read Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus does not end with describing the character of those that will enter the Kingdom. He also describes the behavior of those within the Kingdom. Those that inhabit the Kingdom of Heaven but still dwell on earth are to be distinct and revealing.

How does Jesus use salt to describe the behavior of those indwelling the Kingdom?

How does Jesus use light to describe the behavior of those indwelling the Kingdom?

What does being salt and light in this world reveal about the character and nature of God?

Read Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus describes the most noticeable attribute about himself, his love for those that do not love him. He does not simply allow for people to admire this quality of his character but also calls those that are drawn to follow him to do the same.

Where in the Bible is Jesus referring to when he says “love your neighbor and hate your enemy?” (see note from *ESV study Bible pg. 1830*)

What reason does Jesus give for loving your enemy?

What does Jesus state will make the people that follow him apart from the world?

See also pages 1827-1831 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

How has God moved into your neighborhood? Where are some places that you see Him in your life?

How are you working to be more like Christ? What does obedience look like every day?

How has God provided for you? What specifically is he doing in your life?

What has he done in the lives of those around you? How does that impact you?

Is there something in your life you need to let go of in order to embrace God's Kingdom?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel makes a real difference in the lives of real people. The way we live everyday should change because of the Gospel in our lives. The Gospel is not just the good news that has come to us but it is also the good news that we are to take to others.



Further Reading

Isaiah 61

Luke 6:20-49

Leviticus 19:9-18

Psalm 24



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

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What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

What does God's heart look like?

Is it possible to have a heart like God? What can we do?

What does it mean to have obedience in love? How can we do that every day?

What does life with God look like? How can we invite Him into more of our daily lives?

If God wants to bless, why do we still go through struggles? What is the point of pain?

How hard is it to love people that do not love us? How can we show them love?

What is the Gospel showing us right now?

How can we take the Gospel to others?



Read and Reflect

Read Mark 14:32-50

The disciples have gathered around Jesus following the Passover meal for prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. What begins with a struggle to pray turns to the outright betrayal of Jesus by one that followed him from the beginning of his ministry; one of his disciples.

Who does Jesus take with him into the Garden? Why is this significant?

How would you compare the behavior of Jesus in the Garden to that of Peter, James and John?

How many times does Jesus return to his disciples?

How does the signal of Judas deepen his betrayal of Jesus? What does Jesus' response tell us about Jesus?

Read Mark 14:53-15:15

Jesus is taken to the chief priests and elders for trial before being handed over to Pilate, the governor of Jerusalem. The priests put on a farce of a trial that allows no witnesses on the behalf of Jesus and is done in the shadows of the night (an illegal trial). Pilate finds no guilt but because of social pressure hands Jesus over to be crucified.

What testimony did the Chief Priests find against Jesus?

Why was the testimony given not legitimate? Why is this significant?

What does the answer by Jesus given to the High Priests reveal about him?

What does Pilate ask the crowd? What do the choices of the crowd and Pilate reveal about this trial?

Read Mark 15:16-41

Jesus is handed over to the soldiers to be beaten and taken to the place of crucifixion. The treatment of Jesus was mockery and brutality. Only one man displayed mercy in carrying the cross of Christ. Jesus, the Son of God, is hung on a cross in shame and curse between two robbers as the people of God look on satisfied as Jesus breathes his last breath.

How was Jesus treated by the soldiers that took him from Pilate?

What did the inscription on the cross say? Why is this significant?

What did those passing by and the Chief Priests say about Jesus? Why is this significant?

What did the Centurion say about Jesus at his death? Why is this significant?

See also pages 1928-1932 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Have you experienced a time when you were too blinded to see God working in front of you? Explain.

Was there a time in your life where you doubted God's plan? Explain.

How does the story of Jesus' death impact your life today?



Quiet Time

Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Using the prayer of Jesus to the Father as a guide:

Pray to your Father. Thank him for all the good that you have seen him doing in your life. Recognize him as a loving Father that wants good for you, his child. (James 1:17)

Give praise to God. Recognize God's holiness and authority in your life. Read Psalm 111 as a prayer from the heart toward God.

