

Discovering Who You Are in Christ

STUDENTS



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Six-Week Small Group Study Guide for use with
Identity: Discovering Who You Are in Christ DVD series



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Small Group Leader Pep Talk

So, you agreed to be a small group leader, huh? Good for you! This is going to be one of the best experiences of your life.

Do not worry. Even if you have never done anything like this before, with God's help, you can do it. All you have to do when your group gets together is play the DVD, watch it with everyone else, and make sure the discussion and prayer time stay on topic and on schedule. The Holy Spirit will do the rest!

In the weeks ahead, remember that your group is not going to look like anyone else's. It is not supposed to. Try not to compare. Instead, focus on the people that God has put in your life on purpose. Love on them. Listen to them. Become a family. Make it easy for God to speak to hearts and for people to respond.

Only God knows what He has planned. Stay open. Stay pumped. Expect great things!

How To Use This Book

Every lesson will have the following parts. Here is what to do for each one.



THE HOME PAGE:

Some days are good. Some days are bad. All days are busy. That is why it is important to give your people a chance to catch their breath, shake off the day, and focus on spiritual things. The questions in this part of the lesson should help them do that. Use it as an introduction to the lesson, but do not get stuck. The really important stuff comes later, and you do not want to run out of time before you get to it.



MEMORY VERSE:

It is one thing to read the Bible. It is another thing to memorize it and be able to use it as a weapon against Satan. The second is way better! That is why we chose to include memory verses in this study. Each one comes from that week's lesson and should help students remember and use what they learned.

Before each lesson, read the memory verse for that week out loud and give anyone who memorized the one from the week before a chance to say it to someone. Do not make people feel bad if they do not memorize these verses, but encourage them to try.

LISTEN:

Watch the teaching DVD as a group and fill in the blanks as you go. If you miss any, you can find the answers in the back of this book.

SHARE:

This is the really important stuff!

The questions in this part of the lesson will help your students figure out what the verses they studied have to do with them personally. After each lesson, give them a chance to think about and answer the questions by themselves. Then discuss them as a group.

Be sensitive. If your group seems to want to talk about some questions more than others, go with it. Briefly discuss the ones they are not as interested in. Follow their lead. The goal is to guide discussion without getting in the way by rushing or forcing it.

Try to give everyone an equal chance to talk and draw people into discussion, but do not force anyone to talk who does not want to.

JUST FOR ME:

The questions in this part of the lesson will help your students organize their thoughts and put what God is saying to them into actual words. Give them a chance to answer the questions before they leave. They will be less likely to do it later and may forget something important.



PRAY:

Prayer time is bonding time! Make sure that you give your students plenty of time to thank God for what He has done in their lives and to ask Him to meet their needs. Pray out loud and keep track of prayer requests and praises.



ONE MORE THING:

Follow these instructions to build momentum in your group and prepare for the week ahead.

Session One

Who Do You Think You Are?

Focal Passage: Ephesians 1:3-6



THE HOME PAGE:

- Get to know each other! Ask everyone to say their name and tell one important thing and one random thing about themselves. Find out who came with whom and how they are connected. Give guests a chance to connect with new people so they will come back even when the person who brought them cannot come.
- Go to the “We Agree” page in the back of this book. Read the small group ground rules out loud. When you are finished, ask everyone who agrees to follow the ground rules to raise their hand. Ask anyone who cannot agree to wait somewhere else for your meeting to finish. Make sure everyone understands that the ground rules will be enforced so they can feel safe sharing

with the group. (You may want to write these ground rules out and hang them on the wall every week to remind your people of what they agreed to.)

- Why are you here today?

What do you want to know/learn?

What do you want God to do in your life?



MEMORY VERSE:

“For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight...”
Ephesians 1:4



LISTEN:

Intro

N_____ has more influence in your life than you do.

How you see yourself will affect you E_____,
M_____, S_____, and
F_____.

Sources Of Influence

You have a choice to make.

