

LEADER HELPS

Using the Daily Discipleship Guide to Lead a Bible Study Group

The *Daily Discipleship Guide* was created for the purpose of building disciples. As the leader of the group, you play a major role. You can build disciples through the group Bible study time, encouraging daily Bible engagement, facilitating smaller groups, and apprenticing future leaders.

Building Disciples through the Group Time

Leading the group Bible study time is the most direct way you will build disciples. Each week, you will introduce the group to the Bible passage, examine the key message in that passage, challenge the group to act on that passage, and encourage them to reflect more deeply in the week that follows. Doing so requires preparation. Here is a way to prepare that gives you adequate time to study the lesson and will make the session fresh in your own life.

Early in the Week (Sunday or Monday)

- Ask God to open your mind and heart to His Word as you study.
- Read the Bible passage for the coming session, and review Understand the Context and Key Words.
- If a QR code is available in the Leader Helps, scan it to gain additional information on what's found in the passage.

Through the Week

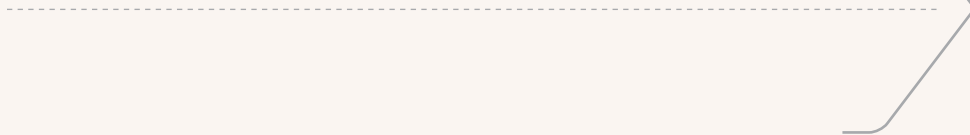
- Ask God to use the Daily Explorations to help you understand and apply the lesson to your life.
- Complete the Daily Exploration activities in the days leading up to the group time.
- Meet with a group of three to four other teachers to share and pray for each other. Use Talk It Out to start your conversation.
- Pay careful attention to the Apply the Text sections for that session, looking for ways you need to apply the Bible in your own life.
- Start gathering items you may use in the group time.

The Day before Group Study Time

- Review the group plan in the back of the *Daily Discipleship Guide*.
- Review the first four pages of the *Daily Discipleship Guide* for that session and the commentary provided in the Leader Helps for that session.
- Review your responses and notes from the completed Daily Explorations.
- Listen to the weekly podcast at goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training.
- Adjust the plan to fit the needs of your group.
Note: You can create custom plans using the DOC file provided in the Digital Download for the Leader Pack—it's the same content printed in the Leader Helps.
- Consult *QuickSource* for additional insights and ideas.
- Review the weekly Adult Extra idea on the Explore the Bible blog (goExploreTheBible.com/LeaderExtras).
- Consult the *Explore the Bible Adult Commentary* for additional insight.
- Pull needed posters from the *Explore the Bible: Leader Pack* (or create your own using Visual Ideas on pages 160–161).
- Make sure you have all your resources gathered including extra copies of the *Daily Discipleship Guide* for guests.

The Day of the Group Study Time

- Arrive early. The group time begins when the first person arrives so make sure that is you.
- Pray for the study and the group.
- Adjust the room as needed.
- Lead the study, adjusting as you go.



After the Group Study Time

- Consider the After the Session idea at the end of the group plans.
- Contact the group, encouraging them to complete the Daily Exploration section and sharing gathered prayer requests and other appropriate information.
- Record insights gained about teaching, individuals in the group, and Scripture.
- Pray for specific needs of people in the group.
- Do it all again, asking God to open you mind and heart to His Word this week.

Building Disciples by Encouraging Daily Bible Engagement

Here are some ways to encourage your group to engage with the Bible daily.

- **VISIT THEM.** Deliver a copy of the Daily Discipleship Guide to every person in your group.
- **ASK THEM.** That seems simple, but the simple is not always easy. Learn to comfortably ask if group members are studying the Bible. You may want to use a statement instead of a question, such as, “I hope you took a look at the Day 3 activity for this week.” It’s a question disguised as a statement, so it’s not as threatening.
- **TELL THEM.** Let them know that you are using the Daily Exploration section as well. Set the standard.
- **SHOW THEM.** Point to the Daily Exploration section at the conclusion of the group study. From time to time, demonstrate how to use the section, guiding them through Day 1 as a group.
- **INVITE THEM.** Call on pre-enlisted volunteers to share with the group what they are learning and how they are using the Daily Exploration section.

As teachers, we have taken on the responsibility of encouraging everyone on our ministry list (class roll, membership list, etc.) to engage daily in Bible study. We can’t make them do it, but we can provide them with a tool and encourage them to use it.

Building Disciples through Smaller Groups

Talk It Out is designed for smaller groups of three to four people to meet weekly. The goal of the smaller groups is simple: holding ourselves and others accountable for living a Christ-honoring life.

Create smaller groups:

- Explain the importance of the smaller groups, emphasizing the goal.
 - Allow the group to form their own initial groups of three by gender (men's smaller groups and women's smaller groups). This tends to work better than assigning groups.
 - Allow the smaller groups to add one person from the names on the ministry list of people who are not present.
 - You may want to encourage the groups to form based on neighborhoods or proximity to work.
 - Make sure some of the groups have extra space for new people and guests.
 - As the Bible study group grows, you may need to reorganize the smaller groups, but try not to regroup too often so that trust can be built within each smaller group.
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Support the smaller groups:

- Provide opportunities for the members of the smaller groups to pray with each other during the group time.
 - Make study assignments in the weekly group time based on the smaller groups.
 - Pre-enlist a volunteer to share with the larger group how participation in the smaller group is impacting his or her life.
 - Periodically organize fellowship events built around the smaller groups. The smaller groups could be the basis for teams during the event.
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Be in a smaller group:

- Meet with two or three other Bible study leaders as part of your weekly preparation.
- Be part of a smaller group within your class.
- Host a smaller group for guests and new group members.

Building Disciples by Apprenticing Other Leaders

Starting new groups is critical to the life of your church and the lives of the individuals in your group. People in your group need to be challenged to take on a greater role in your church. Providing the opportunity to do so helps them grow and removes the largest barrier to starting new Bible study groups—finding a leader. You can make a difference in the growth of individuals and in the future growth of your church by apprenticing potential group leaders. Here's how you can use the *Daily Discipleship Guide* to make this happen.

- **STEP 1:** Prior to group time, ask a potential leader to follow along in the Leader Helps for that session as you lead the group. Tell him or her to note what you did and what you adjusted. You're just coaching your apprentice to use the book he or she has in a different way.
- **STEP 2:** After that group experience, spend time with the group member going over what you did and how you adjusted the leader material for the group.
- **STEP 3:** Invite him or her to do this again in a few weeks.
- **STEP 4:** Ask him or her to lead a group time or part of one using the suggestions in the Leader Helps for that session. You may be away that week, or you can simply observe as a group member. Offer to help him or her prepare if needed.
- **STEP 5:** As your apprentice gains confidence, allow him or her to teach more in the near future.
- **STEP 6:** As a need for a new group surfaces, prepare to move on to lead the new group, with the apprentice becoming the leader of the current group (which tends to work best), or commission the apprentice and a few others from the group to start a new group.
- **STEP 7:** Do it all again.

Not everyone in the group will become a Bible study leader. For those who do, you can become a mentor to potential leaders, extending your teaching ministry and demonstrating discipleship.



The Journey

Session 1 • Numbers 9:15-23



ENGAGE

PREPARE: On a focal wall, display **Pack Item 1** (Map: From Kadesh-Barnea to Moab) and **Pack Item 2** (Poster: Outlines of Numbers, Deuteronomy). Make copies of **Pack Item 7** (Handout: Numbers, Deuteronomy Time Line).

INTRODUCE: As adults arrive, encourage them to share about a recent trip. Ask them to share where they went and why, as well as sites they visited along the way. Find out if they used a GPS on any part of the trip.

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 13.

ASK: Think of a time when bad directions led you somewhere unexpected. How can getting just one detail wrong disrupt our travels? (p. 13)

EXPLAIN: Share that this session is the first in a study of Numbers and Deuteronomy. Direct attention to **Pack Item 1** (Map: From Kadesh-Barnea to Moab). Provide copies of **Pack Item 7** (Handout: Numbers, Deuteronomy Time Line) for additional context for the books. Point out that in these books, Israel moved through the wilderness, but they always had a solid Source of direction: the Lord's presence.

TRANSITION: As you reflect on the journey Israel was undertaking, think about your own spiritual walk. Consider times when you've followed the wrong guide and where those experiences led. Ask God to help you go where He wants you to go for His glory.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

OVERVIEW: Share the following information in **Understand the Context** (p. 13) to help set the background for the book of Numbers: *The book of Numbers presents three primary scenes, and geographic locations identify each. The first part (chaps. 1–10) occurred while the Israelites were still at Mount Sinai. The second describes their journey from Sinai toward Canaan (chaps. 11–25). The final section (chaps. 26–36) describes God's people on the Plains of Moab—across the Jordan River from Jericho.*

IDENTIFY: Use **Pack Item 2** (Poster: Outlines of Numbers, Deuteronomy) to show where this session falls. Explain that the first several chapters of Numbers describe a census of the people. Note that in Numbers 9:15, Moses returned to the narrative.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud Numbers 9:15-16 as the group listens for God's actions in the verses.

