

FROM THE SERIES: BUILDING LEADERS FOR JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

BOOK ONE

# A PERSONAL WALK WITH JESUS CHRIST

Equipping Adults to Lead Students  
To Spiritual Maturity

# Barry St.Clair

FROM THE SERIES: BUILDING LEADERS FOR JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

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# **A PERSONAL WALK WITH JESUS CHRIST**

**Equipping Adults to Lead Students  
To Spiritual Maturity**

**Barry St.Clair**

*To the men and women who have shaped my leadership by their investment in my life:*

*Howard and Kitty St. Clair, my mom and dad, who challenged me to move beyond the limits of the possible, and supported me every time I tried it.*

*Buddy and Bev Price, my in-laws, who have continually modeled unconditional love and a servant attitude.*

*Mal and Wanda McSwain, my Young Life leaders and friends, who taught me the basics of following Christ and the essentials of youth work.*

*Mac Crenshaw, my spiritual leader with Campus Crusade for Christ, who demonstrated how to witness in the love and power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Findley Edge, my professor, who allowed me to think radically about the church.*

*Ken Chafin, my leader at the North American Mission Board, who encouraged my imagination and vision.*

*Chuck Miller, my older peer in youth ministry, who taught me the principles of youth ministry.*

*Jack Taylor and Peter Lord, my "shepherds," who called me to deeper intimacy with Jesus Christ.*

*Carol, my wife of twenty-eight years, who in life and death kept her focus on Jesus.*

A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ

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## A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ

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## INTRODUCTION

This series of books is designed to help us grow as leaders in three areas:

- (1) our personal relationship with Jesus Christ in *A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ*,
- (2) our vision for life and ministry in *A Vision For Life And Ministry*,
- (3) our skills in working with students in *Essential Tools For Leading Students*.

These three books easily adapt to your church's calendar. Each book is designed for use over a twelve-week period of time that includes eleven sessions for discussions and one group experience.

*A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ* has a focus on growing spiritually. We discover how to gain confidence in our relationship with Jesus Christ, grow in character as a spiritual leader, walk daily in the Spirit, and spend time alone with God in Bible study, prayer and Scripture memory.

*A Vision For Life And Ministry* sets the foundation for ministering to students. We learn to develop a Jesus-focused strategy of ministry that builds a Leadership Team, moves students toward maturity through discipleship, penetrates the student culture, and equips students to become spiritual influencers with their friends.

*Essential Tools For Leading Students* provides practical skills training. We develop skills for youth ministry such as envisioning for our lives and ministries, managing our time, understanding and using our spiritual gifts, leading students to Christ and helping them grow in their faith, leading a discipleship group, counseling students and communicating with parents and church leaders.

As we go through these books we will discover that they include both individual study and group discussion. Individually, we will spend time working through each session and making personal application of that session to specific areas of our lives and ministries. Then the group meets once a week with other youth leaders (called a



### The purpose of the Leadership Team:

To train adult leaders of young people to become more

- (1) committed to Christ,
- (2) committed to one another, and
- (3) committed to ministry to students through the power of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of God (See John 17:20-26).

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Leadership Team) to encourage each other, to discuss the lesson and then to pray together and to practice what we learn. Wow! That will stretch us!

How can we get the most from our study of this book?

- Be sure that we have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord from the beginning. (If there is any question about this, talk to the youth leader before beginning.)
- Commit ourselves wholeheartedly to this Leadership Team experience. Expect God to do great things as a result of the time we spend working through this book.
- Ask God to give us a clear call and a strong desire to work effectively with students, both believers and unbelievers.

Our faithfulness to study these books will result in radical life change within ourselves, vision for our ministry with students and the tools needed to lead students to follow Christ and to grow toward maturity in Christ.

**SESSION 1****Getting Started (Group Project)**

The goal of this session is to get to know the other people on the Leadership Team. Each week we will deepen our relationships with each other by sharing our lives together. This session will jumpstart that process. We will try to get beyond, “Hello. How are you?” and move to a level of conversation that expresses itself openly and transparently with the other group members.

After an opening activity created by the leader, let’s consider the following questions:

- Am I willing to give the needed time every week to complete all assignments?
- Can I faithfully attend all group meetings?
- Will I give support in prayer and encouragement to the other group members during this experience?
- Will I make every effort to apply what I learn, both in my personal life and in discipling students?

After prayerful consideration of these questions, we must choose whether or not to commit ourselves to the Leadership Team. It’s better to say no now than to drop out at some point halfway through the course. But if you can commit to this study, expect to see God do great things in and through you as you see yourself, others in the Leadership Team and students grow toward maturity in Christ.

My personal reflections about participating in the Leadership Team:



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## SESSION 2

### What? Me, A Leader?

Douglas Hyde was a former Communist and late editor of the *London Daily Worker* who converted to Christianity. In his book, *Dedication and Leadership*, he told a story about a man he met after a lecture in a factory during his Communist days. The man walked up to him after his lecture and said with some difficulty, “C-c-can I b-b-become a C-c-communist?” Douglas Hyde knew well the Communist axiom: “Every man a potential Communist and every man a potential leader in Communism.” But the flawed speech and unsightly demeanor of this worker took him by surprise. He put the man off, telling him to return to the next week’s meeting.

During the following week, Hyde’s superiors scolded him unmercifully for failing to adhere to the basic axiom of Communism. They told him that this unlikely fellow could indeed become a Communist. And they were right. He did. In fact, this man who seemingly had so little potential rose to lead the world literature distribution of the entire Communist Party (*Dedication and Leadership*, University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 62-69).

If you have ever wondered (with some degree of doubt and fear), *C-c-Can I B-b-become a l-l-leader of youth?* The answer is yes. *Every follower of Jesus Christ is a potential spiritual leader!* Why? Because Christians possess Jesus’ life-changing power. The path to spiritual leadership parallels the path to maturity. As you commit yourself to work through these sessions, you will be challenged to mature in your relationship with Jesus Christ. And as you grow toward maturity, you will begin to recognize your own potential as a leader.

## THE BENEFITS OF LEARNING TO LEAD

As you move toward maturity and begin to sharpen your leadership skills, you will experience the numerous benefits of this experience.

- Encouragement in your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Confidence in your ability to minister to others.
- Clearer vision for what God wants to do with your life.

- Sharpened skills for ministering to young people.
- Deeper friendships with fellow workers.

## THE COMMITMENT TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Before you can experience the full benefits of leadership, you must commit yourself to several disciplines.

- *Set aside at least one hour to study every session.* It is not enough to read the materials. You need to give the information time to soak in. Study several days before the session. As you study, consider ways to apply what you learn to your specific situation.
- *Incorporate disciplines into your daily lifestyle.* You will discern new ways to pray, study the Bible, memorize Scripture and communicate your faith. Look for ways these disciplines can become incorporated into your daily life.
- *Develop a ministry perspective.* As you develop new skills and incorporate them into your life, the challenge of leadership will soon become the privilege of leadership. You will experience the joy of leading others in developing and deepening their relationship to Jesus.
- *Refuse to quit.* Determine now not to give up until you finish this course! You will find encouragement and support from others on the Leadership Team.

Right now, spend a few minutes in prayer. Consider your desire to become a better leader. Examine the commitments you are making to the Lord and to yourself. When you are ready to move ahead, sign the Personal Commitment statement.



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## MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT

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Through the power of the Holy Spirit working in me, I, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, dedicate myself to the following commitments:

- (1) To submit myself daily to Christ and learn all that He wants to teach me about Himself and how I can grow as a Christian.
- (2) To complete the assignments for every session every week.
- (3) To be involved in my local church by supporting its regular ministry, by giving financially as God has given to me and by ministering to my church's young people.
- (4) To attend all group meetings unless a serious illness or circumstance prevents me.

I make these commitments before the Lord, to myself and to my Leadership Team. I will do my best, with God's help, to completely fulfill each one.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION 2

1. Refer to the "Time Sheet" on page 6 to record everything you do each day this week. Be very specific. The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate your schedule in light of your commitment to develop your leadership skills.

At the end of the week, evaluate your completed schedule. Decide on the best time for you to work on your assignments. Also, block out 20 minutes each morning for spending time alone with God.

2. After completing your schedule for the week, classify your routine activities by placing them in one of the columns below.
3. Look at potential times to build relationships with and disciple young people.

**Activities  
I must do  
each week**



**Activities  
I want do  
each week**



**Activities  
I don't need to  
do each week**



## TIME SHEET

| TIME  | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|-------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 6:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:00 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 11:00 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 12:00 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 1:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 2:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 3:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 4:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 5:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 6:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:00  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:00 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 11:00 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |

**SESSION 3****The Leadership Crunch**

Several years ago, a new youth minister began building relationships with some adults in his church. From those relationships, he started meeting with four young men weekly. His goal was to help them strengthen their relationships to Jesus Christ and to encourage them to become spiritual leaders. Those men continued to meet with the leader, and all four began to get involved in different areas of the church's youth ministry.

Of those four men, one became a pastor, another a lawyer who works with students in his church, and one, Matt Brinkley, started a ministry called the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS). This ministry committed themselves to help students grow to maturity in Christ through the local church and then to mobilize those students to reach their friends for Jesus Christ. Ministering to students on six campuses, FCS was the result of a vision God gave Matt to involve the local church in reaching out to students.

Matt believes that he benefited from being a part of a Leadership Team. In that group God gave him the vision of FCS. Each time he learned a new concept of ministry in the Leadership Team he was encouraged to put it into practice in his church. Matt summarized how the Leadership Team helped his ministry: "The leadership principles I learned left two visible results in my church: (1) adult leaders who are mature in Jesus Christ and who gave leadership to the youth ministry, and (2) spiritual depth and maturity in the students involved in the youth ministry through the adults who discipled them." "My participation in a Leadership Team built a solid foundation in Jesus Christ for my life and ministry," says Matt. Matt is now a youth pastor of one of America's largest churches and he equips youth leaders across the country.

**CHECK YOUR FOUNDATION**

Does your life and ministry have the same solid foundation in Jesus Christ? By using a parable, Jesus taught an important lesson on building foundations. Each of two builders wanted to build a house. Each had his blueprint. Each worked hard to complete his job. But there was one difference: one built his house on a rock and the other built his on the sand.

Look at Jesus' comparison of these two people. One was "a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock" (Matthew 7:24-25). Can't you see this man slowly, methodically mixing the concrete that was necessary to anchor his new home to that rock? Pouring the foundation, waiting for it to dry and making sure his work would last?

But the other person was "a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash" (Matthew 7: 26-27). Imagine his thinking: "Winter is coming, so I really need to get this house built as quickly as possible." So he settled for sinking the walls of his house a few inches into the sand.

For a while, the second man might have sat on his porch, construction complete, contently watching the waves roll in and out from the shore. Possibly he watched the other man build his house on the rock because it took longer.

When both houses are finished, each one is picture perfect from the outside and exquisite in every detail. But suddenly a winter storm blows in from the ocean. Imagine the utter despair of the second man as the walls of his new home topple in the sand. His investment of time and money is erased – totally wasted – in one moment of crisis.

Many times Christian leaders take the same foolish approach toward building their lives and ministries. They live in such a fast-paced world that they don't take adequate time to build their foundations on Jesus Christ. They see the overwhelming needs of people around them and quickly throw together a program filled with sports, activities, entertainment and projects. Yet all of those well-intentioned activities are only the walls of a structure. Many people and ministries look good on the outside, but they fold when difficulties come. Unfortunately, many youth ministries are like the house on the sand – they don't stand very long. Your life and ministry must be built on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ if you and your ministry are to endure.

### **WHAT'S IMPORTANT?**

One opportunity to build that strong foundation in Jesus Christ is through participation in a Leadership Team. While the principles and practices in this book work on an individual basis, a Leadership Team provides for intensified spiritual development of adult youth leaders through small-group discipleship. As adult youth leaders

meet together and become committed to grow toward maturity in Jesus Christ, a solid foundation for their individual lives and for the church's youth ministry begin to be built.

The greatest difference between the two builders in Jesus' parable was not their vision for their work, their ability to carry it through or their motivation to get the job done. *The greatest difference was their perspective of what was important.* One felt pressured from the immediate needs. His perspective was, "I need to get this house finished as soon as possible." The other was building for something that would last. He wanted his investment to stand firm through any storm.

What kind of builder will you be?



### ACTION POINT > SESSION 3

1. Alan Redpath said, "It takes but a moment to make a convert; it takes a lifetime to manufacture a saint" (*The Making of A Man of God*, Revell, p. 68). What changes would you like to see in your own life as a result of participating in this Leadership Team?







## SESSION 4

## CONFIDENT IN CHRIST

If someone asked you the question, "Are you married?" you wouldn't have much trouble answering. You either are or you aren't. The same should be true about answering the question, "Are you a follower of Jesus Christ?" The answer is either yes or no.

