

Obedience Based Discipleship

Field Testing Guide
v1.0

Draft

Obedience Based Discipleship
Version 2.0

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Obedience Based Discipleship

Field Testing Guide

Project Manager

David Watson

Development Team

Aychiluhm Beyene, Harry Brown, Bob Craft,
Younoussa Djao, Denise Hadley, Dave Hunt, Joe Hernandez,
Victor John, John King, Stan Parks, Jerry Trousdale,
Pat Robertson, Paul Watson,

Organizations

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Using This Guide

This book is a resource point for you as you prepare to lead a Discovery Bible Study. After you find the Man of Peace you guide them and their family through Discovering God Bible Studies. These studies introduce people to God and guide them to falling in love with Him. We designed this book to help you with the process.

The most important parts of this book are the Scripture list and the Guide to Discovery Bible Study. The Scripture list is a collection of narratives from the Bible designed to help people learn about God through studying Creation, the Fall, and Redemption. The Guide to Discovery Bible Studies outlines a process that establishes patterns of healthy discipleship, even as you work with people who do not know anything about Christ.

Everything else in this resource is for you. Use this resource as you prepare to guide not-yet-believers fall in love with Christ. If you don't need anything but the Scripture list and the Guide to Discovery Bible Study, that is great. Use what helps you the most.

Oh, by the way, please do not hand this book out to non-Christians. It won't work - we promise. When you lead these studies, all you need is a Bible and maybe a pencil and paper. Anything else establishes a bad precedent and a poor foundation for discovery with not-yet-Christians. If you can't resist the urge to use this book as a workbook, delete the file now and throw away any paper copies. We are that serious.

Discovery Bible Study

In the last 15 years, over 40,000 churches sprang up in an area in North India known as the ‘graveyard of missions and missionaries.’ Some of these churches are tenth generation church plants and studies show that the tenth generation is as mature and Biblically sound as the first. While persecution in this area is high, so is the faith of the church. They walk and talk with God. They see miracles everyday. They share their faith. They plant more churches. They pray for the sick. They take care of the widows and orphans. Although many are illiterate, they study the Bible inductively. They believe we have a choice – we read or listen to God’s Word, believe, and obey Him or we don’t. There is no middle ground.

People ask, “Why don’t we see church planting movements in the United States?” It is because we read God’s Word, but are not obedient. We amass knowledge about God, but we don’t do anything with our knowledge. We say we read God’s Word inductively but we usually stop before we get to the hard part: obedience. Until we read God’s Word and obey it, we will not see church planting movements in the United States.

Read, obey, and share – that is the discovery process in a nutshell. We read God’s word out loud (if we are in a group) or write it word for word (if we are studying on our own.) Next, we put God’s Words into our own words – just to make sure we really understand what His Word says and to make sure we can share it in informal situations. Finally, we commit to two things: to change our life to obey God’s Word and share what God taught us with at least one other person. Obedience and sharing must happen within the next 24 to 48 hours. If too much time passes between reading God’s Word and obeying it, people disobey God and establish a habit of negligent disobedience in their lives.

According to Scripture, if we read God’s Word and disobey it we either don’t love God (John 14:15-21) or we are a fool (James 1:22-25, Proverbs 10:8, 14:9, 14:16). If we don’t share God’s Word, we don’t love others. (John 14, Matthew 22, 1 John 3:13) If we know what to do, but choose not to do it, we are disobedient. (James 4:17) But we often follow a religious system that does not require obedience (which makes the religion disobedient.) We judge spiritual maturity by what someone knows rather than if they obey what they know. If we judge spiritual maturity by obedience to God’s Word, there are new Christians in North India who are more spiritually mature than many people who chose to follow Christ years ago. If we want to grow spiritually, we need to adopt a system that encourages behaviors that lead to spiritual growth. Discovery Bible Study is one process that encourages those behaviors.

Let’s take a look at how Discovery Bible Study works for personal study and group study as well as oral and literate cultures.

Personal Discovery Bible Study

Turn a piece of paper on its side, or landscape. Then divide the paper into three columns. Label the first ‘Scripture.’ Label the second ‘My Words’ and the third ‘I Will.’

Scripture

The length of the passage you chose affects how much time the study takes. Longer

passages take longer to study. This isn't a bad thing, but you need to keep it in mind. Generally, try to keep your passages between 10 and 15 verses.

In the 'Scripture' column, write the passage: word-for-word. This takes time but you control how much time by choosing smaller chunks of Scripture. Break larger passages into several sections, spread out over several days. What is most important, however, is this – when you copy a passage word-for-word you actually read it through several (about five to seven) times. It is a form a forced meditation for those of us who can't sit and think about a passage without losing focus. This process also keeps us from skimming familiar passages. When you write it out you have to think about every word.

My Own Words

When you finish copying the passage, use the second column to write the passage in your own words. Write it out like you're telling a friend about it over a cup of coffee. Don't move on until you can write the passage in your own words. You see, you don't really understand it if you can tell it to someone else in your own words. And you can't obey Scripture unless you understand it. It's that simple. Sometimes, you might have to stop on a passage for a couple of days and talk it out with the Holy Spirit before you can finish putting it into your own words. When you start this process, you will probably find there are several familiar passages that you can't write in your own words. Sometimes we 'know' more than we truly understand.

I Will

In the third column we transition from knowing God's Word to obeying God's Word. Look at each part of the passage. Ask God to reveal things you need to add to your life, take away from your life, or change in your life to obey this passage. Be specific. The passage may say that God created the Earth, but you have to decide what that means in your life. How does your life change because you believe God created the Earth? What do you need to do differently? What can you do in the next 24 hours to obey this passage? Every time we open God's Word, He invites us into relationship. We call His invitation 'grace,' because we can't do anything to deserve it. Obedience is how we accept His invitation. God lives with those who obey His Word. (John 14:23-24) When we study God's Word we have a choice: we choose to obey Him or we choose to disobey Him. It is really that simple. This third column is your response to God's invitation.

Share

When you finish this study, you have two responsibilities. First, you need to meet with other followers of Christ and discuss what you learned. Tell them your 'I Will' statements. They can hold you accountable and figure out ways to help you obey God's Word. Second, look for opportunities to share what God said. Work the phrase, "God taught me something today." or something similar, into conversations and wait for a response. This creates discussion opportunities. If people care, they ask for more information. If it isn't the right time for them, they will ignore you. Don't continue to share. Please share your faith with those who are ready and interested, not those who are not ready.

Summary

To summarize the process:

1. Write the passage word-for-word in column 1.
2. Write the passage in your own words in column 2.
3. List the actions you must take to obey this passage in column 3.
4. Share what you learned with other believers for accountability.
5. Create discussion opportunities with not-yet-believers. Share with people who are interested.

Group Discovery Bible Study

Prayer

When you meet with groups for Discovery Bible Study, go around the room and have everyone share one thing they are thankful for and one thing that is stressing them out. Eventually, point out to the group that prayer in its simplest form is telling God the things we are thankful for and talking with Him about what stresses them out. Transition this interaction from a group share time to an open, interactive prayer time. This form of prayers is very interactive and gets the quietest people involved in group prayer.

The Holy Spirit

Right after you pray, ask the group to share what God said to them in their personal time with Him since your last meeting. Asking this question at the beginning of every meeting encourages group members to have a personal time with God. It also reiterates every member's ability to hear God's voice. Giving them an opportunity to share allows room for the Holy Spirit to take the group study in a completely different direction than you planned. Be sensitive to the group and make sure they have this time.

Scripture

After everyone has a chance to share, have someone read Scripture out loud while everyone follows along in their Bible. When they are done, have someone else read the same passage out loud again. This time have everyone listen to the reading. When they are done, ask for a volunteer to retell the passage in their own words. When they finish, ask the group to fill in any points they feel were left out.

Reading, listening, and retelling Scripture is more important than you might think. This pattern allows different learning styles to engage Scripture. Everyone has time to think about the passage and ask the Holy Spirit to speak through God's Word. Retelling the passage allows them to think through sharing this passage with someone outside the group. Allowing the group to add to the retelling encourages everyone to think about the main points in the passage. Even though going through the passage multiple times seems repetitive and time consuming, the process helps develop reproducing disciples.

Discovery Study

After your group retells the Scripture, you can study the passage. Your discussion

must be question driven. Questions facilitate the discovery process. Questions allow your group to wrestle with Scripture and grow spiritually. Below are some sample questions to encourage interaction with Scripture:

- Did anything in this passage capture your attention?
- What did you like about this passage?
- Did anything bother you? Why?
- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does this passage tell us about Man?
- What does this passage tell us about living to please God?

Keep discussion focused on Scripture. If you or someone else in your group is well-read, it will be hard to avoid introducing outside materials into the study. You, as the facilitator, need to work hard to limit the discussion of extra-Biblical or other Biblical materials. These materials are not bad, but they don't facilitate interaction with Scripture. In most cases extra-Biblical materials underscore the intelligence of the one introducing the materials rather than keeping Scripture at center stage. Sometimes this is not the case, but those moments are rare. Do your best to keep discussion focused on the Scripture that is the focus of the study.

Commitment

Knowledge of God's Word must translate into obedience or it is wasted. This next step begins with a statement and a question: "Since we believe God's Word is true, what must we change in our lives to obey God?" Everyone in the group must answer this question before they leave. If they already obey this Scripture, have them share how they obey it. Ask them if there is anything else they need to do to increase their obedience to God's Word in this area of their life.

Keep this part of your time focused on specifics. For example, realizing that there is only one God is awesome, but that realization needs to become action. In this case you might encourage them with a follow up question: "Now that you believe there is one God, what do you need to change in your life? What will you do differently?" Encourage your group to identify specific things to do to obey the passage.

After everyone shares how they are going to obey Scripture, have them identify someone who needs to hear what God said to the group. Encourage them to share what they learned with that person.

Before you wrap up, ask the group to identify people they know who are in need. Ask the group to identify ways to meet those needs in the next week.

Finally, close in prayer.

Summary

To summarize group Discovery Bible Study:

1. Share one thing you are thankful for and one thing that is stressing you out in a group prayer process.
2. Ask the group to share what God told them through His Word since the last meeting. Ask them to share how they were obedient to the previous week's Scripture.
3. Read Scripture out loud while people follow along in their Bibles.

4. Have someone else read the same passage out loud while the group listens.
5. Have someone in the group retell the passage in their own words. Allow the group to add to the retelling, if necessary.
6. Use discovery questions to encourage the group to engage the passage.
7. Challenge the group to obey God's Word. Have each person share what they are going to do to obey the passage over the next week.
8. Have the group identify people they will share the passage with during the next week.
9. Have the group identify people in need and commit to meeting those needs.
10. Close in prayer.

Discovery Bible Study in Oral Cultures

In oral cultures the discovery process is similar to the group process outlined above. Since they can't read, you need to use an audio Bible like those provided by Faith Comes by Hearing (www.fcbh.org) or you need to have someone who can read actually read the passage through for the group. Allowing the group to retell the passage is even more important in oral settings because repetition helps them remember the passage.

Why do all these lessons say the same thing?

Great question! We are so glad you asked!

The way we teach lessons is almost as important as the lesson itself. We can choose to use teaching techniques which build a student's dependence on a teacher. Or, we can use techniques which prepare a student to stand on their own two feet from day one.

The repetition you observed in these lessons is intentional. We want someone to - after only a few lessons - see this process is easy. We want them to know they can repeat the process when they study God's Word individually and when they eventually facilitate a group.

A little repetition leads to rapid multiplication.

Thanks for asking!

