



Foundations Discipleship Guides

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: What do you suppose God is really like? What does He think of you? Most people develop a sort of inner picture of what God looks like, what His voice sounds like, and maybe even what His REAL motivation is in interacting with people. The fact of the matter is, God is our FATHER. Did your dad influence what you think of God? Maybe you were influenced well. Maybe not. But we can all be sure of this; God is more full of love for you than you've ever imagined. And He wants to be KNOWN by His children. Through the Word, through daily time with Jesus, and through loving, Christian community, God wants us to see and experience His Father's heart.

Worship: Read together Zephaniah 3:17, John 1:12-13. Sing or read the words of "How Deep the Father's Love For Us."

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Luke 15:11-31

Background: Jesus is telling a story here...perhaps the most famous story (parable) in the whole Bible. Usually known as the story of the Prodigal Son, Jesus describes God's Father Heart for His children in an unforgettable way.

What does this passage SAY about God's father heart?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Have the person make a list of attributes that describe their earthly father. Have them make a list of attributes that describe the father in this story. Lead them in a prayer exercise to renounce ways their earthly father did not reflect God the Father. Pray, "I renounce the lie Father God is.... And I receive the truth that my Father God is...."

Commitment: Who else needs to know God's Father heart? Will you share this with them this week?

Teaching guide

- There are two ways to leave the Father: being bad (younger son) and being good (older son).
- Repentance is "coming to our senses" and returning to God.
- God will always receive us when we leave him.
- God doesn't want us to live with false ideas of his character and his nature as Father. He is generous, sacrificial, affectionate, present and gracious.

Accountability question (next time you meet): Who did you share with about God's Father heart this week?

Digging Deeper: 1 John 3:1; Romans 8:15; *The Father Heart of God* by Floyd McClung; *Prodigal God* by Timothy Keller

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Who is Jesus? It is the most important question every human being must face. What makes Jesus more than a “great moral teacher?” What separates Him from the founders of any other global religion? What makes Jesus unique? Do you know who Jesus is? Do the people in your life know?

Worship: Meditate on Isaiah 53. Listen to or sing “None but Jesus” by Hillsong

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Matthew 16:13-28

Background: Jesus’ disciples have just returned from sharing about the coming Kingdom of God in neighboring villages. There are many ideas of who Jesus is. The time has come to share with His disciples who He is and what He has come to do.

What does this passage SAY about who Jesus is?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: *What are misconceptions people have about Jesus today? How will you respond to people with those ideas?*

Commitment: *Ask someone else this week who they believe Jesus is. Look for an opportunity to share who He said He was. Memorize one verse where Jesus claims to be God (list below).*

Teaching guide

- Jesus claimed to be God (see also John 1:1-3; John 5:17,18; John 8:58; John 10:33; John 14:9; John 17:21-22).
- As Jesus prophesied, He was crucified and then He rose from the dead.
- C.S. Lewis said, “A man who said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

Accountability question (next time you meet): Which person/nation/people group did you cover in prayer? How might you stay involved with them?

Digging Deeper: John 1; Colossians 1:15-20; Philippians 2:5-11; *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis; *More than just a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell; *God Came Near* by Max Lucado; *Passion for Jesus* by Mike Bickle

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: This is the core of what it means to follow Jesus. It is the foundation of our faith and essential for new believers to understand. But meditating on salvation is not limited to those who are new followers of Jesus. For the rest of our lives, we should seek to grow in our understanding of what Christ did for us on the cross. It's too easy to move on to other aspects of our faith and miss the deep power found in the simplicity of the Gospel message.

Worship: Consider reading Romans 8:31-38 and singing songs about the love of God.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Romans 3:23-25

Background: This passage is a clarification of the Gospel message. Paul is saying we cannot be right with God based on observing the law (being good enough).

What does this passage SAY about salvation from sin?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Take time to practice sharing the simplicity of this message with another person in the group. Consider going out as a Lifegroup to share this message with others.

Commitment: Have you received this free gift of salvation? If not, would you like to now?

List out people in your life who you know need to hear this message. Will you commit to share with them this week?

Teaching guide

- The salvation message has FOUR PRIMARY POINTS (taken from the Steps to Peace with God track):
 1. God's Plan: He loves us and has a plan for our lives (Jeremiah 29:11; John 3:16)
 2. Problem: We all have sinned. In other words, no one is innocent. We all deserve death and hell as the penalty for sin. No matter how many good deeds we do in life, we are still guilty in the eyes of God. (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:2)
 3. God's Solution: God sent Jesus to die for our sins. (Romans 5:8; John 14:6; 1 Peter 2:5)
 4. Our Response: we must trust Jesus as our Savior and receive Him into our life by grace. (Romans 10:9; Eph. 2:8; John 1:12)
- Justified is a courtroom term, which means to declare innocent.
- Redemption means to be brought with a price.
- Atonement means to appease God's wrath.

