

BECOME



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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK



OPEN UP: These studies are designed to be done one on one or in a small group. Begin by opening up about how things are going in your life and in your walk with God so your needs can be met on a personal level.



ON PURPOSE: Each study has a specific focus and purpose.



SCRIPTURE: The most important part of each study is the word of God. Take your time over each passage. Afterward, on your own, be sure to examine the context surrounding each verse.



BECOME: These studies are designed for life change, not just head knowledge. Caution: Your response to the questions in this section could change your life!



TAKE IT AWAY: These are activities to keep you on track and moving forward in between studies. Be sure to set up the next meeting after each bible study!



DIG DEEPER: These studies only scratch the surface of each topic in the scriptures. You can dig deeper by typing a link or scanning a QR code that will take you to our ever-expanding resource blog:
www.becomestudyseries.blogspot.com



EXTRA NOTES: Be sure to take great notes throughout each study. Soon, you'll be able to teach others from all that you've learned!

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SEEKING GOD



OPEN UP:

Have you ever studied the bible before?

How do you feel about your relationship with God?

Do you read the bible? Do you pray?

Do you go to church?

What do you hope to learn from these studies?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to show how much we need God. We will also learn how much God truly wants us. We will gain practical advice and support about how to effectively (biblically) seek God.



Matthew 7:7-8

What promises do you see in this passage?

When God makes a promise, how certain can we be that it will happen?

Deciding to seek God is never a waste of time as long as we truly seek him. The next two verses demonstrate the kind of seeking that always finds God.



Matthew 7:13-14

This verse seems to contradict Matthew 7:8. What do you make of it? How does “everyone who seeks find,” and yet, “only a few find it?”

There is a certain way to seek God that guarantees we’ll find him.

What kind of person is on the wide road that leads to destruction? What kind of person is on the narrow road that leads to life?

Which road are you on? (Remember there are only two roads!)



Matthew 6:33

This passage tells us how to seek God and find him. How are we to seek the kingdom and his righteousness?

What would a person’s life look like who seeks God first?

Have you been seeking God first? If not, what have you put before God? What keeps you from making God your top priority?

What does it mean to seek his kingdom first?

How would one seek his righteousness first?

What are we promised when we seek his kingdom and righteousness first?

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Our existence would be pretty bleak if we were tasked with seeking a God who was hard to find and indifferent to our lives. But instead of seeking an uncaring God, the following parables remind us that God is also seeking us!



Luke 15:1-7

Who is God in this parable? What is he doing? How much does God care about you?



Luke 15:8-10

Who is God now? Does this challenge your image of God?

How does your image of God affect your relationship with him?



Luke 15:11-24

Can you relate with this parable? What does it tell you about God?

Does God care more about your past or about having a relationship with you?

God will stop at nothing to love you and be in a relationship with you. How does this fact encourage you to seek him first?



BECOME:

What changes will you make in your life to seek God first?

How will those changes affect you day to day?

How do you think they will affect your future?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Before the next study read these passages about people who put God first:

Acts 8:26-40

How did the eunuch show humility?

Acts 17:11-12

What did the Bereans do to be noble? What could you do to be like them?

Let's set up the next time we'll study
Time, Date, Place:

WORD OF GOD



OPEN UP:

What did you learn from the last study?

What did you learn from the Take It Away scriptures in Acts?

In what ways have you put God first since our last study?

Do you have any questions before we begin the next study?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to showcase the power of God's word and to begin using the Bible as the standard for your life. We'll take a close look at what the Bible says about itself.



Hebrews 4:12-13

What does it mean that the word is living and active?

How has it been alive and active in your life?

How is God's word like a sharp sword?

Everything will be laid bare before God and we will be judged by his word. What does that say about the importance of reading the bible?



2 Timothy 3:16-17

What does it mean that “all scripture is God-breathed?”

Do you believe that all scripture is from God? (2 Peter 2:20)

How could you use the Bible for “teaching, correcting, rebuking, and training in righteousness?” What will be the result of using the bible in your life?



1 Timothy 4:16

What is the difference between life and doctrine? Is one more important than the other?

Can you think of an example of someone with a good life but wrong doctrine? Is that a saving faith? Also think of someone with the right doctrine who doesn't live it out. Will they save themselves and their hearers? The wings of an airplane is a good illustration.

Why does keeping life and doctrine in check require perseverance and a close watch?

Do you know if your life is in line with God's word? What about your doctrine? Is there anything you think you need to change?



John 8:30-32

Who is Jesus talking to? Is belief enough or is the bible's standard something more?

To truly be his disciples and experience freedom (salvation) what are we to do? (James 1:22)

When we see "if" in the bible we should pay extra attention! "If" often indicates a conditional statement (something we must do).



John 12:47-48

In the end what will condemn us at the last day? Or in other words, what standard will we be judged by?

If you got to see a copy of the test before a big exam what would you do?



BECOME:

God's word is essential in our lives and for the salvation of our souls. Will you make God's word your only standard?

What changes will you need to make? What will be challenging about having the bible as the standard you base your life on?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Get equipped by consistently studying the bible and praying to God (like the Bereans - Acts 17:11).

Reading plan: What gospel will you start with?
When and where will you read?

Study plan: How will you take notes? Notebook, blog, etc...

Prayer plan: When and where will you pray? Do you know how to pray? (Luke 11:1-4 is a great model)

Let's set up the next time we'll study!
Time, Date, Place:



EXTRA NOTES:

DISCIPLESHIP



OPEN UP:

What sticks out to you from the last study?

Have you had any high points or low points since making the bible your standard?

What have you read since the last study? Did you take notes? Did you pray? What did you learn?

Do you have any questions before we begin?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the bible's standard for followers of Jesus, and to commit to becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ.



Acts 11:26c

This is the first of only three times that the scriptures use the word "Christian." The word "disciple" occurs over 200 times in the New Testament. The religious world prefers to use the "easier" term but the scriptures teach us that there is only one standard for following Jesus no matter what you call it. God is not schizophrenic. Christian, disciple of Jesus, believer, follower, child of God, born again, and many more terms all describe the same thing: the committed lifestyle of faith that leads to salvation by the grace of God (Mark 16:16).

To simplify: Disciple = Christian = Saved.

So let's look at the call, the commission, and the cost of Biblical Discipleship:

THE CALL:



Mark 1:14-20

Jesus did not just come so we would believe in him. What else was in his message?

This is the very beginning of his ministry. Are the expectations for those first disciples any different for disciples today?

What did it mean for the first disciples to follow Jesus? What does it mean for you?

Jesus wants to make his disciples into “fishers of men.” What does that mean? How will that change your life?

These men were given a whole new mission in life (no longer fishermen). What have you been living for?

Notice their urgency and excitement. How do you feel about becoming a fisher of men? How will you begin?



Luke 19:10

As followers of Jesus, our mission should be the same as his. What do the action words “seek and save” mean to you?

Can you think of some people in your life that are “lost”?
What could you do to help them be found by Jesus?

THE COMMISSION:



Matthew 28:18-20

We looked at the beginning and the middle of Christ's ministry and now we come to some of his last words. They very important and special, as you can imagine, and they give us our mission as his disciples.

What is the mission of every believer in Jesus Christ?

After someone becomes a disciple, what is the next step?

A commitment to discipleship and baptism are just the beginning. What are disciples expected to learn throughout their lives? How will you do that?

Jesus has fulfilled his promise to be with his disciples always in many ways. He has given us the Holy Spirit so that he can dwell inside our hearts. He has also given us his body, the church. What an amazing promise for true disciples! Jesus will be with us forever!

THE COST:



Luke 9:23-26

The context of this verse is right after Peter's confession of belief in Jesus Christ. Even for Peter, mere belief was not enough. Jesus goes on to teach what life as a believer will entail.

What is the significance of the words "if anyone" or "whoever"? Is there anyone who can call themselves a Christ follower and not live out this passage?

