WHOISJESUSANDWHATISHELIKE?

AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY IN THE GOSPELS

* WAYSIDECHAPEL



- **SESSION 1:** INTRO WEEK
- SESSION 2: THE BELOVED SON MATTHEW 3:1-3, 11-17
- **SESSION 3:** THE TEMPTER MATTHEW 4:1-11
- SESSION 4: THE STORM MARK 4:35-41
- SESSION 5: THE TEACHER JOHN 3:1-21
- SESSION 6: THE DAUGHTERS MARK 5:21-43
- **SESSION 7:** THE DISCIPLES MARK 6:30-44
- **SESSION 8:** THE PRAYER LUKE 11:1-13
- SESSION 9: THE SENT ONES MATTHEW 10:16-33
- **SESSION 10:** THE REST MATTHEW 11:25-30
- **SESSION 11:** RECAP WEEK
- **RESOURCES**

Session 1 INTRODUCTION

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What is an inductive Bible study?

Read the following instructions and definitions as a group. Pause to discuss or ask clarifying questions as needed.

This method helps readers investigate a passage of scripture and draws appropriate and applicable conclusions based on observation. This packet is designed to help us learn this method by cultivating three fundamental skills: observation, interpretation, and application. In addition to the skills to study the Bible, this packet will help develop the skill to share the good news about Jesus. Our hope is that as you practice these skills, your time studying the Bible will become more worshipful and meaningful.

PRAY AND REFLECT

Before each study, our process should always start in prayer. We are dependent upon God to reveal His will to us. Without God working in our hearts and minds as we study, the Bible becomes mere knowledge. The Holy Spirit is needed in order to turn knowledge into understanding and action.

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Before we can interpret the meaning of a passage, it's important that we first make observations in the verses we're reading. Take note of the grammatical, literary, and cultural elements of the passage. This involves considering key words, verbs, and connecting words, as well as the who, what, when, why, where and how's of the passage.

Ask yourself, "What are the main literary elements of the passage? What are some of the key themes of the passage? " Pay attention to key words, repeated words, and connecting words.

Be sure to pay attention to the context. Sometimes, this involves grasping the big picture of the passage before diving into interpretation of individual verses. This may include reading the whole section, chapter, or book of whatever you're studying in order to understand the author's flow of thought, as well as overall idea. What happened right before or right after the verses you are studying?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

After careful observation we can start trying to interpret what a certain verse or passage means. Our goal should be to determine what the author was saying to the original audience. We do this by using the context, defining key words, studying cross-references, comparing multiple translations, and wrestling with the text individually as well as communally. Commentaries such as The New Illustrated Bible Commentary or many others can be helpful, as well as websites like biblestudytools.com in order to study the original languages for deeper understanding.

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

After we've established what the author was trying to communicate to the original audience, we can apply these truths to our own lives. Through prayer and reflection, think through key principles learned in the passage you've studied. Ask yourself questions such as:

"Is there something to worship or thank God for? Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe? Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing? Is there something I need to pray for specifically this week? Is there any relationship I need to work on? What exactly will I do differently this week to apply this principle to my life? Whom, other than the Lord, will I ask to help me follow through with this application?"

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

God calls us to experience personal transformation through the thoughtful and careful study of his Word, but, our responsibility doesn't end there. Part of our calling as believers is to share the good news about Jesus with others so they can also experience his transformative power. Each study will give you helpful tools to individually and corporately prepare and practice sharing your faith with those in your context.

What are some strengths of this kind of Bible study? Can you identify any weaknesses?

How can we leverage this method of Bible study to encourage one another and have a greater Christ-glorifying impact in our spheres of influence?

Guidelines

Read the following guidelines as a group. Pause to discuss and ask clarifying questions as needed.



DURING DISCUSSION, EVERYONE SHARES THOUGHTS IN SENTENCES, NOT PARAGRAPHS.

This allows everyone an opportunity to share and contribute to the study.

2

READ AND STUDY THE PASSAGE ON YOUR OWN BEFORE TURNING TO OTHER PASSAGES, COMMENTARIES, AND AUTHORS.

In doing so, we discipline ourselves to a deeper study of the passage at hand and make the study more accessible to those new to the Bible. The goal of inductive Bible study is not to recite the opinions of others, but to train ourselves to discern God's will through his Word.



BE PATIENT AND GIVE OTHERS TIME TO THINK AND RESPOND. SILENCE IS OKAY!

Some individuals take longer to process and synthesize information. Allow everyone an opportunity to invest and participate in discussion.



RESPECT THE THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS OF OTHERS.

Help us create a safe, supportive space where we can grow in knowledge and understanding together.

5

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS STUDY, WE WILL ASSUME THE BIBLE IS TRUE.

If you're skeptical or have questions about the trustworthiness of the Bible, that's okay! Consider asking your leader after the study. However, during the study our focus will be answering the question, "If this is true, what does it mean?"

6 THE GOAL OF THE STUDY IS NOT SOLELY THE ACCUMULATION OF BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE, BUT LIFE CHANGE: OUR OWN LIVES, AND THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND US.

Often inductive Bible studies can get bogged down in the observation and interpretation stages leaving little time for application. Manage your time well and be sure to work through the whole study including considering how you'll apply and share what you've learned.

What will our group look like if we stick to these guidelines? Are there other guidelines we should add? Discuss as a group.

Session 2 THE BELOVED SON

READ: MATTHEW 3:1-3, 11-17

1 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 3 For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord, Make His paths straight!'"

11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" 15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him. 16 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

STUDY: MATTHEW 3:1-3, 11-17

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

For this passage, pay attention to the characters and what they're saying. What Old Testament passages and promises come to mind? How do they relate to Jesus?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

What do we learn about Jesus purpose in coming to earth? What does this passage show us about the relationships of the Trinity--the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Why should it matter to us?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

As you reflect on this passage, realize that because of Jesus' sacrifice, we are invited to experience that same love and affection that the Father has for his son, Jesus. Let this be an encouragement to you.

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

Allow this passage to cause you to think about people in your life that might be far from God and his love. Make a list of people you know who are far form God. Take a moment to pray for them.

DISCUSS: MATTHEW 3:1-3, 11-17

BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Who are people in your life that God has called you to love and influence? Make a list and share it with your group. Spend time praying for them.	

Session 3 THE TEMPTER

READ: Matthew 4:1-11

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'"

7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" 11Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

STUDY: Matthew 4:1-11

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

For this passage, pay attention to how the devil tempts Jesus. Does this story bring to mind any other prominent stories of temptation in the Bible (especially at the very beginning of Genesis)? What's similar? What's different? How does Jesus respond?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Think of why the author chose to include this story in his story of Jesus' life and ministry. What is the significance of this victory for Jesus? Why does it matter for us?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

What can we learn about how the devil tempts people? Why is it important to be aware of his schemes? What can we learn from Jesus about how to overcome temptation?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As we'll learn in this study, Jesus was aware of the people around him. He loved them and used every appropriate opportunity to share the good news. Using the list of names from last week, create your "Oikos Map" using the resource page at the back of the booklet.

DISCUSS: MATTHEW 481-11

BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Share your Oikos Map with your group. Spend time praying for each other as you become aware of the unique context God has placed you in. Pray for opportunities to show Christ's love. Pray that God would begin to soften the hearts to the good news about Jesus.	





35 On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. 37 And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. 38 Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" 39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. 40 And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"



OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

As you study this passage, you may want to read what comes before and what comes after. Notice, this is just one day in the life of Jesus! Pay attention to the reaction of the disciples before and after Jesus calms the storm.

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

What does this show us about who Jesus is? Why do you think the disciples struggle so much with what they witnessed?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

Put yourself in the disciples' shoes. How would you respond? How should the realization of Jesus' power effect your life? How is his power an encouragement to us in facing our own storms?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As you reflect on this passage, pray that God would cultivate boldness and love in your heart. Allow the power of Jesus to inspire you and motivate you to action. Look over your Oikos Map as you pray for courage to influence people in Jesus' name.



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Discuss how you can encourage and hold one another accountable to reach others for the sake of the gospel. Spend time praying for each other. Try to pray for specific relationships and people.	

Session 5 THE TEACHER

READ: John 3:1-21

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; 2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. 12 If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. 14 As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

STUDY: John 3:1-21

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

Pay attention to what Jesus is saying. What is he trying to help Nicodemus understand? What metaphors and illustrations is he using to describe salvation and life by the Spirit?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Try to put yourself in Nicodemus' shoes. As a Pharisee, he is very familiar with God's Word which prophesied the coming of the Messiah to save his people and bring the Spirit of God. And yet, what Jesus is telling him seems so strange and new. What's so surprising about the gospel that Jesus is presenting?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

What does this passage say about why Jesus came into the world? If he's truly the only way to reconnect with God through his Spirit, then what does that mean for you?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As we're thinking about the good news that Jesus came to proclaim, think about those people in your sphere of influence (from your list and your Oikos Map). Continue to pray that God would begin to soften their hearts to the Gospel. But also, begin to pray that God would prepare opportunities for you to have spiritual conversations.



