

LEADER GUIDE – FORMED BY THE GOSPEL

SESSION 2:5 | DEVOTED TO GOD'S WORD

Overview for Leaders

This session centers on Acts 2, especially Peter's sermon at Pentecost and Acts 2:42–47. The early church did not merely believe the Gospel, they devoted themselves to God's Word together because God's Word pointed them to Jesus and gave ongoing life and direction. Peter explains the work of the Spirit through Joel, David, and the resurrection of Jesus, then the new believers devote themselves to the apostles' teaching. 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 clarifies that the Gospel is of first importance. This session guards against: 1) keeping Christian identity while disconnecting from what forms that identity, 2) treating Bible engagement as only an individual discipline, and 3) allowing secondary things to carry primary weight in the community.

Big Idea

Gospel-formed community is devoted to God's Word together because God's Word points us to Jesus, keeps the Gospel as first importance, and forms us into a people who share life, prayer, generosity, worship, and mission.

Your Role as Leader

Avoid turning this session into a guilt trip about Bible reading. The emphasis is deeper and more corporate: communities form people by what they repeatedly return to together. Keep the Gospel at the center, not more religious activity. Help the group see that the Word points to Jesus, keeps what is primary in first place, and strengthens the church like threads woven into a rope. Invite one practical step of shared devotion.

Session Flow – Adjust as Needed

- Icebreaker
- Scripture Engagement (reading + context)
- Discussion (10 questions) — 40–45 min
- Application Challenge — 5 min
- Prayer & Reflection — 10 min
- Announcements — 2 min

Key Scriptures

- Acts 2:16–18
- Acts 2:31–33
- Acts 2:42–47
- 1 Corinthians 15:3–8
- 2 Timothy 3:14–17
- Colossians 3:16–17

LEADER NOTES, GROUP QUESTIONS, & COMMENTARY

(Use these notes to frame discussion and connect themes)

Icebreaker Purpose – Surface assumptions about habits, repeated attention, shared centers, and how communities form people over time. Suggested options:

- What is something you use or check almost every day without even thinking about it?
- What kinds of things tend to shape a group of people over time?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. God’s Word Interprets God’s Work – Read: Acts 2:16–18

Question: When Peter explains Pentecost, why does he begin with God’s Word through Joel? What does that show about how the early church understood what God was doing?

Leader Insight: Peter does not interpret the Spirit’s activity by feelings, hype, or confusion. He reaches for Scripture. God’s Word gives clarity to what God is doing among His people.

Cue: Ask: “Where do we instinctively look first to interpret life, culture, or spiritual experience?”

2. Scripture Points to the Risen Jesus – Read: Acts 2:31–33

Question: How does Peter connect David’s words to Jesus’ resurrection and the pouring out of the Spirit?

Leader Insight: Peter shows that Scripture has been pointing forward to Jesus. The Word does not merely provide information; it reveals the crucified, risen, and exalted Christ.

Cue: Connect the Old Testament promise, Jesus’ resurrection, and the Spirit’s work without getting lost in details.

3. The Gospel Calls for Response – Read: Acts 2:37–41

Question: Why does devotion to God’s Word begin with repentance, faith, and receiving the Gospel rather than mere information?

Leader Insight: The Word cuts to the heart and calls for response. Devotion to the Word is not Bible trivia; it begins with surrender to the Gospel of Jesus.

Cue: Keep the tone invitational. Ask what it looks like for the Word to move from heard to received.

4. Devoted to the Apostles’ Teaching – Read: Acts 2:42

Question: What does it mean that the believers “devoted themselves” to the apostles’ teaching? How is devotion different from occasional exposure?

Leader Insight: Devotion means ongoing commitment and allegiance. The apostles' teaching was the message of Jesus - His life, death, resurrection, and teaching - explained through the Scriptures and passed down to the church.

Cue: Contrast "occasional exposure" with "shared devotion" without shaming people.

5. The Word Forms Shared Life – Read: Acts 2:42–47

Question: What other practices flow out of their shared devotion to the apostles' teaching?

Leader Insight: Fellowship, breaking bread, prayer, generosity, hospitality, worship, and mission flow from Gospel-centered devotion. The Word forms a whole way of life together.

Cue: Ask which practices become hollow when disconnected from the Word and the Gospel.

6. First Importance – Read: 1 Corinthians 15:3–8

Question: Paul says the Gospel is "of first importance." What happens when secondary things become primary in a Christian community?

Leader Insight: Paul received and passed on what was central: Christ died for our sins, was buried, was raised, and appeared. Secondary matters can be important, but they cannot become the center of gravity.

Cue: Guard against rabbit trails. Help the group name examples without litigating every secondary issue.

7. Scripture Trains God's People – Read: 2 Timothy 3:14–17

Question: According to Paul, what is Scripture meant to do in God's people?

Leader Insight: Scripture teaches, rebukes, corrects, trains, and equips for every good work. It is formative before it is merely informational.

Cue: Emphasize formation over trivia. Ask: "What kind of person is the Word forming?"

8. The Word of Christ Dwelling Richly – Read: Colossians 3:16–17

Question: What does it look like for the word of Christ to dwell richly in a community, not just in individuals?

Leader Insight: Paul imagines a community saturated by the Word: teaching, admonishing, singing, gratitude, and a whole life lived in the name of Jesus.

Cue: Invite examples beyond quiet time: conversations, songs, prayer, encouragement, decisions, and correction.

9. Bible Knowledge Without Life – Read: John 5:39–40

Question: How can someone value Bible knowledge and still miss life with Jesus? How does the Gospel keep us centered?

Leader Insight: Jesus warns that people can search the Scriptures and still refuse to come to Him. The Bible is not the destination; Christ is.

Cue: Gently challenge familiarity without intimacy. Keep pointing back to Jesus, not performance.

10. Holding Fast Together – Read: Acts 2:42; Psalm 119:105

Question: What practical step can help you devote yourself to God’s Word with others this week?

Leader Insight: Shared devotion strengthens the Body like threads woven into a rope. We hold fast better together than we do alone.

Cue: Land with a concrete practice: reading, discussion, memorization, prayer, or Scripture-shaped obedience.

APPLICATION

(Leader Version)

Application Focus: This application is about helping people identify what currently receives their repeated attention and loyalty, then inviting one concrete step toward shared devotion to God's Word. The goal is not to create pressure for more religious output, but to help the group return together to the Word that reveals Jesus and keeps the Gospel of first importance.

Leader Tip: Ask: "What would it look like this week for God's Word to become less occasional and more shared?"

Examples:

- Preparation: Read the upcoming group passage before gathering.
- Conversation: Discuss Scripture with someone instead of only consuming spiritual content alone.
- Re-centering: Let the Gospel move a secondary disagreement back into proper place.
- Practice: Memorize, meditate on, or pray one passage with another believer.
- Discernment: Ask, "What does God's Word say?" before reacting or deciding.

Group Prayer Time at End:

- Fresh hunger for God's Word without guilt-driven performance
- Shared devotion that strengthens the group and church
- Wisdom to keep the Gospel of first importance
- Humility to let Scripture correct and train us
- Joy in seeing how all Scripture points us to Jesus

Close with: "Jesus, make us a people devoted to Your Word together. Keep the Gospel of first importance, form us by the truth that gives life, and strengthen us as we hold fast to You. Amen."

Leader Follow-Up Midweek

- Ask About Devotion: Ask what practice helped them engage God's Word with others this week.
- Keep It Concrete: Encourage one repeatable rhythm, not a vague commitment.
- Re-center on Jesus: Remind them that the goal of Scripture is life with Christ, not Bible activity for its own sake.