

Knowing

Basics of the Faith

Leader's Guide

It is recommended that you review the leader's section in the book. This can be found beginning on page 92. You should spend the first session getting to know one another and sharing enough information from your life in order to build rapport and confidence in your disciple that they are in good hands with you, as their mentor and guide through the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

It is important that you don't do all the talking. Learn the value of asking good questions. One simple technique to move a conversation forward is to simply ask yourself, "What don't I know about what this person just said?" And then ask a question to discover that new information.

It is not advisable to try to go over every single question associated with every topic. Pick those that you think are most important or necessary for your disciple. I would encourage you to always ask, "What stood out to you this lesson and why?" The next question should be "What questions do you have from the lesson or what didn't you understand from the lesson?" Your goal should always be to tap into the necessity, urgency, practicality, and excitement in the lesson.

I have tried to provide some additional thoughts, doctrinal considerations, or exegesis for each topic so that you can supplement what they've learned through the study guide with additional teaching to make your time together as profitable as possible.

Things to bear in mind:

- The Holy Spirit is the agent of ongoing transformation. You are a person of strategic influence that He can use to accomplish His work in the life of the disciple.
- The Holy Spirit wants to work in your life as well. As a mentor, you are also a lifelong learner. Therefore, seek God in the study, as well.
- The Holy Spirit may have a different agenda for your time than you do. Be careful about letting the conversation derail but be open to significant circumstances that may have arisen in which you can help them apply the Bible to their lives in real time.
- It is not loving to affirm what God forbids. This is not Biblical counseling, but you also cannot let sin or error go unaddressed. Not all answers are Biblical, and not all choices are godly. Be tactful, patient, gentle, and loving when confronting or correcting your disciple, but your responsibility is to help them draw near to God and learn to glorify Him in all that they do.
- Encourage your disciple to get involved with you in some ministry opportunity along the way.
- Begin and end every session in prayer. You will teach by your example as well by your words.

Should you be called upon to offer Biblical counseling during the session, I would recommend following the simple method developed by Dr. P. Tripp and Dr. T. Lane:

- Heat – seek to understand their circumstances. What is the “heat” they are facing?
- Thornes – how are they tempted to respond in sinful and fleshly ways that trouble their trouble. These responses are not the result of their circumstances, but what they’re wanting in their heart.
- Cross – what does the Gospel say about their circumstances and their “thorny” response?
- Fruit – what can they do to glorify God in their present circumstances? Never promise that the heat will go away. It may not, but you can promise that through the power of the Holy Spirit and the application of truth to their heart, they can obey God and glorify Him in the heat.

Please note:

If the issue(s) your disciple is facing are particularly problematic, destructive, or habitual you may want to involve pastor Doug who can connect them with a qualified Biblical counselor to supplement the training they are receiving from you.

Topic 1 – A Disciple Learns

Page 6

The authors present their view of discipleship. This would be an excellent place to introduce the disciple to Breesport Baptist Church’s four-step discipleship process as outlined above (Connect – Grow – Serve – Multiply).

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The Word of God gives us the clearest picture of who God is and what He is like. It is the clearest record of His works, His promises, and His commandments (expectations) for humanity and for Christ-followers.

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2 Timothy 3:16-17

Dr. Howard Hendricks, from Dallas Theological Seminary, said that the Bible shows us:

What is right = profitable for teaching

What is not right = for reproof

How to get right = for correction

How to stay right = for training in righteousness

Topic 2 A Radical Message

Page 16

Question 2

Exodus 34:5-7 would be an excellent place to take your disciple to supplement Psalm 103. Exodus 34 represents the first time God declares the meaning of His divine name, Yahweh, which is represented in the Old Testament using the tetragrammaton “LORD.” God’s divine name is rendered in this way some 6000 times in the Old Testament. The description provided in Exodus 34 is likewise repeated throughout the Old Testament as different authors speak the truth of God back to God or apply the truth of His character to their circumstances.

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Question 4

The Law can only condemn. It cannot save. It shows us what is wrong with us but it has no capacity to fix what's wrong with us. In that way, it serves as an MRI machine.

It pinpoints the problem with the human heart...we cannot keep the Law. A person must recognize that bad news before they will be willing to accept the good news of the Gospel.

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Connect the Gospel to the metanarrative or big story of the Bible beginning with Genesis. It's important to understand that the story of humanity begins in peace. We all understand that. It's why laughter is universally preferred to crying and pleasure is universally preferred to pain. We have a memory, woven into our spiritual DNA, where perfection still echoes and reminds us that this isn't the way it is supposed to be.

But in Genesis 3, in the aftermath of the shattering of shalom, we see God making a promise and establishing a pattern that the rest of the Bible is built upon. In Genesis 3:15 God establishes the promise of a coming Redeemer, the Seed of the Woman, who would crush the head of the serpent, take away sin, and make all things new. In Genesis 3:21 God establishes the legal precedent of Penal Substitutionary Atonement which says that it is legal for an innocent one to die in the place of a guilty one, to make payment for their sin before a holy God.

The rest of the Old Testament is God expanding upon the promises of the Messiah through the Law, the Psalms, and the prophets (Luke 24:44). The entire sacrificial system, at the heart of the Mosaic Law, is built on the legal precedent of penal substitutionary atonement and it all points forward to Jesus Christ. The Gospels give us four accounts of the Messiah's life, death, and resurrection. The Book of Acts demonstrate the power of the Gospel to change lives. The Epistles unpack the depth and accomplishments of the Gospel, and the Book of Revelation is the revealing of Jesus to creation as the King of kings and the Lord of lords who keeps His promise to crush the head of the serpent, cleanse the world of sin, and make all things new. Thus, the Bible truly is the revelation of the glory of God through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

Those you disciple need to know that their lives fit into that grand narrative of the universe.

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Bottom

Be prepared to discuss what faith is. Faith is trust. The puritans used to describe it as "rolling your soul upon Jesus." Pastor Doug describes it as "falling dead weight into Jesus." The Bad News, Good News presentation of the Gospel describes it simply sitting in a chair believing that it has the power to hold you up and keeping you from falling.

There is saving faith and there is ongoing and growing faith in God and His promises.

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Life Application #2

It would be good to ask your disciple to write out their testimony of faith in Jesus in a long version and in a short version.

Topic 3 Coming to Faith

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Question 5

Be prepared to talk about the Parable of the Sower. Jesus tells this parable in Mark 4:1-9 but then He explains it in Mark 4:13-20. The purpose is to illustrate the fact that genuine salvation always changes the believer in some way. There will be fruit that accompanies saving faith. If we are dead in our trespasses and sin, blind, and spiritually lame prior to salvation, and faith in Christ makes us alive with Him, opens our eyes, gives us a new heart, and spiritual vitality that has to show up in some discernable way. The amount of fruit is not what is critical in the parable. What is critical is that there is some fruit – “some thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

Where is your disciples seeing fruit in keeping with salvation in their life? Where are they not and why might that be?

Topic 4 All Things New

Note:

It is important to understand that salvation is not simply a “saved from” proposition (justification). It is also a “saved to” proposition (sanctification), which means that salvation is not an end unto itself. It is, rather, a necessary and essential first step in a process that is meant to span the entirety of the disciple’s life and walk with Jesus.

It has been argued that if someone is struggling with an on going sin issue it can be attributed to something he or she doesn’t understand about either their justification (they have been declared innocent with respect to the law and God sees them as though they have never sinned and always obeyed because they stand on Jesus’s record of righteousness) or their sanctification (they are made holy through faith and set apart by God for His special use).

While justification is a one-time act that judicially takes place in the moment of salvation, sanctification has multiple aspects to it: positional (1 Corinthians 1:2), progressive (Romans 8:28-29, Philippians 1:6 and 2:12-13), and ultimate (1 John 3:1-3). Each plays a role in the believer’s life.

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Question 4

The verb “has come” is in the perfect tense. This signifies the fact that in the moment the believer receives Jesus by faith the “new” came with the present and ongoing consequence that they are still new. This means that our salvation never wears out or grows old. We are kept eternally new.

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Why do we still have evil desires in us?

The Tension Principle

See Galatians 5:16-18 and Romans 7:14-20

The tension between the flesh and the Spirit is broken by the will and the will is always controlled by the affections. God has designed the will to chase what it loves the most, therefore, every temptation is an opportunity to reveal who and what we love the most. Therefore, part of what leads to victory is falling more in love with God in Christ.