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Continue sharing about the people God has placed in your path to share the gospel with. Pray over one another asking God to prepare opportunities for you to have spiritual conversations.	

Session 6 THE DAUGHTERS

READ: Mark 5:21-43

21 When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and so He stayed by the seashore. 22 One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." 24 And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him.

25 A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, 26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse- 27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. 28 For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well."29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. 30 Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?" 31 And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" 32 And He looked around to see the woman who had done this.33 But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."

35 While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?" 36 But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe." 37 And He allowed no one to accompany Him, except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing. 39 And entering in, He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep." 40 They began laughing at Him. But putting them all out, He took along the child's father and mother and His own companions, and entered the room where the child was. 41 Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded. 43 And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this, and He said that something should be given her to eat.



OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

Be sure to pay attention to the needs of the two women in this chapter and to how Jesus meets their needs. What's similar about them? What's different? Also, consider how Jesus responds to each. Does Jesus have his priorities straight?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Why do you think the author sees these two unique encounters with Jesus as one connected story? What's he trying to teach us about Jesus? Does Jesus respond to these two situations in the way that the people wanted him to? Is that significant?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

What insight does this passage give us about how Jesus works in the world and, more to the point, in our lives? How can we be encouraged when it seems like Jesus isn't meeting our needs the way we want him to? Is his way better?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As we've seen in our passage, Jesus isn't afraid to look for every opportunity to engage in a spiritual conversation leading to the good news of the gospel. Read the section on Spiritual Conversations in the resource section at the back of the book. Consider how you might use everyday circumstances to share the gospel with the people in your life.



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STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: What experiences have you had talking about your faith? Discuss helpful ways to have a spiritual conversation. Is there a family member, friend, or neighbor you can have a conversation with? Continue praying for opportunities.	

Session 7 THE DISCIPLES



30 The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.

33 The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. 35 When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and it is already quite late; 36 send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But He answered them, "You give them something to eat?" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?" 38 And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." 39 And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. 40 They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. 41 And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves and He kept giving them to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. 44 There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.



OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

This might be a very familiar passage to some, but that doesn't mean there isn't more to learn! Pay close attention and don't skip over details. For context, you may want to read the beginning of chapter 6, especially the flashback about Herod and John the Baptist.

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

What does this passage show us about how Jesus leads? How is Jesus different than Herod? How is his kingdom different from earthly kingdoms? What does he expect from his followers?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

If this is how Jesus rules his kingdom and this is how Jesus leads his followers, how does that affect our lives? How can we receive the empowering leadership of Jesus to serve those around us?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As we've seen in our passage, Jesus will resource and equip his followers for ministry. This includes guiding us and empowering us as we have spiritual conversations with those around us. Continue praying and looking for opportunities to influence people in your context with the good news of the gospel.



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
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Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
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Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Following up on our discussion last week, brainstorm with your group about ways to take your everyday experiences and conversations and turn them into spiritual conversations. Plan and pray specifically for opportunities to share the gospel.	

Session 8 THE PRAYER

:....

READ: LUKE 11:1-13

1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." 2 And He said to them,

"When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 'Give us each day our daily bread. 4 'And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. 11 Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? 12 Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 13If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

STUDY: LUKE 1181-13

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

Once again, we're studying a familiar passage. Don't be dulled by familiarity. Pay attention to the details. Spend time breaking down the prayer and consider what Jesus is encouraging us to pray for. Consider how he wants us to think of the Father when we pray.

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Why do you think the disciples asked Jesus how to pray? What's the significance of this? How does it help us understand what he's trying to teach them?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

How should this passage affect our prayer life? How should it affect our view of the Father? How can you begin praying with the same confidence and boldness of Jesus?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

One of the most effective ways of sharing the good news about Jesus is to share our own story about what he's done for us. Read the section on "Sharing Your Story" in the resource section and consider how you might use your story to share the gospel.



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Practice sharing your story with another person in your group. Encourage one another and give each other feedback. Pray for opportunities to share what God has done in your life with people around you this week.	

