



New Testament Survey

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Group Exercises: Leader Guide

Welcome to Our Daily Bread University's (ODBU) New Testament survey course. In this course, ODBU provides the content of the New Testament survey through lectures and related study materials. On the days when you meet with the students who are participating in the course, you, as the students' leader, will encourage them to interact meaningfully with the content they have already taken in. The purpose of this guide is to provide you with some ideas for activities and exercises that will challenge the students to engage and interact with the teaching.

These exercises and activities have been provided to us by Dr. Sid Buzzell, former Chairman of the Theology Department at Colorado Christian University. He used ODBU's course content in his teaching of both Old and New Testament survey to hundreds of college students each year. The suggestions he makes in this guide have already been tried in classrooms and proven to be successful teaching/learning tools. You now can benefit from his creative thinking and from his experience.

In addition to using Dr. Buzzell's materials, we want to encourage you to think of some exercises that will be unique to your personality and teaching style. Here are some general ideas of types of activities you might develop:

- 1. Provide additional information on the Bible book or topic you are discussing with your students. As you view the ODBU lessons the students are completing, you may think of additional information that you want to cover in your meetings using a short discussion. Feel free to add material as you desire, but keep in mind that you should allow time for students to interact with each other and, with your oversight and involvement, to engage with and apply the information they are learning.**
- 2. Discussion. Some topics lend themselves to open discussion on a particular topic led by the teacher. Often these discussions can be initiated by questions the students may have as they study the biblical text.**
- 3. Small-group discussion. You might break the group of students into smaller learning teams to discuss and/or debate on one of the topics or to share with one another their own exegesis and application of a passage or question.**
- 4. Case studies/problem-solving groups. You might give students a problem to solve or an example (fictional or actual) that will encourage discussion and application of the concepts taught in the lesson.**

Be creative and innovative. This kind of teaching is an opportunity to try new ideas, which will encourage students to be actively involved in learning. By the time they meet with the group, you know they have taken in the course material. In the group meetings, the real assimilation of the material begins, and there is almost no limit on ways in which that engagement with the text can occur. So enjoy this course as you use the activities in this guide and as you develop your own style of interacting with students that will encourage their lifelong study of the Bible.

NT220 Jesus in Galilee: Popularity and Misunderstanding

220:1 The Steady Ministry and Fickle Response

Exegetical Discussion: Who Is Jesus?

Matthew 16:13-23:

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

1. If Jesus (or anyone) asked you this question today, how would you answer? Obviously most people wouldn't think of John the Baptist or Elijah. But as you read, view and listen to media, and converse with others, what are some of the impressions today of who Jesus is?
2. What are five different ideas you have heard about who Jesus is?

15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

1. Setting aside all other impressions and ideas, how would you answer this question? Who is Jesus to you? How do you think of Him, picture Him, relate to Him?

16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

1. What does Peter's response mean? How did Peter view Jesus?
2. If someone truly believes this statement about Jesus, how should that influence their life day-to-day?
3. Pause for a few minutes and seriously examine your own attitude toward Jesus. List a few ways your life is different because you follow Him.

Although Peter claimed that Jesus was the Christ, that He was the Son of the living God (and probably did believe what he said), he still responded to Jesus in a way that seemed to contradict what he had just claimed. Read how Matthew continued the story . . .

21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

1. Why do you think Peter rebuked Jesus?
2. Why did the fact that Peter's mind was set on himself more than on “the things of God” influence his answer?

220:2 The Sermon on the Mount: How God's Kingdom Works

Discussion: Jesus' Teaching: Idealistic or Serious?

Ronald Rolheiser writes, counsels, and teaches, mainly on the topic of spiritual formation. He expressed the following concern:

More and more, as I lecture and write, I am being challenged by people, young and old, who are protesting against idealism. This protest takes many forms. Most commonly it sounds something like this: "Whether certain principles and values are true or false is not so relevant. What is relevant is that virtually everyone has decided to ignore them and live in a different way. Nobody is living like that anymore—everyone is living in this way now.

Implicit in this is that if everyone is living in a certain way, then this way must be right. Values by common denominator. Principles by Gallup poll.

Occasionally, this critique takes a more cynical bent: "Idealism is naive, for kids. The mature, the realistic do not live with their heads in the clouds. Hence, adjust, update, recognize what is there and accept it, live like everyone else is living" (Ronald Rolheiser, *Forgotten Among the Lilies*, p. 52).

Read the following excerpt from Jesus' teaching, which some say falls under the category Rolheiser referred to as idealistic and naive.

Matthew 5:43-46 (NASB): 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

What is your honest response to that teaching? Of course, you need to read it in its larger context, but this teaching, taken at face value, is a strange statement in the 21st century.

1. What did Jesus mean here?
2. What does He expect us to do in response?
3. How would you live this out?
4. Is it realistic to take it seriously or should we categorize it as Rolheiser described above?
5. As you study the Bible and discover teachings that, if followed, would change your life:
 - a. What would be the response of your close friends?
 - b. Are you prepared to live by Jesus' teaching even if others call you unrealistic and idealistic?
 - c. What parts of Jesus' ethic would you find easiest to live out and what parts would you find most difficult?
6. If you were teaching a Bible study, how comfortable and confident would you feel teaching your peers to live as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount?