



ESSENTIALS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND MULTIPLICATION

Small-Group Leader's Guide > > > > _____

INTRODUCTION



Congratulations on your willingness to pass on to others how they can begin to enjoy an authentic, exciting relationship with God. The Apostle John put it this way: “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.” (1 John 1:3-4, NIV)

What follows is a very simple way for you to lead a small group discussion on some of the most essential principles of relating to God and living the Christian life. Although the approach is simple, the teaching methods employed are relevant to the way most people prefer to learn: connecting with peers, discussing versus just listening, considering life stories, and making immediate practical application.

So how can you get started? The best way is to pray for wisdom and confidence. God is quite able to give you whatever you need to lead your group. The next step is to invite some of your friends to the group meeting, at a time and place convenient for you and the others.

Once you are committed to that, you will likely find these materials extremely helpful. Page 7 in Part 1 and page 35 in Part 2 give you an overview of what you will be discussing in the sessions. Notice that there are six groupings of four topics each. This gives you flexibility, if needed, to challenge your friends to one four-session segment at a time. Each segment covers an important theme in living the Christian life. For example, in the 4 Walks, your group members will discuss knowing God and starting to relate to Him.

This Leader’s Guide is designed to be very easy for you to use. Each session has one main page of leader’s notes (Group Discussion Outline) to help you facilitate. Just to the left of that page is a Session Preparation Checklist. It is designed to help you prepare for that session. Notice that each passage of Scripture discussed has a specific alternate set of questions you can use if you would like.

In experimenting with the “Essentials” series, sometimes group leaders didn’t give priority to the last two sections of each session: APPLY and TELL. Be aware that movements of spiritual multiplication are most evidenced by changed lives and frequent conversations about Jesus. So be sure to feature those two parts of each session.

This leads to the importance of encouraging your group members to consider leading their own groups soon. In Part 1 page 6 you will see a section entitled MULTIPLY. There you will read more on whom to challenge and how to get them started. Keep in mind that the majority of the spiritual impact you are likely to have in this lifetime will be through the ministry of those you disciple who in turn disciple others. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul explains how central multiplication should be.

In conclusion, more than anything else, realize that it is God who touches lives and causes spiritual growth and multiplication. Pray often that He will work supernaturally through you and your group members.



ESSENTIALS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND MULTIPLICATION – PART 1

Small-Group Leader's Guide > > > > _____

HOW TO LEAD A SESSION



To prepare for the first session, take a look at the Session Preparation Checklist and Group Discussion Outline on pages 8 and 9 of Part 1. They relate to the first topic, 4 Walks >> Walk Assured. Note the session has four parts which are explained below.

CONNECT: After connecting personally, you pray and then state a simple truth of life: “Relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance.” You have probably experienced that, and so have your group members. So it should be easy to share experiences. After sharing, make a very simple transition to reading from the Bible by saying, “So it is in a relationship with God.”

HEAR: Taking one Bible passage at a time, there are specific questions provided for each Bible passage used in a session. So, for example, when discussing the first Bible passage (Luke 15:11-24) you can use these three questions:

1. What are some evidences of the father’s love and acceptance of the prodigal son?
2. In what ways were the son’s thoughts and actions reflective of the father’s love and acceptance?
3. What are some things we can learn about relationships from this parable?

As you lead the discussion, remember that you are seeking to engage people in the learning process versus just telling them what they need to know. In light of that, keep asking questions, listen intently to their answers and often say, “What do the rest of you think about this?” If you encounter silence in answer to a question, call on someone who often has something to say. If some people have been quiet for a while, ask if there is something they would like to add.

There is a small section entitled “The Big Picture” that is there for you to tie the lesson to the central message of the Gospel that is woven throughout Scripture. If you have members in your group that you are not sure if they are believers, you can especially pay attention to their answers to these questions. REMEMBER, we should preach the good news to ourselves and remind ourselves as believers of God’s incredible grace to us through Jesus.

Try to sense when your group members are really seeing how this truth works in a relationship with God. (Note that you might not need to discuss all the Bible passages or ask all of the discussion questions to accomplish this.) One way to transition to APPLY is to review what has been covered: “We agreed that relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance. We also saw that God does accept us. But that won’t help us unless we feel sure of His acceptance.”

APPLY: At the appropriate moment in the above review, state that it is important to: “Be sure of your personal relationship with God.” In other words, the Bible teaches that God loves and accepts you as His child, if you have trusted Christ as your Savior.

Have them write the “lesson learned” in the space provided in the ½ page “mini-journal” shown at the end of Part 1 of this Small-Group Leader’s Guide. (You will need to print copies of the “Four Walks” handout before your session.)

Of course, the lesson learned is most helpful if your group members apply it to their lives. That is the next step: Ask, “Why don’t we always experience assurance in our personal relationship with

God?” In other words, if the Bible teaches that we are accepted by God, why don't we always feel accepted by Him?

Once that discussion surfaces the barriers, it will be easier for each group member to answer the next question, “What is one action you can take this week to begin to feel more assured?” One action step might be: “I will pray every day for a week, thanking God that He really does love and accept me.” If some in your group have not actually received Christ yet, it would be appropriate to share the gospel at this point, as noted on page 9.

Give your group members time to think of how they (individually) could take some specific action step in the next week to apply this lesson. Have them write it down in their “mini-journals” and discuss it with one or two other group members. After that, have them pray for one another about their action steps, unless you don't think your group members are ready to pray aloud.

TELL: Finally, ask them to plan to tell someone else (outside the group) what they learned in this session. It can be a Christian or some other interested person. They dramatically improve their commitment to apply if they keep talking about it. It also causes them to start becoming a part of a spiritual multiplication process by sharing with others what they have discussed and applied from the Bible. (Remember 2 Timothy 2:2.) Have them write the “person to tell” in their “mini-journal,” share that with one or two other group members, and pray for one another. (Again, it may take a session or two for them to pray comfortably.)