Session 9 THE SENT ONES

READ: Matthew 10:13-33

16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; 18 and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. 20 For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 22 You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

23 "But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

26 "Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. 28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

32 "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

STUDY: Matthew 10:16-33

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

Pay close attention to the various warnings, encouragements, and instructions from Jesus. Under what circumstances is Jesus speaking these encouragements?

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Why is Jesus giving the disciples these warnings, encouragements, and instructions? What challenges does he expect they will encounter? How does he want them to think about the way they interact in the world?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

If Jesus thought his disciples would need these encouragements, do they have any meaning for us? How is our experience in the world similar to the disciples? How is it different? How will Jesus words change the way you think and interact in the world?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

Throughout Christian history, followers of Jesus have developed simple tools and techniques to help share the gospel. Turn to the resource section and learn about the "Three Circles" illustration. Learn it, practice it, and pray for opportunities to use it this week.



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
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STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Practice using the "Three Circles" illustration in groups. Continue praying for opportunities to use it with people around you.	

Session 10 THE REST



25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. 26 Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. 27 All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

STUDY: Matthew 11:25-30

OBSERVE: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What questions do you have? What's difficult? Serious? Interesting? Look for the who, what, when, and where of the passage. Write down anything you want to remember.

As you're making observations, realize this is a prayer that Jesus is praying out-loud for his disciples to hear (which was also written down and preserved for us to read).

INTERPRET: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Try to answer the questions you just asked. What does this passage mean? What is the author trying to communicate?

Pay attention to who Jesus is talking to. What does this show us about Jesus' relationship with the Father? What, does Jesus want us to know about the Father? How will taking Jesus yoke (this is an agricultural illustration about work) lead to rest?

APPLY: WHAT DID I LEARN? WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

What did you learn from this passage? What do you want to remember? How can you apply what you've learned in your life right now? What's something you could share with someone in your life?

What is it that God the Father wants you to know through the revelation of his Son, Jesus? How can you find rest in him by coming under his yoke?

SHARE: WHO CAN I TELL?

How will what you've learned impact the lives of those around you?

As we close this study, spend time prayerfully reflecting on what you've learned and the conversations you've had. Give thanks for the ways God has used you to be a light to those around you. How can you make sharing the good news about Jesus a lifestyle?



BEGIN: WHAT AM I BRINGING WITH ME?	DISCUSSION NOTES:
Catch up: What are you thankful for today? What's causing you stress?	
Pray: Briefly pray over needs and ask God to teach us from his Word.	
	_
STUDY: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?	
Read and Retell: Have one person read the passage out loud. Everyone follows along. Then, have someone retell the story from memory. The group can help fill in any missing details.	
Observe: What important observations did you make? Does anything new stand out? Briefly share with your group.	
Interpret: Based on your observations, discuss the meaning of the passage. What is God trying to teach you? Discuss as a group.	
WRAP UP: WHAT WILL I TAKE WITH ME?	
Apply: As a group, discuss how you'll apply the truth of this passage to your life. How will you hold each other accountable? How will you pray for one another?	
Share: Share with one another on what you've learned and the conversations you've had during this study. Consider how you can encourage one another and hold each other accountable to continue being a light in your context.	





After the past months of considering the person and character of Jesus, the goal of our last meeting is to make it stick and have lasting impact on our lives. We're going to do this in three ways: reflect, celebrate, and apply.

Reflect

Spend a few minutes quietly reflecting on this past semester. What have you learned about yourself, about others, and about God? You may wish to review passages or notes you've taken. Reflection is not necessarily limited to the context of the study so feel free to include lessons learned elsewhere. Write some things down and share them with your group.

Celebrate

Consider the reflection points you've shared. How have these lessons changed you and made you more like Jesus? How have they positively affected friends, family, or co-workers? Record your thoughts below. Celebrate these developments by sharing them with your group-be sure to encourage and rejoice as others are sharing! Pray as a group thanking God for his work in your life.

Apply

What do you want to take away from this study? How can you continue to grow and develop from what you've learned? How can this group hold you accountable? Discuss as a group. Conclude by praying for one another.