Accountability question (next time you meet): Who did you share the salvation message with since we last met?

Digging Deeper: Study Romans 1-8, John 3:14-20, and the book of Galatians.

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Baptism is an important aspect of our walk with Christ, so much so that when the apostle Peter shared the Gospel in Acts 2:38, he concluded by saying, “repent and be baptized, every one of you.” Baptism is a symbol of our new covenant with Christ, much like a wedding ceremony symbolizes the covenant of marriage. When we are baptized, the reality that we are dead to sin and alive in Christ comes alive in us in a fresh way.

Worship: Sing songs focused on the work of the cross. Consider meditating on Isaiah 53.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Matthew 3:1-12

Background: John the Baptist is calling large crowds to repent of their sins and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.

What does this passage SAY about water baptism?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Take time in the following week or two as a Lifegroup to celebrate baptism for any members who are seeking to make this commitment.

Commitment: Is there anyone here who has never been baptized? Are you willing to make this commitment? Do you know others who say they are Christians and have not been baptized? How can you encourage them this week?

Teaching guide

- Baptism is a **picture/reminder** of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. It is a symbolic act through immersion in water. When we go down under the water, it reminds us that our old self (our sin) has been buried with Jesus. When we come up out of the water, it reminds us that we have been raised with Jesus to a new life. Baptism is also a **special sign to God and others** that we love Jesus and want to follow Him. Baptism is not optional but the first command Jesus has given new believers (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38).
- The New Testament word baptism means to be dipped or immersed.
- It pictures death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4).
- John the Baptist used “much water” (John 3:23).
- It should be done as soon as possible after believing.
- All commands to be baptized are immediate. (Acts 8:35-38; Acts 10:44-48).

Accountability question (next time you meet): How have you responded to the command of Jesus to be baptized? Are you encouraging those you disciple to be baptized?

Digging Deeper: *T4T A Discipleship Revolution* by Steve Smith with Ying Kai

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Jesus did not leave us alone on the earth when He ascended into Heaven, He left us His Holy Spirit. In fact, He even told us that it was *better* for Him to leave so the Spirit could be with us. This is a shocking statement! Do we really believe it? Do we actually live this way? The Holy Spirit is not an “it” or “thing”. The Spirit is a person; God’s presence in our midst. Too many Christians do not experience the fullness of what it means to truly know the Spirit and miss out on this incredible gift of the person of God.

Worship: Sing several songs focused on the presence of God. Consider meditating on Psalm 139:7-12. Wait on the Lord and corporately share what you heard.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): John 16:5-16

Background: Jesus was teaching the disciples to prepare them for life once He departed the earth.

What does this passage SAY about the Holy Spirit?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Take time either during Lifegroup or at a later point to sit quietly and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the group. Have people write out whatever came to mind. It is okay to not be sure, just write what you sense. Share with someone in the group what you felt. Often it is a simple encouragement or a Scripture that comes to mind. More mature believers can help others discern what is God speaking to them.

Commitment: Will you set aside time during your personal devotions to listen for the voice of the Spirit and write out whatever He says every morning this week?

Teaching guide

- The Holy Spirit is a person, not an “it”.
- The Holy Spirit comes to reside in us when we receive Christ (John 3:3-8; Ephesians 1:13-14).
- The Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of all truth (John 14:26).
- The Holy Spirit teaches and convicts us.
- The Holy Spirit speaks to us. This does not replace the authority of the Bible, but it does represent His leadership in our life. Every believer has access to the Spirit so every believer is capable of hearing God.

Accountability question (next time you meet): Did you take time to listen for the voice of the Spirit this week? If so, what did you feel that He was speaking?

Digging Deeper: *Surprised by the Voice of God* and *Surprised by the Power of God* both by Jack Deere.

