

G3

A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO DISCIPLESHIP

Real Life Journey

G3 Study Guide

Part I – Gaining Perspective

Welcome

We are so excited that you're taking this intentional step in your faith Journey by joining a **G3 Group**.

We've designed this guide to help you travel this road together with three others adding time for discussion, accountability, and prayer.

Part I of G3's centers on Jesus' strategy of ministry, making disciples. (**Weeks 1-11**)

Reading **Growing Up: How To Be A Disciple Who Makes Disciples**, by Robby Gallaty, will enlighten individuals on the imperative nature of being a disciple maker.

What Should Our Meetings Look Like?

Different weeks will take different formats and emphases, but as a general structure, G3's will follow this structure.

1. Talk about life for a while. Shoot the breeze. Small talk a bit. (Remember, G3's are centered around relationships and living life together) (10 min.)
2. Share needs and pray together. (5-10 min.)
3. Have each person recite the memory verse for the week. (3 min.)
4. Ask each other what God has been revealing to you in your reading of scripture this week. (10 min.)
5. Ask each other what opportunities God gave them to share Jesus with others this week. (10 min.)
6. Talk about what you learned in the assigned reading this week. (10 min.)
7. Close in prayer (2 min.)

The Heart of G3 Groups

Don't miss the point of these groups. Although there is assigned readings and a semblance of structure to every meeting, the heart of G3 groups is on **relational discipleship**—not on lesson content. We desire to see men and women to experience what it is to live in the power of the Gospel (Phil. 3:10)—growing closer to Jesus and hearing from God, overcoming sinful strongholds, and sharing your faith with those who don't know Jesus.

The tendency in many groups is to focus on “head knowledge”. Although this is important, the focus of G3's is on connecting “right-thinking” to “**right-feeling**” and “**right-doing**.” All so often we say we believe something, but rarely do we follow through in challenging our hearts to change and acting on such beliefs.

G3's will challenge group members to consistently **read the Bible, memorize scripture, pray, and share their faith**—all within the setting of a loving biblical community.

What is Accountability?

Through vital relationships, we become stronger, as we help one another through struggles, temptations, and shortfalls and we encourage one another towards spiritual growth. “As iron sharpens iron, so one man (or woman) sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17) Did you know that swords can actually get sharper during a sword fight? How? Because, as they come into contact, they knock off the small rough spots on the blades, and serve to smooth each other; thus, producing an even more finely honed cutting edge. In the same way, men sharpen one another by coming into contact and smoothing out the rough edges.

Accountability is...

- Individuals getting together to share their lives
- Individuals getting to know each other beyond the casual and superficial (beyond sports and the weather)
- Individuals allowing themselves to be challenged and held to a higher standard than the world would dictate
- Individuals being honest with each other about their struggles and shortfalls
- Individuals praying together and for each other
- Individuals growing together toward Christlikeness, reaching their full potential as men and women of God

All of these take place in an atmosphere of love and acceptance, without judgment.

Accountability Issues

This is simple. Don't make it hard. Trust leads to openness and openness leads to purity. Our groups are organic and we don't want to over administer them to the point that the Holy Spirit is locked out because of our structure. Use these questions to help you get started each week...

1. How have you spent time alone with God in His Word and prayer each day this week?
2. How are you doing with ongoing Bible verse memorization?
3. Have you maintained your body physically through diet and exercise?
4. Have you faithfully managed the money God has entrusted to you by sound biblical principles? (tithing, giving obediently, paying the bills on time, etc...)
5. Have you maintained a Christlike relationship with your spouse, children, parents, employees, employer, neighbors, church family, and others?
6. Have you invested your time in the things of God this week or have you spent your time on selfish pursuits?
7. Have you shared your faith this week?
8. Have you lied about any of the previous questions?