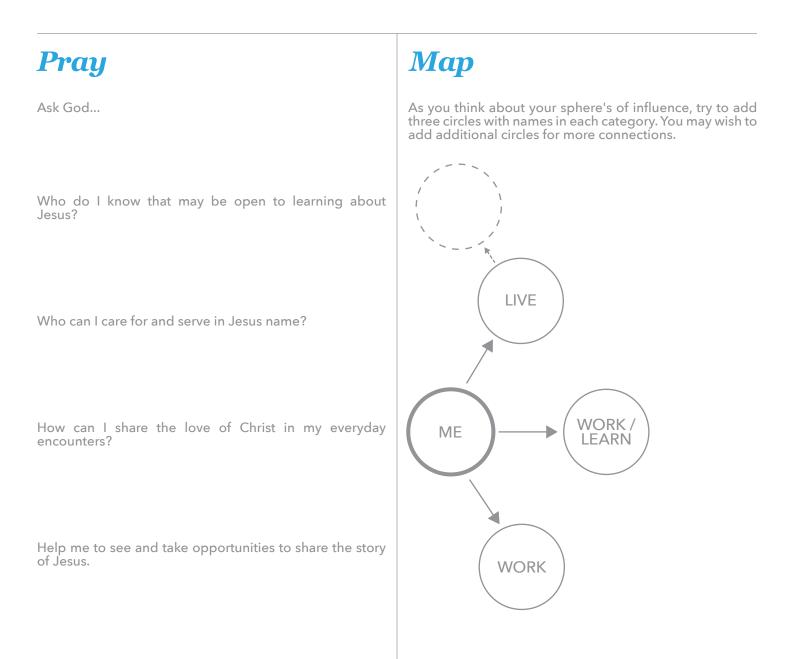
RESOURCES



At the "fullness of time" Jesus entered into the world to perform his ministery just as the Father intended. In the same way, God has appointed each of us to a unique context where he intends for us to love and influence others for Him. Our context is anyone you encounter on a regular basis and may include family members, friends, coworkers, neighbors, etc. We believe God has specifically placed and called you to be a light for him to these people.

Who might God be calling you to minister to in your spheres of influence? But, don't stop with the obvious. Think beyond your normal spheres. Perhaps a family member has a friend you might minister to or a coworker has a neighbor you might share the gospel with. You're connected to more people than you think! Be creative and open to anything God might be calling you towards as you create your Oikos map.

Oikos [oikos] is the Greek word for "household." One of the ways we see the gospel spread so rapidly in scripture is through relational networks. The "Oikos Map" is a tool to help followers of Jesus pray for and intentionally seek to share the gospel with people in their lives.



SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

In his life and ministry, Jesus strategically used everyday events and conversations to share the good news about his kingdom. Using illustrations and stories, Jesus made his message accessible for all to hear. Unfortunately, many modern Christians look at non-believers around them with a different mindset allowing fear of the world or frustration with the culture to keep them from talking about Jesus. Our desire for you is that you would take off this filter and grow in boldness and love as we look for everyday opportunities to share with others who Jesus is and what he's like.

The first step is willingness to be identified in your context as a spiritual person. As you're open about your faith in Jesus, you'll begin to see how others around you react. Yes, some might take a step back from you when they find out you're a Christian. And yet, others will be open to learn more. Some will feel the freedom to ask questions or share about their own beliefs. Often, these conversations and relationships become the context for sharing the gospel. In all of this, it's important to remember it's not our responsibility to argue or convince anyone into God's kingdom. The Holy Spirit is the one who works on a person's heart, making it soft to the gospel. Our responsibility is to trust his prompting to initiate these conversations. He will do the rest.

Here are a few ways you might initiate a spiritual conversation...

As I've been studying the Bible, I feel God is teaching me about...

I'm grateful to God because he's blessed me by...

There was once a time in my life when I struggled with _____. But now, God is teaching me...

When Jesus came into my life, I'm more _____ and less _____.

I feel God has put it on my heart to pray for you. Would you let me know if there's anything in your life I can be praying for?

Remember to give people an opportunity to respond to what you've said. Try asking questions like...

What do you believe about God?

Do you have a relationship with God? What do you think he's like?

Have you ever heard anything like this before? What do you think?

Do you feel that God wants to know you? Why or why not?

As you begin seeking opportunities for spiritual conversations, don't put too much pressure on yourself. Remember, God is the one who stirs in peoples hearts. We're simply trying to allow him to use us and our story to open people's eyes.

Be prayerful and keep your eyes open for anyone God is bringing across your path!