You can find your identity H_____,
focusing on situations, experiences, and human
relationships.

Or

You can find your identity V_____,
focusing on what God is doing in your life through
Jesus Christ.

Tell-Tale Signs

Those who find their identity **H**_____ are discontent, dissatisfied, angry, anxious, defensive, and depressed. They produce the fruit of the flesh.

Those who find their identity **V**_____ are content, satisfied, joyful, and peaceful. They produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

The Solution

If you are a believer, meaning you have surrendered your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and found forgiveness of sin through His death, burial, and resurrection, you must **choose** to see yourself as God does.

In Jesus Christ, you are

1. **B**_____

God has done great things for you. Paul calls them “heavenly” and “spiritual” (v.3). They are permanent, not temporary, and go way beyond the positive experiences you have in everyday life.

2. C _____

By His grace, God has lavished you with His free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. He chose you for Himself “before the foundation of the world” (v. 4). You did not deserve it, but He chose you anyway.

3. P _____

God knows everything that has ever happened or will happen, and He has control over all of it. Before you even knew He existed, He chose you to belong to Him because He wanted you (v.5).

4. A _____

When you were ready, God made you aware of His love and grace and gave you the faith to put your trust in Him so that you could be adopted into His family once and for all. As His child, you are His heir along side your brothers and sisters in Christ and Jesus Himself (v.5).

Why did God do all of this for you (v.6)?



SHARE:

Do you find your identity vertically (from God) or horizontally (from other people and circumstances)? How do you know? Would the people around you agree?

Have you given your life to Jesus Christ? If so, when/how did you do that? Tell the story. How is your life different now that you are a member of God's family?

What, if anything, keeps you from seeing yourself like God sees you? What needs to happen in your life?

How does it make you feel to know that God loved and chose you before you even knew about Him? When did you first hear that He loved you? Did you believe it? Why or why not? How about now?

Do you live like someone who believes they are blessed? Chosen? Predestined? Adopted into God's family? Explain. Does anything need to change?



JUST FOR ME:

Be honest. No one is going to ask you to share what you write here.

What did I learn that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond to Him?



PRAY:

Give everyone a chance to share the good things that God is doing in their lives and thank God for those things. Tell God how good He is.

Give everyone a chance to share prayer requests and pray for those requests as a group. Again, tell God how good He is in both the good times and the hard times.



ONE MORE THING:

Go to “My People” on page 60. Follow the instructions you find there.

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Session Two

They Say. He Says.

Focal Passage: Ephesians 1:7-14



THE HOME PAGE:

- Take a minute to make new small group members feel welcome. Introduce yourselves again. Let people try to find common ground with guests so they can feel more connected.
- Read through the ground rules on the “We Agree” page in the back of this book. You may not need to read the descriptions this time. If you would rather, just read the key words on the left of the page. Ask everyone who agrees to the ground rules to raise their hand and ask everyone who cannot agree to wait somewhere else for the meeting to finish. Make sure that everyone understands that the ground rules will be enforced so they will feel safe sharing.

- Think back over your week. Were you able to find your identity vertically instead of horizontally? What went well? What did not? Give specific examples.



MEMORY VERSE:

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace...” Ephesians 1:7



LISTEN:

Intro

If you do not find your identity in C _____, you will look to other things to find your identity.

The Solution (cont.)

To review what we learned last week...

If you are a believer, meaning you have surrendered your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and found forgiveness of sin through His death, burial, and resurrection, you must **choose** to see yourself as God does. In Jesus Christ, you are blessed, chosen, predestined, and adopted.

You are also ...

5. R_____

Before salvation, every person is a slave to sin. However, in Christ, we are set free from both sin's power and sin's penalty, which is death (Romans 6:23).

6. F_____

When a sinner repents and turns to Jesus, the penalty for sin is wiped away (Luke 13:3). Christ carried your sin to the cross (1 Peter 2:24) so that everyone who believes in Christ is declared "not guilty," including you (2 Corinthians 5:21)!

