



MORE LIFE

*...I am come that they
might have life, and
that they might have it
more abundantly.*

- John 10:10

LEADER LESSON PLAN

RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP



MORE LIFE works in conjunction with
GPS to reach Tennesseans for Christ.



Tennessee Baptist churches giving through the Cooperative Program make this ministry possible.

More Life Discipleship: The Bible and Prayer
Leader Lesson Plan Overview
(To be used by a Teacher during the Second Cycle of More Life)

The Leader Lesson Plan is written primarily to be used in a class or small group setting. The teaching plans are focused, relational and interactive.

More Life Discipleship is designed to perfectly compliment the church's emphasis on More Life. While the materials could be used independently, each cycle of More Life Discipleship is designed to be used in conjunction with the MORE Life Evangelism Strategy. Each session is one hour long and will be conducted at the same time as the evangelism class. These discipleship lessons are designed to lay a scriptural foundation for discipleship relations.

A disciple needs to know how to study the Word of God. The leader lesson plan will encourage you to reinforce the LIFE Outline, as a simple method for Bible Study. That simple method:

LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)
INVENTORY (How does this apply to my life?)
FORSAKE (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)
EXPLORE (What life actions should I take?)

Relational Discipleship is the goal of More Life. Facilitators must take time to build relationships with members. The old saying is true: *people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.*

You are the lesson. You must complete your assignments and be prepared to share what God is teaching you. Paul illustrates this point in Philippians 4:9, "Do what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you." Note the words "in me."

Relational Discipleship has to balance the material with the issues that surface in group member's lives. Allow God to use the text to massage with people's lives. As I have meditated on the verse above, God has clearly laid out a progression for learning. The ultimate goal is to DO. Paul says what you have learned, received, heard, and seen in me, DO.

Living God's Word more abundantly should be the underlying theme. The purpose of the group is not simply to impart knowledge but to help participants put into practice the Christian Life.

May God bless you as lead these studies in Bible Study and prayer during this cycle of More Life Discipleship.

For more information or materials, please go to www.tnbaptist.org/morelife
or call the Evangelism Department of the TBC (800) 558-2090.

More Life Discipleship: The Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan Review of More Life Session One

Welcome Congratulations for completing a previous semester of More Life evangelism training and for making a commitment to further growth as a Great Commission Christian through More Life Discipleship.

Review In the More Life Evangelism Training you learned the importance of praying for the Lost and what it means to be on mission with Christ. You also learned how to share your story and how to use the More Life Transfer Guide. You gained valuable experience in making the most of evangelistic opportunities, as well as in sharing More Life in everyday situations. You learned and practiced additional skills in using the More Life Transfer Guide.

Look at the More Life Guide

"a church that cares"

This space is provided to include your church's location and contact information. (Use an 8660 or 5660 Avery label for a more professional look.)

"1-888-Jesus-2013"

This number directs the caller to the Evangelism Response Center where they will speak with a trained evangelism counselor that is available 24/7. This telephone number is the same number that the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has used for years.

"More Life Response"

This response card allows you to record the person's decision and gather their contact information. Even if the person you are witnessing to does not make a decision, we encourage you to get the person's contact information so that your church can pray for them and continue the follow-up.

DIRECTIVE: You may want to **role play** and give a demonstration of how to use the More Life Transfer Guide to present the Gospel. Also, divide the class into pairs and have them begin by asking the introductory question.

The following is a suggested approach in using the Transfer Guide and walking a person through it.

In speaking with someone you wish to witness to, ask: *"What do you understand it takes for a person to have more life here and to go to Heaven when they die?"* Listen, and then proceed. *"May I share with you how you may experience life to the fullest?"* Proceed to use the More Life Transfer Guide.

Read the section “**SIN.**” Say, “Our sin causes a separation from God, but Jesus paid for the guilt of our sin.”

Read “**THE GIFT.**” Ask: “What hope does man have if he doesn’t receive God’s gift of More Life?” Listen for response.

Read “**TURN.**” Say, “This gift isn’t ours automatically. We must be willing to turn from our sin.” Say: “Look at the greatness of God’s love.”

Read “**THE WAY.**” Ask: “Does this make sense to you?” Listen.

Ask: “Is there any reason why you couldn’t receive God’s gift of eternal life?” Listen. Read the prayer. Ask: “Does this prayer express how you want to respond to God?”

If they are ready, say, “I would like to pray,” and immediately bow your head and proceed in thanking God that they want Jesus in their life. Then encourage them to pray or lead them in offering the written prayer to God.

Not everyone will be ready to receive Christ. Help the class to know what to do if the person does not receive Christ.

If the person is not ready to invite Jesus into their life, encourage them by letting them know you do not have to be present when they give their life to Jesus. When they sense Him speaking to them and they understand they need Him, they can pray anywhere and receive Christ as their Savior and Lord. You may say, “I would like to pray,” and immediately bow your head and thank God that they were gracious to allow you to share Christ with them and that they will soon open their heart to Him and enjoy the More Life that He has planned for them.

Remember it is a glorious victory just to share the gospel, whether anyone does or does not pray to receive Christ.

If the person does pray to receive Christ, follow up with the emphasis on Baptism, Connecting with a Church, and getting involved with a Bible Study Group.

Say: The following is important to help you to obey Christ and grow in your faith. Then, read the part of the Transfer Guide that speaks of Baptism, Belonging to a Church and Groups. You will want to take it **one section at a time**.

After the baptism section, you may ask: “Is there a local church that you are familiar with where you might want to be baptized?” Listen... then explain the importance of being a part of a local church fellowship. Emphasize the importance of a church that faithfully teaches the truths of the Bible. You will want to invite the individual to attend church with you if you live in the same local area. Or, you may make suggestions of a faithful Bible teaching church.

Again, emphasize that it is an act of love to share with a person how they can be saved and have eternal life. We are not trying to manipulate the person, but rather offering them the greatest gift in the world...the Savior, Jesus Christ! Why should that be so difficult?

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Leader Lesson Plan
The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief
Session Two

Before the Session:

1. Obtain a list of who will be attending the More Life Discipleship Classes.
2. Give or send the person(s) you will be leading a copy of Lesson 2: The Bible: A Guide to Behavior and Belief.
3. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then set a convenient time to meet each week for the next eight weeks.
4. Read the Leader Lesson Plan Overview and complete lesson two.