Overview of Part

Week 1 (Page 5) – Introductory Meeting

Week 2 (Page 7) – “Continuing in God’s Word and Sharing Your Testimony”

Week 3 (Page 9) - Growing Up, Introduction and Chapter 1, “The Difference that Made the Difference”

Week 4 (Page 11) - Growing Up, Chapter 2, “The Great Confusion”

Week 5 (Page 15) - Growing Up, Chapter 3, “The D-Group: A Blueprint”

Week 6 (Page 17) - Growing Up, Chapter 4, “No Pain, No Gain: Spiritual Exercise”

Week 7 (Page 21) - Growing Up, Chapter 5, “Communicate: Knocking on Heaven’s Door”

Week 8 (Page 23) - Growing Up, Chapter 6, “Learn: Mining For Gold”

Week 9 (Page 27) - Growing Up, Chapter 7, “Obey: Follow the Leader”

Week 10 (Page 29) - Growing Up, Chapter 8, “Store: An Eternal Investment Strategy”

Week 11 (Page 31) - Growing Up, Chapter 10, “Renew: H.E.A.R.ing from God”

Resources

Meeting God in His Word (Page 35)

Sharing Your Testimony (Page 41)

(The material in this guide was adapted from Bill Street, Pastor of Discipleship at Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, TN with his permission.)

WEEK ONE, DISCIPLE MAKING

Introductory Meeting

This week's goal is to get acquainted with others in your group (if you have not yet already) and overview the purpose of your discipleship group (G3).

Before meeting with your group, be sure to review the "Meeting God in His Word" study guide (page 35) and the "Sharing your Testimony" instruction sheet (page 41).

This Week's Discussion Question:

How does the mission statement of First Denham (see below) lead us to: love God, love people, share Jesus, and make disciples?

First Denham's Mission Statement:

"We exist to reach people with the gospel and lead them to be devoted followers of Jesus Christ."

Before next week...

Following the instructions from the "Sharing Your Testimony" sheet, **write down and practice giving your testimony**. Everyone will share their testimony in next week's meeting.

Our verses to memorize/internalize for next week are **John 8:31-32**. (We use the word *internalize* to emphasize that **transformational change** is the goal, not mere memorization.)

G3 Disciple-Making Agreement

I will commit to the following expectations:

1. I pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of **accelerated spiritual transformation**.
2. I will meet with my G3 group for **approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours every week** unless providentially hindered.
3. I will **complete all assignments** on a weekly basis before my G3 Group meeting in order to contribute to the discussion.
4. I will **contribute to an atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency** for the edification of others in the group as well as my own spiritual growth.
5. I will **pray every week for the other men/women** who are on the discipleship journey with me.

Signed: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____



WEEK TWO, DISCIPLE MAKING

Continuing in God's Word and Sharing Personal Testimonies

If You Continue...

*"So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If **you continue in My word**, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'"*

JOHN 8:31-32 (NASB)

The Greek word for "continue" is "*meno*." It is a fascinating word and we can learn much from the various ways it is used. The following are some examples of how this Greek word is translated:

- *"Abide."* **"Abide** in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it **abides** in the vine, so neither can you unless you **abide** in me" (John 15:4). Our connection with the Word of God is not an occasional act, but a continuing action. We are to live in it and it is to live in us.
- *"Remain."* "And Jesus was saying to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, **stay** there until you leave town'" (Mark 6:10). We are not to visit God's Word; we are to stay in it, allowing it to make its home in our heart.
- *"Lives."* "The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God **lives** forever" (1 John 2:17). The Word of God is not merely to be something we read; it is the living Word that is to bear fruit in our lives.

This Week's Discussion Question:

What is the importance of “continuing” in God’s Word?

A Challenge this week going forward...

Write down daily a truth that God impresses upon you from His Word. (It doesn't have to be a page or even a paragraph—it can be a short sentence! God will speak. We just have to be still enough to listen.)

Before next week...

- Bring your Bibles and notebooks/journals next week
- Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 of Robby Gallaty's *Growing Up* and be prepared to discuss it.
- Internalize **2 Timothy 2:2**. (We use the word *internalize* to emphasize that **transformational change** is the goal, not mere memorization.)

WEEK THREE, DISCIPLE MAKING

Introduction and Chapter 1, “The Difference that Makes the Difference” - *Growing Up*

You Are Entering A War Zone

One leader once exclaimed after starting a discipleship group, “I’m being attacked in ways that I’ve never been attacked before! Why didn’t you tell me it was going to be so intense?”

Let’s be clear, **“You are engaged in spiritual warfare.”** So, a couple of thoughts in that regard:

- **Prepare yourself!** The enemy hates what you are doing! **The enemy never gives up anything or anyone without a fight.** If you don’t stay prayed up, if you don’t stay close to Jesus, you will not be the disciple nor the disciple maker God wants you to be AND the enemy will “eat your lunch.” Although we don’t study spiritual warfare until many months down the road, we’d encourage you to read over Ephesians 6:10-20 and be aware of the spiritual warfare going on around you. **Stay on your knees (stayed prayed up) and on your toes (be alert).**
- Perhaps no spiritual discipline in spiritual warfare is more necessary than prayer. Jesus prayed for His disciples! He prayed for them before He chose them (Luke 6:12-13). He lived a life of prayer before them. At the end of His earthly life, we see Him praying for them (John 17).

This Week's Discussion Questions:

Read pages 8-9 of *Growing Up*. What are your thoughts of David Olson's survey?

Robby writes,

"The goal of every D-group is for the mentee, the one being disciplined, to become a mentor; to multiply-make other disciples.

In essence, the D-group [G3] is designed for the player to become a coach. Leaders must communicate this purpose at the outset of the group. If it is not discussed early on, members in the group will adopt a consumer mentality; with a short-sighted, self-serving focus. The heart of discipleship, as Christ modeled and instituted it, is that you are not learning only for yourself.

You are learning for the person whom you will mentor in following Him"

(GROWING UP, 13-14)

How important is it to have a proper perspective on the purpose of a discipleship group?

Before next week...

Internalize **Matthew 28:19-20**.

WEEK FOUR, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 2, “The Great Confusion” - *Growing Up*

Okay, we will make this short and to the point—**Chapter 2 is the most significant chapter in *Growing Up* and perhaps the most important read of the entire year long disciple making process.**

In our year long disciple making journey, we focus on **two main objectives: maturity and multiplication**. In this week’s chapter, Robbie gives a clarion call to **multiplication**, the most neglected aspect of the Great Commission in the American Evangelical church.

This Week’s Discussion Questions:

Discuss Robby’s Statement:

“The King James Version of the Bible renders the Greek word for ‘make disciples’ as teach. Matthew 28:19, in the KJV reads, ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . .’ Many diligent believers simply read this word and merely teach people about salvation—share the gospel, and lead them to a decision for Christ. This is good and admirable, but it is not enough.”

ROBBY GALLATY, *GROWING UP*, 19

- **What are the main differences between teaching and discipling?**
- **What are the dangers of believing we can disciple people from the pulpit alone?**

- **What are the pitfalls of believing we can disciple people without getting close to them and allowing them to get close to us?**

Notice Robby's definition of discipleship on page 19. **"How do we know when the discipleship process has accomplished its purpose?"** (If you are not familiar with the word "replicate," it means, "to make an exact copy or to reproduce.")

Robby asks two insightful questions, **"What is the distinction between being a disciple and being a Christian? Would you consider yourself to be a disciple?"** (Page 21)

Discuss Robby's section, **"Does preaching produce disciples?" If preaching alone does not produce disciples, what is necessary?**

The sections **"Ministry Myths"** and **"Mythbusters"** (Pages 27-29) are pearls of wisdom. **What do you think is the most important of those "myths and mythbusters?"**

Identify three relationships in your life: a Paul, a Barnabas, a Timothy and if not, who are potential individuals who could fill these roles? (Page 30)

Core Discipleship Truth...

*The process of disciple-making is not complete
until the disciple is a disciple-maker.*

Before next week...

Internalize **Ephesians 4:11-12**.

WEEK FIVE, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 3, “The D-Group: A Blueprint” - *Growing Up*

Robby clarifies the purpose of *Growing Up* in Chapter 3. He writes, “The driving purpose of this book is to help you become a disciple who makes disciples” (Page 34). That resolution lines up perfectly with what we are seeking to accomplish in our G3 groups.

Multiplying disciple makers is a New Testament teaching that has been overlooked in many American churches. Because the practice is still somewhat novel to many, it will take intentionality and prayer to make **multiplication** a common spiritual reality.

This Week’s Discussion Questions:

Multiplication.

“How many people have you personally discipled who are now repeating the process in others?” (Page 36). This is the ultimate question that every Christian must ask himself or herself; it is the culmination of “I am multiplying disciple makers.”

Evangelism.

Describe your experience and feelings about becoming a soul winner?

Accountability.

At First Denham, we believe in and are fully committed to the discipline of accountability. We support and agree with the questions on Appendix 7 of *Growing Up*. However, accountability is not something that can be forced; it must grow.

Why is accountability important? Have you ever been or are you now accountable to someone?

What are the fears and the benefits of accountability?

Before next week...

Internalize **1 Timothy 4:7-8**.

WEEK SIX, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 4, “No Pain, No Gain: Spiritual Exercises” - *Growing Up*

There is a cost involved in discipleship. However, that cost goes both ways.

If you **get serious** about being a disciple of Jesus, **it will cost you**.

- Some of the time normally spent watching television or on your favorite hobby will now need to be invested on spiritual disciplines such as reading the Word of God, praying, Scripture memory, journaling, and investing in relationships with believers and non-believers.
- Some of the disciplines that have become a part of your life will need to be intensified if you want to be a true New Testament disciple. Instead of reading the Bible, you'll need to also study it. Instead of memorizing, you'll need to also meditate on the Word. Instead of being merely kind or polite toward others, you'll need to develop an involved love. Instead of being a person who just responds to others, you'll need to become a leader.

If you **don't get serious** about being a disciple of Jesus, **it will cost you**.

- You'll live with regret as you realize that you never truly lived out the fullness of The Great Commission. You'll find that Robby's question in chapter three—*“How many people have you personally disciplined who are repeating the process in others?”*—to be most of the most convicting and sobering realizations some of your members have ever had. Many will admit that after decades of being a Christian, there was not one person they had ever disciplined, much less who had disciplined others.

This Week's Discussion Questions:

Robby writes, "In the same manner that we train our bodies, we should discipline our inner man" (Page 52). **How consistent are you about the disciplines of life: your finances, eating properly, exercise?**

How has discipline or a lack of discipline in some areas shaped your life?

"Godliness is neither quickly nor easily attained. Author Jerry Bridges comments on its demands, saying 'This pursuit requires sustained vigorous effort. It allows for no laziness, no half-hearted commitment. In short, it demands the highest priority in a Christian's life'" (Page 53). **Is this type of pursuit of godliness reflected in most of our churches? Is it reflected in your life?**

Robby lays out some very important questions, **“Do you have spiritual goals for your Christian life? Have you sat down this year and written out your spiritual objectives? What do you want to become for the glory of Christ?” (Page 57).** The adage, “If you aim at nothing, you’ll hit it every time,” is a pertinent truth to be said here.

Specifically, how will you live differently because of the truth you have been exposed to this week?

Before next week...

Internalize **Matthew 7:7.**

WEEK SEVEN, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 5, “Communicate: Knocking on Heaven’s Door,” - *Growing Up*

Okay, the application this week is not very complicated. Prayer was so important to Jesus’ disciples that they asked Him to teach them to pray. Robby goes on to point out what they didn’t ask Jesus to teach them.

“Notice what these guys didn’t inquire about. Systematic theology was not at the top of the list. Church growth and leadership were not at the top of the list either. They were not interested in healing, preaching, or walking on the water.”

ROBBY GALLATY, GROWING UP, 67.

Prayer was and is vital to godliness.

A couple of statements by Robby summarize what we need to know and do to lead our folks into the discipline of prayer:

- “Prayer is not learned in a classroom.” Page 68
- “Even though you may study a foreign language, the only way to learn it thoroughly is to speak it. Prayer is similar; you learn it by doing it.” Page 68

There are no discussion questions for this week, rather your group will spend time together praying for God to make you more like Him, to strengthen your relationships, to help you fight sin, and other requests.

Before next week...

Internalize **2 Timothy 2:15**.

WEEK EIGHT, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 6, “Learn: Mining for Gold” - *Growing Up*

This is a significant chapter. Its content will stretch you and the people in your group.

We’re going to state this as clearly and emphatically as I can,

WE HAVE ONE TEXTBOOK, THE BIBLE.

We are grateful for every book we study in our disciple making process. We spend a great deal of time examining and thinking though the selection of each book. We are grateful for the authors, the hundreds of hours they have invested in order to state godly truth clearly and practically, and for the wisdom represented. However, there is only one Book that is without error. There is only one Book that holds the promise to “make one wise unto salvation.” There is only one Book that holds the promise of “transformation by the renewing of your mind.” That Book, is of course, the Bible.

One of the essentials of being a disciple is getting in the Word of God and getting It into you. Jesus declared, “If you continue in My Word then you are truly disciples of Mine and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free” (John 8:32). **You cannot be a disciple of Jesus without having a living, abiding relationship with the Word of God.**

Okay, here’s where “the rubber meets the road.” Everyone in a good, Bible preaching church has heard the statements above. **The questions are: “Do we live that out? If so, how?”**

Robby gives us a lot of important insights on how to correctly interpret the Word of God in Chapter 6. In Chapter 10, he gives us an excellent tool to follow in his **H.E.A.R** Bible study method. If you and your group would like to utilize that H.E.A.R model, it's one that we believe holds great value! However, in order to make our time in the Word as simple as possible (especially for those who have never written down their insights) we'd also like to offer you a simpler one:

- What does the passage **say**? (What is God saying?)
- What does the passage say to me? (How does what God is saying **apply** personally to me?)

This discipline is designed to record individual's **insights**. This is the **personal** understanding that the **Spirit of God** gives to a person. We are not writing them down simply for the discipline of writing; we are writing them down because they are essential to your spiritual life and were given **to you by God through His Holy Word and the Holy Spirit**.

This Week's Discussion Questions:

The writer of Hebrews declares, "The Word of God is **living** and **active** . . ." (Hebrews 4:12). Hopefully, you have an intimate relationship with your spouse, or a very close friend. You don't talk **to** one another; you talk **with** one another. In the same way, we have a relationship with God through His Word.

On a scale of 1-10, (with 10 being the highest) please rate your relationship with the Word of God. Do that by answering questions **such as**: "Does the Word of God speak personally and clearly to me?" "Do I listen?" "Do I listen **carefully**?" "Do I **obey instantly** and **completely** what it says?" "Do I **anticipate** time in the Word—as I would anticipate time with your spouse or a close friend?"

Robby writes, “A few primary skills will enable you to discern—with the Holy Spirit’s help—what God means in His Word and how it applies to your life” (Page 88). **Are you willing to put forth energy to obtain some new skills to enable yourself to clearly and personally hear from God?**

We learn from Robby that there is a simple rule of biblical interpretation. “There is one interpretation, many applications” (Page 88). **How often do you finish your Bible reading time with a personal, practical application?**

Reflect on this statement: “Reading the Bible is good. Studying the Bible is better. Living the Bible is best. You won’t live the Bible unless you study the Bible and you won’t study the Bible unless you read the Bible.”

Before next week...

Internalize **John 14:15**.

WEEK NINE, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 7, “Obey The Leader,” *Growing Up*

In what we believe is the highpoint of Chapter 7, Robby quotes Dave Browning, in *Deliberate Simplicity*, “We are convinced that the gap holding back most believers is not the gap between what they know and what they don’t know. It’s the gap between **what they know and what they’re living**. Many Christians are... educated beyond their obedience.” (Page 105).

Christians struggle with two difficult issues regarding obedience:

- While there are some common struggles we all face, our issues are also deeply **individual**. Our past, our present, our jobs, our marriages, our failures, our regrets, our strongholds—while “common to man,” (1 Cor. 10:13) are **unique** to each person.
- Also, for many who have been saved for a lengthy period of time, we know we should be walking in **greater obedience**. Gluttony, lust, envy, coveting, fear, procrastination, not tithing, not managing our money, body, or time well—all these are areas that many believers know they should have overcome by now. Not walking in obedience leads to **guilt and shame** and covering of our sin.

So how do we begin walking in obedience in those areas where we have not? Is it another lesson or another sermon? Will Robby’s chapter finally get us over the hump? While we don’t have the final word on those questions, we do know where we can begin.

This Week's Discussion Question:

What is an area(s) where obedience has not become a settled issue in your life?

Before next week...

Internalize **Psalm 119:11**.

WEEK TEN, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 8, “STORE: An Eternal Investment Strategy,” -
Growing Up

Robby’s quote from Chuck Swindoll states the truth regarding Scripture memory as well as it can be said,

“I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture... No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”

CHUCK SWINDOLL

Robby gives a wealth of information regarding memorization and meditation. The one commitment we encourage you to seek from your group, if they are not already firmly committed to Scripture memory, is a fresh dedication to internalizing the Word of God. As Robby so aptly shared with a senior saint who commented that they were too old to memorize Scripture, “I would rather you spend one year **working on** one verse than to stand before Christ with none of His Word memorized.”

This Week's Discussion Questions:

The most common reason people give regarding why they don't memorize Scripture is, "It's hard. It's especially harder if you are older. You know, it's just not as easy to memorize things as it was when I was younger." We do have empathy towards that statement. **However, what does ease have to do with Christian discipline such as Scripture memory?**

On a scale of 1-10, (in your opinion) how important was Scripture memory to Jesus? Take a look at Luke 4:1-13 before you give your guess.

Discuss the power of hearing the Word of God quoted (from memory) as someone prays, witnesses, teaches a lesson, or gives wisdom or counsel to others.

Are there times you have desired to have a verse of Scripture in your heart, but didn't. How did that make you feel?

Before next week...

Internalize **Jeremiah 15:16**.

WEEK ELEVEN, DISCIPLE MAKING

Chapter 10, “H.E.A.Ring From God” - *Growing Up*

In week 7, we began to stress the importance of journaling—writing down what God reveals to us in, through, and from His Word. We want to continue to make that discipline an integral part of our lives. **We have one textbook, the Bible.** While we study other books, there is only one Book that we must master and one Book that must master us, the living Word of God. If believers spend a year or more in weekly fellowship with us and we fail to lead them to become people who feed upon the Word of God, we will have missed one of the foundational aspects of discipleship.

The following words of Jesus are **an essential truth** for someone who desires to be His disciple.

*“Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you **continue in My word**, then you are **truly disciples** of Mine; and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free’”*

JOHN 8:31-32

Any process of discipleship which does not lead people to **“continue in, abide in, and live in”** the Word of God is not a complete one.

APPLICATION

Robby's H.E.A.R. Bible study method is a tremendous process and one that is worthy of being followed. However, we are not as concerned about someone following a particular process or plan for hearing from God as much as we desire for them **to hear from God.**

The process (again, we are not wanting to focus on a particular process, but we do want to give practical leadership) we gave you Week 1 and Week 2 was a little simpler and may be easier to grasp:

- **What did God say?** (Robby does a great job of describing what this involves in "Explain" on page 150 in *Growing Up*).
- **What did God say to me?** (While there are dangers of wrong application, that's not the greatest problem most Christians in a good Bible-believing church face. Our danger is reading without applying or reading **without hearing from God.**)

Whatever Bible study method you follow, we encourage you to continue to write down what God says to you. **Hearing from God is a vital discipline for every New Testament disciple.**

This Week's Discussion Questions:

What is the difference between reading the Word of God and feeding on the Word of God?

Does your mind wander while you are reading the Bible? How do you combat that problem?

How often does God speak to you in a deep, personal way while feeding on His Word? Do you expect Him to speak to you?

If God does regularly speak to you what do you do with those insights, the thoughts and truths that God gives you?

Does God sometimes not speak because He knows that we are not taking the time to listen?

If you have grandparents or parents who were believers, would it be a valuable thing for you to have a record of what God had said to them as they lived the Christian life? Don't you believe your family would be blessed as they witnessed how you were nourished by the Word of God?

Before next week...

Internalize John 3:16 and Romans 3:23.

MEETING GOD IN HIS WORD

Adapted from Bill Street – Multiplying Disciple-Makers

As your group comes together each week, one of the actions you and your disciple-making group will want to take is to spend a few moments and share how you have **met God in His Word** this week. The following quote is one that is worthy of following:

“The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate knowledge of God, that they may delight in His presence.”

A. W. TOZER

Reading the Bible is not just about facts; it is facts that lead to fellowship with God! Dr. Adrian Rogers said, “God has not given us His Word that we might merely be a reservoir of truth, but a river of blessing.” While we glean facts as we read the Word, fellowship—transforming fellowship with God—is the aim.

With that in mind, I want to give you two approaches, two highways on which to travel, to meet God in His Word. Again, the main focus is not the means, but the end goal. Don’t get lost in details of Bible study and miss fellowshiping with the Author.

The first approach to meeting God in His Word is through asking two questions:

- **What did God say?**
- **What did God say to me?**

Robby Gallaty, in our first book, *Growing Up*, in chapter 10 lays out the **H.E.A.R. method**. This approach centers around four steps that he calls the H.E.A.R. approach. That acronym stands for:

- **Highlight**
- **Explain**
- **Apply**
- **Respond**

Regardless of what method you take (and you are free to take another approach if you have one), the aim is the same, **meeting God in His Word**.

We encourage your group to all be on one Bible reading plan—such as, but not limited to—the *One Year Bible*.

We also want to encourage you to aim for what may be a new discipline for many in your G3 group, writing down what God says to you. The length can be as short or long as they choose—you are doing this to **hear from God**, not impress anyone. Everyone will have time to share one or two of their insights with the group as you meet together each week.

From Bill Street,
Discipleship Pastor at Bellevue Baptist Church

Let me share two examples of what I am talking about in meeting God in His Word. These following insights from the One Year Bible are what I saw the morning I read them. They are from the first two days of the year:

Genesis 1:1 - *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

As I read this verse, it is apparent that GOD is the center and the focus of Himself and His creation. It is God who speaks, who creates, and who breathes.

We live in a world in which we, the created, make everything center around us. We see part of this in Romans 1:21, "We know God; yet we do not honor Him as God." This is the beginning of the downward spiral of man. If we get this right, placing God as the center and circumference of everything, we lay the foundation upon which we can get everything else right. If we get this wrong, we get everything else wrong and we live in a world in which God's responsibility is to make life good and right for us. That is the essence of sin . . . and failure. Today, live a God-centered life!

Psalm 2:8 - *"Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession."*

Prayer is God's way to see God's will on earth done. Here, God the Father is instructing God the Son to ask of Him and He will give the Kingdom. If God the Son must ask, HOW MUCH MORE AM I IN NEED TO ASK. By ask, I mean not merely thinking about asking, but taking time to actually ASK. I am guilty at times of being someone who believes in the power of prayer without practicing prayer. I am the doctor who believes that if someone will take a certain medicine or follow a certain set of physical steps, they will be healed, but as someone who has that disease, I honestly and believingly prescribe the medicine, BUT DON'T TAKE IT MYSELF. I have to confess I sometimes live in a state of

poverty--missing what God wants to give--simply because I won't do one thing--ASK!! Today, don't just believe in prayer, actually take the time to pray!

Those two insights are simply that, insights. That is what God said to me as I read His Word. God may have said something entirely different to someone else as they read these passages. That is great! However, that is what I sensed Him saying to me. I encourage you to allow God to speak to you in a personal, practical way and share these insights with your group. Your insights from God's Word should be as personal, just like your relationship with your Heavenly Father is personal.

Let me encourage you to write down what God reveals to you.

What God says to you may be a sentence; it may be a couple of words! Your goal, your desire every day, is to hear from and know God. Don't focus on length of reflection (writing a lot); focus on being able to say, "This is what God said to me today."

Let me share one other practical (and personal) conviction regarding my approach to reading the Word and what happens if I miss a day—or two.

- First, my approach to reading the Word. **My aim as I read God's Word is to hear from God, not necessarily to get to the end of the passage.** I find that if I make it my goal to read the entire Bible section that day (the Old Testament, the New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs), that becomes my focus instead of hearing from God. There are times that once I hear from God, especially in a powerful, awe-inspiring way, I will not finish reading the entire days reading, or I will seek to come back to it later.

- Secondly, what if I miss a day? Most of the time I can't do anything about missing out on the will of God yesterday (except to confess and repent). The Bible says, "Behold, 'now is the acceptable time,' behold now, 'is the day of salvation'" (2 Corinthians 6:2). I can and need to confess and repent of yesterday's sins; however, trying to "make up for them" is a mistaken strategy. I would **never discourage** someone from wanting to read God's Word through in a year. However, my goal is to meet with God in His Word, not necessarily read so many chapters and verses every day.

Some of you may disagree with that approach and feel like everyone should read a preset amount of Scripture every day. Time spent in God's Word is much like time a parent spends with a child, quality and quantity are both very important! However, over the years I have seen countless numbers of people give up because they feel bound by the constraints of time and feel pressure and guilt if they get behind.

Sharing Your Testimony

In *Share Jesus Like It Matters*, Steve Gaines writes, “If sharing one’s testimony was powerful enough and wise enough for the theologian Paul, it is necessary and appropriate for any believer today.” (Page 71) People may disagree with your theological arguments, but it is difficult to disagree or argue with a changed life!

The Apostle Paul had perhaps the greatest theological mind and grasp of truth that any believer has ever had. Twice in the book of Acts we see him sharing his personal testimony of how he came to faith in Christ. Your testimony is also a powerful tool that the Holy Spirit can use to draw others to Christ.

Use the outline below (taken from chapter 8 of *Share Jesus Like It Matters*) to script your testimony. You need to be able to share your testimony in **4 minutes or less**. You want to keep it short enough for your audience of one to remain engaged.

- **Tell Others What Life Was Like before You Met Jesus.**
Describe how you felt before knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. Tell of your sense of purposelessness; guilt and shame caused by sin; or confusion about the meaning of life. Tell them how you struggled with sin prior to knowing Jesus in salvation. Even a child can give a testimony and tell about how the Lord caused him to feel sorry for his sins against God.

But remember, you do *not* need to share details about your former sins. Your aim is to give glory to God, not the devil. Instead, when talking about your former sins, speak in general terms. Say something like: “Before I met Jesus, I was involved in things that were wrong. If my parents had known what I was doing it would’ve broken their hearts.” Keep it general. Don’t exalt sin or the devil; exalt Jesus!

- **Tell Others How You Came to Sense Your Need for Salvation.** Talk about how you moved from merely recognizing you were a sinner to the fact that you yearned for Jesus to save you. If someone shared Jesus with you to bring that about that desire, describe how it happened. If you came under conviction by reading the Bible or a Gospel tract, tell them exactly how it happened. Tell them, “I began to sense my need for salvation because....”
- **Tell Others HOW You Were Converted to Christ.** Briefly describe how you were saved. Who shared Jesus with you? How did they lead you to faith in Him? What was it like when you *repented* of your sin, *believed* in Jesus, and called on His name, *receiving* Him as your Savior and Lord?
- **Tell Others What Your Life Is Like Now That You Are Saved.** Contrast what your life was like before you met Jesus and what it is like now that He has become your Savior. Say something like, “Before I met Jesus, I worried about almost everything. But now I enjoy peace that can only come from Him.”

Knowing how to effectively share your testimony is one of the greatest steps you will take in learning how to lead others to faith in Christ.

Scripture Memory Verses

Week 2:

John 8:31-32

Week 3:

2 Timothy 2:2

Week 4:

Matthew 28:18-20

Week 5:

Ephesians 4:11-12

Week 6:

I Timothy 4:7-8

Week 7:

Matthew 7:7

Week 8:

2 Timothy 2:15

Week 9:

John 14:15

Week 10:

Psalms 119:11

Week 11:

Jeremiah 15:16

Week 12:

John 3:16;
Romans 3:23

Week 13:

Romans 6:23;
1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Week 14:

2 Corinthians 6:2;
Luke 13:3

Week 15:

Acts 17:30; Acts 16:31

Week 16:

Romans 10:9

Week 17:

John 1:12;
Romans 10:13

Week 18:

Mark 1:35

Week 19:

James 5:16

Week 20:

John 15:7

Week 21:

1 John 5:14-15

Week 22

1 Cor. 4:1-2

Week 23

John 4:23-24

Week 24

Mark 10:45

Week 25

Amos 3:3

Week 26

Proverbs 27:17

Week 27:

Ephesians 4:27

Week 28:

James 4:7-8

Week 29:

Ephesians 6:10

Week 30:

Ephesians 6:11

Week 31:

Ephesians 6:12

Week 32:

Ephesians 6:13-14

Week 33:

Ephesians 6:15-16

Week 34:

Ephesians 6:17-18

Week 35:

Ephesians 6:19-20

Week 36:

Ezekiel 22:30

Week 37:

I Corinthians 11:1

Week 38:

I Timothy 4:15

Week 39:

Romans 15:14

Week 40:

Proverbs 5:21-23

Week 41:

Luke 14:26-27

Week 42:

Hebrews 11:6

Week 43:

Romans 4:19-21