What does it mean to deny yourself? Have you lived a life of denying self? What will it look like to live a life with your desires on the backburner?

What does it mean to take up your cross daily? What was the cross in Jesus' day? Has this been your daily lifestyle? What will you need to do differently to live a sacrificial life?

Have you completely given your life to Jesus, not only in words and thoughts, but in action and lifestyle? How will this cost affect your life? (Luke 9:57-62)



Luke 14:25-33

What strikes you about this "if anyone" passage?

What does it mean to “hate” your family, friends, and even yourself? (Luke 16:13)

Have you loved God way more than anything/anyone else or are there “close seconds” in your life? What are the biggest threats to putting God first?

There are many marks of a disciple of Jesus: devotion to church (Hebrews 10:23-25), love (John 13:34-35), and giving to the needy (Matthew 5:42), are good examples. As you continue this bible study series you will see more and more about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.



BECOME:

Review the call, the commission, and the cost now: Have you been living like a biblical disciple? What areas need to change to match the bible’s standard?

We are not saved by our deeds, no matter how committed to discipleship we might be. But, not living as a disciple of Jesus should cause us to humbly and soberly consider the quality of our faith.

If you have not been living by the bible’s standard for believers then what does that say about your salvation?

Do you want to become a disciple of Jesus as defined by the bible?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Start living out the call, the commission and the cost:

Begin sharing your faith with friends, family and even strangers! It's never too soon to start. Who do you know that would be helped by these studies?

Keep reading and praying every day.

Come to all the meetings of a discipling church. If you are considering a new church family, the person you are studying with can help you get plugged into a church that upholds this standard of biblical discipleship for all of its members.

Let's set up the next time we'll study!
Time, Date, Place:



EXTRA NOTES:

DEATH



OPEN UP:

What sticks out to you from the last study?

What has been the biggest change in your life?

What is challenging? What is inspiring?

Do you have any questions from our studies or your own reading?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to understand how sin affects our lives and our salvation.

You will have the opportunity to be real about the sin in your life so you can begin to move from death to life.

Sin: The Death of Our Souls



Romans 3:23, 6:23

Is anyone good enough to make it to heaven?

What do you think it means to “sin”? The Greek word is hamartia: to miss the mark.

Discuss the consequences of sin.

What does a lifestyle of sin earn for us? How is the grace of God different?



Mark 7:20-23

Where does sin come from? Whose fault is it when we sin?

There are many lists of sins like this in the scriptures. Let's look at a couple of these lists and talk about how each sin causes us to fall short.



Galatians 5:19-21, 2 Timothy 3:1-5

(James 4:17, Ephesians 5:3-7, Colossians 3:5-8, Revelation 21:8)

God has given us a conscience so that we don't need a PhD to know when we're sinning.

As you go through these lists together, be real about the sins you have struggled with. Write down any sins you are currently dealing with and how you can change.

Now that you've talked through the sins, look back over your notes. Which sins will be the most difficult to change?



Isaiah 59:1-2

What does this passage tell us about the consequence of sin?

When we talk about “being saved”, sin is the thing that we need to be saved from. When our sins are removed we are saved! Until removed, sin is like a wall that separates us from God.

GOD

SIN

LIFE

Think about how you have lived your life up to this point. Which side of the wall are you on?

What does that say about your salvation?



BECOME:

Romans 5:6-8

Sin separates us and makes us enemies of God. But God has done everything possible to unite us.

Will you take your sin seriously and stop living a lifestyle contrary to God's will?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Now that you've opened up about your life and seen the extent of God's love for you, make every effort to stop adding bricks of sin to the wall.

Keep reading and praying. Keep sharing your growing faith with others.

Be motivated, not discouraged! The next few studies will put all of this in perspective.

Let's set up the next time we'll study!
Time, Date, Place



EXTRA NOTES:

The Cross



OPEN UP:

How has the last study on the consequences of sin affected you?

Has anything been particularly difficult to change?

Are you excited about changing your life and living by God's standard of righteousness?