During the Session:

1. **State:** I don't know about you, but there are days when it sure would be nice to get an e-mail, text, or Facebook message from God. Have you ever felt like that? **Ask:** What are some of the issues in your life about which you would love to receive a clear message from God? **State:** "Do we really need to get a text or Facebook message from God?" After a few responses, **state:** "the truth of this lesson is that what we really need to do is to stop for a moment, sit down, and read the Bible and read about Jesus. Jesus is God's personal communication to you and to me about who He is and what He is like."
2. Read Philippians 1:2-6 and pray. If possible, personalize your prayer with the names of the participants, by praying a prayer such as "God, thank you for your word and for the promise that the work that you have started in me and in _____ you promise to bring to completion. During the next weeks, use More Life to help us grow spiritually and to see people come to know you as their Savior and Lord."
3. Overview the upcoming lessons. Emphasize that these lessons will challenge the participants to greater understanding of the Bible and prayer. Each lesson is built around the L.I.F.E. outline. Explain how this outline will give them a simple study approach in studying God's word for life.
4. Looking at your completed lesson, share with your neighbor one or two truths that God taught you this week? Read Hebrews 1:1-2 and **Ask:** Who is the one source for revelation? [God] **Ask:** What does this verse reveal about Jesus? [He is the creator, sustainer, and revelation of God] Jesus says in John 8:31-32 that we can know the truth and the truth will set you free. **Ask** for students to share how they answered the question in *Explore*: If God's Word is written so that we can know the truth and the truth will set us free...What are some steps you can take to insure that your life is influenced by God's Word?
5. Examine the basic beliefs about the Bible by having volunteers read each statement about "The Scriptures" in their lesson guide. For example, the first sentence states: The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. After each statement is read, have the class recite, *This is God's Word for God's People. Read, Listen, and Live.* As a statement is read, share and discuss the meaning of important words and concepts as you feel are needed.
6. Remind them that they will be going out to share the gospel in teams of three and are encouraged to practice Lifestyle Evangelism daily. Give each of them a copy of the More Life Transfer Guide. **State:** Pair up with a partner and take turns reviewing.
7. End with asking each member to compose and share a text message or e-mail that they would send to God praising Him for his revelation of himself through Christ and His Word.

Leader Lesson Plan
The Purpose of the Bible
Session Three

Before the Session:

1. Send to each participant an e-mail reminding them to complete this week's lesson.
2. Complete lesson Three.
3. A ruler or a tape measure
4. A candy bar or some item for a prize in step 1

During the Session:

1. Draw several long, straight lines (horizontal or vertical) on the board or a large sheet of paper. Challenge some volunteers to make marks every 12 inches on the lines. Use a ruler or tape measure to judge who was the closest to marking 12 inches on the lines and reward the winner. **Ask:** How does a person decide what is an inch or a foot or other measurements? Explain that these were the ancient standards from which our system of measurement derived. Today we will discover that the Bible is our standard for living.
2. **Say:** For every measurement, there is a final, perfect standard. The Bible is our perfect standard. Form two teams to listen and report after a volunteer reads aloud Psalm 19:7-11. Instruct one team to listen for the words that describe the law of the Lord. Instruct the second team to listen for the law's effects on the believer. As teams share their reports, list the words and the effects of the law on the board. Note the phrase in verse 11—"in keeping them there is great reward"—and **ask:** How is a person rewarded by obeying God's Word?
3. Introduce the context of 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Identify Timothy and explain that Paul was writing as a mentor giving advice to a younger friend. Call on a volunteer to read aloud 2 Timothy 3:14-15, then lead a discussion on the differences between learning about something and being convinced that what one has learned is an absolute truth. Call on volunteers to share persons in their lives who have made a spiritual impact in their lives or have led them to a deep appreciation for the Bible.
4. Call for a volunteer to read aloud 2 Timothy 3:16-17. **Say:** "This verse sets the Scripture as the standard for Christian growth." Discuss the nature of Scripture as God-breathed and its purpose for maturing the believer. Guide students to identify in verses 16-17 the ways that Scripture can be applied for spiritual growth (teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness). Write teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness on the board. Guide students to identify how applying the Bible to their lives can accomplish these four actions in their lives. **Ask:** What is the desired result of God's Word teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training us for righteousness? Point out that verse 17 answers the question—God wants us to be thoroughly equipped for service.
5. Call attention to the following assignment from this week's lesson: Use the L.I.F.E. outline to explore 2 Peter 1:16-21. Some discredit the Bible because humans wrote it. How do these verses discredit the argument that the Bible is a human book and therefore not to be trusted? **Ask:** What did you discover to be some reasons that the Bible can be trusted?
6. Point out the ruler used in step 1 and a Bible. Emphasize that both are standards of measurement. Lead students to pray that they will apply God's standards in the Bible as their rule for life.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Leader Lesson Plan
The Bible: God's Owner's Manual
Session Four

Before the Session:

1. Send to each participant an e-mail reminding them to complete this week's lesson.
2. Complete lesson four.
3. Paper and a Pen for each individual.

During the Session:

1. Give each learner a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask learners to list what they believe to be the top five things that keep people from spending time in God's Word. Ask volunteers to share responses. Record responses on the board. Discuss the difference between excuses and actual hindrances. For example, one hindrance to spending time in God's Word is a failure to maintain proper priorities. Also, apathy might be a hindrance. But how many believers would admit these to be the case? Emphasize that this lesson will challenge us to adopt a lifestyle of spending time alone with God in Bible Study and prayer.
2. Our lesson emphasized six ways that a believer can spend time in God's Word. What were they? [Hear, Read, Study, Memorize, Meditate, and Apply] In the Inventory, you were instructed to evaluate where you are in each of these six areas. **Ask:** What did you discover were your strengths and weaknesses?
3. Instruct learners to keep their eyes closed as you read Psalm 119:11-12. Encourage them to be open to the Holy Spirit's leading as they listen for any word or phrase that stands out to them. When finished reading, allow 1 or 2 minutes before you ask learners to open their eyes. (Note: Remember to listen to the Spirit yourself and be prepared to share your response.) Following the quiet time, encourage volunteers to share the word or phrase God brought to them and why it was significant. **Discuss:** How did you feel during the quiet time? Uncomfortable? Relaxed? Impatient? Was it a new experience? Encourage learners to explain their answers. Admit that for many of us simply being quiet in the Lord's presence for a few minutes with no TV, radio, or other distractions may be a new experience, but it is a spiritual discipline worth developing.
4. Read verses 12-16. Invite learners to identify words that reveal the psalmist's response to God's Word. Note the words "teach me," "proclaim," and "rejoice." **Say:** The more time we spend with God focusing on His Word, the more we want to learn, the more we want to share what we learn, and the more joy we discover, the more we recognize that the Bible is God's Owner Manual for our lives.
5. Point out the word "meditate" in vs. 15. Stress that although many people equate meditation with emptying the mind. That is not the biblical model. Rather than *emptying* our minds, we are to *fill* them with the truth of God. To highlight the effect of filling one's mind with God's truth, ask four volunteers to read the following passages: Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:11, and Colossians 3:16-17, 2 Timothy 3:16.
6. Point out the value of memorizing Scripture. Encourage learners to set a personal goal for memorizing meaningful verses. Invite volunteers to share specific verses they have memorized that have been especially encouraging to them in their Christian walks.
7. Close in prayer, asking God to help each individual adopt a lifestyle of spending time alone with God in His Word and in prayer.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Leader Lesson Plan
Pray Consistently
Session Five

Before the Session:

1. Complete lesson five
2. Group Assignments and large sheets of paper or poster boards and markers for Step 2.
3. Paper and Pens for Step 5.