If a person has more questions and does not feel equipped to tell someone else, you can encourage them to talk with you or someone else to discuss the subject further.

When you start the group session the next week, in a low-key way, see if you can get some of your group members to share how the “applying” and “telling” went.

Well, that wasn't so hard, was it? In the next session, use the same approach for Walk Forgiven. (See pages 10 and 11.) Also, note that in the Appendix (page 63) there is a further explanation of how to use the Session Preparation Checklists.

MULTIPLY: After several weeks, see if some in your group might like to do what you have been doing, with their own groups. Look for people who are particularly faithful to attend and are excited about the discussion, application and sharing. (People they have been “telling” week-to-week may be willing to join their new groups.)

Talk to them about how important it is for group leaders to be growing in their walks with the Lord. Persistent sin grieves God and undermines a person's credibility with group members. It is a privilege to teach people about God, but it is also a sobering responsibility.

If they are willing to accept that responsibility, give them copies of this Small-Group Leader's Guide, walk through it and answer questions. If possible, have them teach a part (or all) of one of your group sessions. Give suggestions afterwards to help them be ready to start a new group, while still continuing to attend your group.

Now, you are getting seriously involved in spiritual multiplication. Before long, there may be several groups meeting because of how God used you in starting your original group. Then you will be well on your way to making an impact for Christ on your campus.



Help them get to know God and start to relate to Him.



4 Walks

1. **ASSURED** >> Be sure of your personal relationship with God.
2. **FORGIVEN** >> Be sure you experience God's forgiveness, so you can have a close relationship with Him.
3. **FILLED** >> Be sure you are filled with the Holy Spirit, so you can have power for living.
4. **CONTINUALLY** >> Relate to God all the time.

Help them trust God for new habits in their lives, in light of their relationships with Him and the availability of His power and wisdom.



4 Talks

1. **APPLY** the Bible (Let God Talk to You) >> Apply to your life daily what you learn from the Bible.
2. **PRAY** (Talk to God) >> Talk things through with God whenever you can.
3. **WITNESS** (Talk to Non-Christians) >> Spread the word about Christ with your non-Christian friends and acquaintances.
4. **FELLOWSHIP** (Talk to Christians) >> Form close relationships with true followers of Jesus, for support and encouragement.

Help them understand some important ways to minister to others, so they can pass on what God has given them.



4 Ministries

1. **LOVE** >> God wants us to love other people, to help meet their needs and to make an impact on their lives.
2. **WIN** (Embrace) >> We can help people come to know God.
3. **BUILD** (Disciple) >> We can help people grow to be true followers of Jesus.
4. **SEND** (Involve) >> We can help followers of Jesus minister to others.

Help them know some important facts about Jesus Christ, so they can respond to Him properly.



4 Facts

1. **GOD** >> Jesus is God, so we should respect Him and listen to what He says.
2. **MAN** >> Jesus was also a human being, so we can know He understands our problems and so we can trust Him more.
3. **SAVIOR** >> Jesus died for our sins, so we can have a close relationship with God.
4. **SERVANT** >> Jesus lived His life on earth helping and serving others and asks us to do the same.

Session Preparation Checklist

We should tell ourselves the Gospel everyday...



4 Walks >> Walk Assured

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare an atmosphere that will be good for discussion. A snack is a great idea...
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- Luke 15:11-24 >> This is the story of the prodigal son. The father represents God. The rebellious son represents how we can be toward God sometimes. The father apparently was looking down the road in hopes his son would return. He had compassion, ran to meet the son and celebrated his return. That picture gives us assurance that God loves and accepts us and wants to have close fellowship with us.
- 1 John 5:11-13 >> These verses provide simple clarity that receiving Christ assures us that we have eternal life (with God).

Focus on Jesus: *(Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)*

- These verses draw attention to the fact that Jesus is the Son, and He is the only source of eternal life. God tells us that we can know that we have eternal life if we have the Son. Because of Jesus, we can walk assured in our relationship with God.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Walks >> Walk Assured

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “Relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance.”
Then, surface experiences:
“Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
“Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in a relationship with God.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Luke 15:11-24 (story); 1 John 5:11-13
- Luke 15:11-24
 1. What are some evidences of the father’s love and acceptance of the prodigal son?
 2. In what ways were the son’s thoughts and actions reflective of the father’s love and acceptance?
 3. What are some things we can learn about relationships from this parable?
- 1 John 5:11-13
 1. What does this passage teach us about the source of eternal life?
 2. What was the intended impact on the readers of this passage, and how does that help us in our relationship with God?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?”
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: Relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance?

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Be sure of your personal relationship with God.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss: (If you have a larger group, you may want to break them into smaller groups of 3-4)
“Why don’t we always experience assurance in our personal relationship with God?”
“What is one action you can take this week to begin to feel more assured?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.
- It may be appropriate to walk through the “Would You Like to Know God Personally?” booklet at this point.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

God's forgiveness is rooted in the finished work of Christ on the cross.



4 Walks >> Walk Forgiven

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- Luke 7:36-50 >> This is a story about an interaction between Jesus, a sinful woman and a self-righteous religious leader. After Jesus saw the woman's sorrow over her sins, He forgave her of her sins. This should encourage people in the group who may feel that they have done so many bad things that God could never forgive them.
- 1 John 1:9-2:2 >> This passage clarifies that we should confess our sins to God. As we acknowledge the fact that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins, we can experience the joy of being forgiven by God.
- Ephesians 3:11,12 >> Because of Christ (and His death for our sins), we can approach God and have a close relationship with Him.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- These verses draw attention to the fact that Jesus is willing to forgive our sins, and only through Christ's payment for our sins are we able to approach God. God is willing to forgive all our sins no matter how big they might be in our minds. God's forgiveness is a free gift to us through Jesus if we are willing to receive it. (Eph 2:8-9)