7. W_____

God has given you His divine wisdom. You are now a part of a large family that stretches all over the world. God gives you the wisdom to understand this mystery, which is made possible by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

8. A J _____ H _____

God has given us an inheritance in Christ (1 Peter 1:3-4), and He has made us an inheritance FOR Christ. The Church is His body, temple, and bride. We will someday share His glory. We will never be gods, but we will live forever in His presence as His adopted children and fellow heirs with Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21).

9. S _____

When a sinner hears the Word of God, which is the Truth, and trusts in Christ, they receive the Holy Spirit. When you receive the Holy Spirit, you are sealed by God forever. You belong to God, and He will keep you (John 10:27). Nobody can break the seal.

What you say to yourself will make you feel good about yourself or feel bad about yourself.

Practice C _____ -C _____

S _____ -T _____. Find your identity in Christ and speak words of life to yourself every day.

For example: "In Christ I am blessed, chosen, predestined, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, wise, a joint heir, and sealed by His Spirit. This is who I am, and who I am determines how I live. Because my identity is in Christ, I will choose to live today for Christ."



SHARE:

What evidence do you see in your own life that you have been set free from sin? Does anything need to happen?

How does the fact that God forgives sin affect the way that you think, act, feel, and/or live your life?

Why is it so easy to forget that we are a part of a world-wide family? What can we do to help us remember?

How should the body, bride, and temple of Jesus Christ be treated? Are you treating yourself that way? What, if anything, needs to change?

Satan wants you to believe that your relationship with God is as unsure and shaky as you are, but it is not. How does it feel to know that once you belong to God, you belong to God forever? How should knowing that affect the way you live?



JUST FOR ME:

*Remember, this is personal.
You won't be asked to share.*

What did I learn that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond to Him?



PRAY:

Give your people a chance to share what God is doing in their lives. Thank God for the blessings and challenges. Next, share prayer requests and pray for them as a group. Follow up on any prayer requests that were shared last week.



ONE MORE THING:

Go to the “My People” page again and decide whom you will invite to the next meeting. Pray for those people.

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Session Three

The Truth About You

Focal Passage : Ephesians 2:1-10



THE HOME PAGE:

- As usual, take a few minutes to get to know any new guests and make them feel welcome.
- Read the “We Agree” pledge (or key words) and ask those who can agree with the ground rules to raise their hands. Politely ask those who cannot to wait somewhere else for the meeting to finish. Remind group members of the importance of sticking to these rules.
- Did you feel more confident this week knowing that you are the body, bride, and temple of Christ? Did you feel free? How did the enemy attack you? How did you handle it?



MEMORY VERSE:

“For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift—not from works, so that no one can boast...” Ephesians 2:8-9



LISTEN:

Intro

Let us take a look at our Christian biography, who we were in the P_____, what God has done and is doing in the P_____, and what the F_____ holds.

Our Past: We were D_____ in sin (vv. 1-3)

Throughout history, people have believed three different things about human nature:

1. Man is basically O_____.
2. Man is not well, but S_____.
3. Man is spiritually D_____.

Humanity without Jesus is spiritually D_____, hopeless. Before salvation, we are C_____.

Our Present: We have L_____ in Christ (vv. 4-6)

If you have put your trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation, God has done two things for you:

1. He has made you A_____.
2. He has R_____ you up.

Our Future: We are S_____ with Christ in the H_____ (v. 6).

If you have put your trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation, you already sit with God. You are “in Christ.” That is your position right now, and it is a glorified (lifted up) one, but someday, you will be glorified (lifted up) in a very practical way.

1. The word S_____ means that your position in Christ is safe and secure forever.
2. The phrase “I_____ C_____” means that you will reign and rule with Him.
3. God’s G_____ made all of this possible.

Our Job

In the meantime, our job here on earth is to live out P_____ what we already are P_____.