During the Session:

1. **Ask:** What were some of the prayers that you recited as children and that you taught to your children and grandchildren? [ex. God is Great, God is Good, Let us Thank Him for our food...] **Ask:** Are those prayers sufficient for you today?
2. Read Matthew 6:5-8. Jesus said, "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites? **Ask:** What are some truths about prayer we can learn from these verses? [Don't pray to be seen by people; pray privately and in earnest. Don't babble. Trust the Father. Pray with proper motives.] Divide the class into two groups and give each a tear sheet or large piece of poster board and the following assignments:
 - Group 1: Answer the question: What are some negative motives for prayer?
Some possible answers: [control God; show off; selfishness; look holy]
 - Group 2: Answer the question: What are some good motives for prayer?
Some possible answers: [hear from God; get directions; meet a need; God's glory to be revealed, so I may know him better].

After a few minutes, have both groups report. **State:** All of us have been guilty of praying to God for improper motives but our motives for prayer really do matter.

3. Our lesson focused on the model prayer of Jesus. Read Jesus teachings in Matthew 6:9-13 and discuss what to pray and how to pray it. List on the board six parts found in the Lord's Prayer [Praise, Purpose, Provision, Pardon, People, and Protection]. **Ask:** Each learner to take one line, read it, and tell about that part. As learners share, lead the class to recall some examples from their personal life or from the Bible that illustrate each part.
4. Call attention to the six parts that you have written on the board. Ask the learners to rank from 1-6 how often they do each. Re-emphasize the importance of each part of the Lord's Prayer.
5. Guide learners to write a prayer. Call for them to share one line only and keep the rest private. **Ask:** What have you learned new about prayer? Who have been your role models in prayer? What did they teach you? What practical actions would move you from seeing prayer as a ritual to seeing it as relationship with God?
6. Lead learners to recite the Model Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 aloud. **Ask:** How many of you used your "church" voice when you recited the Model Prayer? Remind learners to focus on seeking God, not impressing others, when they pray.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan

Praying Persistently

Session Six

Before the Session:

1. Complete lesson six.
2. A String or tape and two signs for Step 1.
3. Write the Oswald Chambers quote on a poster board or large sheet of paper or on the board.

During the Session:

1. Attach a string or tape across the floor from one side of the room to the other. Tape a paper with *Stick to it Un-til the End* at one end of the string. Tape *Give Up Easily* at the other end. Direct learners to stand along the continuum to demonstrate their usual responses to: home projects, exercise, dieting, budgets, work. After discussing reasons learners persist or give up in these areas, direct them to mentally stand on the continuum in a place that demonstrates their prayer life. **Ask:** What's the secret to persisting in prayer? Why does it matter?
2. Read Luke 18:1-5: **State:** Jesus tells this story to give us a contrast between the politics of earth and the promise of heaven. **Ask:** Describe the woman in the story. What problems did she face? What qualities did she possess that helped her to face these problems? Which of her characteristics was most instrumental in acquiring the justice she requested? How are we like this widow?
3. Point to the poster, paper, or to the board where you have written the Oswald Chambers quote in *My Utmost for His Highest* that was included in this week's student lesson. Ask them to read it aloud with you. In the Inventory session of the lesson, you were asked to record your thoughts to this quote and these questions, share with your neighbor how you answer these questions: *What are your thoughts on this quote? What are you persistently asking God to do in your life? Why do you think God delays His answer even though you feel certain you are praying for something that would honor Him?* After a few minutes, ask for some discussion.
4. Invite learners to consider ways that God might fulfill our expectations and answer our prayers as they listen to Luke 18:6-8. **Ask:** Describe the earthly judge. How was he like and/or unlike our heavenly judge? What deductions can we make about what God expects of those who come to Him with requests? How can we determine whether God has answered "yes" to our prayers? How can we determine whether He has answered "no" or "wait"? Point out that, unlike the earthly judge, God beckons us to "come boldly"—He is available any time we are willing to call on Him, and He is faithful to hear and answer. Also point out that, though it is very easy to recognize when God answers "yes" to our prayers, sometimes it is more difficult to determine when His answer is "no" or "wait." We should persist in making our requests until we can hear God's answer.
5. Talk briefly about a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. Explain that we don't see the whole picture of what the kingdom of God will look like, but we can see a piece. And whenever we pray, we begin to connect to the big picture. When we refuse to pray, we're simply taking our piece of the puzzle and saying, "I'm satisfied with the limited vision I have, and I don't need to see anymore." "What is your most urgent plea to God right now?" Encourage learners to exercise humility, determination, and expectation as they persist in bringing that plea before God. *Divide into smaller groups of three or four and ask one person from each group to pray for persistent prayer lives.*

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan

Praying that Pleases God

Session Seven

Before the Session:

1. Complete lesson seven.
2. A can of Coke for Step 1.
3. Write on the board the parts of Jabez's Prayer from 1 Chronicles 4:9-10.
4. Markers and tear sheets or paper for Step 4.

