

LEADER'S GUIDE

The Basics of Our Faith

Course Lecturer: D.A. Horton

If you have not already done so, it is important that you first review our [Leader's Packet](#) for specifics on how to open, facilitate, and close your group sessions.

This Leader's Guide walks you step by step through this lesson. Use as much of the suggested material as you find helpful. Some sections have more than one discussion question or idea so you can choose an option that fits your group. Feel free to add other ideas as well. You may also choose to extend this particular lesson to two or more sessions.

The Leader's Guide contains information that isn't covered in the Listening Guide so the group session adds value to those who have completed the Listening Guide.

Step by Step Through the Study

As you prepare for the session, you will find information you need to lead the discussion questions in this Leader's Guide.

Watch the introduction video for this course at [ODBU.org/discipleship-toolkit-series/](https://www.odbu.org/discipleship-toolkit-series/). You can also choose to download the transcript.

You can tailor this portion of your session to your group's interests and needs by selecting questions appropriate to your group.

What Is the Bible?

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 1. “The Bible is God’s love letter to His children. It is what you hold onto through all your experiences.”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

The Bible, to Christians, is a document of letters inspired by God and written for God’s people. Each letter provides us with a snapshot of God’s character, God’s love, and God’s plan to save us from the penalty of our sin. God revealed the information in Scripture to humans. Humans then used their language and personality to communicate to others what God shared with them. The Bible provides Christians with insights on what we should believe. These beliefs then determined how we are to live our life. Let’s unpack a couple of verses about God’s Word, the Bible.

Read 2 Peter 1:16–21 (NLT)

Further Study

This Scripture is telling us that our life experiences, although real and valid, should never be placed above what the Bible teaches. In our text, Peter shares what he witnessed with his own eyes regarding the transfiguration of Jesus, yet, in light of this real experience, he tells his readers that his confidence and theirs should be rooted in God’s Word.

2. What are some of your life experiences that influence the way you view the Bible? (discuss or write them down)

Further Study

2 Peter 1:16–21 – Peter weighs his life experiences in light of Scripture. He then shows how to use Scripture to determine what we believe, not just our experiences.

- The word Peter uses for “interpretation” means to untie something – it points us back to the fact that no human could have ‘untied’ or ‘unloosed’ God’s thoughts. God had to inspire

the humans and reveal thoughts to them. Simply put, man didn't make up the words of Scripture on their own. The words came directly from God.

- “carried them along” – is the process in which the Holy Spirit guided the writers of Scripture from writing anything that was false or contradicting to what was written before or after them.

3. How have you allowed experiences in your life to determine what you believe?
4. How do your beliefs compare to Scripture?
5. What practices can you put in place to search Scripture for clarity regarding what you believe?

Further Study

In the video, D. A. talked about the game “Big bank takes little bank” and related that to Peter’s life experience. D. A. said Peter’s experience during his life with Jesus was a “big bank” while our experiences are a “little bank.” Peter’s experiences were greater than ours simply because he was physically around Jesus. In spite of this, Peter then tells us to place the Scripture, not our experiences, as the authority for our life’s decisions.

D. A. said Scripture speaks to our life’s situations and struggles. We must use Scriptures to see how characters in the Bible had similar experiences to what we’ve had. In doing this, we’ll begin to see Scripture as a source for truth. A source we turn to during our moments of struggle. Let’s look at 2 Timothy 3:16 in order to see the “why” and “how” we should use Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16 – Tells us that all Scripture is inspired by God. The Word inspired means to be “breathed out.” This tells us that all Scripture comes directly from God. Since this is true, we have to look at how we are to use Scripture:

- Teaching – help others understand what God’s truth is.
- Rebuking – help others see where their beliefs don’t line up with God’s truth.
- Correcting – help others replace the error of their beliefs with God’s truth, as found in Scripture.
- Training in righteousness – help others to know how to live right before God.

6. What are some Scripture passages that you have memorized?
7. How often do you quote them when you’re facing temptation to sin?
8. What keeps you from memorizing Scripture?