Pray for God's Kingdom to be manifest here on earth. Pray for the poor, the sick, the oppressed, the unjust treatment of others and the persecuted church. (Matthew 6:33)

Pray for a reminder to rely on God's provision for you. Thank God for all of his good gifts and all of the blessings that he bestows upon your life. (Philippians 4:19)

Pray for forgiveness of sin. Confess your sins to your Father and ask that he would respond to you with grace, mercy and forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)

Pray for your relationships with those that have sinned against you. Ask your Father that he would mend the broken or hurting relationships in your life through love and forgiveness. (Matthew 18:15-20)

Pray for spiritual growth. Your Father does not want perfection, he wants transformation. Pray that you would seek your Father's good and perfect will for your life. (Ephesians 6:10-20)



Getting to the Gospel

In order for the curse to be removed from mankind, it must be carried by one who can redeem mankind. Not just one man, but all of mankind. On the cross, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took on himself the curse of sin that plagues all of mankind that he might remove the curse and give to those that would receive it righteousness belonging only to him.



Further Reading

Luke 22:35-49
Matthew 26:1-27:56
Psalm 42
Psalm 88
Isaiah 50



Discipling Relationship

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What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

Why does history repeat itself?

Why do we return hate when God gives us love?

What is the point of having a sinful nature? Why give us free will when we chose wrongly?

How does this relate to the Gospel? to the cross?

Why did the disciples fall asleep in the garden? How do we do the same thing?

Why did Judas choose a kiss to signal who Jesus was?

Why did Pilate say he was washing his hands of this? Is Pilate to blame for his part?

Why did the cross have to happen? What is the point of the death of Jesus?



Read and Reflect

Read Luke 24:1-49

On a road to Emmaus, Jesus walks beside two of his followers that are confused and sad. Jesus encourages them to have faith in God's plan revealed in the scriptures before having a meal and revealing himself to them. In this time talking with Jesus their hearts burned and they went to inform the rest of Jesus' followers.

How does the angel's question to his followers in verse 5 reveal the mission of Jesus?

How do the apostles respond? What does this reveal about them?

Why do the disciples not recognize Jesus? What does this reveal about him?

What causes the disciples to recognize Jesus? What does this reveal about Jesus and his relationship with his disciples?

Read John 20:1-21:25

Mary of Magdalene is the focus of John's account of the resurrection. She discovers the empty tomb and is the first to see the resurrected Jesus. Peter and John have a race to discover the testimony of Mary was correct. Jesus appears to the other disciples and strengthens their hearts and faith.

What does it say that Jesus first appears to a woman and that she is the first witness? What does it say that the apostles believed her?

How does Mary respond to Jesus outside of the tomb? How does Jesus respond to Mary?

How does Thomas respond to Jesus? What is the source of his doubt?

What does the conversation between Peter and Jesus reveal about the mission of Jesus?

Read Matthew 28:1-20

The empty tomb is discovered by both Mary's and the disciples are informed by them. Jesus has an unlikely witness to his resurrection in the soldiers that guarded him. Jesus commissions his disciples to take up the mission that he prepared them for and to become fishers of men.

What does the angel tell the two Mary's? What does their response in verse 8 reveal about them?

What does the report of the guards to the chief priests reveal about their hearts?

What are the key commands in the great commission in verses 18-20?

What does it reveal about the Gospel of Mathew that these are the final words?

See also pages 1888, 2012-2014, & 2068-2072 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

What does the cross mean in your life?

How does the cross motivate you to spread the Gospel?

When was the last time your heart burned to tell people about Jesus?

What would be revealed about your own heart if you were present for the resurrection?

How do you respond to the resurrection now?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel is not complete until the Gospel can be received. The resurrection of Jesus displays God's power over sin and death. It also allows those that will to receive the reality of the Gospel by grace through faith. Jesus has overcome sin and death and he calls everyone that will to come to him and receive rest for eternity. He also sends those that have received this gift by grace on a mission to spread the good news to all who have ears to hear.



Further Reading

Psalm 2

Daniel 7

Hebrews 1

Jeremiah 23:1-8



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

What verse or phrase stands out to you?

What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How does God strengthen our hearts and faith?

How do we tell others about Jesus? What does that conversation look like?

What specific and actual steps can we take to obey the great commission?

God has power over sin and death, what does that mean for our daily lives?

How did God invite us specifically into his mission?

How can we celebrate the cross today?

How does God reveal himself to us now? Where do we find him in our daily lives?



Read and Reflect

Read Acts 2:1-4

The apostles and many of the disciples of Jesus gather in an upper room and wait for the promised Spirit to come. The room is filled as they pray and fire falls. They begin to speak in strange tongues as the fire rests on them.

How is the coming of the Holy Spirit described?

What did the fire look like? How does this relate to the speech of the disciples?

How does this passage point to the unity of the people gathered?

Read Acts 2:5-13

As Jews from all over the world come together at the festival of Pentecost they witness the miraculous move of the Spirit of God. The Jewish people heard these Galileans speaking in a language that was understood by everyone. The picture of unity across all tribes and nations produces faith in some and doubt in others.

What did the visiting Jews hear from the disciples?

What was their response?

Did all respond favorably? How did some respond?

Read Acts 2:14-41

Peter stands in the midst of this Jewish crowd and begins to recount the life and work of Jesus. He boldly calls the Jewish listeners to faith at risk of his own well-being. The response of the crowds is somewhat surprising as thousands turn in faith to Christ upon hearing the Gospel preached by the fledgling church.

What was Peter's response to the claim that the disciples were drunk?

How did Peter use David's words to call people to faith in Jesus?

How did the message from David and the Prophets effect the crowd in verse 37?

What are the main elements of the Gospel preached by Peter in verses 38-40?

See also pages 2082-2085 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

What God stories have you shared with others recently?

Describe a time you experienced a moment where you felt the Holy Spirit talking through you.

What holds you back from sharing the Gospel with others?

How can you overcome what holds you back so you can better further the Gospel mission?

We are all called to be evangelists and share the Gospel, in what ways do you need to ask for help to share the Gospel?



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel moves to those that the Gospel was intended to reach, the entire world. At Pentecost God reverses the curse of Babel and begins to unite all nations as one people with one language. A people are commissioned and obey the call to proclaim the message of the Gospel to all nations.



Further Reading

Genesis 11

Joel 2

Psalm 16

Psalm 110



Discipling Relationship

This week, join with one other person and walk through the following together. This is not intended for a group but rather two or three people seeking accountability and growth.

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What are some things that you observe about the verse or phrase?

What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How can we gather, pray, learn and share with one another right now?

What would a picture of unity in the church look like today?

How could unity be accomplished today? What is something you can do today to help bring more unity?

How can we recount the life and work of Jesus with others in our daily lives?

What are some examples that did not turn out to be effective when sharing the Gospel?

What could have been done differently to help the situation or the person?

What is something good that can be taken from that situation?

What are some examples of sharing the Gospel that turned out great?

How can we learn from that experience to keep sharing?



Read and Reflect

Read Acts 6:8-15, 8:1-3

We meet two men that will be connected throughout the story of God. Stephen is a man full of the Holy Spirit that is a preacher and teacher in the newly formed church. Saul is a Jewish priest that stands by as Stephen is killed and chases the church into the far reaches of the world.

How is Stephen described? What does this say about him and his story?

Why did the Jewish people want to attack him? What does this say about them?

How is Saul described in verses 8:1-3? What does this say about him?

What did the church experience as Saul chased after them?

Read Acts 11:19-26

The church on the run finds a new home in Antioch that is safe from Jewish persecution. This new home base is a thriving community that does not focus on just gathering up but also scatters out to share the Gospel.