During the Session:

1. Hold up a can of Coke. **State:** some people approach God in prayer as they would a vending machine, thinking that if they use the right words, they can ask Him for anything and possibly get it. **Say:** Prayer is far from approaching God as a vending machine; rather prayer is a privilege. It is direct communion with the sovereign God—lifting our very soul to Him who embraces, hears, and answers the prayers of His people. The Bible contains models of the kinds of prayers that believers of all generations would do well to offer to God. Our lesson this week focused on one of those prayers by a man name Jabez.
2. Invite a volunteer to read aloud 1 Chronicles 4:9-10. Call attention to the four parts of Jabez's prayer. Point out the first part of the prayer: "Oh, that you would bless me." In our lesson, we are reminded that some people think that to personally ask for God's blessing would be selfish. **Ask:** What was the reason that Jabez's prayer was unselfish and pleased God? [Jabez desired to be blessed in ways that only God could provide as God saw fit.] Share with your neighbor: How you completed the following sentence: I can pray to experience God's blessing in a way that pleases Him by . . .
3. Point out the second part of the prayer, "Enlarge my territory." **Ask:** What was Jabez asking God? Remind learners that Jabez was not asking for increased material blessing. Rather he wanted to become more involved in God's work; thus, he desired more responsibility. Invite learners to brainstorm ways God's kingdom can be advanced. Write answers on the board. **Ask:** There are many possibilities for service, but how do we go about finding our place in advancing God's kingdom? The first step is prayer!
4. Point out the third part of the prayer, "Let your hand be with me." Jabez's desire was that God's power would be released in his life to accomplish God's will and bring Him glory. Break into four groups of three or four. Distribute markers and tear sheets and instruct each group to draw images representing how our society views God. (For example, some people view God as a benevolent grandfather or "the man upstairs.") Allow each group to share their drawings. **Ask:** Which of these views of God do you hold or have you held to in the past? Which of these images depart from the biblical view of God, and how so? **State:** Jabez recognized that he needed help from God to be successful.
5. Point out the fourth part of the prayer, "Keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." **Ask:** What are some things that we trust to provide protection? [winter coats, alarm systems, vaccinations, seat belts, military, sporting equipment, parachutes, antilock brakes] How often do we trust things instead of God? **State:** God cares about us deeply and hears our prayers for protection.
6. The last part of the prayer states, "And God granted his request." Call attention to the list of things in our lives that would hinder our prayers from *FORSAKE*. **State:** May we live and pray in a way that pleases God.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan Summary and Review Session Eight

Before the Session:

1. Decide if you need to make-up work from a previous session or review the seven previous weeks.
2. Make sure you have enough of the More Life Guides, the Student Edition More Life guides, and the Mas Vida Spanish edition of the More Life guide.
3. Make sure there is someone available to help class members download the More Life App on whatever devices the learners may have.

During the Session:

Welcome Everyone

Week One The Journey Continues

Ask: Share the More Life Guide with the person next to you. **Say:** Remember, emphasize that it is an act of love to share with a person how they can be saved and have eternal life. We are not trying to manipulate the person, but rather offering them the greatest gift in the world...the Savior, Jesus Christ! Why should that be so difficult?

Week Two The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief

Say: The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Week Three **Say:** The Purpose of the Bible

- Teaching – helping you learn correct doctrine
- Rebuking – convicting you of false beliefs
- Correcting – convicting you of ungodly behavior
- Training in Righteousness – helping you to live right

Week Four The Bible God's Owner Manual

Say: If you want to prosper and succeed, you must spend time in God's Word. So, how do we do it? There are six ways we can spend time in God's word. They are –

Hear it,
Read it,
Study it,
Memorize it,

Meditate on it, and
Apply it.

Week Five Pray Consistently

Say: Our prayers should include at least six parts:

PRAISE: BEGIN BY EXPRESSING LOVE TO GOD

PURPOSE: COMMIT TO GOD'S PURPOSE AND WILL FOR YOUR LIFE.

PROVISION: ASK GOD TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR NEEDS.

PARDON: ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.

PEOPLE: PRAY FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

PROTECTION: ASK FOR SPIRITUAL PROTECTION FROM GOD.

Week Six Praying Persistently

Say: Oswald Chambers wrote in *My Utmost for His Highest*: "Perseverance is more than endurance, It is endurance combined with the absolute assurance and certainty that what we are looking for is going to happen. Perseverance means more than just hanging on, which may be only exposing our fear of letting go and falling . . . Then there is a call to spiritual perseverance. A call not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately, knowing with certainty that God will never be defeated."

Week Seven Praying that Pleases God

Say: God has revealed in His Word the type of praying that pleases Him. Among the descendants of Judah listed in 1 Chronicles 4:1-23 is Jabez, remembered for his short prayer to God. The abrupt introduction of Jabez suggests that he was well-known at the time that 1 Chronicles was written. Nonetheless, little is known about him now.

His prayer was not a self-centered appeal for material gain. Rather, he desired to please God instead of causing God's people pain. The prayer of Jabez contains four specific requests. He asked God to bless him, to enlarge his territory, to be with him, and to keep him from harm. The verb bless describes something that only God can do. Human choice or effort cannot achieve it. The verb means "to bestow with the power for success." While a superficial reading of this prayer might suggest that this was a self-centered request for personal ability, the Hebrew word maintains the opposite. Jabez asked God for what he himself could not do. In essence, his prayer was to experience more of the presence and power of God in his life. Rather than a desire for personal gain, it was a longing for divine revelation in his life.

Jabez's second request was for God to enlarge his territory. The Hebrew word for territory is rendered "coasts" in the King James Version. The word may refer to either a geographical border or to a territory as a whole. In either case the sense is the same. Jabez asked God to give to him more land. The biblical perspective of land does not regard it solely as a form of wealth. Instead, possession of land included a divine responsibility for stewardship of that land. God gave Adam the Garden of Eden and then instructed him "to work it and take care of it" (Gen. 2:15). Thus, Jabez supplemented his request for a blessing with a petition for more personal responsibility.

Jabez's third request was that God's hand be with him. The terminology emphasized the power to accomplish a task. The human hand enables people to write, to make complex objects, to discern through touch, and to perform other innumerable tasks. It can be used as a weapon when made into a fist. Thus, the hand was an image for strength as the primary means of power. Jabez recognized that he needed help from God to be successful.

Finally, Jabez asked God to protect him from harm. The Hebrew word here means "evil," the exact opposite of "good." It is more comprehensive than wicked behavior. The word can also denote physical injury or a time of distress, and the latter is its meaning here. The words so that I will be free from pain indicate that if God protected Jabez from harm, he would neither experience nor cause pain. The pain referred to here could be either physical suffering or emotional distress.

The passage concludes with a simple, yet profound, statement—God granted his request. The entreaty that Jabez made pleased God and Jabez received what he had requested.

Share and Celebrate:

Ask: Class members to share opportunities to share the More Life Guide or the More Life App. Celebrate lives that have been transformed by the teaching of More Life and the relationship evangelism begun during this session.

BONUS MATERIAL

MORE Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer Discipler's Guide Overview

The Disciple's Guide is easily adapted to discipling individuals, triads, or small groups. The teaching plans are conversational, relational and interactive.