How about the people around you? What do they think about mankind? Do they think we are okay, sick, or dead? How can you tell? Knowing this, what do you think would be the best way to share the Gospel with them? What do they need to understand?

Why is it hard for people to believe that we are spiritually dead on our own? What will happen to their priorities, habits, etc. if they choose to believe the Truth of the Gospel? Change is hard. Knowing this, how can you help new believers through the changes they will face if they choose to believe?

How do you feel when you think about the fact that Jesus Christ died and rose again to make you alive and raise you up? How does it change the way you think about life and the things that you go through?

Do you feel like someone who is seated with God? Explain. Why is it so hard to focus on eternal, heavenly things while you are living here on this temporary earth? How do you keep from feeling defeated and beat up in the right now?

Do you know any Christians who do a good job of living like someone who has been lifted up in Jesus? If so, what makes them different? If not, what do you think that would look like? What gets in the way of your doing it yourself?



JUST FOR ME:

This is just between you and God. Write down everything you are thinking before you forget.

What did I learn from this session that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond?



PRAY:

This time, before you pray, give group members who know Jesus a chance to tell when, where, why, and how their relationship with Him started. Thank God for the difference He is making in the lives of those who belong to Him and for what He wants to do in the lives of those who have not accepted Him yet. Ask Him to give people who do not know Him the faith to believe, trust, and surrender.

Then, give small group members a chance to share praises for other things God has done and share prayer requests. Pray for them as a group.



ONE MORE THING:

Once again, visit the “My People” page. Whom will each group member bring next week? Decide and pray for them.

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Session Four

Building Unity

Focal Passage: Ephesians 4:1-6



THE HOME PAGE:

- You know what to do! Get to know your guests. Make them feel like family.
- Go over “We Agree” again. Ask those who can agree to the guidelines to raise their hand. Kindly ask those who cannot agree to wait somewhere else for your meeting to finish.
- How was your week? Did you live like someone who has been made alive and has been raised up in Christ this week? Give examples if you can.

- Have you been finding your identity in Christ lately? If so, how has that changed the way you see and handle things?



MEMORY VERSE:

“I..urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us.” Ephesians 4:1-3



LISTEN:

Intro

What we B_____ should change the way we L_____. Christians should live together in U_____.

Grow Unity

1. Be H_____, G_____, and P_____. Bear with one another in L_____.

2. Do not lie. Tell the T_____.

3. In your A_____, do not S_____.

4. Do not S_____, but do something useful with your H_____. S_____ with those in need.

5. Do not let U_____ talk come out of your mouth, but build others up according to their N_____.

Protect Christian Unity

Make every effort to keep the
 U_____ of the
 S_____ through the bond of
 P_____.

The Divine Origin of Christian Unity

Unity is rooted in the T_____,
which is made up of the H_____
S_____, J_____
C_____, and G_____ the
F_____.



Any time people get together, conflict can happen. The Church is made up of people who are very different from each other. How is unity in the Church even possible? What can we do to make sure we stay unified? How does our unity glorify God?

Some people consider humility, gentleness, and patience to be signs of weakness. How is God glorified when we live out these character traits? Does it matter what others think? Whom are we trying to please? Who gets the glory when we are able to resist peer pressure and live to please God?

Why is it so important that believers control their tongue, speak truthfully, and learn to keep quiet if they cannot say anything nice? How do our words affect other church members? How do they affect people outside of the church?

Why is it so important for every member of the church to do his or her part and give to each other? What happens in a person's heart when they give? What happens in a relationship when both people give to each other?

What does it mean to make "every effort"? How far does God expect you to go in order to promote unity? How does Jesus make peace possible?



JUST FOR ME:

*Write down your thoughts before they slip away.
Remember, you do not have to share these
answers out loud.*

What did I learn from this session that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond?



PRAY:

Take a few moments to share praises and prayer requests with one another and pray as a group. Think back over the things your group has been praying for. Find out what God has been doing in those situations.



ONE MORE THING:

Ask everyone to pick someone to invite to next week's meeting. Divide up the names of any small group members who are absent or have stopped coming and agree to contact them today. Make sure that your people do not make anyone feel guilty for missing, but just let them know how much they are missed.

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Session Five

Walking With Integrity

Focal Passage : Ephesians 5:1-6:9



THE HOME PAGE:

- Get to know your guests. Make them feel welcome. Go ahead and introduce yourselves again even though most of your people probably know each other by now.
- Go over “We Agree” very quickly. Ask everyone who can agree to the guidelines to raise their hand and ask those who cannot to wait somewhere else until your meeting is over.

- Did you try to protect and promote unity in the Church this week? How? How did it feel to put the needs of others above your own?

- Have you started to see things any differently over the past few weeks as a result of this Bible study? Have your priorities changed at all? Explain.



MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children.” Ephesians 5:1



LISTEN:

Intro

Rather than flirting with the world and
T_____, focus on imitating God
and run toward Him.

Walk This Way

Walk in L_____ (5:1-6)

1. If you know J_____, do not live like those who do not.
2. Run away from S_____ I_____ and all forms of I_____.
3. Do not say F_____ thing so make C_____ joke s. Instead, use your mouth to give T_____.
4. Do not be G_____.

Walk in H_____ (5:7-14)

1. Become partners with God and walk in the L_____.
2. Produce G_____, R_____, and T_____.

3. D_____, or figure out, what is pleasing to the Lord.

4. E_____ the darkness.

Walk in C_____ (5:15-17)

1. Be W_____.

2. Make the most of T_____.

3. Do not be F_____,
but understand what the Lord's
W_____ is.

Walk in H_____ (5:18-6:9)

1. Honor God in your future
M_____ relationship.

2. Children, O_____ and
H_____ your parents.

3. Parents, do not stir up A_____ in your children

4. Serve others with a good A_____, as if you were serving God, not men.

5. Treat those under your A_____ with respect.

 **SHARE:**

Which is more difficult for you, watching your mouth or not being greedy? Explain. How do you fight that temptation?

What are some things you do to protect yourself from sexual immorality and other kinds of impurity? What advice would you give other group members that struggle with those things?

What does it mean to be accountable to someone else? How does being accountable to other believers help you resist temptation? Why do not more Christians ask each other for that kind of help?

They say that silence is agreement. Why is it so important for believers to call sin out and expose evil deeds? Is there a right and wrong way to do this? Explain.

Who is responsible for making sure you know what God's will is and what pleases Him? Are you taking responsibility for yourself or relying on others to spoon feed you and tell you what God's Word says?

Why is it so important for Christians to take good care of the relationships we have with other people? How does God want to use those relationships in His plan to rescue the lost? How do we keep from getting lazy in those relationships?



JUST FOR ME:

When God speaks, it is a big deal. Write down what He says before you forget or talk yourself out of what you heard.

What did I learn from this session that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond?



PRAY:

Take a few moments to share praises and prayer requests with one another and pray as a group.



ONE MORE THING:

Next week is the last lesson in the Identity series, but this is not the end of your small group. It is the beginning. Use the last lesson as a launching pad for new relationships. Get busy. Reach out. Invite more people and finish strong!

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Session Six

Becoming a Warrior

Focal Passage : Ephesians 6:10-18



THE HOME PAGE:

- Make a big deal out of welcoming your guests. Let them know how happy you are that they came even though it is the last week of your study. Make sure they know that you hope this is just the beginning of a long-term relationship with them.
- One last time, briefly review “We Agree.” Ask anyone who cannot agree to the guidelines to wait somewhere else for your meeting to finish.

- Did you resist temptation this week? Share specific successes. Did you struggle at all? How can we help?

- Did you honor God in your relationships this week? What obstacles did you face? How did you overcome them?



MEMORY VERSE:

“For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.” Ephesians 6:12



LISTEN:

Intro

Jesus Christ won the victory over Satan through His D_____, B_____, and R_____. In Christ, you are

V_____, but Satan wants to destroy your T_____ and will attack you. You are a W_____, so prepare and fight!

Be Strong in the Lord (v. 10)

1. Trying to fight Satan on your own is F_____.
2. Let the L_____ make you strong.

Put on the Whole Armor of God (vv. 11-17)

The Armor of God is something you always put on, but never take off.

As a warrior for Christ, your armor includes:

1. The B_____ of _____ Study Scripture for yourself. Do not be carried away by false doctrine (Ephesians 4:14) or lies of Satan.

2. The B_____ of R_____ Guard your emotions by obeying God.

3. The S_____ of the G_____ of P_____ Make sure your relationship with God is right and then carry the Gospel to others.

4. The S_____ of _____ Satan will send flaming arrows your way: immorality, hatred, envy, anger, covetousness, pride, doubt, fear, despair, and distrust. Choose to put your trust in God and believe that His way is best.

5. The S_____ of the _____ Use God's Word to fight temptation.

P_____ at all times to prepare for battle and to get you through the battle.

 **SHARE:**

How does knowing that Jesus Christ has already won over Satan help you fight the battles that you face? Give specific examples.

How can you tell whether you are trying to fight a battle on your own or with the Lord's help? What do you do differently in each case? How do the results differ?

Why is it so important to study Scripture for yourself and double check everything you hear against God's Word? Have you ever believed false doctrine or lies simply because they sounded familiar or Biblical? Explain.

Why is it so important to memorize Scripture and have it ready to fight the enemy at all times?

How has obeying God protected you in the past and kept you from pain?

Are you carrying the Gospel to others and making God's army bigger? If so, what is the most effective method you have found for sharing the Gospel? If not, why not?

Can faith really be as simple as choosing to trust God and believe His way is best? Why do we make it so difficult?

 **JUST FOR ME:**

Keep this book so you can look back through it later and remember what God did in your life during this Bible study.

What did I learn from this session that I did not know before?

What was I reminded of?

What is God saying to me?

How will I respond?



PRAY:

Take a few moments to share praises and prayer requests with each other and pray as a group.

Tonight, make sure to thank God for the new friendships you have made with the members of your small group. Ask Him to bless those relationships in the future as you continue to support and encourage one another.



ONE MORE THING:

Go around the room and let your students tell what this small group Bible study experience has meant to them. Let them share what they have learned and what God has done in their lives over the past month and a half.

Make sure that everyone knows they are welcome to be a part of your weekly small group meetings even after this series is over. Give the time and place you normally meet and make sure they know that you want a long-term relationship with them.

Have you personally made the decision to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If not, consider staying a little later tonight and discuss this decision with your group leader or someone else from your group. They will be more than happy to listen and share with you about the most important decision you will ever make.

Suggestions for Small Group Leaders

Thank you for stepping up and taking responsibility for a small group! May God bless you for your willingness to serve. Here are a few things to remember as you look ahead and prepare to lead your group.

1. Be prepared.

The time your small group will spend together over the next six weeks is too important to take lightly. Do not let anything interfere with your personal relationship with God. You will need to be able to hear the Holy Spirit's voice clearly to lead well.

Before each meeting, watch the video on your own and fill out every blank in the study guide. Think carefully about your answers. That way, if your people are too shy to discuss, you will be ready to share your thoughts and show them how to answer questions boldly.

Pray for your small group during the week, especially just before your meeting.

- Ask God to work in their lives, open their hearts to His truth, and guard the Word that is planted there each week.
- Ask Him to give them opportunities to invite new group members and the boldness to follow through.
- Ask Him to make a way for your small group members to show up and ignore distractions during your time together.
- Finally, thank Him for the opportunity to serve and influence others in such a personal way.

2. Be patient.

The rhythm of God is different in each person's life, and the members of your small group will be in many different places spiritually. Do not expect everyone to know what you know, feel how you feel, or act how you act. Instead, accept them where they are and do your best to lead them to the next step in their relationship with God without getting in the way or pushing them. Remember, only Jesus can be Jesus. Your job is to manage the group. Bring people to Jesus and let Him do the teaching, convicting, forgiving, healing, and fixing.

As you lead the discussion, be sensitive to the needs of your students. Let people share, but do not let them take over. Try to include everyone, but do not put anyone on the spot or embarrass them. Let your quieter group members answer questions that are not as personal until they get used to sharing.

Do not answer all of the questions yourself. Be comfortable with silence and let people think. If a whole minute goes by without anyone talking, you may want to rephrase the question or share a quick thought, but do not take over and start to lecture.

If someone misinterprets Scripture or tries to stir things up, respond kindly with an even, unemotional tone. Use Scripture to make your point. Do not rely on your own opinion or experience. When necessary, suggest that the small group member stay after your meeting to continue your discussion in private. While it is important that everyone leave your meeting knowing the Truth, it is equally important for them to leave feeling okay with the way things went in your meeting.

3. Be flexible .

As a small group leader, your goal is to make everyone feel at home so they will be open to hearing the Truth of God's Word. Your routine, schedule, and the way that your group feels will probably change a little from week to week as new people join you. Decide now to be okay with that.

Do not get upset or defensive when unexpected things happen. Stay flexible. If church leaders ask you to change something, do it with a good attitude and trust the reasoning.

When new people join your group, welcome them and let them participate as if they had been a part of your group from the beginning. If necessary, change the way that your group splits up during memory verse, discussion, and prayer time to make room for new members and give them an equal chance to participate.

4. Be reliable.

If, at this point, you know of any reason you might not be able to follow through on your commitment to lead a small group, tell church leadership immediately and wait for the next opportunity to serve. Once you have committed to lead a small group, make it the new non-negotiable on your calendar and schedule the rest of your commitments around this one.

Make arrangements to show up to every small group meeting early. When there is even the slightest possibility that you might be late or have to miss a meeting, let church leadership and one or two of your most reliable group members know ASAP so they can make sure your small group is unaffected by your being late or absent as possible.

Keep track of small group attendance, making sure to collect email addresses and phone numbers for everyone who attends. When someone is absent, contact that person within 24 hours or assign that person to a small group member who knows them well and ask them to do it.

Keep track of prayer requests and praises for your small group.

My People

You may be very comfortable with the people already in your small group, but you can always make room for one more person who needs Jesus.

Try to remember that this temporary study has eternal potential. Fight the urge to huddle up and ignore people who might want to join your group if you asked them.

Reach out. Invite. Remember, God puts people in your life for a reason. Who knows? This might be it.

Fill in the blanks below with names that fit each category.

My school friends

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

People I sit next to in class

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Teenagers that live in my neighborhood

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My church friends

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Teenagers who share my hobbies/ interests

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Teenagers I work with

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Discuss the categories listed above. If your group can think of another one, add it.

Then, read back through your list. Which names jump out at you? Circle them.

Each week, share one of those names with your small group and commit to invite them before the following meeting, giving them a few days to plan ahead. Pray that God would make them curious, make a way for them to participate, and give them the desire to join your group.

Look for opportunities to invite and follow through with your commitment!

“We Agree”

Because we want to create a safe and supportive environment where we can all study the Truth of God’s Word, ask questions, and share our thoughts without worry or embarrassment, we, the small group members, agree to the following guidelines.

Respect

We agree to respect one another by giving everyone an opportunity to speak, listening to what they have to say without interrupting, and staying quiet when we have nothing positive or encouraging to say in response.

Confidentiality

We agree not to discuss anything said in our small group meetings with anyone outside of our meetings.

Discretion

We agree to put the feelings of others before our own. We agree not to bring up discussion topics that might be hurtful or embarrassing to the members of our small group.

We agree not to participate in gossip of any kind during small group meetings and give other group members permission to stop us when we start to go down this potentially destructive path.

Harmony

We agree to make an effort to include new members in our discussion and make them feel welcome without showing favoritism.

We agree not to argue with or push forcefully our opinion on other small group members. If conflict arises, we will continue the discussion at another time with our small group leader and a Christian adult if and when those involved in the conflict want to. We agree that the Bible is our ultimate authority in settling all disagreements.

Focus

We agree to make small group meetings a priority and attend unless we absolutely cannot help missing a meeting.

We agree to stay on topic and set aside distractions during our small group meetings. We will leave our phones on silent. We will exit the meeting room to text or make phone calls if it is absolutely necessary to text or make a call.

Honesty

We agree to say only what we know to be the Truth according to God's Word so we do not mislead each other or cause confusion.

With a thankful heart,

Signature (s)

Answer Key

Session One:

No one has more influence in your life than you do.

How you see yourself will affect you emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and functionally.

You can find your identity horizontally, focusing on situations, experiences, and human relationships.

You can find your identity vertically, focusing on the work God is doing in your life through Jesus Christ.

Those who find their identity horizontally are discontent, dissatisfied, angry, anxious, defensive, and depressed.

Those who find their identity vertically are content, satisfied, joyful, and peaceful.

Blessed

Chosen

Predestined

Adopted

God did all of this so that people would praise His glorious grace.

Session Two:

IF you do not find your identity in Christ, you will look to other things to find your identity. You are also

Redeemed

Forgiven

Wise

Joint Heir

Sealed

Practice Christ-centered self-talk.

Session Three:

Let us take a look at our true Christian biography, who we were in the past, what God had done and is doing in the present, and what the future holds.

We were dead in sin.

Man is basically okay.

Man is not well, but sick.

Man is spiritually dead.

Humanity without Jesus is spiritually dead, hopeless. Before salvation, we are corpses.

We have life in Christ.

He has made you alive.

He has raised you up.

We are seated with Christ in the heavens.

The word seated means that your position in Christ is safe and secure forever.

The phrase in Christ means that you will reign with Him.

God's grace made all of this possible.

In the meantime, our job is to live out practically what we already are positionally.

Session Four:

What we believe should change the way we live. Christians should live together in unity.

Be humble, gentle, and patient. Bear with one another in love.

Do not lie. Tell the truth.

In your anger, do not sin.

Do not steal, but do something useful with your hands. Share with those in need.

Do not let unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but build others up according to their needs.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Unity is rooted in the Trinity, which is made up of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and God the Father.

Session Five:

Rather than flirting with the world and temptation, focus on imitating God and run hard after Him.

Walk in love.

If know Jesus, do not live like those who do not.

Run away from sexual immorality and all forms of impurity.

Do not say foolish things or make crude jokes. Instead, use your mouth to give thanks.

Do not be greedy.

Walk in holiness.

Become partners with God and walk in the light.

Produce goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Discern, or figure out, what is pleasing to the Lord.

Expose the darkness.

Walk in caution.

Be wise.

Make the most of time.

Do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Walk in harmony.

Honor God in your future marriage relationship.

Children, obey and honor your parents.

Parents, do not stir up anger in your children.

Serve others with a good attitude, as if you were serving God, not men.

Treat those under your authority with respect.

Session Six:

Jesus won the victory over Satan through His death, burial, and resurrection. In Christ, you are victorious, but Satan wants to destroy your testimony and will attack you. You are a warrior, so prepare and fight!

Trying to fight Satan on your own is futile.

Let the Lord make you strong.

As a warrior for Christ, your armor includes

Belt of Truth

Breastplate of Righteousness

Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

Shield of Faith

Sword of the Spirit

Pray at all times to prepare for battle and get you through the battle.