How did the church at Antioch form? What caused people to go to Antioch to share the Gospel?

What was the response of Barnabas to the church in Antioch? What does this say about him?

Who does Barnabas go and get to teach the new believers in Antioch?

How does the church at Antioch respond to the growth that they experience?

Read Acts 15:1-35

The explosive growth around the world causes the church in Jerusalem to gather in order to debate what it takes to become a follower of Jesus. The Jewish men and women that followed Jesus now ask if non-Jews should obey the same laws. The response of the young church effects the world-wide reach of the Gospel.

What were the non-Jewish followers of Jesus being taught?

How did Paul and Barnabas respond?

What does the response of Peter display about the Gospel?

What was the response of the church at Antioch to the letter?

See also pages 2092-2116 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

When did you become a part of the church?

What does the church mean to you?

How have you changed since becoming a Christian?

How have you grown since gathering in church?

What have you done to share the church in the world?



Quiet Time

Identify the one verse or phrase that stood out to you this week.

What does this verse or phrase say about who God is?

What does this verse say about what God has done?

What does this verse reveal about who you are?

What does this verse command you to do/change?

Spend a few minutes each day this week telling God about these things that you have discovered.



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel will not only survive persecution, it will thrive in it. The move of the Gospel due to the death of Stephen is an indicator of the challenges that the church will face but also how God will use anything that they face to bring people into relationship with him.



Further Reading

1 Timothy 4:6-16

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Philippians 3

Galatians 5



Discipling Relationship

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What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

What does it mean to be a Christian?

What does the church look like? What/who is the church?

What do you have to do to become a part of the church?

How do we respond to Christ by grace through faith?

If you could form a new church today what would it look like?

How can our church scatter out to the world around us?

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? How can we grow as a follower of Jesus?

How can we grow in our relationship and our walk with God?



Read and Reflect

Read Romans 1:8-15

Paul has seen the Gospel move forward through struggle and sacrifice. The nations throughout the world are beginning to hear and respond to the Gospel as a result of the faithfulness of God and the obedience of God's people.

What does Paul say that the church at Rome is like?

How does Paul say that he feels about them?

In verses 10-13 it seems that Paul has never been to Rome? Does this change the way he feels about them? Why or why not?

Why is Paul eager to see the people in the church at Rome?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Paul's message is simply the Gospel. The nations are not changed by charity programs or clever marketing but the proclamation of what happened when Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross and raised from the dead.

How does Paul describe his message among the church at Corinth?

What was on display on the message of Paul? What did Paul leave out?

What was the result of Paul's preaching in this way?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12

The experience of being with the churches throughout the nations was not always a short visit with preaching as its focus. Many times, Paul and his team would labor long hours of work and then engage in teaching the church in depth.

What was the reason Paul gives for working so hard?

How does Paul describe his relationship with the church at Thessalonica?

What was Paul's purpose in exhorting and encouraging the church?

See also pages 2158, 2194, 2306-2307 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

When is the last time you took the message of the Gospel to others? What happened?

How are you willing to brave the circumstances in your life to share the Gospel?

Is there someone in your life you want to help grow in Christ?

What team are you influencing? Who is in your team?

How can practice obedience and faithfulness in your life?



Quiet Time

Spend time in prayer this week using this as a guide.

Adoration: Spend time praising God for who he is and what he has done.

Confession: Tell God the wrong that you have and the sin you have committed. Ask for his mercy and forgiveness that only he can give.

Thanksgiving: Spend some time reflecting on all of the good things in your life and thanking God for giving them to you.

Supplication: Spend time asking God for his help on behalf of yourself and others.



Getting to the Gospel

The motion of the Gospel in God's Story has always been to the nations. The Gospel is good news to all the world. As Paul and those in his team set out they find that God has been stirring hearts long before they ever got there. The Gospel goes before us into the hearts of those in all nations.