Billie Hanks, author of a *Call to Joy* and a *Call to Growth*, defines a *Discipler* as “a Christian who is growing consistently in his relationship with Jesus Christ and is showing a younger believer how to mature in his faith and share his witness naturally.”

More Life Discipleship is designed to perfectly compliment the church's emphasis on More Life. While the materials could be used independently, each cycle of More Life Discipleship is designed to be used in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Strategy. Each session is one hour long and will be conducted at the same time as the evangelism class. These discipleship lessons are designed to lay a scriptural foundation for discipleship relations.

A disciple needs to know how to study the Word of God. The discipler's guide will encourage you to reinforce the LIFE Outline, as a simple method for Bible Study. That simple method:

LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)
INVENTORY (How does this apply to my life?)
FORSAKE (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)
EXPLORE (What life actions should I take?)

If the Gallup organization is correct, only 19% of North American evangelical congregants responded positively to this question: *In the last six months someone in authority has spoken with me about the progress of my spiritual growth. There is someone in my church who encourages my spiritual development.* You are that person in authority.

As you lead, resist providing the answers but help your student to discover answers and truths for himself. Reinforce what God is teaching them from the lessons, their daily quiet times, their small group Bible Study, the messages heard, their opportunity to share what God is teaching them. Encourage them in their spiritual development. Some great questions to consider asking:

1. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit in your journey lately?
2. On a scale of 1-10, where are you now and what would it look like if you reached a 10?
3. What has God been speaking to you about the most lately?
4. What is one truth that God has taught you this week that you could share or teach to someone else? When will you have the opportunity to share this truth and with whom?
5. What characteristics or attributes of God really means a lot to you this week?
6. What do you feel would be your next, most crucial step of growing in Christ?
7. What is God doing in your Life and how can I fit in?
8. What is the desire of your heart and how can you begin to put it into action?

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Discipler's Guide to Lesson 1: The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief

Before the Session:

1. Obtain the names that you will be discipling during More Life Discipleship Classes.
2. Give or send the person(s) you will be leading a copy of Lesson 1: The Bible: A Guide to Behavior and Belief.
3. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then set a convenient time to meet each week for the next eight weeks.
4. Read the Disciplers Guide overview and complete lesson one.
5. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Spend some time getting to know your student(s). Prior to the meeting, prepare some basic information on you to share with your student(s). Give this information to your student and say that you look forward to getting to know him better during these next eight weeks. Spend some time getting to know each other. You could ask them to fill a Get Acquainted Worksheet, so that you can pray more specifically and follow up appropriately in the days ahead. Remember that building a Christ-centered friendship takes openness and genuine concern.
2. Share your personal story and ask them to share their testimony with you. Listen to clue about where your disciple(s) are spiritually. In More Life, you will have people on all spiritual levels, but the goal is to come alongside and to challenge them on their journey with Christ.
3. Overview the upcoming lessons. Emphasize that these lessons will challenge the participants to greater understanding of the Bible and prayer. Each lesson is built around the L.I.F.E. outline. Explain how this outline will give them a simple study approach to studying God's word for life.
4. Review this week's lesson on The Bible: A Guide for Behavior and Belief. To reinforce the L.I.F.E. outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and ask: What does God's Word say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.]
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Ask how did you answer the following: *If you were asked to share what you believe about the Bible what would you say? Does what you believe reflect what the Bible claims of itself?*
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE*. State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. Ask: What did God show you in this lesson?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. Did additional questions arise as they completed the L.I.F.E. outline on John 16:13-15. Wrap up with discussing how you both completed answers to: *What are some steps you can take to insure that your life is influenced by God's Word?*
5. Take turns reviewing the More Life Transfer Guide.
6. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship Cycle 2

Discipler's Guide to Lesson 2: The Purpose of the Bible

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 2.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson two.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Seek to communicate your genuine interest in your student's life by asking about his activities during the past week, lessons learned, prayers answered, and the gospel shared. Reciprocate with what God is teaching you.
2. Review this week's lesson on The Purpose of the Bible. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and ask: What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.]
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Ask: how did you answer the following: *List the transforming uses of God's Word as they are described in these verses. Which of these uses do you need most in your life right now?*
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. Ask: What did God show you in this lesson? Ask: how did you answer the following? *Can other believers sense that conviction through my knowledge of and dependence on that Word?* Share from your own personal story some steps and actions that you take so that your neighbors, friends, co-workers, etc. can know that you believe and depend on the Word. Remind them that it is easy to talk the talk but God wants us to walk the walk, to be an example for others.
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. In your study of 2 Peter 1:16-21, What did you discover? Please answer this question honestly: How would complete the following sentence: *I believe the Bible is [not, sometimes, mostly, absolutely] true and authoritative.** This is an essential element in your Christian walk and during our time together, whatever time it takes to help you come to a proper understanding of God's Word.
3. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

*This statement was written by Chris Adsit, author of *Personal Disciple-Making*, and is from the accompanying resource *Personal Disciple-making Toolkit*. If you have a desire to become a disciple maker, this would be a great resource for you.

Discipler's Guide to Lesson 3: The Bible: God's Owner's Manual

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 3.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More LIFE Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson three.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Today's lesson describes the Bible as God's Owners Manual. The lesson asked us to recall some humorous personal experience in which we failed to follow the owner's manual and had disastrous results. Spend some time sharing some of these experiences. State: I am certainly glad God gave us the Bible. Remember that the primary purpose of your time together is sincerely meeting his individual spiritual needs, not just "covering" the assigned material, so before diving into the lesson, see if there are any issues or situations that you can pray with them about and help him find answers to these questions from the Bible.
2. Review this week's lesson on The Bible: God's Owner's Manual. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and ask: What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.] Be sure to emphasize the six ways to spend time in God's Word. Some additional questions that you might use:
 - i. What words did the psalmist use in the passage to designate God's revealed truth? What do they mean to you?
 - ii. What was the psalmist's attitude toward meditating on God's Word? Why did he feel as he did?
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? **Ask:** Where did you rate yourself in each of the six areas? What needs to happen in your life for you to develop the same kind of attitude and commitment the psalmist had toward focusing on God's Word?
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask:** What did God show you in this lesson? What are some ways we could help one another memorize Scripture?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. Pick one or two of the verses that describe the Bible as Spiritual Food and read these verses and actions that we need to place in our lives in order to daily get the proper amount of spiritual nutrition.
3. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Disciplers Guide to Lesson 4: Read the Bible