Oral and Print Communicators

Notes for Oral Communication

Read each passage out loud. If possible, listen to each passage from an audio Bible, like the one provided by Faith Comes By Hearing . After the group listens, ask someone to retell the passage in their own words. Allow the group to interact with the re-told story, adding points that might have been left out or stressing things they see as particularly important. You may have to read/listen to the passage several times before the group is able to comfortably re-tell the passage in their own words.

Notes for Print Communication

You can use the Oral Communicator portion of this lesson with Print Communicators. The following is another way to study the passage, if you think it is appropriate.

Ask the group to turn a sheet of paper on its side. Divide the sheet into three columns. In the first column have the group write the passage, word-for-word. They can use additional paper if necessary. After they finish writing the passage in the first column, have them rewrite the passage in the second column using their own words. Finally, ask them to write what they will do to obey what God says in this passage in the third column.

Scripture

My Words

I Will

Scripture

My Words

I Will

Group Discovery Bible Study Reference Sheet

With people who don't know Christ

1. Ask everyone in the room to share something they are thankful for.
2. Ask everyone in the room to share something that is bothering them or causing them stress.
3. Read the Scripture passage for the day. If you have access to an audio Bible, you may choose to listen to the passage.
4. Ask someone in the room to repeat the story. When they are done, ask the group if the person left anything important out of the story.
5. Ask: "What does this story tell us about God? What does this story tell us about man? What does this story tell us about God's plan. Give them time to answer. Resist the urge to tell them what the story means. If they aren't getting it, read additional passages of Scripture or ask more questions.
6. Ask: "If this story is true, how does that change how we act?"
7. Ask: "What questions do you have about this story?"
8. Ask "Do you know anyone who needs to hear this story?" Encourage them to share the story with anyone they name.
9. Ask: "Is there anyone you know who needs help? What can we do to help them?" Have the group decide what needs to be done and commit to doing it before the next meeting.

With people who follow Christ

1. Share one thing you are thankful for and one thing that is stressing you out in a group prayer process.
2. Ask the group to share what God told them through His Word since the last meeting. Ask them to share how they were obedient to the previous week's Scripture.
3. Read Scripture out loud while people follow along in their Bibles.
4. Have someone else read the same passage out loud while the group listens.
5. Have someone in the group retell the passage in their own words. Allow the group to add to the retelling, if necessary.
6. Use discovery questions to encourage the group to engage the passage.
7. Challenge the group to obey God's Word. Have each person share what they are going to do to obey the passage over the next week.
8. Have the group identify people they will share the passage with during the next week.
9. Have the group identify people in need and commit to meeting those needs

Luke 4:1-13

You are part of developing this curriculum! Please take the time to write a few notes as you reflect on the following:

How did the group respond to the passage?
Did their response surprise you? If so, what surprised you?

Did the questions guide them to discovering more about God?

How did they say their lives would change if they believed God's Word to be true?

Is there anything you think the curriculum development team needs to know about this lesson?

Review

Who did you share last week's passage with?
How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Luke 4:1-13**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples use Scripture to overcome temptation.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

Help them move from a general statement such as 'I will love God.' to a specific statement, 'I will love God by ...'

At the end – ask them to write down / memorize their obedience statement. If they are willing, have them share it with the group. Then ask them to pray with each other for God to accomplish His plans through them in this area of obedience.

How do I need to change how I relate with God?
How do I need to change how I relate to others?
What am I going to have to struggle with to obey this passage?
How can my fellow Christ-followers help me obey this passage?
What other questions do you have about this passage?

Share

Do you know anyone you can share this story with?
Do you know anyone who needs help? What can this group do to help them?

Please email your notes on this lesson to
pwatson@cityteam.org

Review

Who did you share last week's passage with?
How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Luke 5:1-11**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples leave everything to follow Jesus.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

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Did the questions guide them to discovering more about God?

How did they say their lives would change if they believed God's Word to be true?

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John 4:28-30

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Review

Who did you share last week's passage with?
How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passages: **John 4:28-30**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples introduce others to Jesus.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will" ... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

Help them move from a general statement such as 'I will love God.' to a specific statement, 'I will love God by ...'