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Have you ever felt powerless? Maybe you were trying to do something and got too tired to finish. Or maybe you have taken on a task that was just too big for you. Well, God has called us to live a life that is entirely impossible for us to live. We are powerless on our own to make the blind see, heal the sick, and be fruitful witnesses throughout the world. We also struggle to live with sustained joy and boldness. Yet God doesn't leave us without a supernatural power source. He has given us the Holy Spirit. The scripture describes an ongoing experience of being filled with His power as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. God wants us to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit and encourage others to do the same.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Acts 2:1-41

Background:

What does this passage SAY about the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: *There is no one method for being baptized with the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Neither is there only one manifestation of the Spirit. The following are common, biblical characteristics of those who experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit: A hunger for more of God (Matthew 5:8), desire for spiritual gifts and God's power (1 Corinthians 14:1), confession of all known sins (Acts 19:18), coming to Jesus and believing His promise (John 7:37-38), asking to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13), and expecting manifestations like prophecy or tongues or joy or boldness (Acts 19:6 – See also Acts 4:31-35; 13:53). Put on some worship music. Focus on Jesus. Repent of any known sins. Read a few of the scripture promises about the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-38; Luke 11:13; Acts 1:8). Lay hands on one another asking the Father to fill you with the Holy Spirit. Believe and receive Him in faith.*

Commitment: *Ask God every morning this week to be filled with the Holy Spirit.*

Teaching guide

- The Holy Spirit came into your life when you received Christ. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit is unique experience from salvation but they can happen at the same time.
- Jesus was “born of the Spirit” at conception (Luke 2:26-38), yet He was “baptized in the Holy Spirit” (filled or anointed) when the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove at His baptism (Luke 3:21-22; 4:1, 14, 18-19). The same is true for us. We are “born of the Spirit” when we receive Christ (John 3:5-6; John 20:22; Ephesians 1:13-14) but are baptized in the Spirit (Acts 1:8, Acts 2; Acts 19:1-7) when the Spirit “comes upon” us in power.
- The baptism of the Spirit is not just a one-time experience but we are encouraged to “be continually filled” with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18; John 20:22; Acts 2:4, 4:31).
- We need the baptism of the Holy Spirit so that we can do the works that Jesus did – even greater ones (John 14:12-13).
- The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve the church and extend the Kingdom of God. These gifts are abilities that are supernaturally empowered by God. (1 Corinthians 12:1-8).

Accountability question (next time you meet): Did you ask every day to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Did you notice anything different?

Digging Deeper: Review Scripture references in the Teaching Guide and Practice sections; *Surprised by the Power of the Holy Spirit* by Jack Deere

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: There is no other book in the world like the Bible. The Bible was written over a 1500-year span by over forty authors in three languages. It records over 1000 references to fulfilled prophecies and an eyewitness account of a supernatural miracle of God in most of its 66 books. The Bible is regarded as the most reliable text of any piece of literature ever. It has been translated into other languages more than any other book. And for 2000 years, countless lives have been transformed by its message. The Bible is God's Word to us. He speaks to us through His Word today. Let's consider today what the Bible says about itself and what we and others need to know.

Worship: Read Psalm 119:1-16

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): 2 Timothy 3:10-4:5

Background: Paul is in prison giving one last charge to his son in the faith, Timothy.

What does this passage SAY about the Scriptures?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message(s) with this week?

Practice: Teach them the SOS Bible study method. Have them explain it back to you .

Commitment: Encourage them to read one chapter in the gospel of John everyday for 21 days. Have them do the SOS Bible in a journal according to the following pattern.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the Scripture.
- Read one chapter.
- Write one verse or phrase that God highlighted as you read.
- Write in your own words what God is SAYING.
- Write "I will...". Then state one thing God wants you to OBEY from his word.
- Write the name of one person with whom you can SHARE this with.

Teaching guide

- God spoke through imperfect men perfectly what He wanted us to know (2 Peter 1:19-21).
- All of the scripture is God-breathed. This means that God is the author of the bible and the author is with us each time we read it! (John 5:39-40).
- The Bible has authority over our thoughts (Hebrews 4:12).
- The Bible has authority over our emotions (Psalm 199:81).
- The Bible has authority over other people (Acts 17:11).

Accountability question (next time you meet): What has God been speaking to you through the Bible this week? have you used the SOS Bible study method?

Digging Deeper: 30 Days to Understanding the Bible by Max Anders ; Psalm 119

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Have you ever had a relationship with someone you never talk to? Not likely. Having a relationship with someone implies that you communicate with them. Prayer is “talking” with God. We can communicate with God in the same way we can with any other person. Prayer should be natural conversation with God. When you pray you should be honest and sincere. We don’t have to pray perfectly. Jesus will teach you just as he did His disciples. And in turn, He will help us teach others to do the same.

Worship: Read Psalm 86 or, if you are able, sing a song or two related to calling out to God.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Luke 11: 1-13

Background: Some of Jesus’ disciples have overheard him praying. They are so stirred by how and what he prayed that they asked Him to teach them.

What does this passage SAY about prayer?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Spend time praying through each type of prayer (Praise, Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition, Intercession). Model the type of prayer first then have them do it. Have them explain back to you each type of prayer.

Commitment: Make list of things to pray for this week. Take five minutes every day to thank God for something He has done, confess any known sins and make requests for the things on the list.

Teaching guide

- Prayer is communicating with God, both talking and listening
- There are different ways we pray to God
 - Praise “Hallowed by your name” – honoring God for who He is.
 - Thanksgiving – gratitude for what God has done.
 - Petition “Give me this day...” – making requests of God.
 - Confession “Forgive us...” – admitting sin.
 - Intercession “As we forgive those...” – asking God to help others.
- Prayer requires perseverance at times.
- Prayer is an indicator that we need God and trust Him as our good Father.
- We pray to the Father in Jesus’ name.

Accountability question (next time you meet): Were you able to pray every day this week?

Digging Deeper: Luke 18:1-4; *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray; *Prayer* by Richard Foster

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Have you ever felt alone? When God created the first man, Adam, He declared, “It is not good for man to be alone.” (Genesis 2:18). Then He created Eve. People were made to live in community. Just look around our culture and you’ll see people looking for authentic community someplace – clubs, bars, online. God’s intention from the very beginning was to form families that would give Him glory and multiply out all over the world. God’s community is called the church. The church is not a building, program or the keeper of rules. The church is people; people called out by God for the purposes of God.

Worship: Read Psalm 100.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): 1 Peter 2:9-12

Background: Peter is writing to encourage suffering believers.

What does this passage SAY about the church?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: Memorize 1 Peter 2:9. Say it out loud together.

Commitment: Commit to attend a Sunday service together and join or start a Lifegroup.

Teaching guide

- The word church, actually means “the called-out ones.” The church is not a building or program or even a doctrinal statement. The church is people, people who have been called out by God to follow Christ.
- The church is called the body of Christ because it does His work on earth (Ephesians 2:22; 3:10-11).
- The mission of the church is to declare the good news of who God is and what He has done to the world.
- God encourages us to gather consistently with other believers for encouragement (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- You cannot love Christ and not love the church as imperfect as we are. (Acts 9:1-6).
- The local church is the hope of the world! (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Accountability question (next time you meet): Have you committed to gather regularly with a group of believers?

Digging Deeper: Read Ephesians; 1 and 2 Timothy; *The Church Can Change the World* by Jimmy Seibert; *The Body* by Charles Colson

Pastoral Care: How are you doing today?

Accountability: How did you do with what we talked about last week?

Vision: Men are often remembered by their last words. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He used His last words to charge His disciples with the mission of changing the world. The disciples were probably shocked as they realized God didn't have a backup plan for world transformation, but rather, discipleship through the everyday Christian was His only plan. These words deserve special attention and action from us as His disciples, as He lays out strategic elements and the promise of His Power and Presence to complete what Jesus came to do. If we are going to follow Jesus, we are to join Him by working with Him to complete what He came to do: make disciples of all nations!

Worship: Read Psalm 67 or, if you are able, sing a song or two related to God's sovereign power and love for people.

Discovery Bible Study (SOS): Matthew 28:18-20

Background: Jesus is speaking the last words He will speak to His disciples in person before ascension.

What does this passage SAY our mission in life?

- What verse is God highlighting to you? What is He saying?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does it say about God? About you?

What do you need to OBEY?

- What is one thing God is speaking to you to do this week?
- What needs to change this week for you to obey?

Who is one person who you need to SHARE this message with this week?

Practice: *If you are already discipling, write down how these verses will change the way you disciple. If not, write a list of those who don't know Jesus yet and ask Holy Spirit how you can serve them or initiate spiritual conversations with them.*

Commitment: *Follow through with your obedience/practice plan in the next two weeks.*

Teaching guide

- Jesus is speaking to all believers, not just those in vocational ministry, and we should have the same sense of purpose.
- Jesus challenged His disciples to receive the power of the Holy Spirit and start where you are to impact the world (Acts 1:8).
- Take time to ask Jesus to fill you with more of His Spirit and power (Luke 3:16).
- If the Holy Spirit has not directed you elsewhere, ask the Spirit of God to give you vision and direction to start making disciples where you are: your workplace, your family, your neighborhood, etc.
- Note the difference between *teaching* them the words of Jesus and teaching them to *obey* the words of Jesus. Discipleship is teaching people obedience to Jesus' Word.
- Look to disciple those who are spiritually hungry. You will know these people because they obey what Jesus says.

Accountability question (next time you meet): How did you implement discipleship based off Matthew 28:18-20 since we met last? How did it go?

Digging Deeper: *Changing the World through Discipleship* by Robert Herber.