Do you have any questions from the studies so far?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to make a connection between our sin and Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross. Only by understanding the depths of our sin can we understand the heights of his love.



Matthew 26:31-28:10

This is the "passion" (Greek = suffering) account of Matthew. Discuss key events as you read.

Our sin caused Jesus to receive the punishment we deserved:

- Suffered extreme emotional distress (26:36-46)
- Abandoned by his best friends (26:56b)
- Mocked and beaten (26:67-68, 27:26-31)
- Denied by the first person to ever believe him (26:69-75)
- Only innocent person, given death sentence (27:11-25)
- Cursed by those he was dying for (27:25)
- Even mocked while he was dying (27:32-44)
- Felt separation from his intimate relationship with God (27:45-49)
- Died on the cross for your sin (27:50-54)

When you think about your sinfulness and Jesus' suffering and death, how do you feel?

Have a good discussion about the people, events and emotions surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus.



Matthew 28:1-9

The good news of Jesus Christ would not be good at all if it ended in death. Instead, we rejoice in the fact that Jesus did not stay dead. He raised to life as a new creation. Our salvation experience mirrors the death and life of Jesus. When we are truly saved, new life is produced in us just as it was for him!

Can you imagine the shock and joy that those faithful women must have felt?

How would your life be changed if you met the resurrected Jesus?



BECOME:

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Let's break this passage down into smaller parts:

v.14 What does it mean to be compelled? How has Christ loved us?

Think about the last study on death. The cross is our constant motivation to be faithful Christians. "One died for all, and therefore all died." Without Jesus' death on the cross no one could be saved from sin. We would stay dead.

The saving power of the cross is made complete in the resurrection. Jesus has no tomb or shrine where we can visit his body. He raised from death to life as a new creation.

v.17 But he is not the only new creation. “Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come.” Becoming a true Christian and being saved is a totally life changing event. It’s like you’ve died and come back to life as a new person.

What do you think it means to be a new creation?
What would be different about you as a new creation?

Looking back, can you think of a time in your life when you completely changed and stayed changed for Jesus Christ?

How do you think a person becomes a new creation?

v. 18-21 Since studying about discipleship, have you made efforts to reconcile others to Christ?

When God takes away our sin, he sees us as his righteousness. How amazing is that!

Will you respond to the death and resurrection of Jesus by becoming a new creation?



TAKE IT AWAY:

The next two studies will be all about becoming a new creation.

As you face temptations, think about the cross. Resist Satan and strive to live for God.

Let's set up the next time we'll study:
Date, Time, Place



EXTRA NOTES:

Repentance



OPEN UP:

How has your relationship with God grown since you began the Become Study Series?

How have your relationships with Christians grown? What benefits have you seen?

How has the study on the cross affected you?

Do you have any questions from the studies so far?



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to learn the necessary response to the sin in our lives: repentance.



Luke 13:1-5

What does the word 'repentance' mean to you?

Greek word is metanoia: Meta – Change Noia – Mind-set

Do you remember what the wages of sin are? So it makes sense that if we do not repent we will perish.

Think about your sin. In what ways do you need to change your mindset to see things like Jesus?



Acts 26:19-21

Paul preached the unpopular message of repentance everywhere he went. It remains unpopular today because it requires a sober look and true life change.

Is it possible to tell if someone has repented? How?

Although repentance is a decision, it is carried out by actions that may be seen by all.

Have you ever had a significant change in your behavior? (i.e. a time when everyone said, "What has come over you, you are different?")

Has the change lasted? Are you still a different person?



2 Corinthians 7:10-11

An earlier letter to the church in Corinth caused them to repent. Here, Paul elaborates on the nature of their repentance and gives us a great example for our own repentance.

What is the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow?

Look at each of the characteristics that godly sorrow produces and think about your sin. How could each example help you truly repent?

Are you eager to do the will of God? Do you have the heart of the Corinthians?



Matthew 5:29-30

Here Jesus uses grand exaggeration (hyperbole) to show the radical spirit that followers of Jesus must adopt toward sin.