Further Reading

Acts 24-27

Acts 18

Acts 17



Discipling Relationship

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What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How can we bring the message of the Gospel to the people in our part of the world?

What are some of the circumstances that keep people from sharing the Gospel?

How do we overcome those circumstances?

What does faithfulness and obedience mean? What does that look like in our lives?

What is the simple Gospel in our daily lives?

How do we apply the Gospel in our everyday lives?

What does our relationship with the church look like?

How do we use exhortation and encouragement with members of our church?

How can we encourage our church family more?



Read and Reflect

Read 2 Peter 2:17-22

Peter writes to the church about false teachers having promising words but no substance to deliver on the promise. He describes them as being like a well without water. It looks like it will deliver but only disappoints.

What does Peter say these false teachers are doing?

Why would this be a concern for Peter?

What is the ultimate outcome for these false teachers?

Why is the outcome of the false teachers a warning for the church?

Read Jude 3-4

Jude recalls God's story and his true prophets sent throughout history. He also warns against those that want to appear like prophets but are actually seeking to deceive. He recalls that this is not a new occurrence and that the people of God will have to contend for the faith.

What does Jude mean by "common salvation?"

How was the faith "once for all" shared with the church?

How are these false prophets described in verse 4?

Read 1 Peter 3:13-17

The early church had to contend with being mistreated in various ways in their cities. Peter encourages the church into a response that displays faith and extends love rather than returning the offense to the offender.

How does Peter encourage believers in verse 13?

What should the response to suffering be? What should the church be prepared to do?

What does Peter say is the better outcome of our response to suffering?

See also pages 2421-2422, 2449, 2410 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Have you had an experience with false teachers? How did you handle it?

Have you ever had to contend for the faith? What happened?

How do you handle disagreements with non-believers?

How do you handle disagreements with other believers?

Is your attitude different with believers and non-believers? How and why does it change?



Quiet Time

Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Using the prayer of Jesus to the Father as a guide:

Pray to your Father. Thank him for all the good that you have seen him doing in your life. Recognize him as a loving Father that wants good for you, his child. (James 1:17)

Give praise to God. Recognize God's holiness and authority in your life. Read Psalm 111 as a prayer from the heart toward God.

Pray for God's Kingdom to be manifest here on earth. Pray for the poor, the sick, the oppressed, the unjust treatment of others and the persecuted church. (Matthew 6:33)

Pray for a reminder to rely on God's provision for you. Thank God for all of his good gifts and all of the blessings that he bestows upon your life. (Philippians 4:19)

Pray for forgiveness of sin. Confess your sins to your Father and ask that he would respond to you with grace, mercy and forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)

Pray for your relationships with those that have sinned against you. Ask your Father that he would mend the broken or hurting relationships in your life through love and forgiveness. (Matthew 18:15-20)

Pray for spiritual growth. Your Father does not want perfection, he wants transformation. Pray that you would seek your Father's good and perfect will for your life. (Ephesians 6:10-20)



Getting to the Gospel

False teaching, false prophets and persecution are expected in the face of truth. God's promise is that the truth of the Gospel will prevail. He commends each of us to guard the Gospel and ensure that truth remains intact within us so that it can spread out from us.



Further Reading

Proverbs 16

Isaiah 8:11-22

Ezekiel 18



Discipling Relationship

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What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

How do you interact with those who believe differently than you?

Can we enter into relationship with those who believe differently?

How can we help those that are being persecuted for their faith?

How can we respond in a way that displays faith and extends love?

How do you think Jesus would interact with people today that do not believe?

Would Jesus behave differently if he walked the earth today?

Would we behave differently if he walked the earth today?

How often do consider how Jesus would respond to the situations in our daily lives?



Read and Reflect

Read Revelation 1:4-8

John begins the account of the Revelation with an introduction to Jesus. This introduction to the Son of God takes into account the whole story of God. Jesus is described as being the beginning and the end. The story of God is a story about Jesus.

How is Jesus described in verses 5-6? How does this description relate to God's Story?

How does John describe his future return?