SHARING YOUR STORY

There is no such thing as an "ordinary" or "boring" salvation. If you're a believer in Jesus we literally believe you've been brought from death to life. Your story of coming to know and follow Jesus is a unique gift from God and it's one of the most powerful tools you have to invite people to follow Jesus. As you begin to have spiritual conversations with people in your context, a natural next would be to ask, "Hey, can I share the story of my spiritual journey?"

Getting started...

Write or type out your answers to the following questions and prompts. These will serve as the "raw materials" as you build the story of your testimony of what Jesus has done in your life.

How I realized I need Jesus...

Before coming to know Jesus, my identity and sense of security and belonging came from_____. What's a personal exampled from your life that illustrates this point? How did the things you formerly put your hope and trust in disappoint you? How did they fall short? How did you come to realize those things were empty?

Some who trusted Jesus early in life won't have a clear memory of empty, broken things they formerly trusted in before coming to know him. However, even those who believed at a young age will have a later experience where they strayed from finding their identity in him and had to be reminded of what they believed. The point is not necessarily to share a "before and after" picture of your life. It's to show that we're aware of our need for him.

How I first believed in Jesus

When and how did you first hear about Jesus? When did the good news of the Gospel first start to make sense? What about Jesus was attractive to you? What did you learn about him that caused you to believe that he is who he claimed to be ? Why did you decide to follow him?

Some will be able to point to a specific moment in life when God radically grabbed a hold of their heart and they believed. Others will point to a period of gradual understanding and belief. Both are fine! Everyone's story is unique. The most important part is that once you didn't believe and now you do.

How Jesus changed my life...

How is your life different as a result of knowing and following Jesus? How is your perspective, attitude, character, and relationships different now that you trust in Jesus? What motivates you to live for and follow Jesus? How does his story and commands shape your life?

What motivates you to live for and follow Jesus? How does his story and commands shape your life? How do you experience God in your daily life?

Bringing it all together...

Spend time formulating a coherent story. You don't need to include every detail. But, share enough of your story so people can see and understand what Jesus has done for you. Be sure to think of how you transition from one event to another.

Try to practice sharing your story in 3-4 minutes.

Be sure that you're clear about who Jesus is and why he is the way and not just a way.

THE THREE CIRCLES

The word gospel simply means "good news." Christians believe the story of what God has done in the world through Jesus is good news (the *best* good news). Sometimes, as believers we can overcomplicate the good news about Jesus. So, throughout church history, believers have come up with simple tools to help share the story of Jesus in helpful, concise ways. The three circles is a visual tool to share the gospel.

The three circles help us explain the good news about Jesus according to the overall story of the Bible. Read each section and the verses that follow.

GOD'S GOOD DESIGN

Out of his great love, God created the world and everything that fills it. Everything that he created had a purpose and it was good. As humans made in his image, we were designed to experience a deep and vibrant relationship with each other and with him. We were called to live for him as his royal representatives. (Genesis 1-2)

BROKENNESS

Yet, God's good world broke when human beings rebelled against his authority. Now, everywhere we look we see evidence of the brokenness: war, disease, corruption, broken relationships, death, etc. Unfortunately, the brokenness is also inside of us: lying, hatred, lust, greed, etc. This is because we've all rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own desires. The Bible calls our rebellion sin and the result of our sin is death. Unless our sin is dealt with, we will experience brokenness and seperation from God, forever (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23)

JESUS

Because of his great love and grace, God did not want to abandon us to an eternity of sin and brokenness. God provided a way to forgive our sin and to receive eternal life. Because Jesus, the Son of God, took the pentaly for our sin through his death on the cross, we can be forgiven. If we trust in his death for our salvation and resurrection as the promise of victory over death, we can know that our sin is forgiven and we can live forever with him. (John 17:3, Romans 5:8, and 1 Cor. 15:3-5).

We respond to Jesus through faith. We no longer need to strive for God's approval. We also no longer deny our need for salvation and forgiveness. Everyone who believes in Jesus for forgiveness will be forgiven and receive eternal life (Eph. 2:8-9, John 3:16-17).

But, our relationship with Jesus doesn't stop there. By trusting in him, we're not only trusting in his death for our salvation, but we're also trusting that he's going to work in our heart by the power of his Holy Spirit. When we trust him, he begins a process of making us more like him. And, as we're "renewed" he sends us back into the world to tell others about his love and offer of new life (Matthew 28:18-20)

Spend time practicing drawing out the illustration and telling the story. Continue to be ready and open to sharing the good news about Jesus whenever and wherever you have the chance!