Our world teaches us that sin is okay in moderation but Jesus teaches that we must hate sin and deal with it drastically.

Do you share God's attitude toward sin?



2 Peter 3:8-9

While it is comforting to know that God is patient with us, we should not take his patience for granted.

God's heart is for everyone to repent. How do you think you could help other people to truly repent?



BECOME:

Acts 3:19

Repentance is the response of true faith in Jesus Christ.

Will you repent?

What will it take to truly repent so that you can be refreshed and saved?

Talk about how the church can help with your repentance.



TAKE IT AWAY:

Take time to examine all the areas of your life. What parts need to die so that you can have life from God?

Make every effort to obey God and stop sinning.

No one is perfect. If you mess up, confess and keep repenting.

Come to the next study dead to your old life and ready to be born again!

Let's set up the next time we'll study!
Time, Date, Place



EXTRA NOTES:

**OPEN UP:**

How has your repentance been going?

Has anything been particularly difficult?

Have you felt refreshed?

Have you been living like a disciple? Studying the word and praying daily, sharing your faith and meeting with the body?

**ON PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this study is to learn what the bible teaches about how we become saved by the grace of God.

REVIEW - Read and Discuss

Consider the studies you have done up to this point. You have learned how to seek God and find him. You have decided to make the bible your standard. You learned the lifestyle of a disciple of Jesus. You learned the consequences of sin and opened up about sin in your life. You learned that when the sin that separates us from God is removed we are saved.

You learned that Jesus died on the cross for you while you were still a sinner. You learned that repentance is changing your mindset from a sinful, self focused outlook to seeing things Jesus' way and living accordingly.

In all of these studies and all the scriptures you've read, have you seen anything that tells you how to biblically receive salvation?

What are some prevalent ideas about receiving salvation in our culture today?

In this study we'll put everything together and see God's amazing plan for us to receive salvation. Like everything else in these studies we must remain committed to becoming first century, bible-only, Christians and not imitate our culture or Christian tradition.



Ephesians 4:4-6

Baptism is a basic Christian doctrine. Along with communion, it is one of only two rites that Jesus passed down to us. It is a transliteration of the Greek word baptizdo which means to immerse or dunk.

What do you think the significance of baptism is? Have you seen many baptisms? Have you been baptized? If so, when were you baptized? Why were you baptized?

What do you think it means that there is “one baptism”?

We need to be sure that we are baptized according to the scriptures.

In the book of Acts (the biblical history of the early church) we find that baptism is the point at which people were saved from their sin.



Acts 2:36-41

This passage is significant because it is the first sermon of the New Testament church; our church. Peter, by the power of the Holy Spirit and having been given “the keys to the kingdom”, lays out the steps of salvation at the end of his message about new life. Let's break it down:

Belief

2:36 Peter's sermon ends with a summary of what someone coming to Christ must believe.

What do you need to believe? What does it mean that “you” crucified Jesus? What does it mean to have Jesus as Lord? What does Christ mean?

A lot of people want Jesus as Christ (annointed savior), but few want him as Lord (master). Is Jesus Lord and Christ in your life? Saving faith is much more than intellectual assent that Jesus existed.

The crowd’s belief is demonstrated by the fact that they were “cut to the heart” by the message. They ask Peter and the apostles, “What shall we do?”

This is the attitude of true belief. Not, “This is what I’ll do,” but, “I’ll do anything, what shall I do?” Have you been cut to the heart, will you do whatever the bible teaches?

If mere belief were enough to be saved the sermon would end with Peter saying, “You’ve already done it.” But he goes on and answers the question of what to do.

Repentance

2:38 “Repent.” In 2 Corinthians we read that repentance “leads to salvation” and now we see it as a part of the salvation process.

Repentance is the death of ourselves and our sinful nature so that we can live for Christ. (see Romans 5-6)

Can you say that your sinful nature is dead? Have you repented?

Baptism

2:38 “And be baptized.” Biblical salvation occurs at the moment that an individual believes, repents and is baptized. Beyond salvation, the Holy Spirit and a place in God’s kingdom are also promised at baptism.