EXAMINE: Emphasize that God wanted to dwell among the Israelites, so He made His presence known above the tabernacle.

- **(9:15)** The term “tabernacle” comes from a word that means “to dwell” and describes God’s dwelling place among His people. The word first appears in Exodus 25:8 and denotes a tent that Israel could transport through the wilderness. Solomon built the temple 480 years later as a permanent structure where God’s people could worship Him (1 Kings 6–8; see 6:1).
- **(9:15)** The cloud of God’s glory is significant, as it was a common companion with Israel in the wilderness. When God’s people left Egypt, God showed His presence with a cloud (Ex. 13:21). The cloud was a visible manifestation of His guidance; the people did not need to fear, because God led them! By covering the tabernacle, God also confirmed that His glory/presence would dwell there.

ASK: How do you think the visible evidence of God’s presence made the Israelites feel? How can you be assured of His presence in your life? What are some ways you can benefit from His presence (p. 15)



The Tabernacle

Scan here to discover more about this place of worship built by the Israelites.

READ: Direct the group to read silently **Numbers 9:17-21**, considering Israel’s response to God’s revelation of Himself.

ACTIVITY: Prior to the session, collect several board games that require players to move around the board. During the session, show adults the games and encourage them to share how players determine their movements. Point out that knowing where and when to move is an important skill in life.

DISCUSS: Draw two columns on the board: *Move* and *Not Move*. Encourage the group to share how Israel determined whether they needed to move or stay put. Lead a brief discussion about why they were willing to follow God’s presence.

RECAP: Emphasize that at times, the cloud stayed in place for many days. Other times, the wait lasted only a few days. These verses are a reminder that the Lord sometimes compels us to wait. He may call us to sit still—which can be difficult to do. Many times we wait without knowing why.

ASK: Have there been times when God made you wait for an answer or solution from Him? How did that experience affect your faith? (p. 15)

READ: Invite a volunteer to read **Numbers 9:22-23** as the group reflects on how God set the timeframe for Israel’s journey.

EXAMINE: Explain the two implications from “lifted up”: abrupt action that suggested prompt obedience and decisive leadership that followed God’s plan with no questions asked. Encourage adults to suggest why both of these are important to experiencing God’s presence and following Him well. Note that we can afford to act “abruptly” when we are confident in God’s leadership.

READ: Read verse 23 aloud once again. Emphasize the “LORD’s command” and the “LORD’s requirement.” Share that through all the focus on the movement of God’s presence, we can learn much from Israel’s obedience.

- **(9:23)** While God could have told them everything in advance, He chose a different path. He commanded them to follow Him as He revealed the way. Most of the time, God does not reveal His entire agenda at once. As humans, we might feel overwhelmed, and our faith would be hindered. Instead, He graciously reveals His purposes on a “need to know” basis. This allows us to trust Him and obey one step at a time.

ASK: Why does it matter that we follow the Lord’s lead? Why do we sometimes delay doing what He wants us to do? (p. 15)

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week’s Bible passage:

- Believers can be assured that God is with them and can provide trustworthy guidance.
- Following God’s guidance will require believers to act on His instruction.
- Following God in faith means that we act on His timeframe and not our own.

IDENTIFY: Encourage adults to consider the three statements and to identify the one that presents the greatest challenge to them. Provide an index card and direct them to write

a prayer, asking God to help them lean into His presence and help as they address this issue during the week.

DISCUSS: Direct the group to read the **Apply the Text** questions on page 15. Allow adults to suggest ways the group can be more involved in an existing ministry or start a new ministry. Urge them to make this a matter of prayer during the week.

PRAY: The **Explore the Bible Prayer Guide** provides weekly prayer prompts based on this quarter’s Bible passages. Encourage adults to scan the QR code on page 15. Be prepared to lead a prayer based on Numbers 9:15-23 using the prompts in the prayer guide: *Thank God for His constant presence in your life. Thank God for the ways He has directed and guided you. Ask God to give you the wisdom to know when to wait on Him and when to step out in faith. Pray that you would be faithful to God where you are right now.*

AFTER THE SESSION

Reinforce the session by texting or emailing the group. Remind the group of the suggestions they came up with for existing or new ministries. Challenge them to prayerfully consider the options during the week and to bring their top two options to the next session. Urge them to seek God’s leadership as they reflect on where God might be leading them.