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Walks >> Walk Forgiven

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “Forgiveness gives a relationship a fresh start.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in a relationship with God.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Luke 7:36-50 (story); 1 John: 1:9-2:2; Ephesians 3:11,12; (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)
- Luke 7:36-50
 1. What are some differences in how the religious leader viewed the sinful woman versus how Jesus viewed her?
 2. What can we learn from verses 40-47 where Jesus tells the “debt cancellation” illustration and applies it to the attitudes of the religious leader and the woman?
 3. Why did Christ come to forgive sins?
- 1 John 1:9-2:2
 1. Would you agree that people commit sins? What has led you to your conclusion?
 2. What does this passage say is the solution to our sin problem? What must we do to take advantage of that solution?
- Ephesians 3:11,12
 1. In what ways does our faith in Christ impact our relationship with God?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“Relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Be sure you experience God’s forgiveness, so you can have a close relationship with Him.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “Why don’t we always experience the forgiveness that God offers us?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to experience that forgiveness?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

The command to “Be filled” in Eph 5:18 is actually “Be being filled” in the Greek.



4 Walks >> Walk Filled

Note for leader: We will study the Holy Spirit in much more depth in weeks to come. For now all your students need to know is that the Spirit of God gives us power to help us walk with Him. Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- Ephesians 3:16-20 >> This is a stunning statement of how much help God is willing to give us through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Ephesians 5:18-21 >> These verses give the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit and show the dramatic life-change that can result.
- John 18:15-18 together with Acts 2:14-22 >> This shows a remarkable change in Peter's courage within just a few weeks. Before being filled with the Holy Spirit, he denied Christ. After being filled, he preached with strong words to a large crowd.

Focus on Relationship: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- We must have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ in order to have the continual help of the Holy Spirit living inside of you. God not only saves us, He provides power for living every day. He cares for us, and He wants to be in connection with us at all times.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Walks >> Walk Filled

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “Often we need help to do a difficult assignment.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in a relationship with God.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Ephesians 3:16-20; Ephesians 5:18-21;
Contrast Peter in John 18:15-18 (story) versus Acts 2:14-22 (story)
- Ephesians 3:16-20
 1. What are some benefits added to believers if they take advantage of the presence of the Spirit in their lives?
 2. If we possess such power and such a sense of how much God loves us, in what ways might that affect our daily lives?
- Ephesians 5:18-21
 1. What are some specific behaviors that result from being filled with the Spirit?
 2. In what ways do those behaviors contrast with normal human behaviors?
- John 18:15-18 together with Acts 2:14-22
 1. What types of changes do you see in Peter from John 18 to Acts 2?
 2. What seemed to be the major contributors to those changes?
- The Big Picture
 1. What relationship do we need to have in order to receive the help of the Holy Spirit?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“Often we need help to do a difficult assignment?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Be sure you are filled with the Holy Spirit, so you can have power for living.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “Why don’t we always seek to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to live in the power of the Holy Spirit?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.
- It may be appropriate to walk through the “Satisfied?” (Spirit-filled Life) booklet at this point.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8



4 Walks >> Walk Continually

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- Philippians 4:4-9 >> These verses contain encouragement toward very frequent interaction with God: e.g. “rejoice always,” “in everything...present your requests to God.”
- Psalms 16:8,9 >> This verse gives insight into the prayer life of David: “I have set the Lord continually before me.”

Focus on relationship: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- Our relationship with God should be our highest priority, because He alone is the source of true Joy. These passages speak of the work of God in giving us peace and safety in Him because we can trust Him completely. A relationship with God is different than every other human relationship.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Walks >> Walk Continually

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “A relationship with a person greatly benefits from frequent interaction.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in a relationship with God.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Philippians 4:4-9; Psalm 16:8,9
- Philippians 4:4-9
 1. What are some specific topics of interaction with God mentioned in this passage?
 2. What seem to be some positive outcomes which result from these interactions with God?
- Psalm 16:8,9
 1. What are some positive outcomes in King David’s life from “setting the Lord always before him”?
 2. What can we learn from this (and the previous) passage concerning a walk with God?

[In this discussion, you should be leading your group members to see how often during the day God would like to have them talk with Him.]
- The Big Picture
 1. Why should our relationship with God be a priority over every other relationship?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: “A relationship with a person greatly benefits from frequent interaction?”

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Relate to God all the time.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “Why don’t we continually relate to God?”
 “What might change in your daily experience if you had more interaction with God?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to begin to do that more often?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.
- Tell them how they will be helped by the next four sessions. (See page 7: “4 Talks”.)

Session Preparation Checklist

Jesus bridges the infinite communication gap between us and God.



4 Talks >> Apply the Bible (Let God Talk to You)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- James 1:22 >> This verse tells us clearly to apply what the Bible says.
- Luke 6:46-49 >> Jesus shows us the great value of putting into practice what He says: It gives our lives a strong, firm foundation.
- Acts 2:41-47 >> These verses show us the model of the Jerusalem church right after so many responded to Peter's message. If you use this passage on this topic, emphasize their devotion to the apostles' teaching versus their enjoyment of the fellowship. (You might consider saving this passage for the *4 Talks >> Fellowship session*.)
- Note:* As you transition to stating the main lesson (in APPLY), point out that Jesus' and the apostles' teachings are available today in the Bible. Therefore, we can see from the discussions that we need to apply what we learn from the Bible.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the *Big Picture* questions during the lesson)

- Jesus IS the Rock upon which we can build a firm foundation for life. We need to remind ourselves that on our own, we are helpless to live life the way God wants us to live, and we cannot obey God apart from a relationship with Jesus. Jesus gives us the ability to obey God, and if we accept Him, he replaces our guilt, shame and disobedience with His righteousness. (*2 Cor 5:21*)

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Talks >> Apply the Bible (Let God Talk to You)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “It is one thing to hear about something; it is another to do something about it.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in the Christian life.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: James 1:22; Luke 6:46-49 (story); Acts 2:41-47 (story); (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)
- James 1:22
 1. How does this verse relate to the discussion we just had (about “hearing” versus “doing”)?
- Luke 6:46-49
 1. Have you ever seen or heard of modern day examples of this? (e.g. a hurricane striking an area where houses had poor foundations/structures)
 2. What are some lessons we can learn from Jesus’ illustration?
- Acts 2:41-47
 1. What kinds of things did the new believers do?
 2. What are some evidences that they were applying the truths they were learning?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *It is one thing to hear about something; it is another to do something about it?*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Apply to your life daily what you learn from the Bible.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “Why don’t we always apply what we learn from the Bible?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to start applying the Bible to everyday life?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“Prayer projects faith on God, and God on the world.” E.M. Bounds



4 Talks >> Apply the Bible (Talk to God)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- 1 Kings 3:5-14 >> King Solomon has a conversation with God (via a dream). In this interaction we see a dialogue - - sort of “talking about things.” It conveys how prayer can be viewed as a conversation with God.
- Nehemiah 1:4-11 >> This represents the more normal prayer experience, where Nehemiah doesn't hear God speak audibly. Yet, it also shows how Nehemiah “talks things through” with God, pleading his case on a particular concern.
- John 14:13-14 >> This passage shows Jesus cares for all of our needs. We can talk to Him about anything that is going on in our lives.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- Jesus is addressing prayer as being communication from us to God through Him. Only God can make such powerful claims of Himself, therefore this is a direct claim of Jesus divinity. He is the mediator for us in our prayer and in all communication with God. We can pray in His Name because He took our sin away and made us right with God. (*Heb 4:16*)

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Talks >> Pray (Talk to God)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “Most people like to ‘talk things through’ with a friend.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in the Christian life.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: 1 Kings 3:5-14 (story); Nehemiah 1:4-11 (story)
- 1 Kings 3:5-14
 1. What do you think Solomon’s example teaches us about talking with God?
 2. How does this compare or contrast with what you normally think of as “praying”?
- Nehemiah 1:4-11
 1. What can we learn from Nehemiah in terms of sharing our concerns with the Lord?
 2. How does this compare with the discussion we had earlier about talking things through with a friend?
- John 14:13-14
 1. What significance is found in Jesus’ broad statements about prayer?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Talk things through with God whenever you can.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “Why don’t we tend to talk things through with God?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to do that more?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

Followers of Christ should not live in a bubble.



4 Talks >> Apply the Bible (Talk to Non-Christians)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Matthew 28:18-20 >> Jesus exhorts us to pass the gospel on to others, as widely as possible. Knowing the message of Jesus Christ should motivate us to share it with others.
- John 4:19-41 >> These verses show us the great impact of one woman's witness to her entire town.
- Acts 4:1-13 >> This passage documents how Peter stood up to the religious leaders in Jerusalem and proclaimed that salvation is found in Christ alone. The leaders took note of his courage.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- Jesus claims to be the Savior, demonstrates his power to the woman at the well, and goes on to make sure that His disciples know that the most important thing in the world is to know Him and to tell other people about him.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Talks >> Witness (Talk to Non-Christians)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God during the session.
- Start by stating: “It is normal for word to spread when people who know about a subject tell others.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in the Christian life.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Matthew 28:18-20; John 4:19-41 (story); Acts 4:1-13 (story);
- Matthew 28:18-20
 1. What did Jesus command His disciples to do?
 2. Why do you think Jesus considered this important to tell His disciples?
 3. Why do you think it is important for us to do these same things today?
- John 4:19-41
 1. Why did the woman conclude that Jesus was an important person to listen to?
 2. What were the results of this one woman’s “witness”?
- Acts 4:1-13
 1. What would you guess were the risks to Peter and John if they “witnessed about Christ”?
 2. What were some evidences of their courage and their clarity of message in sharing their faith?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“It is normal for word to spread when people who know about a subject tell others?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Spread the word about Christ with your non-Christian friends and acquaintances.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some barriers to talking about Christ with non-Christians?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to have a spiritual conversation with someone who doesn’t know Christ?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

We need each other, and we need to be real with each other.



4 Talks >> Apply the Bible (Talk to Christians)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Hebrews 10:24,25 >> These verses ask us, as Christians, to get together often to encourage one another.
- Acts 2:42-47 >> This illustrates the daily close fellowship Christians enjoyed after coming to Christ. They are very loving and committed to one another, and enjoy each other's company. (You may have used this three sessions ago in *4 Talks >> Apply The Bible.*)
- Acts 1:12-15 >> This records that right after Jesus ascended into heaven, the eleven disciples, and many others, met together frequently for prayer and mutual encouragement.

Focus on the Gospel: (*Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson*)

- The Gospel is the good news that Jesus died for us and took our place so that we would not have to pay the penalty for our sins. Because of this, believers in Christ are righteous before God. Christians need to be in fellowship with each other to remind each other of the joy of this good news continually. If we are not careful we can isolate ourselves in the busyness of life and get sucked into temptation.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Talks >> Fellowship (Talk to Christians)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “Relationships with friends provide support and encouragement.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “So it is in the Christian life.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Hebrews 10:24,25; Acts 2:42-47 (story); Acts 1:12-15 (story);
- Hebrews 10:24,25
 1. What are some benefits to getting together with other believers?
 2. How have you experienced these benefits in a Christian context?
 [This ties into the CONNECT discussion on friends providing support and encouragement.]
- Acts 2:42-47
 1. What are some evidences in this passage that the new believers were relating to one another often and well?
- Acts 1:12-15
 1. What did the believers do shortly after Jesus ascended into heaven?
 2. Why do you suppose they met together?
- Note: Make the point that your “Thrive” group meets regularly, in part, to provide support and encouragement for your group members. You might even want to talk about how the group is doing.
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about how the Gospel should impact our lives?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: “*Relationships with friends provide support and encouragement?*”

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Form close relationships with true followers of Jesus, for support and encouragement.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What can keep us from forming close relationships with Christians?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to begin to overcome those barriers?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.
- Tell them how they will be helped by the next four sessions. (See page 7: “4 Ministries”.)

Session Preparation Checklist

Love is wanting what is best for someone else regardless of its cost to you.



4 Ministries >> Love

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, "So it is in a relationship with God..."

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- John 13:34,35 >> These verses command us to love. People will know we are followers of Christ by how we love others.
- Luke 10:25-37 >> The parable of the Good Samaritan is a story about loving a stranger. After being beaten and robbed, a man is left for dead along a road. A priest and a religious leader come across the man, but do not stop to help. Then, a Samaritan sees the man, takes him to an inn and pays for his care. During the time of Jesus, a Samaritan was often looked down upon and was not well accepted. With this parable, Jesus made the point that love should meet needs and not discriminate.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 >> These verses give us a definition of love. If we ever need help knowing how to love another person, this passage shows us how.

Focus on the Gospel: (Refer to this when you ask the *Big Picture* questions during the lesson)

- The Gospel parallel in the story of the Good Samaritan is that God offers us salvation from our sin-stained lives. He sees us, has compassion on us, and saves us from ourselves. We are as powerless to save ourselves as the man who was laying in the street. Our sin leaves us powerless to come before Him, but He offers to pick us up as we are, and He showed that he would pay any price to have a relationship with us. Jesus was the supreme example of love, as He laid down his life for undeserving people.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members "tell" easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Ministries >> Love

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “People who love us make an impact on our lives.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “If we want to minister to people, we must start by loving them.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: John 13:34,35; Luke 10:25-37 (story); 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (In verse 8, you only need to read the first sentence: “Love never fails.”);
- John 13:34,35
 1. In what ways does loving fellow Christians communicate to other people that we are Christ’s disciples?
- Luke 10:25-37
 1. What are some lessons from this passage on what it means to “love your neighbor”?
 2. How does that tie to our previous discussion and “people who love us make an impact on our lives”?
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
 1. Give some examples of how you have received love in the specific, unselfish ways described in this passage.
 2. How does this description of true love contrast with what the world defines as love?
- The Big Picture
 1. What parallels do you see between the story of the Good Samaritan and how God relates to us?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“People who love us make an impact on our lives?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “God wants us to love other people to help meet their needs and to make an impact on their lives.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep us from loving other people?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to be loving and kind to someone?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“Now we say goodnight, from our own separate sides, like brothers on a hotel bed.” DCC



4 Ministries >> Win (Embrace)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Acts 1:8 >> In this verse, Jesus sent the apostles as witnesses throughout the land. However, they were not to begin until they were equipped with the power of the Holy Spirit. This also applies to us, as we are commanded to go and to tell others about Jesus Christ.
- Matthew 4:18-22 >> Jesus called his first disciples while they were out fishing. He said that if they followed Him, He would make them “fishers of men.” Evangelism was at the heart of Jesus’ ministry.
- Matthew 5:14-16 >> Once we truly accept Christ into our hearts, we cannot keep our faith hidden. God designed and called us to be a light so people will see Christ through us.

Focus on the Gospel: (Refer to this when you ask the *Big Picture* questions during the lesson)

- Jesus pursues us and wants to make us a part of what He is doing in the world. We only become the light of the world once He has turned the light on in our lives.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Ministries >> Win (Reach)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “People need to know God personally.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.” (Perhaps give your testimony.)
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “God uses people to show others how to know him personally.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Acts 1:8; Matthew 4:18-22 (story); Matthew 5:14-16;
- Acts 1:8
 1. [Note: Mention to your group that Acts 1:8 occurs just before Jesus departs from His disciples and ascends to heaven.]
 2. In light of that, what seemed to be most on Jesus’ mind to leave as a final impression with His disciples?
- Matthew 4:18-22
 1. What kinds of thought and daily activities do you suppose occupied the minds of fisherman like Peter and Andrew?
 2. What are some comparisons between that and what Jesus meant for them to think and act like as “fishers of men”?
- Note: The Acts 1:8 and Matthew 4:18-22 passages make clear that we can and should help people come to know God.
- Matthew 5:14-16
 1. In what ways is “light” a good metaphor for a Christian’s role in winning others to Christ?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about the person of Jesus and what He did for us?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“People who love us make an impact on our lives?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “We can help people come to know God.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep us from talking about Christ?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to share Christ with someone who doesn’t know Him?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“He is beginning to turn you into the same kind of thing as Himself.” C.S. Lewis



4 Ministries >> Build (Disciple)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-13 >> In this passage, Paul shares about his relationship with the church in Thessalonica. He nurtured and cared for them, as a parent would for a child. He also says that he shared his life with them. Discipleship happens best as people experience life together.
- 2 Timothy 4:2 >> We are to be prepared to share the word of God with others. Whether through encouragement or correction, we are to be ready to help people grow spiritually.

Focus on Discipleship: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- First, you must be a follower of Christ before you can help others grow in their relationship with God. Second, the call to help others grow is a command that God has given to every believer.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Ministries >> Build (Disciple)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “People need to grow in their relationship with God.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “God uses people to help Christians grow in their relationships with God.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-13 (story); 2 Timothy 4:2
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-13
 1. What are some ways to describe the efforts Paul made to build into the lives of Christians in Thessalonica? [Note: Look for lifestyle as well as content.]
 2. What are some evidences of Paul’s commitment and intentionality?
- 2 Timothy 4:2
 1. Note: Build on the discussion of the second question above. Say, “Having seen Paul’s model of ministry, now let’s look at his exhortation to minister.”
 2. What further zeal and intentionality do you see in this verse?
 3. What lessons can we learn from these two passages?
- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about discipleship?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“People need to grow in their relationships with God (and whether we can help in that)?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “We can help people grow to be true followers of Jesus.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep us from growing in our relationship with God?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to help another person grow in his or her relationship with God?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“I want to tear down the walls that hold me inside.” U2



4 Ministries >> Send (Involve)

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Luke 10:1,2 >> During the time of Jesus' ministry, He spread more of His message by sending people into different areas. In these verses, Jesus sent more than seventy people to go before him to the different towns to share the gospel.
- Acts 11:19-26 >> Followers of Christ were scattered by persecution and spread the gospel. Barnabas, an apostle of Jesus Christ, visited the church in Antioch and was encouraged by their growth. He then sought out Paul, and together they taught great numbers of people. This story illustrates how Barnabas influenced Paul to become involved with ministry.
- 2 Timothy 2:2 >> This is a picture of spiritual multiplication. Our responsibility is to share with others what we are learning and they, in turn, pass it on.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- First, you must be a follower of Christ before you can help others grow in their relationship with God. Second, the call to help others grow is a command that God has given to every believer.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Ministries >> Send (Involve)

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God for the session.
- Start by stating: “It can be rewarding to be involved in ministering to people.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this or have a desire to.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “Most often God uses people to motivate and equip Christians to become involved in ministry.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Luke 10:1,2 (story); Acts 11:19-26 (story); 2 Timothy 2:2;
- Luke 10:1,2
 1. How would you describe the process Jesus used to minister? [Involving sending people.]
- Acts 11:19-26
 1. What seemed to motivate the church at Jerusalem to send Barnabas to Antioch?
 2. What were the things that apparently motivated Barnabas to travel some distance to ask for Saul’s help?
[Note:] Draw the conclusion from both passages that it is normal for additional people to be come involved in ministry as the needs and opportunities arise?
- 2 Timothy 2:2
 1. How would you describe the process going on here?
 2. What words might describe Paul’s and Timothy’s thoughts and feelings as they saw spiritual multiplication unfold?

Note: Clearly Christ intends for His followers to involve others in ministry.

- The Big Picture
 1. What do you think these passages teach us about how we should respond to Jesus?
 2. How do you think these passages relate to the topic we discussed earlier: *“It can be rewarding to be involved in ministering to people?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “We can help followers of Jesus minister to others.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep people from becoming involved in ministering to others?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to encourage a Christian to minister to others?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” Jesus



4 Facts >> God

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Mark 1:29-34 >> Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law and a large number of others as well. The demons mentioned apparently knew He was God.
- Mark 6:35-44 >> Jesus miraculously multiplied the five loaves and two fish to become enough to feed a very large crowd and still have a considerable amount of leftovers.
- Mark 16:1-8 >> Jesus had died a few days before. Three women went to His tomb to honor Him with a proper burial. But, they were told that He had risen from the dead. Shortly afterwards, He appeared to one of the women.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the *Big Picture* questions during the lesson)

- Jesus is God. He said that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and that no man comes to the Father but through him (John 14:6). These claims of equality with God are what got him killed, and the truth of it is shown in that He rose from the dead.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Facts >> God

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God during the session.
 - Start by stating: “Sometimes things happen that seem beyond human power or explanation.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “The life of Jesus on earth 2000 years ago contained many evidences that He was God—living beyond human power or explanation.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Mark 1:29-34 (story); Mark 6:35-44 (story); Mark 16:1-8 (story); (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)
- Mark 1:29-34
 1. What are some evidences here that Jesus was something beyond a mere human being?
- Mark 6:35-44
 1. If you were one of Jesus’ disciples watching this miracle happen, what might you be thinking about Jesus?
- Mark 16:1-8

[Note: Here is an even greater miracle: Jesus rose from the dead. In light of all three of these passages, ask...]

 1. Since Jesus demonstrated God-like, supernatural qualities, what would be some appropriate responses to whatever He asks of us?
- The Big Picture
 1. What can we learn from these passages about Jesus or our response to Jesus?
 2. How do you think this passage relates to the topic we discussed earlier: *“Sometimes things happen that seem beyond human power or explanation?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Jesus is God, so we should respect Him and listen to what He says.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep us from treating Jesus with the respect He deserves?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to respect Jesus more?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“We have a present God and not a distant King.” Dallas Willard



4 Facts >> Man

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Matthew 9:35-37 >> Jesus traveled throughout the towns to help meet the needs of the people. He had compassion on them because they were helpless.
- John 11:32-36 >> Lazarus was very sick. His sister, Mary, sent word to Jesus to come and help. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had died and was in the tomb for four days. Mary wept at the feet of Jesus and He was deeply moved. Jesus connected so much with Mary's troubles that He wept also. He then raised Lazarus from the dead.
- Philippians 2:5-8 >> Jesus, whose very nature is God, did not allow His divinity to prevent Him from becoming a man and so experiencing what it was like to be human.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson)

- Jesus is fully God, and yet he was fully man as well. His perfect sacrifice was necessary for God to exact justice upon the sins against Him. They simply had to be paid for in order for us to have a relationship with God, and that is why he came to be one of us. God came among us in a most humble way, being born not in a palace but in a stable among the lowly. He was tempted and overcame it. He felt hunger, pain, sadness, and joy just like we do.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Facts >> Man

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God during the session.
- Start by stating: “When we take time to get to know people, they sense we understand them better and they trust us more.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “This is an important reason Jesus came to live on earth — so people would know He understands them and their problems.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: Matthew 9:35-37 (story); John 11:32-36 (story); Philippians 2:5-8; (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)
- Matthew 9:35-37
 1. What are some human qualities we see in Jesus’ response to the plight of the crowd?
- John 11:32-36
 1. What can we learn about Jesus from His responses to Mary and the death of His friend Lazarus?
- Philippians 2:5-8
 1. What can we learn about Jesus from this passage? What did he give up for a while? What did he endure as a result?
 2. Why do you suppose that the Father sent the Son (Jesus) on this mission? [Among other things, look for the response, “So we can see God up close and know He understands us and our problems.”]
- The Big Picture
 1. Why did Jesus come to live as a man, and why was it so important?
 2. How do you think this passage relates to the topic we discussed earlier: “When we *take time to get to know people, they sense we understand them better and they trust us more?*”

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Jesus was also a human being, so we can know He understands our problems and so we can trust Him more.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “*What are some things that prevent us from completely trusting Jesus?*”
 “*What is one action you can take this week to help you trust Jesus more?*”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“I am the good shepard. The shepard lays down his life for his sheep.” Jesus



4 Facts >> Savior

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- Matthew 9:35-37 >> Jesus traveled throughout the towns to help meet the needs of the people. He had compassion on them because they were helpless.
- John 11:32-36 >> Lazarus was very sick. His sister, Mary, sent word to Jesus to come and help. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had died and was in the tomb for four days. Mary wept at the feet of Jesus and He was deeply moved. Jesus connected so much with Mary's troubles that He wept also. He then raised Lazarus from the dead.
- Philippians 2:5-8 >> Jesus, whose very nature is God, did not allow His divinity to prevent Him from becoming a man and so experiencing what it was like to be human.

Focus on Our Condition: (*Refer to this when you ask the Big Picture questions during the lesson*)

- We are born sinful. You don't need to teach a child to be selfish. Our lives are never innocent before God on our own efforts. We have inherited a condition from the first man who sinned against God, and we default to deserving eternal separation from God. Even Paul, who wrote a substantial part of the New Testament, struggled with a sin problem. (Romans 7:15-25)

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Facts >> Savior

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God during the session.
- Start by stating: “There are times people need serious help to get out of bad situations.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “Human beings are in a very bad situation due to their sin, and Jesus came to give them some serious help.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: John 8:3-11 (story); Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4-9;
- John 8:3-11
 [Note: The woman did break the Jewish law and faced death as a result. Adultery was punishable by death in that culture at that time.]
 1. So why, do you suppose, Jesus didn’t condemn her? [There are a few different levels to this answer, but one of them is that He had compassion on her and wanted to save her.]
- Romans 5:8
 1. Why did Christ have to die? [You may need to add some understanding here that God’s punishment for sin ultimately is death—eternal separation from Him. However, Jesus’ death can take the place of our death for our sins.]
 2. What was God’s motive for allowing a way for us to be rescued from the penalty of sin? How should our knowledge of that love of God affect our relationship with Him?
- Ephesians 2:4-9
 1. [You may want to read this passage before discussing the second question for Romans 5:8.]
 2. How does our salvation occur? What is God’s part? What must we do to apply that grace to us?
- The Big Picture
 1. What is true of us that makes us need a Savior?
 2. How do you think this passage relates to the topic we discussed earlier: “*There are times people need serious help to get out of bad situations?*”

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Jesus died for our sins, so we can have a close relationship with God.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that prevent people from accepting Jesus as Savior?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to point a friend to Jesus as Savior (OR) to accept Him as Savior yourself?”
- It may be appropriate to walk through the “Would You Like to Know God Personally?” booklet.
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.

Session Preparation Checklist

“The one who is greatest among you will be your servant.” Jesus



4 Facts >> Servant

KNOW YOUR GROUP:

- Pray for wisdom and for your group members by name, and consider the following:
 1. How is the group doing in building friendships right now?
 2. Is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?
 3. Anticipate how this discussion may impact those in your group who don't know Jesus.

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.
- Have a good personal example to share that relates to the opening statement.
- Have in mind how to transition to the hear section, “So it is in a relationship with God...”

HEAR:

Getting to know the passages: (Two of these passages may be enough to cover in one session.)

- John 13:1-17 >> Jesus gives a lesson in humility when he washes the feet of the disciples. Such a menial task was usually left to the servants. Here, Jesus sets an example that we should do for others what He has done.
- Mark 1:40-42 >> A man with leprosy begged Jesus to make him clean. Touching a person with such a disease brought defilement under the law. Jesus, however, unselfishly responded to the man's request and cured him.
- Ephesians 6:7,8 >> This passage challenges us to serve others as if we were serving God.

Focus on Jesus: (Refer to this when you ask the *Big Picture* questions during the lesson)

- We learn that Jesus came to serve, and not to be served. Not only this, but he had the power to cleanse a man from leprosy and also the power to forgive sin. He served us ultimately by giving His very life for us. We should live our lives for Him.

APPLY:

- Have in mind when and how to transition from HEAR to APPLY.
- Be prepared to encourage people to a specific action step. (Have an example in mind.)

TELL:

- Pray for courage to challenge students to do something that they are not comfortable doing.
- Consider which of your group members “tell” easily. Write their names here:

Name(s) _____

They may be good at leading their own group soon. When they are ready to start, make an discipleship appointment to challenge them.

4 Facts >> Servant

Group Discussion Outline



CONNECT with needs:

- Find out how they are doing. Ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and share the heart behind them.
- Pray for wisdom from God during the session.
- Start by stating: “People who are unselfish and serve make a powerful, positive impact on those around them.”
Then, surface experiences:
 “Let me tell you how I have experienced this.”
 “Tell us how you have experienced this.”
- Transition to the Bible by saying, “Jesus demonstrated that He was unselfish and sought to serve people.”

HEAR what God says:

- Read (or tell) a Bible story/passage related to the topic:
- Choices: John 13:1-17 (story); Mark 1:40-42 (story); Ephesians 6:7,8;
- John 13:1-17
 1. What are some qualities about Jesus we see in the act of washing the disciples’ feet?
 2. If we take the qualities of “humility” and “serving” beyond washing people’s feet, what are some ways we can apply those qualities in the context of our daily lives?
- Mark 1:40-42
 1. What might be some reasons Jesus wouldn’t want to touch the leper?
 2. So, why did he do it?

Note: This next passage moves from Jesus serving to our following His example in serving.
- Ephesians 6:7,8
 1. What would be some alternatives to wholehearted service? [Reluctant, begrudging]
 2. What are some examples you have seen of wholehearted service and begrudging service?
- The Big Picture
 1. What can we learn about Jesus or our response to Jesus?
 2. How do you think this passage relates to the topic we discussed earlier: *“People who are unselfish and serve make a powerful, positive impact on those around them?”*

APPLY that to life:

- State the main lesson: “Jesus lived His life on earth helping and serving others and asks us to do the same.” Have them write the “lesson learned” on their “mini-journal” handout.
- Discuss:
 “What are some things that keep us from helping or serving others?”
 “What is one action you can take this week to help or serve someone else?”
- Have them write down that specific “action to take.” Then in groups of two or three, have them share what action they plan to take. Finally, have them pray for one another.

TELL someone they know:

- Ask them to think about anyone who might be interested in hearing about what they are learning.
- If anyone in the group has more questions, encourage them to talk to someone about it.
- Have them write the name after “person to tell.” Then, in groups of two or three, have them share whom they plan to tell. Encourage them to tell those people in the next few days.



APPENDIX

Session Preparation Guide > > > > _____

Session Preparation Guidelines

(This correlates with the Session Preparation Checklist.)



PRAY

Only God can empower you to have a truly successful session. Take some time to pray for that before you dig into your specific preparation. Also pray that each person in your group:

1. Will attend this session.
2. Will be helped by God to understand what will be discussed.
3. Will apply the main lesson in some specific way this week.
4. Will share what was learned with someone else this week.

CONNECT

Be sure to have a good personal example ready to be able to tell how you have experienced the stated truth. This “lead” into the Bible discussion is intended to be a sharing of experiences not a debating of opinions. It should create a climate where most people acknowledge the truth from experience, so you can easily lead into the HEAR section with a statement like, “So it is in a relationship with God (or in the Christian life, etc.).”

Part of connecting involves assessing where your group members are spiritually. If there are a number of non-Christians present, your whole session may contain more explanation and may need to be sensitive about prayer times, etc.

Each week, you can use this time to ask the Weekly Stories questions, and refer to the Weekly Stories page for instruction on how to do this.

HEAR

Spend time reading over the possible Bible passages. Consider using the “alternate questions” listed in the Session Preparation Checklist on the page before each session in the Small-Group Leader’s Guide. These questions may be easier for you to use than the standard questions in the Group Discussion Outline. Ask yourself if there are other questions you would like to add or use instead. If, for example, your group consists mainly of non-Christians, you may need to ask questions which clarify or assure proper understanding, like: “Is there anything about this passage that isn’t making sense to you?”

It should prove helpful to plan which questions you are going to use for a particular Bible passage. That will help you guide the discussion more easily.

APPLY

This should flow very directly from the HEAR discussions. For example, in the “Walk Assured” lesson you should be able to say something like: “We agreed in our discussion at the beginning of the session that ‘relationships thrive on acceptance and assurance’. That



includes a relationship with God. We can see from our discussions related to the Bible that God does indeed love and accept people who have established a relationship with Him. So it is crucial to 'be sure of your personal relationship with God'."

Then the next logical question is, "Why don't we always experience assurance in our personal relationship with God?"

Every session has this kind of simple flow of thinking built into it. Don't make things too complicated or disjointed. Let the discussion flow from one step to the next. And make sure your group members do write down an "action to take" and share and pray about it. (You may need to share a personal example.) Life change leads to motivation to continue to grow and to talk about Christ with others.

TELL

Likewise make sure they plan to tell someone outside the group what they are learning. Realize that many people may be somewhat reluctant at first to talk about spiritual things with friends. But those simple discussions help the gospel spread through the networks of friends of the members of your group.

OVERALL

From time to time over the weeks, ask yourself:

1. What are some things I can do to build stronger relationships in the group? (For example, is this a good week to take a break from the regular material to do a group activity?)
2. Who among the group members seems ready to be challenged to take his/her own group? (Plan a time to talk to the person about it. Let him/her take a part of one of your sessions and acquaint the person with this Small-Group Leader's Guide.)
3. Are there some group members who seem like they don't know Christ? (Pray and look for opportunities to share Christ with them.)





Every week, you will notice this in the study preparation:

CONNECT:

- Prepare to ask the *Weekly Stories* questions and record them so you can input to the web later.

The idea behind these questions is to ask them every week. We want to develop a culture of “This is just who we are, and we share our faith with people around us.” You can make them very natural as a part of your discussion each week, and it will be exciting to see the people in your group get excited about sharing what they are learning and experiencing with others.

We want to be able to celebrate together what God is doing, and we also want to be evaluate whether or not we are being effective in reaching the campus with the Gospel. The best way to do that is through each individual Bible study. Can you imagine how cool it will be when we begin to hear reports that hundreds and thousands of students have heard the Gospel because students are sharing their faith with others around them?

We want to hear about what God is doing in your group each week, so if when you write down the numbers each week, you can record them online, and this way we will be able to share with all of you just how much God is doing among us.

Remember, each number represents a person that God loves, and we want to find ways to reach everyone! We will provide a way for you to give us your stats and information online.

You can do this in a group discussion fashion, and some students will have something to share, and others may not. This is ok! You want this to be a time to encourage people to apply what they learned and not just absorb knowledge! Be patient with your group, and share the heart behind why we are doing this together, and that is to reach others who need to know the Lord.

Definitions:

1. *Spiritual Conversation*: Asking questions about what someone believes, talking about anything spiritual, discussing Scripture and even part of the Gospel.
 2. *Sharing the Gospel*: Telling someone what they need to know to trust Christ for their salvation.
 3. *Follow-up*: Meeting someone to answer questions and to get them plugged-in to a small group.
-

So here are the questions you need to ask your group members each week:

1. Did you have any opportunities to get into spiritual conversations this past week? What are their names and what was it like talking with them?
2. Did any of your conversations allow you to share the Gospel with someone?
3. Did anyone you shared with make a decision to become a follower of Christ?
4. How many of these people are being pursued consistently for follow-up?