The Promise

2:39-41

In all of our studies, this is the first scripture we have read that promises the forgiveness of sins. This is how the first church taught salvation and this is the way that people receive salvation to this day. “The promise is for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Promise is another way of saying testament. This is the New Testament. 3,000 people believed, repented and were baptized that day. 3000 people received forgiveness for all their sin, the gift of the Holy Spirit and were added to their number, becoming the first church.

Is this the way that you were taught about salvation? Have you seen it taught differently? Why do you think there are so many ideas about how someone gets saved?

If you want to be saved and teach salvation like the first Christians, then this is the way!

People frequently ask why baptism plays such a prominent role in the salvation process? Paul explains it in his letter to the Romans.



Romans 6:1-5

Here Paul is addressing the Christians in Rome. They “were baptized into Christ Jesus” because that is how the first century Christians became Christians. In reminding them of their conversion, Paul describes the process and significance of baptism.

Significance

Baptism is our participation in Jesus death, burial and resurrection.

Repentance

6:2

We can see the entire salvation process in this passage. We can assume that they believed in Jesus because they died to sin.

Dying to sin is a perfect description of repentance. It was a given that they would be dead to sin before they were buried with Christ.

Baptism

6:3-4

In baptism we are buried with Christ, so that we may rise to a new life having conquered death (sin).

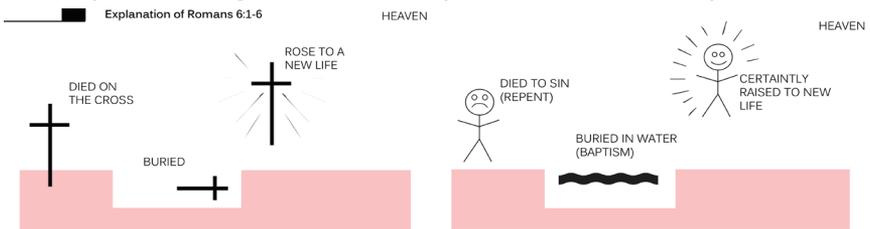
This is more than just a ritual or symbol. This is participating in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. We mercifully receive new life and salvation by the power of Christ.

If...Then

6:5

When we rise from the water, we live a new life (new creations). When it comes to salvation we want to be certain. That is the clear promise we see in this scripture.

A couple of diagrams will help to illustrate this process:



How important is it that a person being baptized is truly dead to sin? What if Jesus hadn't actually died?

For more references to baptism in the New Testament check out these passages:

John 3:1-8 Jesus alludes to baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:11-12 Faith is necessary at baptism.

1 Peter 3:18-21 Baptism is clearly linked to salvation.

Acts 22:1-16 Paul's salvation is completed at his baptism.

A Word of Caution

Baptism is just one part of the salvation process. Faith and repentance are much more difficult. Baptism gets more focus in this study because it is so frequently misunderstood. God is the only judge. We cannot put him in a box. Yet, we still need to obey.

Many are tempted to minimize the importance of baptism by talking about faith versus works. Faith, repentance and baptism are not works that earn our salvation. Nothing can earn our salvation. When we faithfully obey God's word we can expect salvation from his grace alone. (Ephesians 2:9-10)



BECOME:

In today's study we've learned how people in the first century became Christians. The early church consistently taught that people become saved when they truly believe, repent and get baptized. Today's churches often teach variations of this clear truth.

Are any parts of the process missing in your life? Or, are there any differences between the plan of salvation presented in the bible and your experience in coming to Christ? Spend some time discussing this.

What is the next step you need to take to secure the free gift of God's salvation in your life?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Pray for the strength to follow God's plan. Stay humble. Don't let other people's opinions sway you from following God's word. Remember, God's word is your standard!

Think about people in your life that may be missing out on becoming new creations in Christ. How important is it for you to build deep convictions so you can help them?

Let's set up the next time we'll study!
Time, Date, Place



EXTRA NOTES:

PERSISTENCE



OPEN UP:

Do you have any questions about anything we have studied or anything you have read?