Further Study

This passage has shown us Scripture is lets us know how to “get right” and “stay right.” We must make it a habit to study God’s love letter, asking God to reveal wisdom in how we use Scripture for guidance. In Ephesians 6:17, Paul says that our offensive weapon in the spiritual battle we face daily is the “sword of the Spirit,” which is the Bible, God’s Word. Paul is telling us that when we are engaged in a spiritual battle, our primary weapon is Scripture. When we quote Scripture during

times spiritual battles we fight back and slay the evil one.

9. Read Matthew 4:1–11. How does Jesus use Scripture? What is the result? What does this tell you about the power of Scripture?
10. Read Luke 2:46–47 & 2:52. What do these verses tell you about Jesus' knowledge of Scripture? How old was Jesus when this occurred? Does this encourage you to learn Scripture?
11. What do you think the world would look like if there was no Bible?
12. How would you explain the importance of the Bible to a friend?

Reflection

It is important to promote this Reflection time in each session of the course. Ask the members to think back over what they have just experienced and form at least one point they can add to their understanding of God's Word. These insights may or may not match what they expected at the beginning of the lesson. Have them reflect on those affirmations or changes.

Also emphasize that this part of the group session could be an important time for participants to minister to other members of the group. Not everyone "sees" the same emphases and something one person highlights may be an added insight to others in the group.

Close in Prayer

You may want to ask if anyone is dealing with something they would like prayer for. Depending on the size of your group, it would be meaningful to pray for each person by name.

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 2. “God the Father loves you and is with you every day in all your experiences even when you do not feel His presence.”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

The Bible never tries proving God’s existence. If the Bible is breathed out by God then its very existence proves God exists. When we text someone, we don’t open our text to them by proving we’re alive.

During our next three videos we’re going to work through each person of the Trinity. The word Trinity is not in the Bible but it is a word used by Christians to describe what the Bible says about God and His existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Read Matthew 3:16 (NLT)

Further Study

In this Scripture we see such God the Father speaking, as God the Son is baptized, while God the Holy Spirit descends on Him like a dove. All three are existing at the same time; they are distinct from each other but remain equal.

2. What are your initial thoughts about God existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit but still being classified as “one”?
3. How do you feel when you hear the word *father*?
4. What are some initial thoughts you have about God being called “father”?
5. Do you view God in the same way you view your biological dad?

Further Study

In the video, D. A. explains that God is our Father and how the word father is a word that brings up all kinds of emotions for us. D. A. said how his relationship with his dad wasn't good. This led him to believe if God was his father, then God must be a bad "dad" like his dad.

Let's look at a few Scriptures to see how God the Father is not like our physical dads.

Psalm 103:19 – Tells us that God's throne is up in the heavens and God's power rules over all people and all things. God the Father has total control over everything and everyone.

Psalm 115:3 – Tells us that God is in the heavens and He does what He pleases. Since God is perfect and has no sin we can be sure that everything God does is good and never evil.

6. Have any of your life experiences been like those of Joseph?
7. Have you ever felt abandoned by God like Joseph did?

Further Study

D. A. walked us through the life of Joseph. During most of Joseph's life he couldn't catch a break. He was sold into slavery by his own family, put in prison for a crime he didn't commit, and then forgotten by people he helped. It would've been natural for Joseph to feel like God abandoned him based on his hard life. Scripture shows us that Joseph wasn't alone. God was with him the entire time!

Let's go back to God's Word to find encouragement regarding our life's experiences. We'll read how, like Joseph, God has never left us. Instead God wants to turn our mess into a message that will encourage others to turn to God!

Ephesians 1:11 – Tells us that God not only controls all things but that God also works all things together according to the will of God. For believers this means that in all of our life circumstances, through good and bad times, we can know that God is with us. God is not causing the bad things to happen; rather, as they happen, God is in the thick of it. God is helping us working through these times to bring about His will.

Romans 8:28 – Tells us again that God works through all the things we go through in life. God will work experiences for our good because we're called according to His purpose.

- Joseph – sold into slavery by his brothers; lied on by Potiphar's wife; thrown into prison where he was forgotten; then became a Prime Minister of Egypt and forgave his brothers. Joseph told his brothers "what you meant for evil but God meant for good." *Leader Note: Ask a student to read Genesis 50:20 – "you intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people."*
- Job – suffered many things; all his children were killed; suffered with physical disease; and his friends told him he was wrong.