How does Jesus describe himself in verse 8? How does this description relate to God's Story?

Read Revelation 21:1-8

John is given a glimpse into the coming New Heaven and New Earth. The way that earth is described by John recalls the way that the tabernacle was organized. The relationship between man and death will be changed forever.

How does John describe the coming of the New Heaven and New earth?"

What does the voice from heaven say that this New Heaven and New Earth will be like in verses 3-4?

How does Jesus describe himself in verses 5-6?

What will be the outcome for the faithful? What about those that have not placed faith in Jesus Christ as Savior?

Read Revelation 22:1-5

The final chapter of God's Story is a recalling of life in the Garden. There will be a return of what was lost. But the outcome for those that have faith will be the possession of a better Garden. We will be with God forever and see him in his glory for eternity.

How is the river of life described?

How is worship of God changed in verse 3?

How is our relationship with God changed in verses 4-5?

See also pages 2463-2497 of the ESV Study Bible, also available online at esv.org



Apply to Your Life

Describe a time you've seen God's glory and intentions displayed in your life.

Describe a time you've seen God's glory and intentions displayed in someone else's life.

Was God different with you? How?

What did you experience by watching God work in someone else's life?

What do you want to experience in your walk with God?



Quiet Time

Find a time when you can dedicate about an hour to prayer. This is a challenge but worth it. Pray the following for 5 minutes each. You can set a timer on your watch or phone.

Praise and worship

Waiting on the Lord

Confession of guilt and sin

Pray a passage of Scripture (you can even read a passage out loud to God)

Watching (praying over culture, country or community)

Intercession

Petitions

Thanksgiving

Song (listen or sing)

Contemplation (silence or repetition of a single phrase example: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.")

Listening

Praise



Getting to the Gospel

The Gospel is good news because the end of the story is good. We will see the Gospel brought to fruition in the New Heaven and New Earth and salvation is completed in the glorification of those that surrendered in justification and were obedient through sanctification.



Further Reading

Zechariah 14

Psalm 46

Ezekiel 47

Isaiah 65:17-25



Discipling Relationship

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What is going on in your life that God is speaking to in this verse or phrase?

What is God calling you to do, change or confess?

Based on above response, take turns in prayer for one another.

Who are you going to share about what God is doing in your life?



Gather and Discuss

Describe a time you had good intentions. What happened?

How is God's intentions different from ours?

What are you looking forward to the most in regards to eternity?

How does eternity change how you live day-to-day?

How is New Creation different or similar to the Creation in the Garden?

How has our relationship and walk with God changed since Creation?

How does the Gospel Story impact your daily life?

Are you ready to share the Gospel Story?

Who will you share the Gospel Story with? What can you do to become more prepared?

How to start a Discipling Relationship

A Discipling Relationship is a group of three people (of the same gender) that are committed to listening to what God is saying to them in his Word, being obedient in doing what he says to do and praying for each other as you follow through.

We call this a simple rhythm of obedience. Simply asking:

1. What is Jesus teaching me right now?
2. What am I going to do about it?
3. How can you pray for me?

Of course, there are many other conversations and discussions around scripture that will come up in a Discipling Relationship, but the group needs to remain focused to address these three questions before engaging in those other conversations.

So, what do you need to do to start a Discipling Relationship?

1. Pray. Ask Jesus to reveal someone that would be interested and committed.
2. Ask. Go to that person and approach the idea. Give them this sheet if needed.
3. Decide. Set a time and place for the group meeting. Public spaces are okay but we have learned that they do not work well for more intimate discussions.
4. Commit. Move the meeting, don't miss it. If someone in the group has something come up, set up another time and place in the same week.
5. Share. Everyone needs to be involved. Everyone can take turns leading the discussion. Each person can have a responsibility for setting up the group.

How to start a Life Group

A Life Group is about 10-12 people that are gathered together to build relationships with one another around the application of God's Word in everyday life. In short, we say that this is how we do life with one another. A Life Group can be a blend of church members and non-members. It can be a blend of followers of Christ and not yet followers of Christ. But everyone needs to be aware and agree that the Bible will be discussed as the core function of the group.

Where do Life Groups meet?

Life Groups can meet anywhere but we find that the living room of one or more of your group members is ideal. Hosting the meeting is a great way for Life Group members that are not comfortable with leading discussions can serve and be involved. We also share meals often as a part of our Life Group rhythms. Every member can contribute for the meal and this makes a great time of fellowship, as well as helping with the busy evening schedules.

What do Life Groups do?

1. Discuss. We talk about God's Word using a Bible study or sermon notes.
2. Pray. We spend time sharing our needs and pray for one another.
3. Share. We open up about how God is moving in our lives. We offer support not advice.
4. Serve. We join in serving others together. We might even partner with another Life Group.
5. Celebrate. We pause to bring the better party when birthdays or other events arise.

How to start a Life Group.

Starting a Life Group can be intimidating at first. We don't all have 10-12 people hanging around wanting to study the Bible with us. Know this, everyone that has started a Life Group has felt that feeling and following through with obedience to Jesus if he is calling you to do this will be one of the greatest blessings in your life.

1. Pray. Ask Jesus to lead you to people that may be longing for this kind of relationship.
2. Share. Get the word out through flyers handed personally to people that you feel led to.
3. Relax. This does not need to be overwhelming. Make it fun.
4. Partner. Get one or two other people to help you. The more that say they want to come, ask them to help.
5. Start Small. Don't expect 10-12 people to join up in order to start your group. We have had wonderful groups with 5 people.

You are not alone.

We are here to help you along the way. Simply reach out through email and we can assist you.

God's Story

Bible
Reading
Plan



God's Story

Bible Reading Plan

The Beginning

Genesis 1 A Book of Beginnings

Genesis 2 One Shining Moment

Genesis 3 The Crash

Genesis 4 Crouching at the Door

Genesis 7 Under Water

Genesis 8 The Rainbow

Genesis 15 The Plan

Genesis 19 A Catastrophe Sent from God

Genesis 22 Final Exam

Genesis 27 Jacob Gets the Blessing

Genesis 28 Something Undeserved

Genesis 37 Family Battles

Genesis 41 Behind the Scenes

Genesis 45 A Long Forgiveness

Forming a Nation

Exodus 3 Time for Action

Exodus 10-11 The Ten Plagues

Exodus 14 Miracle at the Red Sea

Exodus 20 The Ten Commandments

Exodus 32 The Dream Dies

Leviticus 26 Legal Matters

Numbers 11 Trials in the Desert

Numbers 14 Open Mutiny

Deuteronomy 4 Never Forget

Deuteronomy 8 Dangers of Success

Deuteronomy 28 Loud and Clear

Joshua 2 New Spies, New Spirit

Joshua 6 Strange Tactics

Joshua 7 Slow Learners

Joshua 24 Home at Last

Judges 6 Unlikely Leader

Judges 7 Military Upset

Judges 16 Superman's Flaws

Ruth 1 Tough Love

The Golden Age

1 Samuel 3 Transition Team
1 Samuel 16 Tale of Two Kings
Psalm 23 A Shepherd's Song
1 Samuel 17 Giant-Killer
Psalm 19 Outdoor Lessons
1 Samuel 20 Jonathan's Loyalty
Psalm 27 Ups and Downs
2 Samuel 6 King of Passion
1 Chronicles 17 God's House
Psalm 103 The Goodness of God
2 Samuel 11 Adultery and Murder
2 Samuel 12 Caught in the Act
Psalm 51 True Confession
Psalm 139 David's Spiritual Secret
1 Kings 3 Raw Talent
1 Kings 8 High-water Mark
Psalm 84 Home Sweet Home
Ecclesiastes 3 A Time for Everything

The Northern Kingdom

1 Kings 17 The Prophets
1 Kings 18 Mountaintop Showdown
2 Kings 5 Double Portion
Joel 2 Word Power
Jonah 3-4 Beloved Enemies
Amos 4 Street-Corner Prophet
Hosea 11 Wounded Lover
2 Kings 17 Postmortem

The Southern Kingdom

2 Chronicles 20 Meanwhile in Jerusalem
Micah 6 Pollution Spreads
2 Chronicles 30 Hezekiah's Festival
Isaiah 6 Power behind the Throne
Isaiah 25 Eloquent Hope
2 Chronicles 32 Battlefield Lessons
Nahum 1 Enemy Justice
Zephaniah 3 Rotten Ruling Class
2 Kings 22 Boy Wonder
Jeremiah 2 National Adultery
Jeremiah 31 Israel's Future
Jeremiah 38 Prophet's Perils
Habakkuk 1 Debating God
Lamentations 3 Poet In Shock
Obadiah No Room to Gloat

Starting Over

Ezekiel 1 In Exile
Ezekiel 2-3 Toughening Up
Ezekiel 4 Write Large and Shout
Ezekiel 37 Resurrection Time
Daniel 1 Enemy Employers
Daniel 3 Ordeal by Fire
Daniel 5 Like Father, Like Son
Daniel 6 Daniel's Longest Night
Ezra 3 Home at Last
Haggai 1 A Needed Boost
Zechariah 8 Raising Sights
Nehemiah 2 A Man for All Seasons
Nehemiah 8 Mourning into Joy
Esther 4 A Race's Survival
Malachi 2 Low-grade Disappointment

The Messiah has Come

Luke 1 One Final Hope
Luke 2 No Fear
Mark 1 Immediate Impact
Mark 2 Signal Fires of Opposition
John 3 Late-Night Rendezvous
Mark 4 Hard Soil
Mark 5 Jesus and Illness
Matthew 5 Inflammatory Word
Matthew 6 Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 13 Kingdom Tales
Mark 6 Contrast in Power
Luke 16 Of Two Worlds

Responses to Jesus

Luke 15 Seeking the Lost
John 6 Food that Endures
Mark 7 Poles Apart
Matthew 18 Out of Bondage
John 10 No Secrets
Mark 8 Turning Point
Mark 9 Slow Learners
Luke 10 Mission Improbable
Mark 10 Servant Leadership
Mark 11 Opposition Heats Up
Mark 12 Baiting Jesus
Mark 13 A Day to Dread
Mark 14 A Scent of Doom

Final Days of Jesus

John 14 One Final Meal Together
Matthew 26 Appointment with Destiny
Matthew 27 No Justice
Mark 15 The Last Temptation
Matthew 28 A Rumor of Life
John 20 The Rumor Spreads
Luke 24 The Final Link

The Gospel Spreads

Acts 1 Departure
Acts 2 Explosion
Acts 5 Shock Waves
Acts 9 About-face
Galatians 3 Legalism
Acts 16 Detour
Philippians 2 Downward Mobility
Acts 17 Mixed Results
1 Thessalonians 3-4 Preparing for the End
2 Thessalonians 2 Rumor Control
1 Corinthians 13 The Love Chapter
2 Corinthians 12 Boasting of Weakness

Paul's Mission

Romans 3 Remedy
Romans 7 Limits of the Law
Romans 8 Spirit Life
Romans 12 Down-To-Earth Problems
Acts 26 Unexpected Passage
Acts 27 Perfect Storm
Acts 28 Rome at Last
Ephesians 2 Prison Letter
Colossians 1 Spanning the Gap
Philemon A Personal Favor
Titus 2 Paul's Troubleshooter
1 Timothy 1 Growth Pains
2 Timothy 2 Final Words

Vital Letters

Hebrews 2 The Great Descent
Hebrews 11 What Is True Faith?
James 1 Walk the Talk
1 Peter 1 Converted Coward
2 Peter 1 Hidden Dangers
Jude Sounding the Alarm
1 John 3 Mere Christianity