

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.
-

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.
-

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

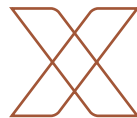
Starting new groups is critical to the life of your church and the lives of the individuals in your group. People in your group need to be challenged to take on a greater role in your church. Providing the opportunity to do so helps them grow and removes the largest barrier to starting new Bible study 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.

Strong and Courageous

Session 1 • Joshua 1:1-11,16-18



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Conquest of Canaan*) and **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*). Make copies of **Pack Item 9** (*Handout: Praying Scripture in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*). Gather pens and index cards for the “Challenge” activity.

INTRODUCE: Invite the group to read the opening paragraph on page 13.

ASK: What makes a person trustworthy? (p. 13)

SHARE: Point out that trust is earned. Note that as people demonstrate trustworthiness, it becomes easier to trust them. Highlight Joshua on **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and summarize this content from **Understand the Context** (p. 13):

- “When God called Joshua to be Moses’s replacement, humanly speaking, Joshua had every reason to be intimidated. He had witnessed many of the things God did through Moses. However, as with Moses, God had prepared Joshua for his task. . . . God’s assignment for Joshua would be different in nature from what Moses’s assignment had

been. Nonetheless, as with Moses, God providentially prepared Joshua for the task before him. Therefore, there was every reason for Joshua to trust the Lord and be strong and courageous.”

ASK: What might have been going through Joshua’s mind when God installed him as the leader after Moses?

TRANSITION: *Today’s study examines the transition from Moses’s leadership to Joshua’s leadership. But while the human leadership had changed, God had not.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Joshua 1:1-5 as the group listens for God’s promise to Joshua.

RECAP: Note that Moses had not been allowed to enter the promised land because of his sin. Provide more information about Israel’s new leader, Joshua:

- **(1:1)** *Joshua means “Yahweh is salvation.” Moses changed his assistant’s name from Hoshea (“Save!”) to Joshua (“the Lord is salvation,” Num. 13:16). In Greek, Joshua is the same word as the name “Jesus.” Joshua has a rather long history. He led Israel to victory over the Amalekites (Ex. 17). He alone accompanied Moses on*

the holy mountain (24:13-14). As one of the twelve spies, Joshua along with Caleb urged Israel to obey God and enter the land (Num. 14:5-9).

EXPLAIN: Share that God had promised a home for His people in the days of Abraham. Joshua's first order of business, as the new leader of the Israelites, was to prepare them to move into the promised land. Highlight the borders of the promised land using **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Conquest of Canaan*). Emphasize God's faithfulness in keeping His promises to His people.

ASK: How have you experienced God's faithfulness? (p. 15)

TRANSITION: *God's promise of land also included the promise of His presence with Joshua and the Israelites.*

READ: Call for a volunteer to read Joshua 1:6-11 as adults consider why believers don't have to be afraid when following God.

SHARE: Highlight "strong and courageous" in verse 6. Note that the phrase appears three times in Joshua 1. Emphasize the importance of Joshua demonstrating these qualities.

- **(1:6)** Israel would need to see Joshua's strength and courage as an example to follow in the face of what would appear to be insurmountable challenges in the land of Canaan. He would be the one who would distribute the land to the people as their inheritance. The mandate to show strength and courage occurs in verses 6, 7, and 9. The number three in biblical thought often emphasized completion. The Lord required Joshua's total obedience.

DISCUSS: Note how God connected strength and courage to full obedience to His Word in verses 7-9. Allow volunteers to describe what it means to meditate on God's Word and to suggest practical ways to meditate on Scripture each day.

ASK: How does God's Word provide courage and direction for our lives? What role does His Word play in our definition of success? (p. 15)

MEMORIZE: Point out that Joshua 1:8 serves as the memory verse for this session. Lead adults to read aloud the verse three times. Encourage them to memorize it this week.

TRANSITION: *Responding to God's challenge, Joshua prepared the people to move into the promised land.*

READ: Read Joshua 1:16-18 as adults identify key ideas in the Israelites' words to Joshua.

EXPLAIN: Point out that the commitment voiced by the tribes east of the Jordan River was shared by the entire nation. Note that to emphasize the significance of their commitment, the tribes promised to hold themselves accountable, even to the point of putting rebels to death.

- **(1:18)** The Israelites' assertion to Joshua that anyone who rebels against your order . . . will be put to death stressed the degree of their devotion. They were willing to hold themselves accountable for disobedience. The military situation in which the Israelites were engaged under Joshua's command required strict discipline and

thus severe punishment for rebellion. The death sentence was carried out in Joshua 7:24-26. At the conquest of Jericho, Achan took some spoil that belonged to the Lord. When God revealed Achan's sin, Joshua commanded the man's entire family and his possessions be destroyed.

ASK: How does a shared commitment to God's purposes encourage other people? (p. 15)

DISCUSS: Lead the group to discuss how believers, like the Israelites, often make promises to God but fail to keep them. Discuss the difference between intent and action. Emphasize the importance of holding one another accountable.

PRAY: Joshua's courage was grounded in the assurance of God's trustworthiness. This came from the words of his people, but also from the Word of God. Review Joshua 1:8. Encourage adults to scan the QR code for the **Explore the Bible Prayer Guide** on page 15 and follow the prompts to pray Joshua 1:8 back to God.

CHALLENGE

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

- We can find courage in the truth that God keeps His promises.
- We can discern God's best for our lives by studying His Word.
- We can encourage the kingdom work of others by supporting them and partnering with them.

SHARE: Remind adults that while this session focused on God's promises to Joshua thousands of years ago, we serve the same God today. Emphasize that the God who kept His promises to Moses and Joshua still keeps His promises today.

DISCUSS: Guide the group to discuss the **Apply the Text** activity on page 15. Lead a brief discussion of specific promises found in Scripture and the impact those promises can have on our lives as Christ followers.

PRAY: Distribute index cards and pens. Direct adults to record an area in which they need strength and courage on one side of the card. As they are working, play the song "Promises" by Maverick City Music. On the other side of the card, encourage them to write a prayer related to what they wrote on the front of the card. Give them a moment of silent prayer. Challenge them to continue using **Pack Item 9** (*Handout: Praying Scripture in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) to pray through these issues this week.

AFTER THE SESSION

Email the group to let them know that you are praying for them to stand strong and courageous for God this week. Share one of your favorite promises from God and ask them to share one of their favorite promises from Scripture. Direct them to reflect on and respond to the **Apply the Text** questions on page 19. Encourage them to suggest ways the group can partner with other believers in the days ahead.