8. Review the Scripture passages for this session. What did these passages teach you about God?

9. What practices do you incorporate into your life to remind you of God's presence? How specifically can you become more aware of God in the coming week?
10. What are the primary characteristics of the Father?
11. How has God been present in your life as Father?
12. What reminds you of God's presence in your life? How do you think you can become more aware of God's presence?

Reflection

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Close in Prayer

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Who Is God the Son?

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 3. “Jesus is God the Son. He not only claimed it but demonstrated it. But what does this mean for you?”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

Jesus is God but unlike God the Father or God the Holy Spirit. Jesus became fully human in order to be the payment for sinners, who needed to be bought out of sin’s slavery.

In our video D. A. talked about how Jesus declared Himself to be God, how Jesus demonstrated He is God, and how the work of Jesus impacts us today. Before we walk through some conversation points brought up in the video, let’s read a Scripture that focuses in on Jesus becoming human.

Read John 1:14 (NLT)

Further Study

This Scripture tells us that nobody can be classified as being the same status as Jesus. Jesus, who has always been God, entered into our world and clothed Himself in human flesh. Many people have claimed to be God but only Jesus demonstrated He was God.

2. If someone told you, “Jesus never claimed to be God,” how would you respond to them? (discuss or write down your answer)

Further Study

Jesus declared Himself to be God – many people say Jesus never claimed to be God; however, the Bible shows that He in fact did

- John 5:17–18 – (Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)
 - ◇ Jesus says was still working because God, His Father, was still working. The people

thought that by claiming God as His father that Jesus was saying He was equal to God. They wanted to kill Him for this claim.

- John 8:57-59 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ Jesus told the people that He existed before Abraham was born. He claimed to be God by saying the phrase “I Am.”
 - ◊ The people picked up stones to kill Him because of another claim of being God.

In the video D. A. took time to show how Jesus demonstrated to people He was/is God. Let’s look at a few passages that show us Jesus’ demonstrations of His Godhood:

Jesus demonstrated He is God – Many people claim to be God. Being able to demonstrate it is what separates Jesus from everyone else. Jesus demonstrated He was God by showing us:

- Omnipotence (He’s all-powerful)
 - ◊ Matthew 8:26-27 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ Jesus spoke to the storm and told it to be still.
 - ◊ The weather obeyed Him.
 - ◊ Matthew 8:32 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ Jesus spoke to the demons that possessed a man and told them to leave him just by saying one word, “go.”
 - ◊ The demons obeyed.
- Omniscience & Omnipresence (He knows all things and is everywhere)
 - ◊ Mark 2:8 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ Jesus knew the thoughts in the people’s minds who heard Him tell a paralyzed man his sins were forgiven.
 - ◊ Jesus healed the man to prove that He was given the authority by God to both forgive sins and heal.
- Omnipresence (Him being all in more places than one)
 - ◊ John 1:47-51 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ Jesus told Nathaniel that he saw him while Nathaniel was alone under a fig tree.
 - ◊ Nobody knew Nathaniel was there. Jesus wasn’t even there physically, but when Jesus told this to him, Nathaniel put his trust in Jesus.

3. How does Jesus’ declaration and demonstration to be God impact your life?

Further Study

The Scriptures overwhelming show that Jesus declared Himself to be God. Jesus also demonstrated before the presence of many eyewitnesses that He truly was God.

How Jesus’ Work Impacts Us Daily –

- John 1:1–14
 - ◊ Tells us that Jesus left heaven and clothed himself in human flesh.
- Hebrews 4:15 – *(Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.)*
 - ◊ This Scripture tells us Jesus was tempted to sin just like you and me.
 - ◊ Jesus never fell into this temptation. His life was completely perfect.

- Matthew 27
 - ◇ Chronicles Jesus' physical sufferings that included being beaten, mocked, whipped, and crucified. Jesus was crucified on a Roman cross as if he were a criminal receiving the death penalty.
 - Matthew 28
 - ◇ Gives us a detailed record of Jesus' resurrection. The resurrection proves His payment for sin was accepted by God!
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17–20 – (*Leader Note: Ask a student to read this passage.*)
 - ◇ Tells us that when we embrace what Jesus did in our place, the old us dies and we're born again, as a new creature in Jesus.
 - ◇ We have been reconciled to God through Jesus and now are called to tell all the sinners we know they can be reconciled to God through Jesus too.
4. Review the Scripture passages for this session. What did you these passages teach you about Jesus?
 5. What do the following words tell us about Jesus: fully human and fully divine? Why are these words important?
 6. How would your life be different if you walked each day in a relationship that glorified the Father through the Son?
 7. What, in your opinion, is a Christian? What makes a person a Christian?
 8. What has changed in your life since you became a Christian?

Reflection

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Close in Prayer

You may want to ask if anyone is dealing with something they would like prayer for. Depending on the size of your group, it would be meaningful to pray for each person by name.

Who Is the Holy Spirit?

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 4. “The Holy Spirit is not a “thing” or “it” or “force”. The Holy Spirit is a person with a mind, will and emotions. He is God. Can you tell if the Holy Spirit is living in you?”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

A lot of people go to two extremes when talking about God the Holy Spirit. Either they don't talk about the Holy Spirit at all or they talk about the Spirit incorrectly and/or too much. The Bible is clear in affirming that God the Holy Spirit is God and that the Holy Spirit is active in the lives of believers.

People often talk about the Holy Spirit as a thing or it rather than a person. The Bible clearly identifies the Holy Spirit as God, as well as having the characteristics of a person, as opposed to a “thing” or “it.” In this video we'll talk through how the Bible supports the truth that the Holy Spirit is God and a person. We'll close by looking at how the Holy Spirit works in the lives of Christians.

Read Acts 5:3-4 (NLT)

Further Study

This Scripture passage is telling us that the Holy Spirit is in fact God.

2. What are your thoughts regarding the actions of Ananias and his wife? (discuss or write down your response)

Further Study

The Holy Spirit as God –

- Acts 5:3-4 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ Ananias and Sapphira sold their property and kept back some of the money for

themselves. Peter asked them why they lied to the Holy Spirit. He then told them “you didn’t lie to man but God.”

- 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ This passage tells us that God reveals all things to us through the help of the Spirit. No one knows the depth of God’s mind except God. The Holy Spirit knows the thoughts of God because the Holy Spirit is God.

3. What thoughts enter your mind regarding the Holy Spirit being a person?
4. How does the personhood of the Holy Spirit affect your life?

Further Study

In addition to seeing the Holy Spirit as God we must also see the Holy Spirit as being a person, not a “thing” or an “it.”

Let’s work through a few passages that show us why we can trust the teaching that the Holy Spirit is a person:

The Holy Spirit as a Person – A person possesses emotions, intellect and the ability to make decisions about what they have a will or desire to do.

- Isaiah 63:10 and Ephesians 4:30 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read these passages)
 - ◇ These Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit can be grieved by our actions.
 - ◇ Grief is an emotion.
- 1 Corinthians 2:10 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ We already discussed how the Bible shows us that the Holy Spirit has intellect. The Holy Spirit has full knowledge of God’s thoughts.
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 - (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ This Scripture tells us that every Christian has been given at least one spiritual gift. This gift is to be used for God’s glory through the building up of the saints in the local church.
 - ◇ The Holy Spirit is the one who determines what gifts are given to each believer.

Let’s tie all of this together by looking at the Holy Spirit’s role in our day-to-day life.

The Holy Spirit’s Ministry in our lives –

- Romans 8:9-17
 - ◇ Tells us the Holy Spirit lives in all believers. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to say “no” to sin and yes to living righteous. The Holy Spirit also affirms that we’re children of God because we’ve been saved by Jesus Christ.
- Romans 8:26 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ Tells us that when we pray, even if we don’t know what to say, the Holy Spirit is making perfect pleas to God the Father on our behalf.
- Galatians 5:22-23 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ Tells us that the Holy Spirit will bear fruit in our lives. This fruit confirms that the Holy Spirit is working in our lives, as we mature in our walk with Christ.

- Ephesians 5:18-21 –(Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ Tell us that we are to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit rather than being under the influence of alcohol (or any other substance we can abuse).
 - ◇ Evidences of us being under the influence of the Holy Spirit are joy, thankfulness, and submission.
5. When have you been aware of the Holy Spirit in your life?
 6. Re-read Galatians 5:22 and write down the “fruit of the Spirit.” What can you do to allow these characteristics to show in your life?
 7. Re-read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, then read Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11-16. Ask yourself “what gifts has the Holy Spirit given you?” The following questions may help you identify your spiritual gifts. What do you like to do? What do people ask you to do or tell you they appreciate you doing? How could you use these things to glorify God? Are the things you like to do similar to any of the Spiritual Gifts mentioned earlier?
 8. How would you describe the Holy Spirit to someone?

Reflection

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Close in Prayer

You may want to ask if anyone is dealing with something they would like prayer for. Depending on the size of your group, it would be meaningful to pray for each person by name.

What Is Salvation?

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 5. “You were born a sinner, but God did not leave you in your sin. God accepted the payment of Jesus death on your behalf for your sin. Salvation means that you, as a sinner, have been rescued from the wrath of God you deserve.”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

In our video D.A. walked us through what it means to be “saved.” The question most non-believers normally asked is “what do I need to be saved from?” Understand how to best answer that question can be tricky. We must take time to look at our personal sin and our personal need for a Savior. This will allow us to unpack the beauty of Salvation and our day-to-day sanctification.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

Further Study

This Scripture passage is telling us that God chose to save us by grace. We cannot be saved by our own efforts. We cannot “work” or “earn” our way into being save.

2. What does it mean to be saved by grace? (discuss or write them down)

Further Study

In order to really understand salvation we must take time to understand our sin. Let’s take a look at the reality of sin.

Our Sin – In Genesis 3 we see Adam disobeyed God.

- Romans 5:12 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ This Scripture tells us when Adam disobeyed God sin and death entered our world.
- Romans 3:23 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◇ This Scripture tells us that everyone has fallen short of God’s perfect standard.

- John 8:34 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◊ This Scripture says anyone who sins is a slave to sin
 - Romans 6:23 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◊ This Scripture tells us that the wages (or paycheck) for sin is death.
3. Do you consider yourself to be a “sinner?”
4. How do you feel about Scripture making the case that we are all born in sin and slaves to sin?

Further Study

Since we are all sinners we must realize that we cannot save ourselves. We are dependent on someone else to save us.

Our Savior– There’s no way we can save ourselves from God’s wrath. In order to be saved we must consider the only person who has ever made an acceptable payment to God for sin’s debt. Video #3 in our series talked about how Jesus Christ is the one who is qualified to be our savior. Jesus’ sacrifice of his own life was accepted by God as payment in full for our debt.

Since Jesus is the only qualified person who can save us, let’s take a look at the salvation he offers us.

Our Salvation: Salvation is the work of God through Jesus Christ. Salvation means that – when we believe in Jesus and confess him as our Savior – we are forgiven us our sin, freed from guilt, and restored into a right relationship with God.

- Romans 8:1 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◊ This Scripture reminds us that those who are in Christ will never face God’s condemnation. Through Christ, God says we are eternally “not guilty” for our sins (we call this justification).

Our Sanctification – Jesus’ resurrection is the proof that God was pleased with Jesus’ payment. As such we can now be set free from sin!

- Romans 8:9-17 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◊ This Scripture passage tells us that the Holy Spirit lives inside of us. This causes our hearts to desire more of God’s holiness than the sin we used to live in.
- 1 John 1:8-10 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)
 - ◊ This Scripture reminds us that God is faithful and just to forgive us! With every sin we commit we can ask God for and receive forgiveness because God is a faithful and just God.

Our Status in Eternity – 1 Corinthians 15:42-57 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)

- This Scripture passage tells us when the believer’s life is over, our corruptible body will be exchanged for a new body, and we live in God’s presence for all eternity!
- Death will be defeated. Because of Jesus’ resurrection death has no hold on him and, if Christ is in us, death will have no hold on us either!

5. Review the Scripture from this session. What did you learn about salvation? In your own words, how would you describe salvation?
6. What does each of these phrases mean to you? Sins forgiven / Freed from guilt / Restored with God
7. How has your life changed since you became a Christian?
8. How would you share the meaning of salvation with a nonbeliever?

Reflection

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Close in Prayer

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What Is the Church?

Introduce the Lesson

Introduce the lesson by reading the “Introduction” of Lesson 6. “The Church is not a building The Church is a body of believers who claim Jesus Christ as Savior. The Church is also your family!”

Ask if there are questions about the session or about preparation for the session.

Application Questions

1. What is one new thought you had as a result of watching the video?

Further Study

As we conclude our series on the Basics of our Faith we close with a study of the Universal Church. The first thing to know about the Universal Church is that it's not a building, it's a body. This is why it is sometimes referred to as the Universal Church. Buildings can be destroyed but the Universal Church, which is in Christ, will not be destroyed. The Universal Church is comprised of every believer who has placed his or her trust in Jesus Christ. In our readings, when you see Church this is referring to the Universal Church while church is referring to a physical and/or local church.

The Church is a family. As such we should look forward to spending time in fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Being involved in a local church is an important part of walking with/in Christ. As we unpack what the Bible says about the Church, we pray you'll see that all discipleship relationships should point back to a local church. Churches like the one you attend for youth group.

Read Matthew 16:18 (NLT)

Further Study

This Scripture tells us that Jesus is the only one who is responsible for building the Church. We should never think it's our responsibility to build the Church. We are called to be the Church. We act like the Church when we live obedient to the commands we see in Scripture, specifically the Greatest Commandments and the Great Commission (which we'll talk about in a little bit).

2. What are 3 things that come to you mind when you hear the word “church?” (discuss or write them down)

Further Study

Ephesians 2:11-22 (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)

- This Scripture tells us that through Jesus a new covenant was made. Church membership is now open for anyone who embraces Jesus as their Savior.
 - Racism was destroyed by the resurrection.
 - Social-Class segregation was destroyed by the resurrection.
 - We are now citizens with the saints and saints are called to make disciples. Jesus commanded us to make disciples from every nation. We are not to limit our discipleship to just our family or to the area where our ancestors may be from.
3. In what ways can the Church seem like a family?
 4. What are some practices you can put in place to become more close to the people in your local church?

Further Study

Since the Church is a body and not a building, we should work to make sure no favoritism is shown in our relationships as Christians.

As a family, we have an assignment to glorify God within our cities. The assignment we have is called the Great Commission. Let's look at the Scripture that unpacks what the Great Commission is.

Matthew 28:16-20 – (Leader Note: ask a student to read this passage)

- This Scripture is the mission of the Church summed up in a few verses called the Great Commission
- In this passage:
 - ◇ Jesus tells his disciples that “All authority in heaven and on earth” has been given to him.
 - ◇ Then Jesus tells his followers to “Go” and make disciples of all nations (ethnicities and/or people groups).
 - ◇ We are to do this by sharing the gospel (good news) message. When someone accepts the good news and seeks salvation we “disciple” or help them grow in their knowledge of Christ. Our video series titled “Growing in the Faith ” unpacks what discipleship looks like in the life of the believer.
 - ◇ Jesus promises that he will remain with us for every minute of every day until he returns to earth for his Church!

There's no greater way to show your friends the Church is a body, not a building, than seeking to make disciples.

5. How have gangs been making disciples in your city?
6. What are some ways you can intersect your life to live on mission and make disciples?

7. How is the church similar to other clubs, schools, teams, and/or organizations in your neighborhood? How is it different?
8. Is your church universal and open to everyone or are there some people who are left out or made to feel not welcomed there?
9. How does your church emphasize believing and sharing the gospel (good news)?
10. What makes you want to be part of your church? What excites you about your church? What frustrates you about your church? What could be done about these frustrations?
11. Read about the eChurch in Acts 2:37-47 and 4:32-35. What practices were common in the early church? What do you like about these practices? What do you not like or what makes you uncomfortable about these practices? What do your church and the early church have in common? What can your church do to better align with the early church?

Reflection

It is important to promote this Reflection time in each session of the course. Ask the members to think back over what they have just experienced and form at least one point they can add to their understanding of God's Word. These insights may or may not match what they expected at the beginning of the lesson. Have them reflect on those affirmations or changes.

Also emphasize that this part of the group session could be an important time for participants to minister to other members of the group. Not everyone "sees" the same emphases and something one person highlights may be an added insight to others in the group.

Close in Prayer

You may want to ask if anyone is dealing with something they would like prayer for. Depending on the size of your group, it would be meaningful to pray for each person by name.