Yet you might have some uncertainty concerning your relationship to Jesus. So before we go any further, let's make sure all of us start at the same point. Are you a follower of Jesus Christ? Do you know Him personally?

If you have made the decision to begin your relationship with Him, then you have:

- admitted that you need Jesus to take away your sin and selfishness which once had separated you from God (Isaiah 53:6, Romans. 3:23).
- turned away from your sins (Mark 1:15).
- became a child of God by asking Him to take control of your life (John 1:12).
- believed that Jesus has given you eternal life as He said He would (John 3:16; Revelation 3:20).
- begun to follow Him in obedience (John 14:15).

Can you say with confidence that each of those statements is true of your life? If not, why not remove any doubt by turning away from your sin and selfishness and turn to Jesus right now. The following prayer will help you express your desire to follow Jesus:

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am sinful and selfish. Right now I turn from my sin. I ask You to come into my life and take control of my life. I want to obey You in everything I do. I thank You that You are now in my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you believe the following statements are true for you, add your signature and today's date.

I am confident that I am a follower of Jesus. Jesus Christ lives inside of me. My life belongs to Him and I am now following Him in obedience.  
(Mark 1:17, Luke 17:21, John 1:12-13, John 14:21)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FAITH, FACT, AND FEELINGS

You can put confidence in the promises God provides. For example, the Apostle Paul says, “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, *you will be saved*” (Romans 10:9, author’s emphasis). So your decision to ask Jesus into your life is not based on how you feel, but on God’s promises (His facts). Some people have an emotional experience when they decide to follow Jesus, others feel nothing at all.

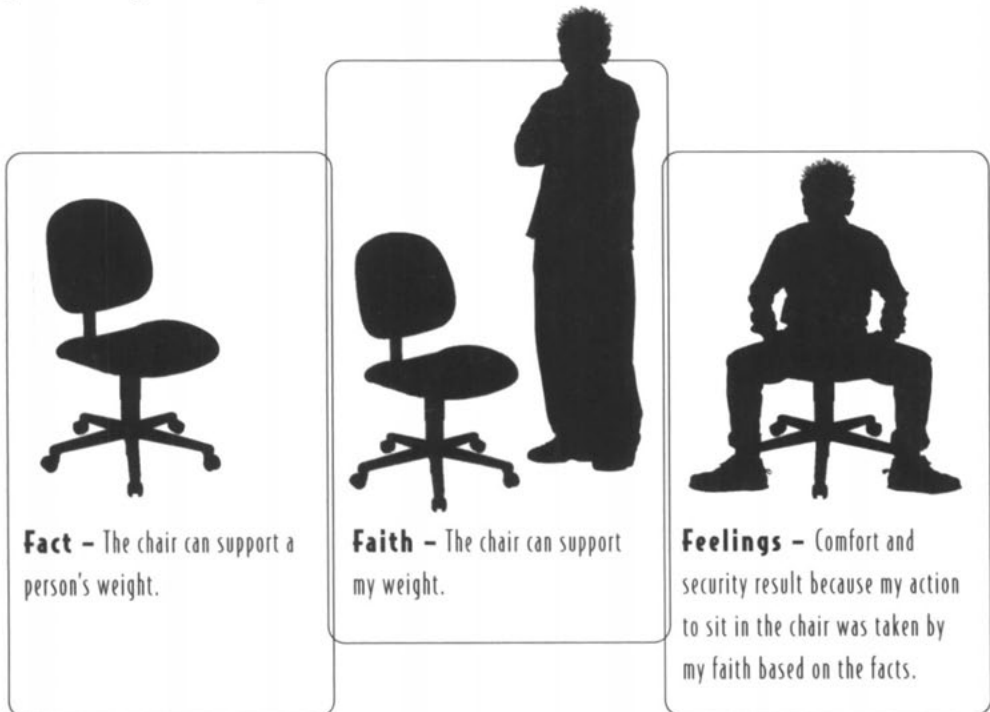
Distinguishing between the following three elements will prevent confusion and provide a clear picture of what you place your confidence in as a follower of Jesus.

*Facts.* The Bible is God’s Word. It tells who Jesus is. It tells of His life, death and resurrection. The *facts* about who He is are the basis of our faith and feelings.

*Faith.* Once the facts (the Word of God) are accepted as absolute truth, then we can have confidence that what God says is true. We can then place our faith in those facts.

*Feelings.* Our feelings cannot always be trusted. Based on circumstances and emotions, our feelings, as important as they are, do not necessarily reflect the facts.

Look at the following diagram: When your faith is exercised in response to fact, your feelings will always follow.



## BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

After entering into a relationship with Christ, we certainly need to develop an ongoing relationship with Him. Let's explore some of the realities about our relationship with Jesus that will affect our day-to-day walk with Him.

*God created us.* In fact, He created us twice! The first time, He created us physically. Read Psalm 139:13-16. Note the care that God gave to our creation.

God also created us *spiritually*. "We are God's workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus* to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10, author's emphasis). And we are promised that, "If anyone is *in Christ*, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, author's emphasis). Romans 5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 describe some of those changes. When we are new creations in Christ our lives begin to change. Those verses tell us that some things are gone: spiritual death, condemnation for sin, the law, etc. As well they tell us some of the things that have "come": God's grace, righteousness, resurrection, etc. Take time to read these passages carefully, making a complete list of what is "gone" and what has "come" as a result of your relationship with Jesus.

*God cares for us.* A story is told of a judge whose own son came before him in court. The judge asked his son, "How do you plead?" The son replied, "I am guilty." Because the judge was a just man, he had no choice but to sentence his son to a large fine or send him to jail. When the son could not pay the fine, the judge as a loving father stepped down from his bench, paid the large fine himself, and made it possible for his son to go free.

We are not able to pay the penalty for our sin. We stand guilty before God. But the Father proved overwhelmingly, through the sacrifice of His own Son, that He loves and cares for us. As you read John 3:16-18, Romans 5:8 and 1 John 4:9-10 note how much God cares for us.

*God changes us.* When God brings us from death to life, we change. The presence of Jesus Christ in the lives of Peter and Paul brought about major changes in those two men. What did those changes look like?

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Peter before | (John 18:15-27)                           |
| Peter after  | (Acts 4:13-20)                            |
| Paul before  | (Acts 26:1-18; Galatians 1:13-14)         |
| Paul after   | (1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Philippians 3:8-12) |

When Jesus Christ changed their lives, they gained great purpose and power. The same is true for us! To discover how your own relationship with Christ has already changed you, compile a list of words or phrases that describe your life before and after you began your relationship to Christ. The following verses will help.

**BEFORE I FOLLOWED CHRIST I WAS:**

John 3:19  
 Romans 3:10-18  
 Romans 5:6  
 1 Corinthians 2:14  
 Galatians 4:8  
 Ephesians 5:6  
 Colossians 1:21  
 1 Timothy 1:15  
 1 Peter 1:14

**AFTER I BEGAN TO FOLLOW CHRIST I AM:**

Romans 8:5-6  
 2 Corinthians 2:12-16  
 Galatians 4:4-7  
 Ephesians 1:3-6  
 Ephesians 4:24  
 Ephesians 5:28  
 Colossians 1:12-13, 22  
 1 Peter 1:15-23

Coming to know Christ makes us a special person to Him. Even though we don't always *feel* special, still we can exercise our *faith*, believe *the facts* and know it's true.



**ACTION POINT > SESSION 4**

1. Describe your "confidence in Christ." Describe how you began a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Use the following outline if it helps. Be very specific.

Before I met Christ:

How I met Christ:

How I have changed since knowing Christ:

2. First John offers several answers to the question: How do I know that I have truly become a child of God? Record the evidence and rejoice:

1 John 2:3-6

1 John 3:14, 23

1 John 3:24; 4:13

1 John 5:1

3. Discover what God has done to change your life by reading all of the passages in the section "Building A Relationship" and recording how those changes are true in your life.

**SESSION 5**

## Receiving God's Love

God is the originator and source of love (1 John 4:7). He provides a never-ending supply of it (Jeremiah 31:3). Yet some people find it difficult to accept God's love, often because of a negative experience with human love. Perhaps we, or some of our students, have difficulty comprehending and receiving the love of God. Let's examine and discover an accurate view of God's love. Let's see how God's love far exceeds man's best attempts to love.

*Man's love is conditional.* Love is not freely given. "Strings" are usually attached. "I love you if you'll take care of me," or "I love you because you act right, smell right and look right." A condition must be met in order to receive love.

*God's love is unconditional.* God's love stretches far beyond the "strings" we attach to love. That means He will continue to love us no matter what we do. We don't have to earn it. God loves us in spite of our inadequacies and failures. Nothing we can do will ever make God love us any more or any less. "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

*Man's love is stingy.* We usually hold back on love. "I love you, but don't expect all my love." We can't count on stingy love when the going gets tough. If it is love at all, it certainly doesn't go very deep.

*God's love is sacrificial.* As you read or recite John 3:16, picture the cross in your mind. What a sacrifice! God loves us so much that He willingly gave us His most precious possession – His Son – in order to draw us back to Him.

*Man's love is selfish.* It operates on the philosophy of "You scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours." Its motive is getting, not giving (though often it may give willingly to get even more).

*God's love is serving.* God loves expecting nothing in return. That love expresses itself through the most humbling of tasks. Jesus demonstrated that serving love when He washed His disciples' feet (John 13:1-17). He did it to show them that He loved them. Jesus, even though He is Lord, has chosen to serve us. He is always prepared to help us and He is never too busy to show His love for us.

*Man's love is grudging.* This counterfeit kind of love is evident in statements like, "I could never forgive so-and-so." A person who has been hurt by someone close to him can build up bitterness.

*God's love is total.* Some people think they have done things that are so bad that God could never forgive them. That's not true. (See Colossians 2:13-14.) Remember His promise, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God's love is so complete that He will forgive us and remove all of our sin and guilt.

*Man's love is limited.* When someone says, "I'm going to love that person if it's the last thing I do," it is usually the last thing he does! We are limited in our ability to love other people.

*God's love is creative.* As we allow God's love to soak in, it will begin to flow through us to others. Acting on our own, we might be able to splash a drop of love here and there. But God's love flowing through us will overflow into the lives of others. According to 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, God's love can change our lives so radically that we have the capacity to love everyone (family, friends and even enemies) in any situation.

God's love is unconditional, sacrificial, serving, total and creative. We need to let His love invade our lives and overflow from inside of us. When we do, then our love will overflow to others – to family, friends and students who desperately desire someone to love them.



#### ACTION POINT > SESSION 5

1. Identify one negative experience you have had with someone who said he/she loved you. How has that experience interfered with your receiving God's love? Be specific.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 13. Make a list of all of the positive qualities of love, and write your own ideas of what those qualities mean.



| WHAT LOVE IS | HOW IT APPLIES TO ME |
|--------------|----------------------|
|              |                      |

Now make a list of what love is not. Beside each one, write your own idea of what that means.

| WHAT LOVE IS NOT | HOW IT APPLIES TO ME |
|------------------|----------------------|
|                  |                      |

3. From this session, you may have discovered that God's love is often the exact opposite of how some people have tried to express love to you. What positive qualities of God's love counteract the negative experiences you have had?

| NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE | GOD'S POSITIVE QUALITY |
|---------------------|------------------------|
|                     |                        |

4. How will experiencing more of the depths of God's love help you respond to:

One specific family member?

One specific friend?

One person you find hard to love?

One student who needs love?

5. This week focus on two radical thoughts:

- God's complete love for you – unconditional, sacrificial, serving, forgiving and creative.
- God's love flowing through you to other people: family, friends, enemies and students.

Record your reflections on these two radical thoughts.

**SESSION 6****A Usable Tool**

Perhaps the greatest fear people have about becoming leaders is that they will prove to be inadequate. Have you ever felt inadequate to lead something? What did that feel like? Inadequacy often stems from two sources: (1) lack of preparation, or (2) feeling that the people you are leading aren't following.

At least one person in the New Testament seems to have struggled with feelings of inadequacy. Timothy was young and inexperienced during a time when wisdom and age were revered. Shyness and timidity characterized him. He was the last person you would expect to pastor a church.

But the Apostle Paul, Timothy's "father in the faith," wrote him a letter of encouragement and instruction telling him how to approach the task of leading his church. Paul advised him: "The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5).

Paul seemed to be saying, "Timothy, when you lead others, lead them by loving them. And you can really love them when you have a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith."

