



GETTING STARTED

5 BIBLE STUDIES

Establishing Faith

We believe that materials such as these are always “in process” and able to be improved. We will be grateful to receive any feedback you have to share with us. Please send any comments and/or suggestions to:

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NOTE: In the interest of editorial brevity and simplicity, these documents treat gender-neutral and gender-plural references with the masculine pronoun “he” rather than “she,” “he or she” or other constructions. When clarity is better served by other words, we follow whatever usage seems to aid readers best. Worldwide Discipleship Association follows Scripture in joyfully recognizing that God created man and woman in His image as equal recipients of His grace and mercy.

Getting Started, Bible Studies, Establishing Faith

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INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LEADER

About Worldwide Discipleship Association (WDA)

Colossians 1:28 says, “We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect (mature) in Christ.” In WDA, our desire is to help build mature men and women of God who can honor Him by leading consistent Christian lives. We also want to help Christians multiply themselves in the lives of others.

We seek to accomplish this goal by following a Biblical and chronological pattern which can be observed in the Gospels. (Read *Disciple Building: A Biblical Framework*, WDA, for more information.) Christ began His ministry by teaching foundational truths to his disciples. As they grasped and applied these, He taught more challenging content. *Who is God?* is a series of studies that examine the character of God and how to know Him personally. The *Who is God?* series comes before this set of studies entitled *Getting Started*. It would be helpful for a disciple to complete *Who is God?* before progressing to *Getting Started*

Introduction to Getting Started Studies

The following five studies are designed to help new Christians begin to understand some of the foundational truths of the Christian life. They can also be helpful to those who have known Christ for a while but still need to focus on basic truths. Reading WDA 's *A Small Groups Manual* will help you get some additional instruction on leading a study.

Because this is a foundational Bible study, you will not be able to go into a lot of detail on each question. Your goal is to give group members a basic understanding of truths presented and some practical application suggestions. Consider interspersing two or three felt need topics (topics which are of current interest to the group) with these five studies if additional sessions are desired.

The written copies of these studies are designed for the leader, not for the student. It is recommended that the students not be given copies during the discussion. Providing the written copies to the students at the end of the discussion might be considered as a option.

Here are some other suggestions:

Realize that those coming to the study are somewhat open to God, but may have low levels of commitment to Him, you, and others in the study. Work at establishing a

comfortable atmosphere in the group and at helping them practically apply the Bible. As they begin to grow, their commitment will increase.

In the first study, begin with introductions and a good question that gets people talking, but isn't too personal. "What do you like to do for fun?" is an example. If group member know each other, this may not be necessary. (See *A Small Groups Manual* for guidelines on leading group discussions.)

Then introduce the study by saying something like this:

- We are meeting to consider how to grow in our relationship with God.
- We will be meeting one hour per week for ___ weeks (the number of weeks you plan to meet).
- Please bring a Bible with an Old and New Testament. We will use the Bible as the basis of our discussions.
- The study will be discussion-oriented, so please bring your questions.

As you get into the study

- If a question arises that is related to the content, go ahead and discuss it. If a question comes up that is off the subject, "table" it for "Question and Answer time" at the end of each study, or consider it as a topic for a future study.
- As you look at each study, realize that the purpose and objectives are stated for the benefit of the discussion leader only. Begin the study with the "introduction."
- As you lead these studies, be sensitive to how the Holy Spirit is working in each person's life. Consider meeting personally with each group member to see how he is doing and to encourage him. Also, take some time each week to pray for the group members. We can plant and water, but God causes the growth (I Corinthians 3:6).
- If interaction in the group is going well, some studies may take more than one session. Having good interaction from the Word is more important than how much content you cover. If you run out of time, stop and pick up at that point the next week.
- At the end of these studies you will find each of these verses written out in the NIV translation of the Bible. You may print out this list of verses for the group if you want to do so.

IMPORTANT: These studies are also effective in a one-to-one study if a group is not available.

GETTING STARTED

Study #1 The Word and Prayer

Purpose: To show the disciple how to grow spiritually by spending time with God in the Word and in prayer.

Objectives: 1. To show that the Christian life is a growth process
2. To show how reading the Bible and praying are important for growth.

Instructions and other information for the Leader will be in ***Bold Italics***.