How is your discipleship going?

Have you been able to share about what you've been learning with others?

What do you remember about the last study?



ON PURPOSE:

Once we become saved, staying saved (living out our salvation) becomes a great focus in our new lives. In this study, we will examine the final part of the salvation process: perseverance. We will also examine two gifts that God gives disciples so they can persevere until the end: the Spirit and the church.

A) The Holy Spirit



Matthew 28:18-20

This is the commission of our new lives in Christ. Jesus has given us all of the tools we need to stay faithful. He is with us always as his Spirit lives in each of us. He has also given us the church and the relationships therein to help us live everyday for him.

When you look ahead to your new life in Christ, what challenges do you see?

How do you think the Holy Spirit (Christ with you) will help you overcome those challenges?

These first disciples took this commission and created God's church. When you think about church what comes to mind? What has your experience with church been?



John 3:8

The Spirit that Jesus promised to those who are born again is powerful and mysterious.

What do you know about the Holy Spirit?

If our lives are in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25), and the Spirit is like an untameable wind, then what should we expect our lives to be like with the spirit?

Are you willing to live the adventurous life that the Spirit demands? What are some new experiences that the Spirit might lead you into?



John 16:7-11

The Spirit is so essential that Jesus said he needed to go away so the Spirit could come. One of the Spirit's main roles is to act like a Godly conscience in our lives. We have to learn to listen to the Spirit and be convicted so we can stay out of sin and grow.

How can you learn to listen to the Holy Spirit?

How important will prayer and bible study be in helping you grow in the Spirit and persevere? How have your devotional times been?

Always remember: the Holy Spirit gave us the bible (2 Peter 1:20-21). The Spirit is not a feeling and He will never contradict what the bible says.

B) The Church



Colossians 1:15-20

This is a list of some of the awesome qualities of the risen Christ. Among other things he is the head of the church. What does a head do for the body? Can a body survive without a head?

The church is an organism not an organization or a building. The original word “ekklesia” means gathering. It’s about God and his people, not a building or a name.

The church of Christ has Jesus as its only head. This means that Jesus makes all the decisions. Tradition, intellect, cultural ideas and committees can never take the place of Jesus’ word.

Think about the church you currently attend as you read about the New Testament church in this study. Is anything missing? Is there a way you can help your church? Is it necessary to be at a church that expects everyone to practice biblical discipleship? These are tough questions. Don’t let sentimentality or tradition keep you from being in a place where you can persevere until the end.



1 Corinthians 12:12-27

What lessons can you learn about the biblical church from this passage?

How do we become a part of Christ's church?

In what ways do you need the church?

In what ways does the church need you?

The book of Hebrews was written for the purpose of helping Christians stay faithful. There is much to be learned from Hebrews about the nature of the church.



Hebrews 10:23-25

How will the church help you to “hold unswervingly”?

What does it mean to spur one another on? How important is it to consider others? How will you practice this?

How important is it to meet together regularly? (Example: logs in a campfire.) Do you know what all the meetings of the body are? Are you committed to being there?



Hebrews 3:12-14

Whose responsibility is it to keep each other from falling away?

How do we stay strong as Christians?

How could you live out the call to daily encouragement?

Real relationships keep our hearts from being hardened by sin. With deep friendships we can continue to confess sin, get advice or encouragement and help others. We accomplish this through small discipleship groups or one on one discipleship relationships much like the relationships you've built through these bible studies.

Discipleship Relationships

Jesus and his disciples set the example for us to follow by practicing discipleship in small groups. (Matthew 10:1-4, Matthew 17:1-3, etc...) Who have you built relationships with in the church? Who would you like to get to know?

Why are real relationships important?

Take time to talk about what groups and relationships will be the most helpful. Get set up with a discipleship group and a plan for continuing to study the bible and growing in the Spirit.



Acts 2:42-47

Here is the First Century church in action. What characteristics of the early church impress you?

They were devoted: completely committed to God's word, fellowship, communion, and prayer.

There was a sense of awe and excitement.

They generously shared with one another to meet all kinds of needs. (For information on contributing/giving see Malachi 3:6-12)

The body grew spiritually and numerically.

Are you excited to be a part of a church that desires to live this out? How do you feel about being devoted to a church like this?

Meeting you where you are

The main role of the church is to help people be devoted to God until the end. Great relationships, the Holy Spirit and the bible can also help create great marriages and great parents. Quite the side benefit! Some places to start growing are Ephesians 5:22-6:4 and 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Singles will also be strengthened by following God's standard for purity and relationships. As a church we always follow the scriptures over society when it comes to relationships. Some passages to take to heart are 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, Ephesians 5:1-7, 1 Timothy 4:12.



BECOME:

Ephesians 2:19-22

Becoming a Christian is only the very beginning of the change and growth that will occur in a lifetime of discipleship. We are always being built together to become all that God wants us to be. The key word is together.

Jesus did not just come to teach us how to live a new life. He also started a new spiritual family (the church) so we could experience life together. There is no “lone ranger” Christianity in the bible so there shouldn’t be any in our churches.

What are some things you can do to be an encouraging part of the body?

Do you have any immediate needs that the body can meet?

Are ready to be devoted to the church?



TAKE IT AWAY:

Who would you like to get to know better? How will you do it?

Be sure to come to all the meetings of the body. Begin working your calendar around the church. It may be an adjustment but it is essential to persevering and growing in your faith.

Let’s set up the next time we’ll meet:
Date, Time, Place

Our next study will be Counting the Cost. It’s important for you to review what we’ve learned so you can decide to follow Jesus for eternity. Come prepared with any questions you might have.



EXTRA NOTES:

COUNTING THE COST



OPEN UP:

Spend time praying together about the life changing conversation that is about to take place.



ON PURPOSE:

The purpose of this final bible study is to review what you've learned and consider if you are ready to make the lifelong commitment of becoming a Christian.



Luke 9:57-62

How many of these 3 became followers of Jesus? Why?



Luke 14:28-30

Have you counted the cost of this decision?



Luke 14:31-33

Are you completely surrendered to the big king?



Deuteronomy 20:1-9

Are you ready to fight along side your new brothers and sisters in Christ?

Do you have anything that you are unsure about or doubting?

Do you have any questions?

Take some time to review the concepts we have studied:

Some topics may be:

Conversion

Obstacles and challenges

Implications (what does this mean on a larger scale)

Implications of repentance

Implications of baptism

Purpose and mission

New Testament church

Meetings of the body

Dating and marriage

Finances

Discipleship relationships

Taking a firm/loving stand with family and friends

Sacrifice and service

Lifelong decision

The awesome grace of God!

Do you really think you can live like this for the rest of your life?

What will be the most challenging part of this new life?

What are you most excited about?

Who do you think you will be able to impact?

Do you have any questions about anything?



BECOME:

Take time to pray together and discuss any plans that need to be made for baptism, restoration or membership.



TAKE IT AWAY:

Spend extra special time with God.

Consider fasting with the person you've been studying the bible with.

Keep getting closer to God and growing in consistency.



EXTRA NOTES:

How would Jesus make disciples?

He spoke to the crowds and did great miracles but he disciplined only twelve. Remarkably, God's plan to save the world hinged on Jesus pouring himself into just a few men. If this was the method that Jesus chose for the creation of the church, then we would be wise to imitate.

The Become Study Series puts the gospel message of Jesus Christ into the hands of his disciples. The topics, scriptures, and questions have been chosen to bring about incredible life change for the student as well as the teacher.

The goal of this series is to bring First Century Christianity to the 21st Century. We will never realize such a goal by inventing new methods for disciple-making. Jesus has shown us the way: The crowds may come and go but real power rests in teaching God's timeless message in very small groups. We don't need arenas or even large church buildings to change the world; just open hearts, open bibles and a coffee shop or dining room table. One by one we can change the world just like those first disciples!