**THE GREATEST GOAL**

As growing disciples and leaders for Jesus Christ, our greatest ministry goal is love. The kind of love Paul described in 1 Timothy 1:5 is *agape* love. This kind of love originates with God. He pours it out like water coming out of a showerhead. It is so refreshing and stimulating that it creates a response in us. That response is obedience (John 14:21). That obedience opens the channel of God's love and leads to another aspect of His *agape* love: God's love overflowing from my life into the lives of others. Is there anything young people need more than to have someone love them like that? How does love like that develop in us?

*Agape* love will spring up in us when we develop a *pure heart*, that means, a heart with unmixed motives. Like everyone else, we are susceptible to the traps of materialism, success and pleasure. But as a spiritual leader, we can say with the psalmist: "O God, You are my God, I seek You; my soul thirsts for You, my body longs for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water" (Psalm 63:1).

Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf founded the Moravian movement in the

18th century. Profoundly, he summarized a pure heart: "I have but one passion. It is He. He alone." With that purity of passion, von Zinzendorf began a 24-hour prayer meeting that lasted 100 years. Hundreds of missionaries went out under his leadership! At one point, the Moravians had more missionaries overseas than they had at home.

Agape love will flow from us when we have *a good conscience*. A good conscience centers around a desire to make all relationships right. This was very important to the Apostle Paul. Look at Paul's words to Felix, a Roman governor: "I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man" (Acts 24:16). A good conscience results when we repair any broken relationships that may exist between us and our spouse, our family, the members of our church, the people where we work or anyone else we know.

My younger sister and I began to have some conflicts when I was in high school. One afternoon while I tried to complete my science project on the back porch, I asked her to get me a drink. She did. I asked her to hold it. She did. And she kept on holding it while I worked on the poster. Finally, she got fed up and poured the water all over my science project. I responded by slapping her. She ran inside. I wanted to slap her again. From that point, our relationship drifted apart. I couldn't do anything right, it seemed. Years later, she told my mom what a crummy big brother I had been to her. Her accusation hurt, and God began to deal with me. Soon after that, I sat down with my sister and told her how much I really loved her. I listed every way that I had treated her wrongly, and then I asked her to forgive me. Asking her forgiveness was a humbling experience, but God used it to mend our broken relationship. The walls we had built between us came down, and the result of that experience in my life was a fresh supply of love and spiritual power flowing through me.

Agape love becomes a reality in our lives when we have *a sincere faith*. Put simply, a sincere faith is the result of obeying God. Someone has said, "You put into practice what you believe every day, and everything else is just religious talk."

Personally, I have faced situations where I had to choose to take the easy way or to do what I knew was right in God's eyes, even though the cost was high. Once I had a decision where my options were either to pay \$2,500 out of my already tight budget or to break a promise I had made to someone. I chose to pay the \$2,500 because I knew that price was less than the price I would have had to pay spiritually by having to live with disobedience.

## GET RID OF INADEQUATE FEELINGS

As leaders we model life in Christ to young people. We set an example, whether we realize it or not. Young people need to see in us people whose character consistently reflects a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. As each of those areas of our lives develops more fully, we will experience a freedom to love others that we've never known before. When the agape love is flowing, the focus is off of ourselves and on what God is doing through us. At that point our feelings of inadequacy as a leader will diminish.

The Apostle Paul knew that if those three character qualities developed in Timothy's life, then his youth, inexperience and timidity would eventually disappear. As long as Timothy had a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith that resulted in agape love, then God had in His hand a usable tool – a life through which His love could pass on to others.

Now it's our turn to become a usable tool in God's hand.



### ACTION POINT > SESSION 6

1. Analyze in your own life the extent that each of the three qualities (a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith) in 1 Timothy 1:5 function in your life. Pray through each of the seven questions thoroughly, and ask the Lord to show any area(s) that need attention and action.

### PURE HEART

- > Do you have impure thoughts toward the opposite sex? (2 Timothy 2:22)
  
- > Do you gripe, complain or have a critical attitude? (Philippians 2:14-15)

## **GOOD CONSCIENCE**

- Do you respect and honor your parents and family? (Ephesians 6:1-4)
  
- Are bitterness or resentment keeping you from forgiving another person? (Matthew 6:14-15)
  
- Have you treated another person wrongly? (Matthew 5:23-24)

## **SINCERE FAITH**

- Do you lie, steal or cheat? (Colossians 3:9)
  
- Is Jesus first in every area of your life? (Matthew 6:33)

2. Record one step of action you will take as a result of answering the seven questions.
  
3. Since having a “pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith” is an ongoing process between you and God, ask yourself one of these questions each day.

“The effective teacher always teaches from the overflow of a full life.  
If you stop growing today, you stop teaching tomorrow.” –Howard Hendricks

**SESSION 7****A Life Filled Up**

Dealing with frustration can create frustration – even more! Some of life’s frustrations are caused by circumstances beyond our control - pressure from deadlines, unusual family circumstances or physical and financial disasters. However, other frustrations arise from making wrong choices.

The Apostle Paul was familiar with frustration. He said, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Romans 7:15). But he also discovered a key to minimizing frustration: “We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

The secret to overcoming frustration is not found in trying to do the best we can for God, but in being totally available to God so that He can do His work in us. In that we are “called according to His purpose.” How, then, can we develop the desire to allow God to work through us?

**GAINING THE DESIRE**

Before becoming a Christian, we were responsible for our lives – making decisions, reacting to situations and carrying all of the weight that accompanies responsibility. We had to do that, since ourselves was all we had to count on. But now that we belong to Christ, that has changed.

One of the basic truths of our faith in Jesus Christ is that He has now taken responsibility for us. His death on the cross paved the way for us to have a “father-child” relationship with God (Romans 8:15). That kind of relationship is one of healthy dependence. *We need God to direct our lives!*

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6). That is a command to depend on God. We will begin to *trust* God more and more when we understand more of what Jesus did for us on the cross. The deeper our understanding of what Jesus did for us on the cross, the greater our dependence will be.

In addition to a healthy trust in what Jesus did on the cross, we also depend on (trust in) Jesus’ resurrection. We are weak and have no power. But when we are

weak, He is strong in us. We have an inward source of power, the Holy Spirit, energizing us to live like Jesus, helping us make right decisions and react properly to situations. We must learn to tap into our source of power!

## GAINING THE POWER

Tapping into the Holy Spirit's power requires a clear channel of communication between God and us. God is always communicating with us. He wants us to communicate with Him by (1) confessing our sins to God (1 John 1:9) and (2) concentrating on allowing Christ to control our lives (Ephesians 5:18). That kind of communication must happen daily.

A good illustration of communication with God is the physical process of breathing. Hopefully all of us have been breathing since before this session started! Yet breathing is not something we really think a lot about. It's automatic. We breathe out impurities from our lungs, and then breathe in life-giving oxygen. Most of the time we aren't even conscious of it.

Spiritual "breathing" serves a similar purpose in our walk with God. When we *exhale* (confessing our sins to God), we become clean and pure. When we *inhale* (concentrating on allowing Christ to control our lives), we are given the strength, the power of the Holy Spirit, to live the kind of life God has called us to live.

Ephesians 5:18 explains this simply: "Do not get drunk on wine...instead, be filled with the Spirit." Right now, ask the Spirit to fill you. You might express your prayer like this: "Lord Jesus, I confess my sin to You. (Name specific sins.) I ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit now." Repeat this prayer daily as you practice spiritual breathing.

The Greek word used for "fill" literally means "to wholly take possession of." So to be filled by the Spirit means to be completely under His influence. Being *filled* with the Holy Spirit means, then, we are *controlled* by the Holy Spirit.

After we have tapped into the power source of the Holy Spirit, then what? How can the power of God within us be transformed into *outward* signs of God's presence in our daily lives? The Apostle Paul wrote, "Live [walk] by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Galatians 5:16).

## RELEASING THE POWER

Notice that the term "walk by the Spirit" is a command. Therefore, it follows that the Holy Spirit's control of our lives does not happen automatically. We must



choose to live under the influence of the Spirit on a day-to-day basis. Walking by the Spirit is something that we decide to do every day.

When we “walk by the Spirit” then we please the Holy Spirit. When we don’t, then we will either grieve the Spirit or quench the Spirit. We want to avoid both.

(1) *Do not grieve the Holy Spirit* (Ephesians 4:30). We grieve the Spirit by giving in to anything that is opposed to Him. If lust, passion or evil desire controls us, then we cannot be controlled by the Spirit. Any Christian who consciously sins grieves the Spirit.

(2) *Do not quench the Holy Spirit* (1 Thessalonians 5:19, NASB). Another translation expresses it this way: “Do not put out the Spirit’s fire” (NIV). The Holy Spirit within us is kindling a fire - stimulating us, giving us ideas, producing thoughts and making suggestions (John 14:26). Every time we refuse to do what He is prompting us to do, then we “quench” His power in us.

Then we must realize that the Holy Spirit lives within us. We are a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). As we yield ourselves to Him and desire His fellowship, we will continue to live in His presence. The more we live in His presence, waiting for Him, expecting His help and listening to Him, the more He will reveal Himself to us.

**REMEMBER:** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:24-25).



#### ACTION POINT > SESSION 7

1. What frustrations do you face with:  
your job?

your family?

your friends?

yourself?

As you look back over your list, how many of these frustrations have you caused or aggravated by your own wrong attitudes or actions? Do you need to confess these?

2. Have you asked the Holy Spirit to fill you?
  
3. If not, why don't you do so right now? Say something like, "Lord, I am weak but You are strong. Fill me with Your Spirit and make me strong in You."
  
4. Write out how you plan to practice spiritual breathing every day?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Under the categories below, write your creative ideas on how you can avoid grieving the Spirit and quenching the Holy Spirit.

Grieving the Spirit

Quenching the Spirit

**SESSION 8**

## Feeding Yourself

Imagine you are in an all-you-can-eat smorgasbord restaurant – one that has every kind of food imaginable. You are hungry and everything looks good, so you walk around and analyze the food. The tomatoes are full of potassium. The steak has plenty of protein. The macaroni is high in carbohydrates. The oranges can provide the daily requirement of vitamin C. The bread and cereal are full of fiber. You look, but you don't eat.

Looking at the food won't remove your hunger. You can study it, write reports about it, and even have seminars and discussions about it. But if that's *all* you do, you will *starve to death*.

Maybe the restaurant illustration is a little far-fetched, but it's exactly what happens to many people in the church. Not that they don't eat at the church fellowship meals! But, spiritually, they don't know how to feed themselves. The spiritual food they need is available in abundance, but all they do is discuss it and analyze it. They starve spiritually. Not only do they not feed themselves, but they do not know how to feed others. How can someone who is continually hungry think about feeding someone else?

Colossians 2:6-10 describes how we can be spiritually full. Notice the phrase in verse 10: "you have been given fullness in Christ." "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power." Can we experience "fullness" in Christ? To understand the phrase, picture a banquet table loaded with all kinds of delicious food. The food represents the fullness that Christ has to offer. But before we can eat any of the food, we must take some practical steps to get to the food.

**Step #1 – Walk to the table.** Paul told the Colossian church, "Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him" (Colossians 2:6). Some translators use the word "walk" in that verse instead of "live." The meaning is similar, but walk indicates taking a specific action.

When we walk toward someone, we plan to meet that person. As we walk along we begin to develop a relationship and build that relationship. Jesus Christ desires that we experience His fullness. In order to do that, we must walk with Him. He will lead us to His table.

**Step #2 – Sit at the table.** Paul writes that we are to be “rooted and built up by Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:7). When a person becomes hungry and, therefore, “dead serious” about eating, he not only walks to the table, but also makes sure he gets a good seat in close proximity to the food. Look at the words Paul used to describe “getting a good seat.” He likened it to a tree.

*Rooted* – Why do the roots of a tree run deep into the ground? For *nourishment*.

*Built up* – With constant nourishment, a tree grows and becomes *strong*.

*Established* – The more strength the tree gains, the less likely it is to get blown down when storms come.

When we, as believers, become firmly entrenched at God’s table, we have nourishment and strength, and we will not be blown away by the storms of life.

George Mueller, a 19th-century pastor, known for his work with teenage orphans in England, once confessed: “I see more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend to every day is not how much I might serve the Lord...but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how the inner life might be nourished.”

When we are seated at God’s table, ready to receive His fullness, we are provided with utensils to help us eat the food. It is not that we can’t get by without them, but eating is a much more pleasant experience when we use the utensils. God provides four utensils:

➤ Prayer (Ephesians 3:16-19)

“. . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

➤ The Word (Colossians 3:16)

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

➤ Fellowship (Hebrews 10:25)

“... not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.”

➤ Witnessing (Acts 1:8)

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Each utensil, used properly, will help us enjoy “the feast” Jesus Christ provides.

**Step #3 – Select the food carefully.** The Apostle Paul continues, “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of the world rather than on Christ” (Colossians 2:8). A paraphrase of that verse might be: “Don’t let what you are supposed to eat, eat you!” When we eat the wrong food, one or both of these things will happen.

- (1) We will not receive the proper nourishment.
- (2) We will get an upset stomach.

Indigestion is no fun. Yet often we bring it on ourselves by eating the wrong food.

Paul points out four food choices that the Colossian church is snacking on that will give them spiritual indigestion rather than spiritual nourishment:

- Intellectual, secular philosophy – In Paul’s day a group of people tried to present the gospel so that only “intellectuals” could understand it. In a later letter to Timothy, Paul offers advice to help his young disciple not come under the influence of such harmful philosophies. He told Timothy, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

- Empty deceit – In our world, empty deceit poses as the “good life.” People go after wealth, pleasure, comfort, happiness, power, prestige and other “empty” things that don’t really satisfy. Years before the New Testament was written a man named Isaiah spoke clearly about how those foods don’t satisfy, but how, when we eat what is good, our “souls will delight in the richest of fare” (Isaiah 55:1-2).
- Traditions – Someone aptly spoke that the seven last words of the church will be, “We’ve never done it that way before.” Healthy traditions are fine, but for some people, church turns into nothing more than going through the motions. It is like eating moldy bread. *We avoid unhealthy traditions by asking God for fresh food every day!* We can be sure that in the same way God fed the Children of Israel in the wilderness, God will provide fresh “manna” for us every day.
- Legalistic do’s and don’ts – Many people see Christianity as “Don’t drink, don’t smoke, don’t chew; don’t hang around with people who do.” That’s legalism. Legalism creates dependency on the “basic principles of this world.” Walking with Christ puts us in the arena of grace. Trying to live by the rules prevents us from experiencing the real nourishment that God wants to provide for us.

Now that we have walked to the table, seated ourselves, discovered what utensils we use, and become aware of what food not to eat, we can feast on Jesus Christ! He is bringing us to *fullness* of life in Him!



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION 8

1. Work through the following “Survey for Growing Disciples.” On a scale of 1 (definite yes) to 5 (definite no) try to discover how full you are in Him from the statements below.

## SURVEY FOR GROWING DISCIPLES

**YES** ←————→ **NO**  
 1     2     3     4     5

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| I am absolutely sure that I have a relationship to Jesus.<br>(1 John 5:11-13)   |  |  |  |  |  |
| I often experience God's total love and forgiveness.<br>(Ephesians 1:7)   |  |  |  |  |  |
| I know what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and I am able to walk in the Spirit consistently. (Ephesians 5:18)   |  |  |  |  |  |
| My prayer life is regular and spontaneous and it consists of praise, confession, thanksgiving, petition and intercession. I see God answer my prayers often (Ephesians 6:18).   |  |  |  |  |  |
| I am growing in my knowledge of who God is as my Father, who Jesus is as the Son and who the Holy Spirit is as He lives in me. I know what place each of these expressions of who God is fit into my life (Ephesians 1:17). |  |  |  |  |  |
| I regularly hear the Bible taught and preached<br>(Romans 10:14).   |  |  |  |  |  |
| I read from God's Word daily and have a definite plan to study the Bible (1 Timothy 4:13).  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I know how to study God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15).  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have a regular and consistent method of memorizing and reviewing Scripture (Colossians 3:16).   |  |  |  |  |  |
| I enjoy meditating on Scripture. I find my thought patterns changing and the Word becoming more real to me<br>(Ephesians 4:22-24).  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As I learn God's Word, I am forming convictions that influence my beliefs and actions (2 Timothy 4:2).  |  |  |  |  |  |





**SESSION 9***Spending Time Alone With God*

Think back to your first date. Did it go something like this?

A guy, sweaty hands and all, finally gets enough courage to dial the number. He is so nervous he dials the number incorrectly three times. Finally his nervous fingers get the correct combination. He has wanted to ask the girl out for weeks. On the other end of the line, she almost faints at the sound of his voice. She has been waiting for him to ask her out for months. Finally he blurts it out: "Hello, Mary, this is movies. Will you go to the John with me?" Oops! Finally, he gets it right, she says yes, and they work out all of the details.

Where will we go? What time? How will we get there? Even though these are important questions, none is more important than: Will we really like each other? Everything hinges on that basic question.

After human relationships begin, they usually develop gradually and follow a pattern:

- Mutual attraction
- Time spent getting to know each other
- Developing a loving, caring relationship

We move from one step to the next by spending time with that person. It's the same reality in your relationship with God. One secret of all growing, dynamic Christians is that they consistently spend time alone with God.

Remember all of those details from your first date? Going through the same kind of planning for our times alone with God will help our relationship with Him grow quickly. Below are some areas to consider.

*Choose a time.* Schedule a regular time to meet with the Lord every day. The best time to meet Him is first thing in the morning. Have you ever watched an orchestra warm up *after* a concert or a team put together their game plan *after* the game? Having an early time with God will prepare us to face the day. Jesus often met with the Father in the morning (Mark 1:35). His example ought to be enough to convince us.

*Choose a place.* Find a place that is quiet. Hopefully it can be a place where talking out loud with God won't bother anybody. Get away from normal surroundings. Try to find a place where distractions and interruptions won't happen. Abraham talked to God in the desert. Moses spoke to Him on the mountaintop. Daniel met with Him in the quiet of his room. Wherever we meet with God will become a special place for us.

*Choose to prepare.* Our mental attitude is important when we meet with God. Prepare to come to God quietly and reverently, but also rested and alert. Psalm 46:10 provides some good advice: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Here are other ways you can be prepared for your time with God:

- *Look to Jesus.* Instead of worrying about the details of our day or the bad things that could happen, we can let our first thoughts focus on Jesus.
- *Keep a Time Alone with God notebook.* Recording our thoughts, prayer requests, answers to prayer, Bible study notes, and insights God gives us each day, we will soon have an unbeatable source of inspiration. Later we will look back, see how many things God has done and be utterly amazed.
- *Don't give up.* Missing your time with God one morning isn't the end of the world. Don't worry about it. Take the opportunity the next day.
- *Be honest.* We get bored easily. When we feel that our time with God is empty and worthless, tell Him so. But don't quit. Let's ask God to increase our desire to meet with Him.
- *Be consistent.* Some of our times with God will be wonderfully insightful. Others will be very routine. The way we *feel* is not a very accurate indicator of success. Every day that we spend time alone with the Lord will strengthen our relationship with Him, even if we don't sense the results right away.

Our ultimate goal for spending time alone with God is to know Him better – not to become a whiz at Bible study, set a record for verses memorized or prayer hours logged. Bible study, Scripture memory and prayer are all important, but they are only steps to achieving our main goal of developing a deep love relationship with the Lord. When we set our sights on Jesus, then the other spiritual benefits will come supernaturally!



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION 9

1. "Building a relationship" suggests investment. Read the following verses and write down the investments you will make to build your relationship with God:

Matthew 6:33

Philippians 3:10

Matthew 22:36-38

2. Read the following verses to discover some of the goals God has for your life:

1 Corinthians 10:31

Jeremiah 33:3

Philippians 4:6-7

How do you think that spending time alone with God each day will help those goals become realities in your life?

3. Right now, choose a time to be alone with God for 20 minutes every day to read Scripture and talk with God in prayer. Listen to what God wants to say to you during those times. Even if you feel a little awkward at first, soon this will become a special time for you. Write the time and place you choose here.

Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

4. Begin a Time Alone with God notebook, if you haven't yet done so. (Put *Time Alone with God Notebook* inserts in a 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" binder, so you will have everything you need to get started. You may photocopy the inserts from pages 63-76 of this book.)



## SESSION 10

## Going Deeper Into God's Word

Imagine going to (or think back to) your high school reunion. Of all the things you experience, the biggest surprise may be your recognition of how people have *changed*. (Expanding waistlines and receding hairlines make that easy to spot.)

Suppose one of your friends, whom you haven't seen since high school, approaches and tells you about his terrific job, his loving family and his large house. Then he turns to you and asks, "Do you feel like you've been successful?" How would you answer him? Why?

God's recorded plan for our success is written in Psalm 1:1-3: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper." (NKJV) A vital element of "success" from God's point of view is "delighting in the law of the Lord." In other words, a successful person gets excited about spending time in the Word of God.

Why should we spend time in God's Word? And how can time alone with God make us successful? Take a look at the following reasons.

*We will get to know ourselves better.* As we spend time in God's Word, we will begin to notice how it penetrates our lives. Like a skillful surgeon who uses his scalpel to carefully remove threatening cancerous growths, God uses His Word to remove the things that keep us from becoming all He wants us to become. God gives us His Word as a tool to get to know ourselves better. "The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

*We will get to know Jesus better.* The more we read the Bible, the more we will understand Jesus – His life, His death and His resurrection. We know that is true, because Jesus Himself said, "These are the Scriptures that testify about Me" (John 5:39).

*We will grow as Christians.* In a prayer for His disciples, Jesus said: "Sanctify

them by the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17). *Sanctify* means “to grow to become all God wants you to become.” This goes beyond just knowing that God’s Word is the truth. That will not automatically help us grow as Christians. Peter tells us what will help us is to crave good spiritual milk (1 Peter 2:2). Just as babies need milk to help them grow healthy, we need God’s Word to help us mature spiritually.

*We will have a successful life.* When a person meditates on God’s Word daily, success is guaranteed. That person will be “planted” – like a tree. According to Psalms 1:3, three things will happen: (1) he will yield fruit; (2) his leaf will not wither; and (3) whatever he does will prosper. What a great deal that is! Guaranteed success!

*You will be able to handle temptation.* Bible study gives us the ammunition to handle any situation the way Jesus would. As we spend time in God’s Word, He will help us find and meditate on passages such as 1 Corinthians 10:13: “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man and God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out that you can stand up under it.” What an incredible discovery to find out that it is God who is faithful. He is the One who provides a way of escape. He is the One who helps us stand against temptation! Only studying His Word will lead us to that insight and the power behind it. By His Word and power we can stand against temptations.

The following hints will help you in your Bible study:

- Stick to the time chosen to meet with God.
- Study the Bible for personal meaning, not for how it applies to others.
- Be willing to let the Holy Spirit change you.
- Record your insights from Scripture each day.

Remember the Bible is not just literature  
to be studied or facts to be learned.  
It is truth to be applied.



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION 10

- How would you evaluate your comfort level in understanding the Bible?
  - \_\_\_ Well-developed. I enjoy the Bible and I apply its teachings to my life.
  - \_\_\_ Getting there. I am new at this, but I study God's Word several times a week and I have begun to apply it in some situations.
  - \_\_\_ Almost nonexistent. I can't seem to find the motivation or time to study the Bible.
- Use the Bible Response Sheet (on page 75) to do a Bible study on Psalm 1:1-3. For an example of how to use a Bible Response Sheet, refer to the completed one on John 1:1-5. For daily use, photocopy the one on page 75 in the back of this book.
- Continue to have a time alone with God each day, spending 15 minutes in Bible study and 5 minutes in prayer. Study the Book of Mark. Read the verses and then work through the Bible Response Sheet. Writing down your insights will help you both to remember what you have studied and to apply it to your life. See the suggested readings for the first week below. The entire book of Mark is broken down into suggested daily readings on the Check-Off Sheet in the Appendix (p. 132).

- Day 1: Mark 1:1-3
- Day 2: Mark 1:4-8
- Day 3: Mark 1:9-13
- Day 4: Mark 1:14-15
- Day 5: Mark 1:16-20
- Day 6: Mark 1:21-26
- Day 7: Mark 1:27-28

| A PERSONAL WALK WITH JESUS CHRIST  |                             | 75 |
|--|-----------------------------|----|
| <b>BIBLE RESPONSE SHEET</b>  |                             |    |
| Date   | 5-10                        |    |
| Passage  | John 1:1-5                  |    |
| Title  | Jesus brings light and life |    |
| Key Verse  | verse 4                     |    |
| Summary  | the Word (Jesus)            |    |
|  | (1) was in the beginning    |    |
|  | (2) was with God            |    |
|  | (3) was God                 |    |
|  | (4) made all things         |    |
|  | (5) was life and            |    |
|  | (6) was light               |    |
| Personal Application   |                             |    |
| I need to let Jesus be who He wants to be to me. I can experience His life and light by spending 15 minutes alone with Him every morning for the rest of this series of studies. |                             |    |

**SESSION 11**

## Remembering the Bible

People tell me that they have a recurring dream. It goes like this. I go to sleep the night before a big exam. The alarm is set, but it doesn't ring. I oversleep. When I finally wake up, the exam has just begun. I panic. My body breaks into a cold sweat. From a deep sleep, my entire system is pumping with adrenalin. I throw my clothes on and run to get to the test. When I sit down to take the test my mind is completely blank. I can't remember anything about anything that I studied. Then I awake. It never happened. Even though I am relieved, my body is still in a cold sweat. What a nightmare!