Topic 5 Assurance of Salvation

Note:

Romans 6:1-4

Paul is addressing the concern that if Christians are truly forgiven of all of their sins (past, present, and future) what would keep them from living a life of sin so that they can receive grace upon grace. His argument is that that's not how Spirit-filled Christians think and that's not what the Gospel accomplishes in the life of a believer.

In the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer or fully places him or her inside of Christ such that His righteousness completely covers them. The implication of this is that God never sees the believer apart from Christ. He always sees the believer through Christ.

From an ordinance perspective, water baptism becomes the physical picture of the believer being joined with Jesus in His death as they go under the water and being joined with Him in His resurrection as they come up from the water to now walk (live) in the power of the resurrection unto newness of life. This would be a great time to talk to your disciple about baptism, if they have not been baptized yet.

Topic 6 The Bible

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It would be good to talk about the Sufficiency of the Bible as well. Sufficiency refers to the fact that the Bible is all that we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible speaks truthfully and authoritatively in every area of life that it addresses, and it addresses most areas of the human experience through commandment, principle, or example. In any other category the believer is allowed to decide out of a Biblically trained conscience (Romans 14).

Note:

If your disciple desires to dive deeper into how to study the Bible, you can direct them to the church website and a video course that pastor Doug did entitled "How to Study the Bible." It is all about the inductive Bible study method. There are videos and homework assignments that can be downloaded.

<https://breesport.org/how-to-study-your-bible>

Topic 7 God

Note:

The Fatherhood of God is one of the most precious doctrines given to us, as Christ-followers. We, through faith in Christ, are invited into the intimate and personal relationship with God that Jesus enjoyed.

It can be helpful to explore their concept of God to determine how closely it aligns with the truth of the Bible. The danger is that we make a “disciple” who has a false concept of God. It would also be helpful to ask about their relationship with their earthly father and if they have allowed that relationship to shape their relationship with God in any unhelpful or unbiblical ways and correct them, as needed.

The most frequent title ascribed to God in the New Testament is “Father.” He is referred to in that way some 245 times. Our confidence in prayer and even in sin and temptation is rooted in the fact that God deals with us through a father’s heart for his children.

Topic 8 Jesus

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The Hypostatic Union

Philippians 2:5-11

The Hypostatic Union says that Jesus, uniquely, possesses within Himself, two complete and yet unmixed natures such that He is fully man and fully God. In other words, His deity doesn’t elevate His humanity such that He didn’t feel pain or hunger or thirst in the normal human ways. It also means that His humanity did not diminish His divinity such that He ever became less than fully God (even in the womb and even in childhood). There are profound implications to this in terms of His wilderness temptations and the sufferings and accomplishments of the cross. He is one with us forever.

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Be able to describe the events surrounding the cross.

- The Last Supper – Matthew 26:17-29
- The Garden Agonies – Matthew 26:36-46
- The Betrayal and Arrest – Matthew 26:47-56
- The Scourging – Matthew 26:26
- Jesus Beaten by the Romans – Matthew 26:27-31
- The Crucifixion – Matthew 26:32-56

See supplied article, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ.”

Topic 9 The Holy Spirit

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One can add the following row to the chart at the bottom of the page:

Involved with the resurrection of Jesus Christ

The Father – Galatians 1:1 and Acts 2:24

The Son – John 10:17-18

The Holy Spirit – Romans 8:11

Note:

It is possible for Christians to do many Christian things but not in the power of the Holy Spirit. In that case, they are Christians who are not truly living the Christian life. The Kenosis passage of Philippians 2:5-11 describes the fact that Jesus, in the incarnation, set aside the independent use of His divine rights and privileges, even though He never ceased to be fully God, and made Himself submissive to the Father and dependent upon the Holy Spirit for His miraculous works and service to mankind.

This was, in part, to show us what it means to live the Spirit-filled life of dependence and divine enablement through sustaining or strengthening grace. The filling of the Holy Spirit and learning to walk by the Spirit are essential to the Christian life.

Topic 10 The Church

Note:

This would be an excellent opportunity to talk with your disciple about church membership, church involvement beyond the Sunday morning worship service, and how they are serving or contributing to the health and progress of the church. You could present them with a copy of the church constitution, if they do not already have one.

Note:

This lesson brings you to the end of this first book. It is now necessary to determine your next steps together in terms of taking some time off for a season or jumping into the next 10-lesson volume of the material which mainly deals with developing the Fruit of the Spirit in the life of the growing disciple.