Comments, statements, questions to be made by Leader are introduced by words in **BOLD CAPITALS**.

• *Begin with introductions and a good non-threatening question that will get people talking. Example: What do you like to do for fun?*

• *Then introduce the study by saying something like this:*

- *We are meeting to learn how to grow in our relationship with God.*
- *We will be meeting one hour per week for ____weeks(# of weeks you plan to meet).*
- *The study will be discussion-oriented so please bring your questions. Also, we will use the Bible as the basis of our discussions so please bring a Bible with the Old and New Testaments.*

• *At the end of these studies you will find each of these verses written out in the NIV translation of the Bible. You may want group members to use this list of verses during the study so they are all using the same translation and to decrease the time necessary to find the verses.*

INTRODUCTION: How many of you enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles? What was the most difficult puzzle you ever put together?

Q: What is essential in being able to put together a jigsaw puzzle?

A: Looking at the finished picture on the box to help you know where the pieces go.

STATEMENT: Our lives are composed of many different parts, similar to a puzzle. In the Bible, God has given us a picture of what He wants us to become.

As we have met together (assuming group has done *Who Is God?* studies), we have looked at what God is like and how to know Him personally. The Christian life begins when we receive Christ and trust Him for forgiveness. We can't live the Christian life without Christ in us. When we accept Christ, we meet God. The rest of our lives should be an ongoing process of growing in our relationship with the living God. As God continues to work in our lives, there are also activities we need to do in order to continue growing. In this study we will look at two of these activities.

READ Romans 8:28-29

Q: What is God's goal for our lives?

A: That we will be conformed to the likeness of His Son.

Q: What does this mean?

A: God wants us to grow (become consistent and mature in our character) and reflect Jesus' life in our actions and words.

STATEMENT: Let's consider two activities that can help us maintain our spiritual walk and grow towards maturity.

READ II Timothy 3:16-17

Q: How does the Bible help us to grow?

A: It teaches us God's will, points out our wrong actions, trains us to live righteously, and equips us for every good work.

READ I Peter 2:2 -3

Q: How are we to be like a newborn baby?

A: Just as a baby desires milk, so we should desire the Word of God.

Q: What is the result of spending time learning from God's Word?

A: Just as a baby grows physically by drinking milk, so we growing spiritually by taking in the Word of God.

STATEMENT: Obviously, the Bible is vital in our spiritual growth. We need to put ourselves in situations where we hear the Bible taught each week. We also need to be

reading the Bible on our own. You might start with the book of Mark in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, begin with Psalms and Proverbs, reading one chapter each day.

Now let's look at another key aspect of growth.

READ Philippians 4:4-7

Q: This passage talks about prayer. What is prayer?

A: Talking to or communicating with God.

Q: Why is prayer important?

A: It enables us gain God's perspective on time and events, experience His peace as we learn to hear His words, and it helps us to not be anxious.

READ Matthew 6:6 ; 9-13

STATEMENT: Here Christ assumes His followers will pray. He says, "When you pray." The Christian life is a relationship with the living God. Therefore, it has to be maintained as other relationships are maintained.

Q: How do you build a relationship with someone?

A: By spending time together, doing things together and talking together.

Q: How do you think we can build a relationship with God? (*Let group members interact.*)

STATEMENT: In order to build a relationship with God we have to slow down and consciously spend time with Him. Through the Bible He speaks with us, and through prayer we speak with Him.

Note to Leader: If you think some of your small group members are spending personal time with God, you may want to ask:

Q: Some of you may have begun to pray and read the Bible. What are some of the challenges you have faced?

STATEMENT: To be consistent in meeting with God, we will need to decide on a regular time and place, and have some kind of guide or plan.

Note to Leader: Briefly present some content from 7 Minutes with God (NavPress) or other material on how to have a Quiet Time. Also share some things you have found

helpful in establishing and maintaining a consistent Quiet Time in your life. In the next group of studies (Laying Foundations Knowing God, Study #1) there is more information about having a devotional time. If a group member is very interested, refer him to that information.

READ Philippians 1:6

CONCLUSION: God promises to continue to work in us and help us to grow. We also have a role in our progress. In order to grow, we need to begin spending time with God in prayer and reading the Bible. As an assignment this week, try to take some time each day to pray and read the Bible.