This actually happened to one of my son's friends his freshman year in college. It wasn't a dream! Only in his hurry to get to the test, he forgot to put his pants on! He ran across campus in his boxers! And he got an F on the test! What a dreadful experience! It speaks to us about being prepared.

When it comes to the Bible, most believers are not ready for the test. We get into a conversation with someone about the Bible, and we remember some things we have heard. But we don't have the slightest clue about exactly what it said or where to find it.

The only way to have the Bible at you fingertips is to memorize it. I can hear it now. "What? Me, memorize? I can't memorize." I will admit that it is harder for some people than for others. But we can all memorize. For example, what is your name? Your address? Your phone number? Your spouse's name? Your children's names? Your work address? The name of your church? You get the idea! We can memorize. So let's get started.

During biblical times, Jewish men wore phylacteries – small leather boxes containing verses of Scripture that were tied to the left arm or between their eyebrows. These men *literally* had God's Word in front of them all the time.

We can carry God's Word with us as well. And as we keep it in front of us, we will memorize it. When we memorize it, then we will have it with us all the time! The Bible instructs us to "Bind them [God's words] upon your heart forever" so that "When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you" (Proverbs 6:21-22). That's what Scripture memory is all about!

## BENEFITS OF SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Memorizing Scripture enriches our lives in a number of ways.

*The Bible will come alive for us.* Psalm 19:7-11 shows us how valuable God's Word is to us. Among other things, God's Word:

- Revives our souls (v. 7)
- Can be trusted (v. 7)
- Makes the simple wise (v. 7)
- Is right (v. 8)
- Gives joy (v. 8)
- Enlightens us (v. 9)
- Inspires confidence (v. 9)
- Endures forever (v. 9)
- Is always righteous (v. 9)
- Is more precious than gold (v. 10)
- Finds great reward (v. 11)
- Provides warnings (v. 11)

By memorizing Scripture, we gain strength to face everyday situations.

Obviously, most people can't study the Bible all day long. But when we carry its teachings in our mind and heart, we can recall them at times when we really need them. God's Word is called the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17). It's our weapon to fight the daily battle. Scripture memory allows us to carry our weapon with us at all times.

*We will prosper spiritually.* In the last session we saw that a person who delights in the "law of the Lord" (God's Word) is like "a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither" (Psalms 1:2-3). Memorizing Scripture will help us become firmly rooted in our day-to-day walk with Jesus Christ because we will think God's thoughts.

*We will have strength to overcome temptation.* Take a close look at these words from Psalm 119:9-11. "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according



to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” When we hide God’s Word in our hearts, we have the ability to overcome temptation.

*We will witness for Jesus Christ.* When God’s Word is in our minds and hearts, we will always stand ready when God gives us the opportunity to speak for Him. Like David, we can “recount all the laws that come from [God’s] mouth” (Psalms 119:13). Many people feel that they don’t know what to say when they witness for Christ. But when we memorize Scripture we always have something to say.

*We will begin to see things from God’s perspective.* When God’s Word becomes an integral part of our lives, we begin to think the way God thinks. This is what Paul had in mind when he said to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). When we think the way God thinks, then we can have His perspective in every situation.

When we adopt an attitude of *confidence* about memorizing Scripture, that will affect our *desire* and will help us memorize Scripture more easily. Realizing how valuable it is to memorize God’s Word will inspire that attitude of confidence. David summarized this type of attitude when he said, “Because I love Your commands more than gold, more than pure gold, and because I consider all Your precepts right, I hate every wrong path. Your statutes are wonderful; therefore I obey them” (Psalms 119:127-129). As we develop a greater love for God’s Word and a desire to hide it in our hearts, we will experience the many benefits that result from the rewarding practice of Scripture memory.



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION II

1. What are your biggest obstacles to Scripture memory?
2. What are the most positive benefits for you to memorize God's Word?
3. Make a list of positive reasons why you can memorize Scripture.
4. Memorize 2 Timothy 3:16. Before you start, refer to the section in your Time Alone with God Notebook labeled "How to Memorize Scripture" on page 66. After you memorize a verse, review it every day for thirty days. *The key to Scripture memory is review.*
5. Continue spending time alone with God each day this week. Spend 15 minutes in Bible study in the book of Mark and 5 minutes in prayer.

**SESSION 12****Communicating with God**

It's 6 A.M. The alarm rings and your first impulse is to catch another hour's sleep before you begin the day. But you've promised God this is the day that you will start getting up earlier in order to spend more time with Him. Your mind drifts: "It would be so much better to spend time at the church of the Inner Spring under the warm protection of the Reverend Sheets." But you figure snoring isn't what the psalmist meant when he said to "make a joyful noise."

So how do you convince yourself to get up and keep your appointment with God? The key is to *properly understand prayer*. Some people think of prayer as a chore, much like taking out the garbage. It's something they don't really enjoy, but they do it anyway to keep the air clean. But prayer is like dialing the combination that unlocks a safe. It opens up our relationship to God. We discover the richness of who He is that has been locked up in the safety deposit box. Prayer opens the door to God's riches. When we don't understand the purpose of prayer and consequently don't pray, that door remains shut.

**PRAYER'S PURPOSE**

Through prayer we learn to communicate with God on a personal level. Prayer exposes us to who God is, what He wants us to do and how He wants us to do it. We begin to understand His plans and purposes for us. Soon we discover that we have the power – His power – to do whatever He asks us to do. In fact, Jesus promised that, "You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it" (John 14:14). Prayer opens up God's world to us.

Douglas Thornton saw the positive benefits that spending time in prayer was having on some of his classmates. He was determined to begin each day in prayer but he struggled every morning to get up. In desperation he built a device from a fishing pole, four hooks and an alarm clock. When his alarm rang in the morning, the pole would release to pull on the four hooks, which were attached to the four corners of his sheet. Once the covers were pulled off the bed, it wasn't so hard for him to get up!

That method might seem a little extreme. That is, it might seem extreme until you consider the question: "How much did Douglas Thornton want to know God?"

His desire to know God was so strong that he was willing to do whatever it took in order to spend time in prayer every day.

Maybe you've made commitments to pray more often, only to let them slide. Perhaps you don't have the real desire to pray even now. It's a duty, a responsibility, not a joy. But God wants to create in you a desire to know Him. It's the chicken and egg thing. Which comes first? In this case, as you pursue prayer and practice it, your desire will grow.

## **GOD'S ANSWERS TO PRAYER**

Sometimes people don't pray because they don't understand God and the way He answers prayer. They pray for something, seem to get no answer, become discouraged and quit. But God always answers our prayers. He responds to our prayers in several different ways.

When we ask for something according to God's will, His answer will always be yes. How can you be sure? Remember the promise found in John 14:14: "You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it."

James writes about those who doubt when they pray with the wrong motives: "That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does" (James 1:7-8). When we pray with a double mind, the answer will always be no. We cannot pray something contrary to God's will and expect Him to answer us affirmatively.

God's answers to our prayers also depend on His perfect timing. Sometimes God says "Wait" before He says "Yes." He knows all things. He will answer when the time is just right. In the meantime, He is building our faith and endurance as we continue to make our request to God.

As we develop a consistent prayer life, God will teach us to discern His will. As we do that we sharpen our ability to pray according to His desires.

## **WAYS TO PRAY**

Prayer involves more than just making requests of God. It is much richer and deeper than that. God has given us at least *five* different ways to pray to Him. Each one is a part of our communication with God that will help us get to know Him better and better.

*Praise* may be the single most important ingredient in prayer. It expresses, openly and freely, our love for God. Praise is unrestrained worship. Through praise we reflect back to God the qualities that are true of Him. We adore Him for who He is. Praise also helps us handle fear. When we praise God in a fearful or difficult situation, we recognize His ability to handle every problem. And after we begin to see our problem from the perspective of how great and awesome He is, that issue doesn't seem so threatening.

*Thanksgiving* reveals our gratitude. It shows an awareness of what God has done, expresses appreciation for His works, and honors His actions and gifts. If we know that God always has our good in mind, then we can thank Him for every circumstance – good or bad, difficult or easy, exciting or mundane.

*Confession* removes any barriers sin might have put between God and us. Our confession shows that we agree with God that we have sinned and that we accept the forgiveness that Jesus' death has provided for us on the cross.

*Petition* asks God for what we need. He wants to give us His good gifts. In fact, God is the source of every good gift (James 1:17). Petition is the key that unlocks God's storehouse that is filled with God's good gifts for us.

*Intercession* releases the power of God's Spirit into the world. We represent God as His "ambassadors" (2 Corinthians. 5:20). One way we do that is to pray for specific individuals and circumstances. We make known specific needs to God, and in turn, He releases His Holy Spirit to deal with each particular situation according to His will.

Each of these ways to pray provides a vital link in building our relationship with God. Each one is a path that leads us to get to know Him on a deeper level. The more we pray, the better we will know and love God. The more we pursue Him, the more we will see His hand at work in our lives, answering our prayers.



## ACTION POINT &gt; SESSION 12

1. Read Matthew 18:18-20 and John 14:12-14. Make a list of your discoveries about prayer from these passages.
  
2. Think of one prayer request in your past when God said yes, one when He said no and one when He said to wait. Be specific. Looking back, can you see why He answered those prayers the way He did?
  
3. God's Word gives hundreds of promises pertaining to prayer. But His promises won't mean much if we don't apply them to specific situations. Look up the following promises. Ask God to show you how to apply them personally. Then begin to claim them during your times alone with God.

Matthew 7:7-8

Philippians 4:6-7

Philippians 4:19

James 1:5

4. Spend a few minutes evaluating your time alone with God. How can you get more out of that time? How do you need to develop your prayer time?

5. Memorize John 15:7 this week.

6. Fill out a Prayer Action Sheet each day during your time alone with God. A reproducible form is in the Time Alone with God Notebook on page 49. Study the Scriptures you can use for each aspect of prayer (praise, confession, thanksgiving, petition and intercession) on pages 67-72. Use those passages in your prayer time every day. For example, under Praise, on the first day of the month, read Psalm 8. One example of a completed Prayer Action Sheet is shown on page 50.

From now on, fill out one Bible Response Sheet and one Prayer Action Sheet each day in your time alone with God. Spend about 12 minutes in Bible study (continue in the Book of Mark) and 8 minutes in prayer.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** Make sure you have completed all assignments from *A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ* (daily times alone with God, memory verses and weekly studies and projects) before moving on to *A Vision For Life And Ministry*.

**PRAYER ACTION SHEET**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

PRAISE: Write one reason to praise the Lord today.

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THANKSGIVING: Write what you are most thankful for today.

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CONFESSION: Write any sin(s) you need to confess.

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PETITION: Write your most important needs for today.

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INTERCESSION: Write the names of the people you are praying for today and a phrase that expresses your prayer for each person.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer \_\_\_\_\_

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## PRAYER ACTION SHEET

Date 5-10

PRAISE: Write one reason to praise the Lord today.

Lord, I praise You that You are  
the one who gives me strength.

THANKSGIVING: Write what you are most thankful for today.

Lord, I give You thanks that You  
will protect me as I face my  
angry friend.

CONFESSION: Write any sin(s) you need to confess.

God, please forgive me for fighting  
with my family.

PETITION: Write your most important needs for today.

Jesus, all I need today is for  
You to be with me throughout the  
day.

INTERCESSION: Write the names of the people you are praying for today and a phrase that expresses your prayer for each person.

|      |       |        |                  |
|------|-------|--------|------------------|
| Name | Nikki | Prayer | guidence         |
|      | Mom   |        | Strength         |
|      | Alex  |        | stability        |
|      | Koby  |        | Your love        |
|      | Me    |        | all of the above |

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LEADERSHIP TEAM LEADER

### SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

During the Leadership Team experience both you and your group will grow in your relationship to Christ, in your vision for ministry to students and in your skills to reach them and help them grow. Growth means change! As life change takes place, allow for it. That will require flexibility as your group members face their personal needs and the need to minister to young people. Let the Holy Spirit lead you as you oversee this study.

Keep in front of the group the challenge to become equipped. Getting equipped is the heart of the Leadership Team. Some will respond to that more quickly than others. As you give assignments and ministry responsibilities to individual group members, be aware that some people will be ready more quickly than others. Give them responsibilities in proportion to their readiness.

Commitment will create success in the group. Only include in the group those adults who will commit themselves to study this book and the Bible on their own and who will faithfully take part in the meetings and projects. This group will be referred to as a Leadership Team.

The person to lead the group is the youth pastor or key youth leader in the church. That person is responsible to get the approval of the pastor or church leader to conduct this group.

Leading the group will require more time in preparation and more personal involvement than most Bible studies or Sunday School classes. As a member of the group and its leader, you must set the example by taking part in all of the commitments, activities and assignments of the Leadership Team.

Follow these instructions to get the group started on the right foot.

*Look through the material in this book.* Familiarize yourself with the purpose of this book: To grow in a personal relationship to Jesus Christ. In the first session go over this purpose and discuss it. Show the group all three books so that they are familiar with the whole series (see the order form on page 79 to obtain these). Examine the Table of Contents to obtain an overview of what the group will discuss. Then take a close look at several individual sessions to get a feel for the depth of the material and the level of commitment that will be required.

*Decide on a place and time to meet.* Probably, you will meet weekly as a group

throughout this study. The other option is to meet every two weeks, taking twice as long and covering two sessions. But this is not the best option. At the first meeting everyone needs to have input on the best time for the group to meet. If possible, hold the meetings in your home or the home of one of the group members. Meeting in the informal atmosphere of a living room or around a dining room table helps people relax, open up and join in discussions.

*Order all materials prior to the first meeting.* Each participant of the Leadership Team, including yourself, will need a Bible, a copy of this book, and a 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" binder for the Time Alone with God Notebook inserts. (The use of the inserts will begin Week 9.)

*Determine the length of each meeting.* One hour to two hours are the parameters for the length of the meeting. One and a half hours each week is optimal and allows 15 minutes for review or sharing, one hour for the main study, and 15 minutes of prayer for personal and ministry needs. Flex these to meet the needs of the group.

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

Your role in the Leadership Team is that of leader, not teacher. By explaining that you, too, are in the process of becoming a more mature disciple of Christ, you will establish yourself as one of the group, rather than the "instructor." But you are the leader, so expect group members to look to you for organization, guidance and example. When they see that you genuinely love God and that you care about them as individuals, they will begin to grow. They will form solid, loving relationships with God, with you and with one another. Here are some suggestions for building stronger relationships:

1. *Meet with each group member.* Schedule a personal appointment with each person on your Leadership Team during the first few weeks. Get to know the needs, interests, concerns and goals of each person. Share those same things about yourself. This will help you see one another as unique, important individuals with feelings and ideas. It will also result in more meaningful discussions during the group meetings.
2. *Keep a notebook throughout this study.* Record your observations about the members of your Leadership Team. Regularly pray for each person by name. Keep track of individual needs. If someone misses a session, contact that person personally. Help them when they have trouble understanding something from Scripture. Talk with them if they do not follow through on commitments. Ask for their opinions during meetings. Build up each member so each person feels valued and appreciated by the rest of the group.

3. *Keep your pastor and church informed.* While you are building relationships in your Leadership Team, strengthen relationships within your church as well. Keep your pastor informed about what is happening in your group. Encourage the group members to be involved in the church, especially the youth ministry.
4. *Limit group membership.* Because your Leadership Team will build trust between each other based on shared experiences, it is unwise to add any new members once the group has been established. When new people become interested in the Leadership Team, begin a new Leadership Team for them once another Leadership Team leader is ready to take responsibility for a group. From the beginning, look for another person to lead a Leadership Team. Ask that person to help you lead this group. That experience will prepare him/her to lead a Leadership Team in the future.

## ESTABLISHING SESSION LEADERS

One aspect of the growth experience in this group will come from the opportunity of each person to lead the Leadership Team meetings. A weekly schedule of meetings is on page 55. Fill in the blank sessions. You lead all the sessions where “Group Leader” is written. Make the assignments during the first few weeks.

Ask the leader for the next week to read the material under “Preparing to Lead” the day after the previous group meeting.

## PREPARING TO LEAD

1. *Prepare early.* Begin preparing at least five days prior to the group meeting. Study the material in this book answering the questions for yourself as a participant, not as the leader. Read through the Discussion Guide to see if there is anything you need to prepare early. After reviewing the session material and studying the discussion ideas, finalize your preparation one or two days before the meeting.
2. *Start on time.* Even if only a few people are present when it is time to begin, start the meeting. If you wait on people to arrive who are late, you will find yourself starting the group later and later each week.
3. *Keep the discussion on track.* Encourage people to talk. To maximize your time in the group, follow these guidelines:
  - State questions clearly and concisely. After asking a question, allow time for the group to think and respond. Don't be afraid of short periods of silence. Avoid giving your own answers or opinions especially in the beginning. Give

them the opportunity to express themselves. Don't make a contribution to the discussion that someone else in the group can make.

- Respect each person's comments. Encourage participants to say what they think rather than what they think they should say. Honesty and transparency will create depth and open sharing in the group. As the leader, ask additional questions to help them clarify their thoughts. Look for opportunities to move their thoughts from the abstract to concrete. Challenge them to personally apply what they say.
- Stay close to Scripture. The Bible serves as the authority for this study and the group discussions. Encourage group members to base their ideas on biblical principles. Use the Bible as the "plumb line" for their ideas. Let it be the authority for "faith and practice."
- Challenge trite or superficial answers. Don't let group members get away with simply rattling off a cliché, a Bible verse or an easy answer. Ask them to explain what they mean and to give a personal example of what they mean. Challenge them to "go down deep and come up strong."
- Ask review questions. Help the group think through new concepts through the grid of their previous studies. Use the review time for people to reflect on what they have learned, to raise previously discussed issues with which they are still having problems, and tell how they have seen that discussion come alive in their own lives.
- Ensure total participation. If some group members hesitate to take part in the discussions, ask them direct questions relating to their personal opinions or experiences. Let them know that you care about them and what they think. If some people try to answer all the questions, begin addressing your questions to others by name so everyone will have an opportunity to respond. If one person dominates, after the meeting gently ask him or her to help you by encouraging everyone to have equal time to talk.

4. Evaluate every session. Within 24 hours after each meeting, review the session. Write down any problems or needs you noticed in the group. Think about how you want to address these. Get with the person who led that particular session. Ask that person to evaluate his leadership of the session. Keep it simple by asking what strengths and what weaknesses he saw in his leadership of the meeting.

**GROUP LEADER ASSIGNMENTS****Session****Section One**

1

Group Leader

2

Group Leader

3

Group Leader

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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**Session****Section Two**

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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**Session****Section Two**

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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Group Leader

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Since different people will lead the group, as the leader you can help them by pointing them to the appropriate Discussion Guide for that week. The questions and suggestions will help them get to the heart of each session. These guides by no means exhaust the material or the possibilities of discussion. Add your own questions, ideas and applications as long as that topic and the material in the session are the focus.

### **SESSION 1 (GROUP PROJECT)**

1. During the first session focus on discussing and deciding the purpose of the group, building relationships and organizing your group. Keep the meeting informal and fun. Creatively plan a picnic, bike hike or a party at someone's house to make that point.
2. Ask each person to tell his/her story. Give each one five minutes. Appoint a time keeper. Allow 30 minutes for this. For those who do not tell their story, they will have that opportunity next week. State the purpose of the group: To grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. In light of that purpose ask each person what he/she wants to get and give by participating in this group.
4. Ask how they think accomplishing this purpose will build the youth ministry.
5. Focus on the Personal Commitment form on page 4. Discuss what that means. Ask them if they understand the commitment they are making. Talk to them about being in an accountable, covenant relationship. Tell them that each person will be asked to sign the "Personal Commitment Form" next week. Ask them to pray about those commitments.
6. Set a date and time for the next meeting. Make that the regular time for the group to meet each week.

### **SESSION 2**

1. If the group did not have time for each person to tell his/her story, begin there and complete that. Again give each person five minutes. Appoint a timekeeper. Do this each week until everyone has shared.
2. Review the story about the Communist party leader. Make the statement that

every follower of Jesus Christ is a potential leader in the faith. Ask: *Do you see yourself as a potential leader? Why?* Let each person respond.

3. Ask: *Which of the benefits of leadership are most meaningful to you?*

4. Ask someone in the group to read the material under the subhead, "The Commitment to the Leadership Team." Ask: *What do you think it means to make a commitment to a group?* Have each group member sign his/her own "Personal Commitment" statement on page 4. Pass the books around and have each person sign all the other books. Emphasize that this expresses the seriousness of the commitment that group members will have to each other.

5. Let everyone give a *brief* description of his/her schedule. Check to see if anyone expects problems in attending the group meetings every week. (If so, have those people talk to you after the meeting. Perhaps you can arrange for a baby-sitter for the group, meet on a different night, etc.).

6. Pray as a group about the commitment each member has made to be on the Leadership Team.

7. Set a date now for the half day of prayer. (See Session 13.)

### SESSION 3

1. Begin the meeting by having everyone share their "favorite hobby."

2. Ask: *What are your reactions to the story about Matt Brinkley? Do you think God could ever bring about similar results in your personal life and ministry?*

3. Divide the group into pairs. Have everyone read the parable from Matthew 7:24-27 and talk about what truths they think Jesus is trying to communicate to us through the parable. As a group, create a modern-day parable that would communicate the same message.

4. Read the Alan Redpath quote on page 9. (See *Action Point* question 1.) Ask: *What does that quote mean to this group of potential leaders?*

5. Ask: *What did you write in answer to question 4 about where you personally need to grow in your relationship to Christ and in your leadership skills?* (Leader: Take notes to encourage group members later.)



## SESSION 4

1. Have each person express why he/she has “confidence in Christ.”
2. Ask them to describe situations where they depend on feelings rather than facts, especially as it relates to their walk with Jesus Christ.
3. Have someone read Psalm 139:13-16 and Ephesians 2:10. Ask: *Why do you think God created you?*
4. Ask someone to read 1 John 4:9-10. Using this passage, Say: *Describe in one sentence how much God loves you. Each person express one specific way you know that God loves you.*
5. Ask: *Will each person contrast his/her life “before” and “after” beginning a personal relationship with Jesus?*
6. Look up as many of the passages listed in the session as time permits and summarize each one. Give each person a passage to summarize.
7. Taking off on the question: “How do I know that I truly have become a child of God?,” ask them: *What other evidence besides what is described in I John leads you to the conclusion that you are a child of God?*

## SESSION 5

1. Discuss common misconceptions about love. Write them on a board.
2. Ask: *What is your fondest memory of experiencing love?*
3. Ask: *Of the four ways man’s love and God’s love differ, which one has affected you the most? Why?*
4. Ask each member to share one negative experience with love that has hampered him/her from receiving/experiencing God’s love.
5. From the study of 1 Corinthians 13, have each group member pick out the quality of God’s love that is most significant to him/her and explain why.
6. Ask: *How does receiving God’s love affect how you respond to the three people you listed in Action Point #4?*
7. Pray together asking that each person will allow God’s love to flow in and through his/her life, cleanse him/her from past negative experiences, and help him/her love others more completely.

**SESSION 6**

1. Ask the group members to share the one time in their lives when they felt the most inadequate.
2. Break into groups of two. Have each group read Psalm 51, then answer these questions: *Why was David feeling inadequate?* (His sin with Bathsheba. See 2 Samuel 11.) *How did David respond to God after his sin?* Report the findings of each group.
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:5. Ask: *Reflecting on Paul's words to Timothy, what one step of action did you realize that you need to take in order to have a pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith?* Encourage everyone to be specific.
4. Summarize: *Let's pray together asking God to give us courage to take that step as quickly as possible, even as soon as next week.*

**SESSION 7**

1. Review the last session by asking each person to report on the action each decided to take as a result of his/her study of 1 Timothy 1:5. If some group members did not take that action, ask them how the group can continue to pray for them.
2. Have the group divide into pairs to read and discuss Romans 8. Have each pair list the characteristics of true believers from that chapter. Then ask each pair to offer one characteristic.
3. Ask the group: *What do you think it means to "walk in the Spirit?"* Discuss this as a group.
4. As the leader, give one example from your own personal life where you have been frustrated by circumstances or your inability to do what is right. Describe how walking in the Spirit did or could have changed that circumstance.
5. Encourage each person to pray that he/she be filled with the Holy Spirit now and walk in the Spirit every day. Lead them in a prayer to be filled with the Spirit.
6. Pray in groups of two. Pray Romans 8 back to God, asking that those words become a reality daily.
7. Remind each person to pray that he/she will be filled with the Spirit and walk in the Spirit every day this week.

**SESSION 8**

1. Ask: *What is your favorite food and why?*
2. Read and discuss Colossians 2:6-10 together. Ask: *How did you receive Jesus Christ?* (through faith) *How can you walk in Him?* (also through faith) *How can you become rooted and built up in the faith, strengthened and overflowing with thanks?* (Discuss the question.) *What are some of the “deceptive philosophies” and “human traditions” that keep us from experiencing fullness of life in Christ?* (legalism, church traditions, etc.) *How do those things affect us personally?* (Get their opinions) *What do you think Paul means by “fullness of life in Christ”?* (discuss the question)
3. Challenge your group members to use their “utensils” regularly (prayer, God’s Word, fellowship and witnessing). If some people are not in the habit of spending time alone with God every day, encourage them to begin this week. (Have available copies of *Time Alone with God Notebook* inserts for everyone. Spend as much time explaining the inserts as you think your group needs. Emphasize the sections on “How to Have a Time Alone with God” and “How to Study a Passage of Scripture.”) Point out that the next session will provide more specifics for beginning a daily time alone with God.
4. As a group, practice going through a “Prayer Action Sheet” and “Bible Response Sheet” (You will do this again next week. Do it this week to become familiar with the idea).
5. Remind your group members of the half day of prayer and begin to gather the materials you will need.

**SESSION 9**

1. Ask each person to describe his/her first date.
2. Emphasizing that good relationships are maintained by spending time together. Read Mark 1:35 as a group. Discuss why Jesus needed to have time alone with His Father.
3. Ask: *What would you describe as the most meaningful experience you have had while alone with God?*
4. Ask: *How do you think spending time alone with God will help you accomplish the purpose of this study?*
5. Answer any questions they have about beginning a daily time alone with God.

6. Ask the group to set a goal for every group member to spend time alone with God seven days in a row. If one or more persons miss a day during that period, agree to start over on the goal. This exercise will build group unity and will provide mutual encouragement to spend time alone with God. Emphasize honesty. It won't hurt the group to start over one or more times. To build encouragement and accountability, divide them into pairs and have them call each other the night before as a reminder.

## SESSION 10

1. Ask: *What one thing has changed about your physical appearance since high school that people might comment on at a reunion?*
2. Brainstorm characteristics that the secular world sees as qualities of success. Then divide into groups of three and have each group write their own definition of success according to Psalm 1:1-3. Reassemble, share those definitions, and discuss how they contrast with the secular world's ideas.
3. Check to see how the group did on their seven days in a row spending time alone with God. If anyone forgot or neglected to have a time alone with God (even for a day), designate the day after your meeting as "Day 1" and begin your seven day goal again. (This is not designed to be legalistic, but to encourage consistency and build a habit.) If everyone followed through with their times with God, encourage them to continue the good habits by having a time alone with God every day during this study. (Note: Ask group members to bring their Time Alone with God notebooks to the next meeting.)
4. Have each person share one insight from his/her times alone with God during the past week.
5. Discuss any problems they encountered.
6. As a group, work through each step of a Bible Response Sheet using Hebrews 4:12. Then have each person work through another Bible Response Sheet, using 2 Timothy 3:14-17. When everyone finishes, discuss how they did each section. (This exercise is designed to help people understand the method of Bible study rather than to gather insights from Scripture. Sort out any problems they are having with filling out the Bible Response Sheet. The insights will come naturally during their future times alone with God.)
7. Celebrate by going out for ice cream when the group reaches its seven day collective goals. You buy!

## SESSION 11

1. Have each group member describe the most positive benefit of memorizing Scripture that he/she has experienced or identify the obstacles that have prevented him/her from memorizing Scripture.
2. Ask: *What are negative experiences have you had trying to memorize something?*
3. As a group, recite 2 Timothy 3:16. (Group members were assigned to memorize this verse during the week.) Say it over and over until everyone has it memorized perfectly.
4. Using “How to Memorize Scripture” from the *Time Alone with God Notebook* inserts, go over the steps of Scripture memory.
5. Memorize Hebrews 4:12 together. Say it until everyone has memorized it perfectly.
6. Assign each person in the group one of the following verses to memorize on his own by using the steps of Scripture memory. Reassemble after a few minutes and have each person say his/her verse. Notice people who are having problems and make a mental note to call, to encourage and to work with them to help them learn the verses. (Verses to assign: 1 John 5:11; Philippians 1:6; 1 John 3:23; John 15:5; Psalm 119:9; John 16:24; Matthew 4:19; Proverbs 3:5-6; and Matthew 6:33.)
7. Read and discuss John 14:26 and 2 Peter 1:3. Ask: *How do these verses relate to Scripture memory?*
8. Have group members share from their personal times alone with God. (Check again to see how they are doing on seven straight days.)
9. Pray over specific personal problems and positive insights from those times with God. Finalize plans for the half day of prayer. (See Session 13.)

## SESSION 12

1. Ask: *Do you consider yourself an “early bird” or a “night owl”?* Get the “early birds” in one group and the “night owls” in another group. Ask them to make a “top ten” list of the reasons they are that way. Each group report to the whole group.
2. Ask them to share insights from their daily times alone with God. (Celebrate if the group has completed its seven-day challenge.)
3. Determine the purpose of prayer as found in John 14:12-14 and Matthew 18:18-20.
4. Have each person describe a recent, specific answer to prayer. (Remember yes, no

and wait.)

5. Break into five groups. Assign one aspect of prayer (praise, confession, thanksgiving, petition, intercession) to each group. Have groups explain *why* that aspect of prayer is vital to a relationship with God. Reassemble and report.
6. Go over the sample Prayer Action Sheet. Make sure each person understands how each section applies to spending time in prayer.
7. As a group, pray through the Prayer Action Sheet one section at a time. (Allow five minutes for each section.)
8. Make sure everyone knows exactly what to do for next session's half day of prayer. Gather individual prayer requests and print them for next week.

## TIME ALONE WITH GOD

These sheets provide suggestions for beginning a time alone with God and daily outlines for keeping it going.

Photocopy the pages and insert them in a 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" notebook. For a 10 week supply, make:

- 1 copy of pages 64-72
- 5 or more copies of page 73;
- 5 or more copies of page 74;
- 10 or more copies of page 75-76.

Contents of these inserts have been excerpted from *Spending Time Alone with God* (Book 2 of the Moving Toward Maturity Series).



## HOW TO STUDY A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE

### **Observation**

*(Use with Title and Key Verse sections of your Bible Response Sheet.)*

Pray first for the Holy Spirit's guidance, and then read the passage carefully.

Read with an open mind, ready to receive and obey what God has to teach you.

### **Interpretation**

*(Use with the Summary section of your Bible Response Sheet.)*

Step One — Read the verses preceding and following the passage in order to understand the proper setting and context.

Step Two — Ask yourself these questions about the passage: Who? What? When? Where? and How? In outline form write down your insights, then write any of your unanswered questions.

Step Three — Look up unfamiliar terms in a standard dictionary or a Bible dictionary.

### **Application**

*(Use with the Personal Application section of your Bible Response Sheet.)*

Step One — Look for: Promises to claim; Attitudes to change; Challenges to accept; Sins to confess; Commands to obey; Actions to take; Examples to follow; Skills to learn.

Step Two — Describe how the passage applies to your life by asking yourself these questions: "How can I make this passage personal?" "How can I make it practical?" "How can I make it measurable?" Be specific.

### **Memorization**

Find a verse of Scripture that speaks to you personally, and memorize it.



## HOW TO MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE

### *Read The Passage Several Times*

Read it silently, and then read it aloud.

### *Understand The Passage.*

Read it in the context of the passages around it.

Read the comments about the verse in a Bible commentary (for example, *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*).

Write in a few words regarding what the passage is about.

### *Visualize The Passage.*

Use your imagination to picture the passage. For example, Matthew 5:1-2 is part of the "Sermon on the Mount." Picture yourself there on the mountain with Jesus. Then place each of these "Beatitudes" going up the side of the mountain. Later, that picture will come to mind and help you recall these verses.

### *Break Down The Passage Into Natural Phrases*

Learn the first phrase of the passage; then add the second. Continue adding phrases until you have memorized the entire passage.

### *Learn The Reference As Part Of The Passage*

Say the reference, then the verse, and then repeat the reference again at the end. This step helps you fix the location of the verse in your mind, allowing you to turn to it immediately when you need it.

### *Learn It Word Perfect.*

As you say the passage over and over to yourself, continue to correct yourself until you've learned it exactly as it is written. You are already taking the time to learn it, so why not do it right? Learning it this way now will give you confidence to quote and use the passage later.

### *Meditate On The Passage*

As you think and pray about the passage, ask God to speak to you. When the passage becomes meaningful to you, then it will be much easier for you to remember.

### *Review The Passage*

Each day, review the Scripture passages you have already learned. If you review a passage every day for 30 days, it will be yours forever!

## THIRTY DAYS OF PRAISE

|                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Day 1:</i> Psalm 8              | <i>Day 16:</i> Psalm 104:1-23  |
| <i>Day 2:</i> Psalm 23             | <i>Day 17:</i> Psalm 104:24-35 |
| <i>Day 3:</i> Psalm 34:1-3; 50:1-6 | <i>Day 18:</i> Psalm 111       |
| <i>Day 4:</i> Psalm 63:1-4; 66:1-7 | <i>Day 19:</i> Psalm 112       |
| <i>Day 5:</i> Psalm 67             | <i>Day 20:</i> Psalm 113       |
| <i>Day 6:</i> Psalm 84             | <i>Day 21:</i> Psalm 134       |
| <i>Day 7:</i> Psalm 86             | <i>Day 22:</i> Psalm 135:1-7   |
| <i>Day 8:</i> Psalm 90             | <i>Day 23:</i> Psalm 138       |
| <i>Day 9:</i> Psalm 91             | <i>Day 24:</i> Psalm 139       |
| <i>Day 10:</i> Psalm 92            | <i>Day 25:</i> Psalm 145       |
| <i>Day 11:</i> Psalm 93            | <i>Day 26:</i> Psalm 146       |
| <i>Day 12:</i> Psalm 95:1-7        | <i>Day 27:</i> Psalm 147       |
| <i>Day 13:</i> Psalm 96            | <i>Day 28:</i> Psalm 148       |
| <i>Day 14:</i> Psalm 100           | <i>Day 29:</i> Psalm 149       |
| <i>Day 15:</i> Psalm 103           | <i>Day 30:</i> Psalm 150       |

## SEVEN DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

Focus your thanks to the Lord in two areas each day: (1) Bible passages that describe His promises and gifts to you, and (2) your personal thanks for God working in your daily life.

*Day 1 Pray through 2 Peter 1:4 to express your thanks to God.*

Lord, thank You for Your great and precious promises that You have given to me that I might be part of Your divine nature.

I also thank You for: Your amazing love, letting me be in Your family, making me really live and life at its most fantastic in Jesus.

*Day 2 Pray through 1 John 1:7 and Colossians 1:14 to express your thanks to God.*

Father, I thank You for the blood of Your Son Jesus Christ that cleanses me from all sin and frees me from Satan's power.

I also thank You for: Your patience, Your comfort, Your closeness to me, Your disciplining of me and Your love inside me.

*Day 3 Pray through 1 Peter 2:24 to express your thanks to God.*

Lord Jesus, I thank You that You bore my sins in Your body on the cross, so that I am dead to sin and live righteously, and that by Your wounds I am healed.

I also thank You for: the Body of Christ (other Christians), the privilege of prayer, my home and my parents.

*Day 4 Pray through Ephesians 2:8-10 to express your thanks to God.*

Lord, I thank You that I am saved by grace through faith, and that it is Your free gift — I don't have to work for it. Thank You that, as Your new creation, I can live for You and help others.

I also thank You for: my body, my health, my strength, happy times, sad times and in-between times.

*Day 5 Pray through Psalm 91:11-14 to express your thanks to God.*

Lord, I thank You that You give Your angels charge over me to guard me in all my ways. They will steady me with their hands and protect me. You will deliver me because You love me.

I also thank You for: opportunities for spiritual growth, comfort when I'm depressed, joy when I'm sad and courage when I'm scared.

*Day 6 Pray through Ephesians 1:3-6 to express your thanks to God.*

Lord, thank You for choosing me to be adopted into Your family. Thank You for blessing me with all the good things You have stored up for those who belong to Christ.

I also thank You for: food, clothes, a place to live, freedom to speak about You to others.

*Day 7 Pray through 2 Corinthians 8:9 and 9:8 to express your thanks to God.*

Thank You, Lord, for paying a debt for me (my debt of sin) that I can never repay. Thank You not only for saving me from sin but for giving me the grace I need today to live for You.

I also thank You for: saving me from selfishness, saving me from pride and saving me from eternal separation from You.

**THIRTY DAYS OF CONFESSION***Sins to Confess:*

*Day 1:* 2 Timothy 2:22. Do you have impure thoughts toward the opposite sex?

*Day 2:* Philippians 2:14-15. Do you complain or gripe?

*Day 3:* Ephesians 6:1-3. Do you honor your parents?

*Day 4:* Ephesians 4:31. Are you bitter toward anyone?

*Day 5:* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Are you careless with your body?

*Day 6:* Matthew 6:33. Do you seek what God wants first?

*Day 7:* Matthew 6:14. Do you have a bad attitude toward someone?

*Day 8:* 2 Timothy 2:22. Do you have impure motives?