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 4.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More LIFE Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson four.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Ask your students to share his best and worst experience of the past week in completing the six ways of spending time in God's Word. Briefly share of your own spiritual victories or struggles. Be sensitive to the difficulties he might be having in developing a habit of hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, meditating, and applying God's Word.
2. Review this week's lesson on Read the Bible. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and ask: What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.] Pull your keys you're your pocket or purse. This key doesn't work at my office because it is my home key. I believe that this lesson focuses on the key to our spiritual life. If we want to grow, we have to read our Bibles. Share some best practices that you have discovered and some of the various ways that we can read the Bible: Chronologically; Devotionally, Beginning to End, Topically.
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Stress the significance in Revelation 1:3 that the verbs are present tense and therefore are continuing actions: To continue hearing, reading, and heeding God's Word.
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask:** What did God show you in this lesson? Be sure to talk about what they need from you in order to make the adjustments to read the word daily.
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. Discuss the truths found in James 1:22-25 or Hebrews 5:12-13.
3. Hold up your Bible and say this is the KEY to our spiritual life. Let's commit to reading the Bible daily and teaching others what God is teaching us.
4. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Disciplers Guide to Lesson 5: A Biblical Worldview

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 5.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson five.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Seek to communicate your genuine interest in your student's life by asking about his activities during the past week, lessons learned, prayers answered, and the gospel shared. Reciprocate with what God is teaching you. **Ask:** How did you do? Were you able to read the Bible daily?
2. Review this week's lesson on A Biblical Worldview. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and **ask:** What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.] Some additional questions that you might use:
 - i. How can we present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God on a daily basis?
 - ii. Why is it imperative that we allow God to transform our minds?
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Discuss the Transformation Gap and how our Bible Study should be changing the way we live?
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask:** What did God show you in this lesson? What is God's good, pleasing, and perfect will for you in the area of sacrifice?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. Spend some time just discussing and sharing how God use following six agents of transformation in your life and asking for examples from your disciple(s): Scripture, the Family and Home, the People of God (church), circumstances of life, spiritual exercises for Godliness, and God's discipline.
3. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Disciplers Guide to Lesson 6: Pray Consistently

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 6.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson six.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Ask your students to share their best and worst experience of the past week. Briefly share of your own spiritual victories or struggles. Be sensitive to the difficulties they might be having.
2. Our lesson this week was found in Matthew 6:9-13. Let's spend some time praying the Lord's Prayer. **Say:** We will pray silently and occasionally, I will give you an opportunity to pray out loud. [Let God lead you].
 - a. Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. [Picture Calvary and Thank God You can Call Him "Father" by virtue of the Blood of Jesus.] Lead in prayer praying the names of God. [For example, Lord thank you that you are Jehovah-Tsidkenu "Jehovah our righteousness." Jehovah-Rophe "Jehovah heals", etc.]
 - b. Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be Done. [Pray for Yourself, Your Family, Your Church, Your Nation. Pray specifically for the Harvest and workers.]
 - c. Give Us this Day our Daily Bread. [Thank God for his provisions]
 - d. And Forgive us our Debts as we Forgive our Debtors. [Ask God to Forgive You and to set Your will to forgive those who sin against you.]
 - e. And Lead us Not into Temptation, but Deliver us from Evil. [Pray a Hedge of Protection around you, your family, your church.]
 - f. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory Forever. [Declare your faith in God and praise God for who He is.]
3. Review this week's lesson on Praying Consistently. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and ask: What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.]
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life?
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask:** What did God show you in this lesson?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*.
4. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Disciplers Guide to Lesson 7: Praying Persistently

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 7.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson seven.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Focus on what God is doing in your lives this week! Discuss answers to the opening exercise in *LISTEN* to your usual responses to home projects, exercise, dieting, and budgets; do you *Stick to it Until the End* or *Give Up Easily*? Check up with each other on how well you are sticking with spending time with God in Bible Study and prayer.
2. Review this week's lesson on Praying Persistently. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and **ask**: What does God's Word Say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.] Some additional questions that you might use:
 - i. What's the secret to persisting in prayer? Why does it matter?
 - ii. What if we all responded to Christ in the same desperate manner she did? How would our faith be different?
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Read each statement about prayer and discuss each one.
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask**: What did God show you in this lesson?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. As time allows, read some of the scriptures on delayed answers to prayer. Discuss the responses to the question: How should we respond when we believe our prayer is Scriptural and that our heart is right, but we do not see the answer to prayer?
3. Close the session with a time of praying for each other.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Disciplers Guide to Lesson 8: Praying that Pleases God

Before the Session:

1. During the week, call or e-mail your disciple(s) to let them know that you are praying for them and to remind them to complete Lesson 8.
2. If your sessions are not in conjunction with the More Life Evangelism Class then remind them of the time and place that you will meet them this week. .
3. Complete lesson eight.
4. Pray for your students and for God's guidance and leadership.

During the Session:

1. Personal Connections: Focus on what God is doing in your lives. Share stories of what God has taught you through the lessons and evangelistic opportunities of sharing your faith using the More Life Transfer Guide during this cycle of More Life.
2. Review this week's lesson on Praying That Pleases God. To reinforce the L.I.F.E outline, use the outline as a way to discuss and review the lesson. Remember to share what God is teaching you as well.
 - a. Begin with *LISTEN*, and **ask**: What does God's Word say? What issues arose that might have seem confusing and need clarifying? [Encourage them to write these questions down and bring them each week to the session.] Some additional questions that you might use:
 - i. In verse 9 what character quality describes Jabez?
 - ii. What characteristics describe an honorable person?
 - iii. Why was Jabez's prayer an honorable one?
 - iv. How can we be honorable in the prayers we pray?
 - b. Continue with *INVENTORY*. What did you discover this meant for your life? Ask for the privilege to pray with them about the Blessing that they most desire from God. In fact, pray now.
 - c. Discuss *FORSAKE* . State choices and adjustments should be the natural part of reading and studying his word. **Ask**: What did God show you in this lesson?
 - d. End the Bible Study time talking about *EXPLORE*. **Ask**: What was the heart attitude of Solomon's prayer? Why is this prayer a good example for Christians who want to pray prayers that are pleasing to God?
3. Close the session praying for one another's walk with God and the ministries that God has for you in the future. Encourage your disciple(s) to continue to read God's Word and to pray. Remind them that God desires for his disciples to teach to others what God is teaching them. Suggest they use these series of lessons and become a Paul to a Timothy.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan

A Biblical Worldview

Supplementary Material

Before the Session:

1. Complete lesson.
2. Write on the Board or on a tear sheet the “Pledge to the Bible” for use in Step 1.
3. Prepare small gifts, such as a piece of candy, for each learner for use in Step 2.