At the end – ask them to write down / memorize their obedience statement. If they are willing, have them share it with the group. Then ask them to pray with each other for God to accomplish His plans through them in this area of obedience.

How do I need to change how I relate with God?
How do I need to change how I relate to others?
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Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Acts 17:16-34**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples are wise and sincere when they relate with unbelievers.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

Help them move from a general statement such as 'I will love God.' to a specific statement, 'I will love God by ...'

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How did the group respond to the passage?
Did their response surprise you? If so, what surprised you?

Did the questions guide them to discovering more about God?

How did they say their lives would change if they believed God's Word to be true?

Is there anything you think the curriculum development team needs to know about this lesson?

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Acts 4:23-31

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Review

Who did you share last week's passage with?
How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: Acts 4:23-31

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Believers will be persecuted just and Jesus was persecuted.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

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How do I need to change how I relate to others?
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Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Acts 21:1-14**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples shouldn't be afraid to die as Jesus did.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

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Did the questions guide them to discovering more about God?

How did they say their lives would change if they believed God's Word to be true?

Is there anything you think the curriculum development team needs to know about this lesson?

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Acts 18:1-11

You are part of developing this curriculum! Please take the time to write a few notes as you reflect on the following:

How did the group respond to the passage?
Did their response surprise you? If so, what surprised you?

Did the questions guide them to discovering more about God?

How did they say their lives would change if they believed God's Word to be true?

Is there anything you think the curriculum development team needs to know about this lesson?

Review

Who did you share last week's passage with?
How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Acts 18:1-11**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **God helps disciples endure persecution.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

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How do I need to change how I relate to others?
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How can my fellow Christ-followers help me obey this passage?
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Share

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Review

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How have you experienced God since the last time that we met?

Discover

What are you thankful for this week?
What problems do you have this week?
Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Luke 15:11-32**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples reconcile broken relationships.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

Obey

Ask questions to help individuals and groups say how they will obey. Help them make specific "I will"... or "we will" statements (or their cultural equivalent). Encourage them to help each other actually obey.

Help them move from a general statement such as 'I will love God.' to a specific statement, 'I will love God by ...'

At the end – ask them to write down / memorize their obedience statement. If they are willing, have them share it with the group. Then ask them to pray with each other for God to accomplish His plans through them in this area of obedience.

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How do I need to change how I relate to others?
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How can my fellow Christ-followers help me obey this passage?
What other questions do you have about this passage?

Share

Do you know anyone you can share this story with?
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Mark 7:14-23

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Discover

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Discovery Passage: **Mark 7:14-23**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Evil begins in the heart and eventually leads to action.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

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Share

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Matthew 19:1-12

Review

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Discover

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Is there any way this group can help you?

Discovery Passage: **Matthew 19:1-12**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Marriage is a lifetime commitment..**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

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Acts 5:1-11

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Review

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Discover

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Discovery Passage: **Matthew 5:33-37**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples keep their word.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
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Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

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Discovery Passage: **Genesis 1:1-25**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples do not retaliate when people hurt them.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

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Matthew 5:43-48

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Review

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Discover

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Discovery Passage: **Matthew 5:43-48**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples love their enemies.**

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Discovery Passage: **Luke 18:9-14**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples humble themselves before God.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

Now that the group members have discovered truths from God's Word, help discover what they need to do to obey these passages.

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Luke 15:11-24

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Discovery Passage: **Luke 15:11-24**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples look to God as their Father.**

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What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
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Discovery Passage: **Matthew 26:39-42**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples must surrender their will to God's will.**

What happens in this passage?
What does this passage say about our relationship with God?
What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

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Discovery Passage: **Matthew 18:21-35**

Do NOT teach these following truths - ask questions until they discover the basic idea that: **Disciples forgive others as the Lord forgives them.**

What happens in this passage?
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What does this passage say about our relationship with each other?

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