*Day 9:* Colossians 3:9. Do you lie?

*Day 10:* Ephesians 6:1-3. Do you respect your parents?

*Day 11:* Ephesians 4:31. Is there anger in your life?

*Day 12:* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Do you have bad habits?

*Day 13:* Matthew 6:33. Is God the most important person in your life?

*Day 14:* Matthew 6:14. Are you holding a grudge?

*Day 15:* 2 Timothy 2:22. Are your thoughts pure toward the opposite sex?

*Day 16:* Philippians 2:14-15. Do you have a critical attitude?

*Day 17:* Colossians 3:9. Do you steal?

*Day 18:* Ephesians 4:31. Do you talk about others behind their backs?

*Day 19:* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Are you lazy?

*Day 20:* Matthew 6:33. Have you given God everything in your life?

*Day 21:* Matthew 6:14. Do you have a wrong relationship with someone?

*Day 22:* Colossians 3:9. Do you cheat in school?

*Day 23:* Ephesians 6:1-3. Do you have problems with authority?

*Day 24:* Ephesians 4:31. Are you jealous of anyone?

*Day 25:* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Do you eat too much?

*Day 26:* Matthew 6:33. Are you trusting God with your life?

*Day 27:* Matthew 6:14. Is there anyone you resent?

*Day 28:* Philippians 2:14-15. Does your attitude honor God?

*Day 29:* Ephesians 6:1-3. Are you rebellious?

*Day 30:* Ephesians 4:31. Do you argue with other people?

These sins to confess will help you through your first 30 days of confession. During the first month, you will discover several areas that God wants to change in your life. From then on, follow the passage that corresponds to that day of the month. Apply it to a sin you need to confess.

## SEVEN DAYS OF PETITION

Focus your petitions in two areas each day: (1) Bible passages that describe what God wants for you, and (2) your personal requests for God to supply your needs.

*Day 1* (Read Galatians 2:20)

“Jesus, help me to live as someone who is dead to my own selfish desires. Take charge of my body, my mind and my emotions. Live Your life in me today.”

Other needs:

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*Day 2* (Read Galatians 5:22-23)

“Jesus, through Your Spirit please help me to express these qualities to other people.”

Other needs:

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*Day 3* (Read Ephesians 5:18)

“Jesus, I claim the filling of Your Spirit. Fill me now. I pray for all that comes from Your Spirit: courage, power, wisdom, sexual purity, boldness, compassion, enthusiasm, honesty and openness.”

Other needs:

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*Day 4* (Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

“Lord, help me to know my spiritual gift(s) and use it for Your glory today.”

Other needs:

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*Day 5* (Read Ephesians 6:10-18)

“Jesus, it’s tough to be a Christian in this world. The pressure gets heavy at times. I ask for Your strength and protection from the world, the flesh and the devil. I put on

Your armor: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit — the Word of God.”

Other needs:

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*Day 6* (Read Isaiah 41:10)

“Lord, sometimes I am afraid. But I know I don’t have to be scared because You are my help and my strength. Help me today to overcome fear by trusting in You.”

Other needs:

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*Day 7* (Reads Acts 1:8)

“Jesus, I want to be a witness for You to my friends. Give me the power and courage to be Your witness today.”

Other needs:

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## PRAYERS YOU CAN PRAY FOR OTHERS

Look at these prayers of the Apostle Paul. They will help you know how to pray for other people. In fact, you can pray these specific prayers for them.

- "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:9-11).
  
- "I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:16-19).
  
- "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).









**PRAYER ACTION SHEET**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

PRAISE: Write one reason to praise the Lord today.

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THANKSGIVING: Write what you are most thankful for today.

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CONFESSION: Write any sin(s) you need to confess.

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PETITION: Write your most important needs for today.

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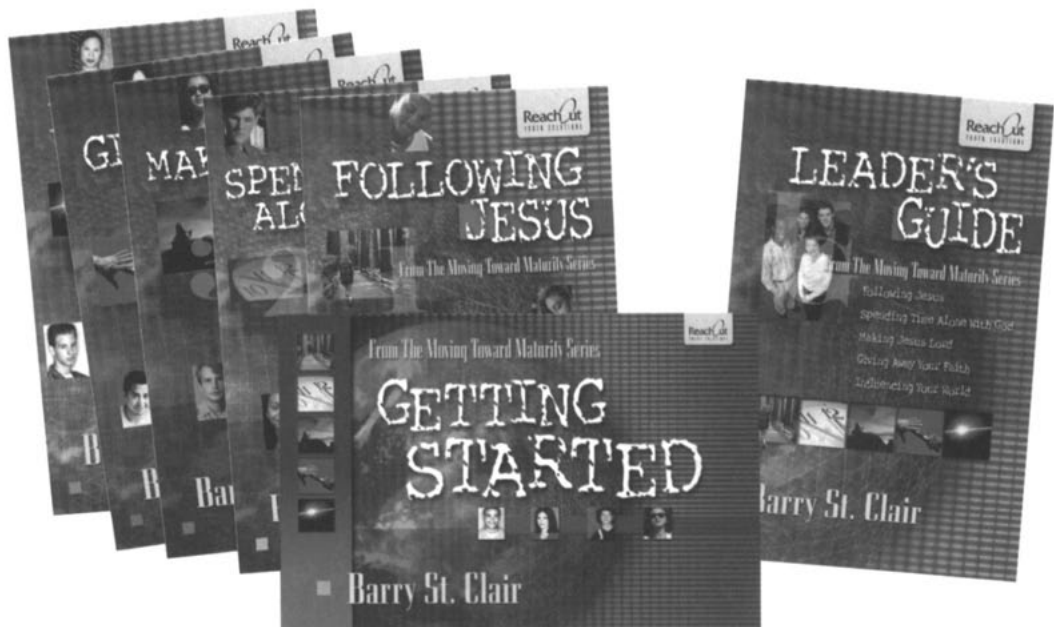
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INTERCESSION: Write the names of the people you are praying for today and a phrase that expresses your prayer for each person.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer \_\_\_\_\_

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
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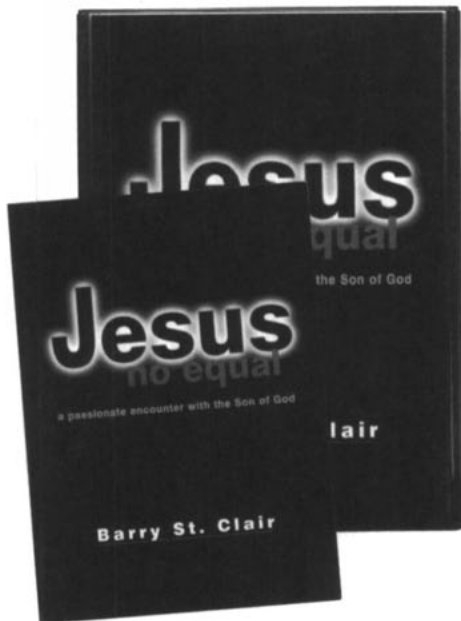
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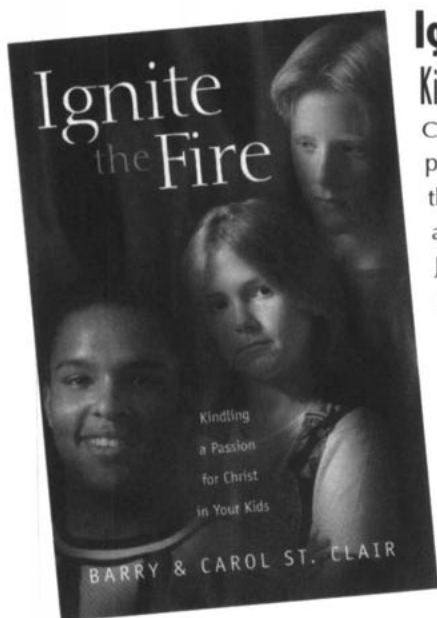
## Jesus No Equal

### A Passionate Encounter with the Son of God –

This student devotional creates an intense encounter with Jesus that traces Christ's coming, His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and second coming. The challenge of this book is for students to spend at least 20 minutes a day discovering Jesus. They will come to know Jesus for who He really is and will follow Him more passionately. That encounter will create the enthusiasm they need to take Jesus to their schools with the good news that in Jesus there is no equal. This book is much more than a resource. It is a campaign to place Jesus at center stage in the lives of the younger generation.

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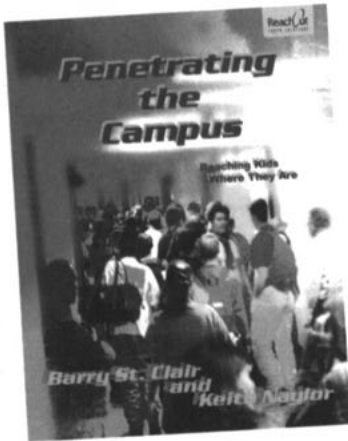
## Ignite The Fire

### Kindling a Passion for Christ in Your Kids – Barry and

Carol St. Clair have raised four children who are living proof of the message of this book. The circumstances that brought this book into existence are compelling – a couple who loved each other, parents who placed Jesus in the center of their home, children who responded to love and discipline, and their mother who died while the book was being written. Most parents ask the question: "What can I do to help my children turn out right?" In *Ignite the Fire*, Barry and Carol suggest a better question: "What can I do help my children love Jesus more?" This book offers ten biblical actions that parents can take to help motivate our children to pursue Jesus.

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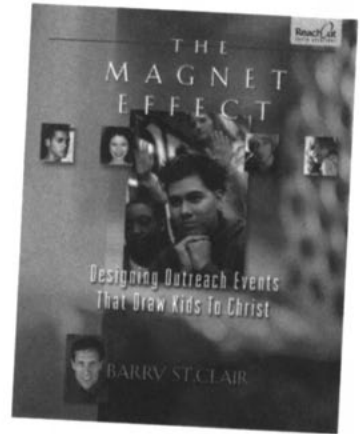


## Penetrating the Campus

**How To Reach Students Where They Are** – Designed to teach youth leaders how to relate to young people on their turf, this book helps leaders understand non-believing students as they face the emotional, social and spiritual challenges of adolescence and of life on their middle school or high school campuses. In *Penetrating the Campus*, Barry St. Clair and co-author Keith Naylor, a veteran youth leader, give youth pastors and leaders in-depth practical advice for communicating God's love to high school students. This book helps youth leaders bridge the gap between their church ministry and the public school campus — probably the most important mission field in America today.

## The Magnet Effect

In *The Magnet Effect* book and video, Barry St. Clair teams with the Willow Creek Youth Ministry Team to challenge youth leaders to create events designed to draw non-believing students to Christ. *The Magnet Effect* book offers simple yet powerful strategies and tools that enable youth leaders to equip students to reach their friends. *The Magnet Effect* video illustrates an excellent outreach event. This set is an essential tool for youth ministries that want to reach students.



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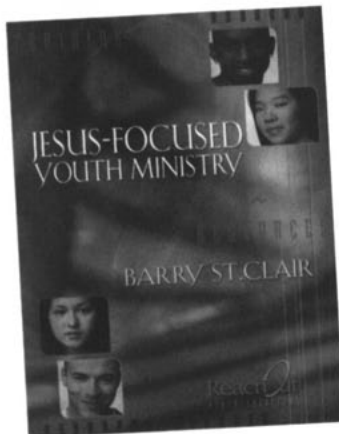
**Going Deeper with Christ** – How do you develop intimacy in your relationship to Jesus and reflect Him to others?

**Building Leaders** – How do you build quality leaders for a long-term ministry?

**Discipling Students** – How do you disciple students to have spiritual passion and become spiritual influencers with their friends?

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**Dr. Barry St. Clair's** desire is to influence as many teenagers as possible to become followers of Jesus Christ. As the founder and president of Reach Out Youth Solutions, Barry lives on the leading edge of national and international youth ministry. He speaks to and trains thousands of students, parents and youth leaders each year in the United States and around the world. Barry, author of over 20 books, wrote *Ignite the Fire: Kindling a Passion for Christ in Your Kids* along with his late wife Carol. Barry has run the Boston Marathon and played on the number three basketball team in the nation. Barry and his wife Lawanna live in Atlanta and have a combined family of eight children.

**Reach Out Youth Solutions** was founded by Barry St. Clair in 1976 to equip leaders for Jesus-focused youth ministry through the church around the world. They provide training opportunities and cutting-edge resources for students, parents, volunteers and youth pastors. Reach Out Youth Solutions establishes youth ministry equipping centers all over the world in places like Eastern Europe, Russia, Mexico and Egypt. For information, write Reach Out Youth Solutions at: [info@reach-out.org](mailto:info@reach-out.org), visit our website at: [www.reach-out.org](http://www.reach-out.org) or call us at: 1-800-473-9456.

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