During the Session:

1. **Ask:** How many remember reciting the pledges to U.S. Flag, Christian Flag, and the Bible at Vacation Bible School as a child? **State:** This was one of my favorite parts of VBS. Let’s stand and say the Pledge to the Bible: Attention, Salute, Pledge: “I Pledge Allegiance to the Bible, God’s Holy Word, and will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, that I might hide its words in my heart and not sin against God.” **State:** Our Bible Study really should change how we live our lives.
2. Invite a volunteer to read aloud Romans 12:1-2. Distribute the gifts as you tell learners you wanted to present each of them with a gift. Ask what it means to present something to someone. [You put it at their disposal to use as they desire.] **Say:** Paul commands believers to put all we are and have at God’s disposal to use as He desires. **Ask:** What does the phrase “by the mercies of God” mean? How do God’s mercies inspire you to sacrifice yourself?
3. **Say:** Living our lives as sacrifices to God is a response to what God has done and it is an act of worship. **Ask:** What sort of picture would the term “living sacrifice” give to a Jew brought up to follow Old Testament commands? Emphasize that typically a sacrifice is killed. But here the sacrifice, counter to the world’s general direction, is a life that is holy and pleasing to no other allegiance but God. **Ask:** What are some allegiances you’ve served and how do they work only when God is first?
4. Point out that verse 2 explains the way to do that. Invite a volunteer to read aloud that verse again. **Ask:** What does Paul challenge us to do in order to develop a lifestyle of sacrifice? Both “be conformed” and “be transformed” are a passive-voice verb, which means we as believers are acted upon by an outside force. **Ask:** Who does the conforming and how? Who does the transforming and how? Why is sacrifice the key to knowing God’s will? Why is God’s will good, pleasing, and perfect? Summarize: Christianity isn’t some mystical out-of-body experience, but a practical in-the-body exercise. We give God our bodies, personalities, goals, likes, and dislikes. We put all that is us, good and bad, at God’s disposal.
5. **State:** Paul would certainly believe that our Bible Study should change the way we share our toys, the way we see the world, the way we play the game, and the way we conduct our business. The goal of Bible study is a life that is formed, conformed, transformed in the image of Christ. Let’s close today by standing again and saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Bible: Attention, Salute, Pledge: “I Pledge Allegiance to the Bible, God’s Holy Word, and will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, that I might hide its words in my heart and not sin against God.” Close in a prayer of commitment.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Leader Lesson Plan Read the Bible for Life Supplementary Materials

Before the Session:

1. Complete lesson
2. A Padlock or Door Lock that could be used in Step 1. Be sure to have a key.
3. Prior to class, prepare and pass out the verses to be read in Step 3.

During the Session:

1. Have learners pull keys from their pockets or purses. Ask them to try open your lock. After several unsuccessful tries, ask why learners can't open the lock. State: Just as this right—specific—key is necessary to open this particular lock (open the lock), it is equally important to have the right spiritual key for our lives. Brad Waggoner, author of *The Shape of Faith to Come*, makes a strong case that Reading the Bible daily is that key. In fact in the research for his book, they found that reading the Bible daily was the number one indicator of whether a believer was growing in Christ. **Ask:** What are some reasons that this might be the key?
2. Read Revelation 1:1-3. Write on the board the following verbs from verse 3: Read, Hear, Heed (Keep). If the Bible is our spiritual key, a Christian must keep on reading, hearing, and heeding the Word. **Ask:** Why was the king instructed to write a copy of the law? [Read it and follow carefully all the Laws and its decrees] **Ask:** What were your answers to the question in *FORSAKE* about the difference between reading for information instead of transformation?
3. **Ask:** What are some reasons that we should we read the word daily? [One reason: Not having a regular intake of scripture will stunt our spiritual growth, just as improper nutrition harms a child.] I gave each of you one of the verses that describe God's word as spiritual food, let's read these verses and remember that Reading God's Word daily is an essential key to growing in Christ: 1Peter 2:2; Psalm 78:24, 119:105, ; Proverbs 7:2, 16:24, 25:11; Luke 4:4; Isaiah 55:10-11; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 5:12-14; I Corinthians 3:1-2; John 16:13-15.
4. Write the word Read on the board vertically. Get in groups of three or four, thinking practically, come up with one or two words that begin with R.E.A.D. that we need to practice to make reading the Bible a key. If necessary, give them a few samples to get them started, such as Research, Elements, Adjust, and Determination. After just a few minutes, ask someone from each group to come to the board and write their words beside the appropriate letter. Pick some out from each letter and dig deeper. For example, if we are going to research what we are learning, what kinds of tools might be needed?
5. Lead learners to once again pull out the keys from their pockets or purses. **State:** Examine the keys in their hands and share thoughts about how the key is made. Ask if anyone else has a key exactly like the one in your hand. Ask students to hold up their Bible (or IPADS, phones) Explain that this key—the Bible—gives the same access to all who hold and apply its truth. Write 25%, 32%, 16%, on the board, then state: The sad thing is that 25% of Active church goers never read their Bible, 32% read the Bible once a week, and only 16% read the Bible daily. In other words, more than 50% of active church goers seldom read the Bible. It is the KEY to our spiritual life and many ignore it. You have the key: Commit to reading the Bible daily.
6. Close this session in prayer asking God to help us make the adjustments and commitment that are needed to read the Bible daily for transformation and not just information.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer

Learner's Guide A Biblical Worldview Supplementary Materials

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

It's playtime...Is his Bible Study changing the way he (a preschooler) shares his toys?
It's time for Social Studies...Is her Bible Study changing the way she (a child) sees the world?
It's crunch time...Is his Bible Study changing the way he (a teenager) plays the game?
It's time to close the deal...Is his Bible Study changing the way he (an adult) does business?

These questions are lifted from a promotional piece for Lifeway's Sunday School Curriculum in 2000. How would you answer these questions? Shouldn't Bible Study change the way you and I live?

When one listens to the news or reads the newspaper, everyday you read of wise men, scholars, and philosophers who believe that their answers to life are to be preferred over God's. Groups like the ACLU insist that Christians accept these unbiblical views or at least not force their views on society. In a 2003 study, the Barna Research Group revealed a stunning statistic – only nine percent of professing Christians have a biblical worldview.

Read Romans 12:1-2. Paul advises his followers to act on the truth they have received, letting that truth be the foundation of their Christian practice. Paul would certainly believe that our Bible Study should change the way we share our toys, the way we see the world, the way we play the game, and the way we conduct our business. The goal of Bible study is a life that is formed, conformed, transformed in the image of Christ.

Read Romans 12:1-2 again. What is Paul saying to you?

The apostle urged his readers to develop a Biblical Worldview and to reject worldliness and be transformed by the renewing of [the] mind. The phrase *be transformed* in the Greek is a present passive imperative form. This form suggests three important truths. **First**, the present tense describes a continuing action. Transformation of our thinking and attitudes is an ongoing, lifelong endeavor. **Second**, the passive voice indicates that the indwelling Spirit is the Source of our transformation. We can't transform ourselves but rather must be transformed. **Third**, however, is the truth suggested by the imperative that we must consciously place ourselves at the Spirit's disposal for transformation to happen. The Spirit will not transform us against our will.

Transformation happens when the renewed mind begins to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. The writer of the Holman New Testament Commentary on Romans wrote, "It is the will of God—his standards, his desires, his motives, his values, his

practices—which gradually pull the monarch butterfly of the believer out of the world’s cocoon into which he or she has been squeezed. It is a knowledge and practice of the will of God that leads to spiritual growth and maturity in the Christian’s life.”

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

In *Whole Life Transformation*, Keith Meyer believes the abundant life promised by Jesus and Paul should be the norm. In other words, More Life is not only possible but should be expected. Research comparing Christian behaviors to non-Christians behaviors consistently suggests that there is little difference in how the two groups live, act, and behave. In other words, their Bible Study is not changing how they live and view the world.

Give some examples of how you live your life from a Biblical Worldview?

Meyer goes on to describe what he calls the Transformation Gap. “The gap falls between God’s initial work of justification and his final work of glorification. Sanctification is the process of becoming progressively more like Christ by cooperating with God to become holy....It is the *life change* that occurs after conversion and before death.”

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

Is your Bible Study closing the transformation Gap in your life? If not, what steps can you take to insure that your Bible Study is changing the way you live and view the world?

Meditate on Romans 12:1-2. Close the time of meditation by journaling your thoughts.

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

A book written by Roy Edgemon and Barry Sneed, entitled *Jesus by Heart*, expressed the following six agents of transformation: Scripture, the Family and Home, the People of God (church), circumstances of life, spiritual exercises for Godliness, and God’s discipline. Consider how God has and desires to use each of these agents to close the transformation gap in your life.

Edgemon and Sneed shared the following hindrances to transformation: Satan, the world, personal desires (flesh), lack of faith, lack of knowledge, drifting (unintentional), rebellion (deliberate), and distraction. Consider how you can conquer these hindrances to closing the transformation gap in your life.

Use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to study the following verses: Romans 8:28-30; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; and Galatians 4:19.

Remember: The heart of God is that believers be transformed into the likeness of Christ.

More Life Discipleship: Bible and Prayer
Learner's Guide
Read the Bible for Life
Supplementary Materials

1. LISTEN (What God's Word says for my life?)

If during worship services on a typical Sunday morning, the question was asked, "How many people here believe the Bible from cover-to-cover?"—almost every hand would be raised. However, if asked, "How many have read the Bible from cover-to-cover?"—the show of hands might be embarrassing.

Read Deuteronomy 17:18-19. A new king was instructed to write a copy of the Law. The king's copy was to be made from the "official" version, which was kept by the priests in the temple. He was to read and follow carefully the Law and its decrees. Every year, over half billion copies of the Bible are sold. Most Americans own a Bible. In a survey conducted by Lifeway Christian Resources, they found that reading the Bible daily was the number one indicator of whether a believer was growing in Christ. Yet, that same survey indicated that less than 16% of active churchgoers read their Bible daily. Another 32% read the Bible at least once per week. George Guthrie, author of *Read the Bible for Life*, responded, "even churchgoers are not reading the Bible consistently and thus are not being changed by God's Word. This has resulted in an ignorance of the Bible's content and a disconnect for many between the Story of Scripture and their own lives."

Read Revelation 1:1-3. John Powers wrote in *I Believe: Bridging Belief with Behavior*, "John stated that a blessing is in store for every believer who reads it. Believers might be surprised as to how much insight into doctrine is gained simply by reading God's word. The Greek verb is present tense and should be translated, keep on reading. Also, the verb implies reading out loud. When investors inquire of the "ROI" of a business opportunity, they are thinking of "return on investment." The "ROI" is the amount of money they make on that particular investment. John makes it clear that all the time invested in reading the Bible has a significant return on investment." Some suggestions for reading God's Word:

- Read the Bible systematically. Don't use the dip and skip method. Many of you have done this because I have too. You set down on the edge of your bed at night and start to feel guilty -- "I've got to read my Bible!" -- so wherever you open it up that's where you start.
- Read all the Bible, not just your favorite parts. Rick Warren states, "It's going to be pretty embarrassing when some of you get to heaven and Habakkuk comes up and says, 'How did you like my book?'"
- Choose a reading plan and stick with it. Set a goal to Read the Bible each Year.

Recall 1 Peter 2:2. Not having a regular intake of scripture will stunt our spiritual growth, just as improper nutrition harms a child.

2. **INVENTORY** (How does this apply to my life?)

Number the admonitions in proper order as they appear in Revelation 1:1-3.

- _____ Heed (Keep) the word.
- _____ Read the word.
- _____ Hear the word.

John Powers in *I Believe* continued with this thought: “But, the greatest blessing is received when that believer *heeds* the word of God. *Heed* means *to watch over, to observe attentively*. A believer who *watches over* the word of God continually, immediately, and passionately **obeys** what it says. A believer who assumes a posture of obedience to what God says is blessed indeed.”

Are you reading, hearing, and heeding the Word of God on a daily basis? How does John’s instruction in Revelation apply to your life?

3. **FORSAKE** (What areas of my life need to be adjusted?)

The king was instructed to write a copy of the Law. What was the purpose for this instruction? He was to _____ and _____ the Law and its decrees.

What’s the difference in reading the Bible for information or reading for transformation?

What adjustments would you have to make to spend 30 minutes a day reading the Scriptures?

4. **EXPLORE** (What life actions should I take?)

Explore the following reading through the Bible formats: Chronologically; Devotionally, Beginning to End, Topically. Pick one of these formats to begin with. Time for a commitment: I will read the Bible each day at _____.

Use the L.I.F.E. acrostic (Listen, Inventory, Forsake, and Explore) to study the following verses: James 1:22-25 or Hebrews 5:12-13. Remember growing in Christ is not automatic, it takes effort.

Suggestions for Deeper Study: Learn how to read the Bible the parts of the Bible for transformation and not just information by reading *Read the Bible for Life*, by George Guthrie. Dr. Guthrie serves as the Benjamin W. Perry Professor of Bible at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee.