

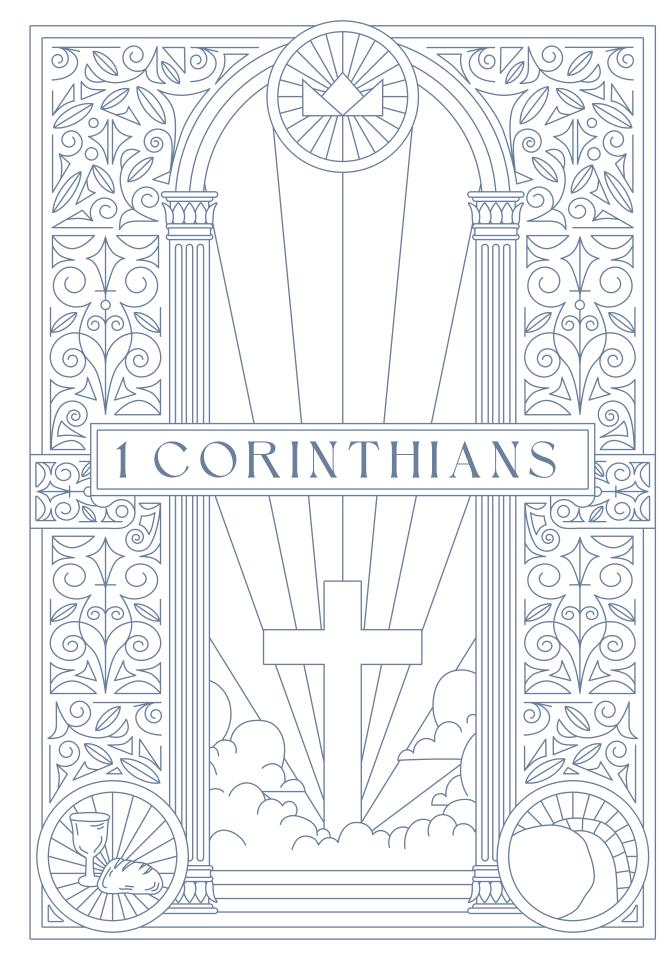


#### FIND MORE RESOURCES AT GRACE-BIBLE.ORG

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## 



6 WELCOME

What is the Gospel?
Memorize and Meditate

- 10 SURVEY
- 14 LESSON 1 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16
- **24** LESSON 2 1 Corinthians 3:1-4:5
- **34 LESSON 3** 1 Corinthians 4:6-6:8
- **44 LESSON 4** 1 Corinthians 6:9-7:40

LESSON 5 54

1 Corinthians 8:1-9:14

64 LESSON 6

1 Corinthians 9:15-11:1

LESSON 7

1 Corinthians 11:2-34

84 LESSON 8

1 Corinthians 12 + 14

94 LESSON 9

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

104 LESSON 10

1 Corinthians 15-16

SYNTHESIS

Put it back together

APPENDIX

Leader Helps

Study Tools Chronology

Engage Tools

Spiritual Practices

Additional Study Resources





## WELCOME

l Corinthians is an amazing letter offering insight into the gritty and real issues faced by a first century church. Paul, their father in the faith, aims to bring this diverse group of Jesus followers to maturity in both their thinking and practices. The letter touches on issues of wisdom, division, arrogance, rights, sex, marriage, singleness, gifting, and church gatherings. It covers major doctrinal questions about the nature of God, the work of the Spirit, the cross of Jesus Christ, and His resurrection. l Corinthians speaks into our church contexts and the issues we face today. Following Jesus together means developing the skill of seeing all areas of life and relationships through the lens of the Gospel.

This study will guide you to:

**CONNECT** in authentic community as you and your group share the joys and struggles of life and pray together for big things.

**GROW** in biblical truth by searching the scripture and actively applying this truth to your life. **ENGAGE** in helping people find and follow Jesus by practicing simple disciple-making tools that tune your heart to those who are far from God.

#### PERSONAL STUDY + PRAYER

God's word, the Bible, is a unique and wonderful library of books that tell a united story. It is one of His greatest gifts to us. By reading it regularly, meditating on it, and studying it with others, we begin to hear God's voice and to know Him more deeply. As we put biblical truth into practice, cooperating with the Holy Spirit, our relationship with God grows. We become more like Jesus, transforming into mature sons and daughters of God.

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who has looked intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and has continued in it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an active doer, this person will be blessed in what he does."

James 1:22-25

Each lesson begins with personal study sections designed for you to walk through the selected passage verse by verse. The Survey provides the big picture and background information for the book of 1 Corinthians. Lessons 1-10 focus on studying each section in detail. The Synthesis is a place to record an overall summary of what you learned in the study.

In this study, you will practice a basic Bible study method that answers three questions:

Look it Over (Observation): What do I see?

Think it Through (Interpretation): What does it mean?

Make it Real (Application): How does it work?





An overview of this method is summarized in the Bible Study Tools section in the Appendix beginning on page 120.

**Prayer Reminders:** We need God Himself to illuminate His word to us. As we prayerfully approach the study of His word, God shows up! Pray before, during, and at the end of each lesson for eyes to see and ears to hear the things the Holy Spirit has planned to reveal to you.

#### GROUP DISCUSSION

At the end of every lesson, there is a Group Discussion Guide that provides a balanced plan for the time you spend together as a group - connecting, growing and engaging. Use this guide to plan your group time.

#### **APPENDIX**

**Leader Helps:** This section contains a few helpful ideas for anyone leading others through this study. See pages 122-123.

**Bible Study Tools:** Each lesson contains descriptions of tools that will help you to observe, interpret, and apply scripture. These are summarized on pages 124-129.

**Chronology**: A list of the approximate dates of major events in the New Testament can be found on pages 130-131.

**Engage Tools:** We are called to partner with God in helping people find and follow Jesus. Some of the basic tools for becoming a disciple maker will be introduced in the lessons and can be found on pages 132-140.

**Additional Study Resources:** This section contains a list of recommended books and online tools on page 142.

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# WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

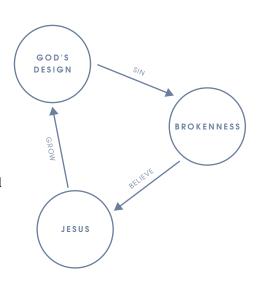
The Gospel is the good news of how we can be reconciled to God through Jesus.

#### GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

#### **BROKENNESS**

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust. This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way.



Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23)

Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a) Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

#### **JESUS**

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

#### BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live. (John 3:16-17)

Which circle or arrow best represents your life right now?

Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?





# MEMORIZE & MEDITATE

Begin to memorize and meditate on these important verses.

For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. **1 Corinthians 1:21** 

So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. **1 Corinthians 3:7** 

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. 1 Corinthians 5:6-7

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

But take care that this freedom of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 1 Corinthians 8:9

Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. So they do it to obtain a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 1 Corinthians 9:25

However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 1 Corinthians 11:11

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

But now faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 1 Corinthians 15:3-5

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## SURVEY

#### THE BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Surveying a book like 1 Corinthians allows you to grasp the big picture and the overall storyline of the book before getting caught up in the details. This survey provides a helpful road map to guide your study during the coming weeks.

Begin this crucial first step by taking the time to read straight through 1 Corinthians without stopping.

Answer the questions below, focusing in especially on 1:1-17, the introduction to the letter.

l Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, 2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 just as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 10 Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For I have been informed concerning you, my brothers and sisters, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. 12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," or "I am with Cephas," or "I am with Christ." 13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one would say you were baptized in my name! 16 But I did baptize the household of Stephanas also; beyond that, I do not know if I baptized anyone else. 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made of no effect.

- 1. How would you describe Paul's relationship to these believers?
- 2. What is the tone of the letter?





- 3. How would you describe the church in Corinth? In what ways are they healthy? In what ways are they unhealthy?
- 4. What are the major themes or big ideas in this book? (Hint: Look for repeated words and ideas.)

#### BACKGROUND

Once you have completed the introductory questions, read the following background information (portions have been compiled from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* and *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* and BibleProject.com).

#### **AUTHORSHIP AND RECIPIENTS**

Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, went alone from Athens to Corinth in about A.D. 51 during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-18). There he labored with a Jewish-Christian couple, Aquila and Priscilla, who had recently been expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius because they were Jews. The couple ran a tent-making business, a trade also practiced by Paul. Silas and Timothy also joined Paul in Corinth. When Paul left Corinth 18 months later, headed to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila, a Christian congregation had been founded in the city of Corinth. After a period of training, Paul would later send the gifted Alexandrian Apollos to Corinth for ministry there (Acts 18:24-28). While Apollos was ministering in Corinth (Acts 19:1), Paul remained in Ephesus on his third missionary journey in the fall of A.D. 53 for a period of about two and one half years (Acts 19). It was probably during the early part of this ministry in Ephesus that Paul wrote the letter mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:9. Paul learned of the church's misunderstanding of this first letter (1 Cor 5:10-11) and of further problems in the church at Corinth from the household of Chloe (1:11). Then an official delegation - Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (16:17) brought Paul specific questions on issues dividing the church. Paul, the concerned pastor, would write 1 Corinthians probably in A.D. 54 or 55 to address these matters.

This fledgling congregation in Corinth was composed primarily of Gentiles, mainly Greeks and Romans (1 Cor 12:2), but some Jewish believers were also among them. Most of them were from the lower classes (1 Cor 1:26-28). Some were slaves (1 Cor 7:21) while a few were wealthy (1 Cor 11:22-32).

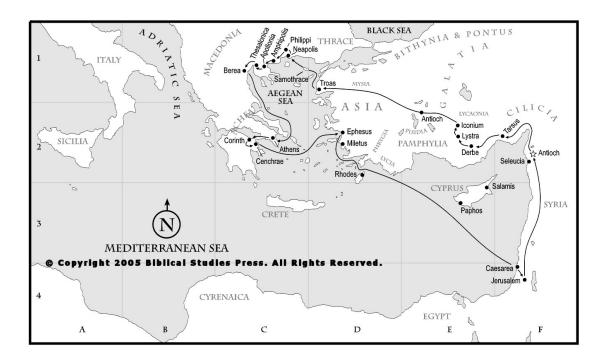
11



#### SETTING

Corinth was the political capital of the province of Achaia in the Roman Empire. It was rebuilt in 44 B.C.E by Julius Caesar and founded as a Roman colony. The Romans imposed new city plans, architecture, political organization and laws making Corinth geographically Greek but culturally Roman in religion and values.

Corinth, ancient Greece's most important center of trade, was ideally situated on the Isthmus of Corinth connecting Rome, the capital of the world, and the East. Along with great wealth, there was great poverty in this multi-ethnic, multicultural port city. In addition, there was a thriving trade in prostitution and a reputation as a place of sexual license and immorality.



#### HONOR/SHAME CULTURE

The Corinthian church existed in an honor/shame society which placed particular stress on tradition, relationships, and hierarchy. These three factors shaped a person's social status. A person could earn honor through patronage (giving large amounts of money), marriage, cultivation of connections, and oratory (impressive public speaking). The Romans and Greeks both valued skillful oratory, rhetoric, and philosophers who taught cultural wisdom.

#### GENRE

New Testament epistles or letters were written to specific churches and individuals in specific cities or geographical regions. Each had unique people, problems, cultural issues, strengths and weaknesses. As we look at 1 Corinthians we must remember that the text is in essence "half a conversation" as Paul responds to reports and letters he has received. We can't know everything about the other half of the conversation.



Paul uses Greek rhetorical structure in 1 Corinthians to make his case and persuade his readers. This structure includes repeating some of the Corinithian phrases or "slogans" such as "All things are permitted for me" (1 Corinthians 6:12). It can be challenging to determine which phrases are slogans and which are Paul's words.

#### **PURPOSE**

In 1 Corinthians, Paul's aim is to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices. The church had reverted to cultural norms of tradition, relationship, and hierarchy, leading to arrogance and division. The Corinthian church had become syncretistic by failing to recognize that ideas and practices from its surrounding culture were at odds with Christianity. Paul addresses the Corinthians' harmful immaturity and misguided behavior. His relationship with the church was complex and somewhat embattled, but he loved them and wanted to see them grow toward full maturity.

#### OVERVIEW

The letter can be divided into five major thematic sections:

CHAPTERS	THEME
1-4	Divisions
5-7	Sex + Bodies
8-10	Rights + Idolatry
11-14	The Church Gathering
15-16	The Resurrection + Final Instructions

13 C



For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:21

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.

Pray for God to teach you more about

Himself through His word.



### LESSON 1

## WISDOM

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16





## LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is "What do I see?" This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of your study. Simply read the passage and write one or two observations for each verse. Your observations might identify people, places, and events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences. Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written:

"I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE,

AND THE UNDERSTANDING
OF THOSE WHO HAVE UNDERSTANDING, I WILL CONFOUND."

20 Where is the wise person? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than mankind, and the weakness of God is stronger than mankind. 26 For consider your calling, brothers and sisters, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many

mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the insignificant things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no human may boast before God. 30 But it is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 so that, just as it is written: "LET THE ONE WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-16

I And when I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come as someone superior in speaking ability or wisdom, as I proclaimed to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 3 I also was with you in weakness and fear, and in great trembling, 4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of mankind, but on the power of God.



6 Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; 8 the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 9 but just as it is written:

"THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD,

AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HUMAN HEART,

All that God has prepared for those who love Him."

10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. ll For who among people knows the thoughts of a person except the spirit of the person that is in him? So also the thoughts of God no one knows, except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God. 13 We also speak these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But the one who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is discerned by no one. 16 FOR WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT нім? But we have the mind of Christ.

#### OBSERVATION SKILL: LIST PRIMARY THEMES

A theme is a central idea, truth, or command that is the focus of the passage, such as "the wisdom of God" and "the Spirit reveals truth" in 1:18-2:16. After reading the whole passage each week, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

- 1. List any primary themes or big ideas you see in this passage.
- 2. Circle every time you see "wisdom" or "wise." And underline every time you see "foolish" or "foolishness."
- 3. List all the ways you see the power of the Spirit at work in this passage.

17



## THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

INTERPRETATION SKILL: USE THE CONTEXT

This interpretive skill greatly improves our understanding of what a passage meant to its original readers. Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous passages or cause you to read ahead in the book for clues.

1. How does the "wisdom of God" differ from the "wisdom of the world?" What does Paul's
lengthy comparison of human wisdom and God's wisdom begin to reveal about the problems
within the Corinthian church?

2. According to 1:18-25, how does the message of the cross uniquely demonstrate the power and wisdom of God (see also Romans 1:16-17)?

3. According to 1:26-2:16, what is required for a person to understand the wisdom of God correctly?

4. Why does Paul highlight the simplicity and weakness of his own message and preaching in $2:1-7$ ?
5. According to 2:10-15, what prevents someone from understanding the revealed wisdom of God (see also Romans 1:18-23, 28 and James 1:5-8)?
SUM IT UP
How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

LESSON 1



## MAKE IT REAL

#### **APPLICATION**

The goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. This leads us into a deeper relationship with Him and to becoming more like Him.

- Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you. Answer the reflection questions designed to demonstrate how each passage relates to our lives.
- Next, step back and look at the passage as a whole and begin to list things God has shown you including ideas, images, biblical truths and principles. A principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is relevant to our lives. A principle is not specific to a particular person or time.
- Finally, prayerfully decide on specific action steps that you will begin to take right away to live out biblical truth in your daily life.

#### 3 STEPS TO APPLY → REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

- 1. What people, groups, or institutions, does your generation typically turn to as an authority on truth? Why might our culture tend to view these sources of authority as more appealing or convincing than Scripture?
- 2. Do you ever feel like the Bible is either too hard to understand or too distant to be of use in modern life? Why or why not?
- 3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?
Is there a truth for me to believe?
Is there a command for me to obey?
Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?
How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?



4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that
God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.

#### **ENGAGE TOOL**

#### EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Jesus noticed and cared for the people around Him. He taught His disciples to do the same. As His followers, we are also called to love our neighbors, the people with whom we live, learn, work and play.

Turn to page 133 and prayerfully fill in your Every Neighbor Map. Be ready to share it with your group next week.

For more insight, watch the Every Neighbor Map video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

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21



## GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

#### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
- 2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.

#### WHY ARE WE HERE?

Spend a few minutes discussing your group's purpose. Of all the things we could be doing, why are we here? Why is this time important to be present for and to prioritize?

Pray for your time together.

#### GROW

#### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. How do we observe scripture? What are we looking for and what questions are we asking?
- 2. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16. Share some of your observations.
- 3. What are some of the primary themes you noticed?

#### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

#### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Why is it important to personally apply biblical truth to your life?
- 2. What people, groups, or institutions, does your generation typically turn to as an authority on truth? Why does our culture tend to view these sources of authority as more appealing or convincing than scripture?
- 3. What did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### ENGAGE TOOL Every Neighbor Map (p. 133)

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now.

Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

#### RESPONSE

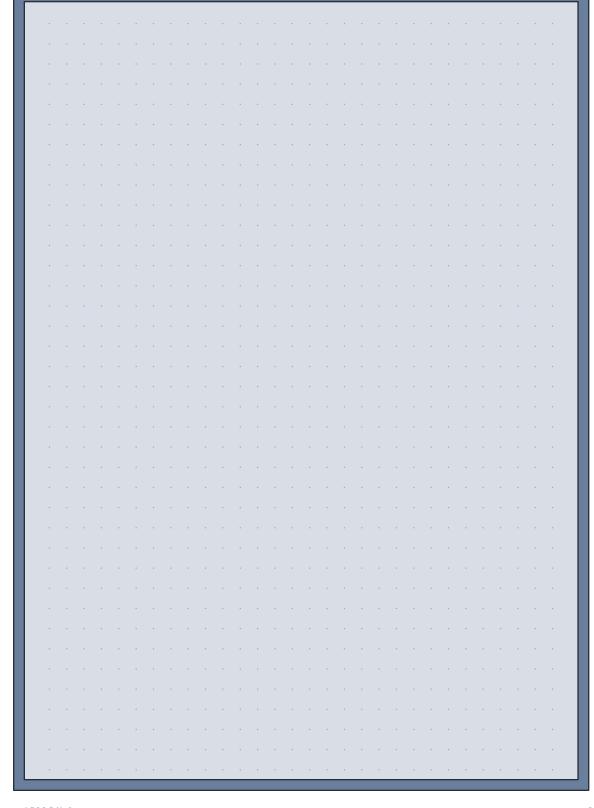
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?



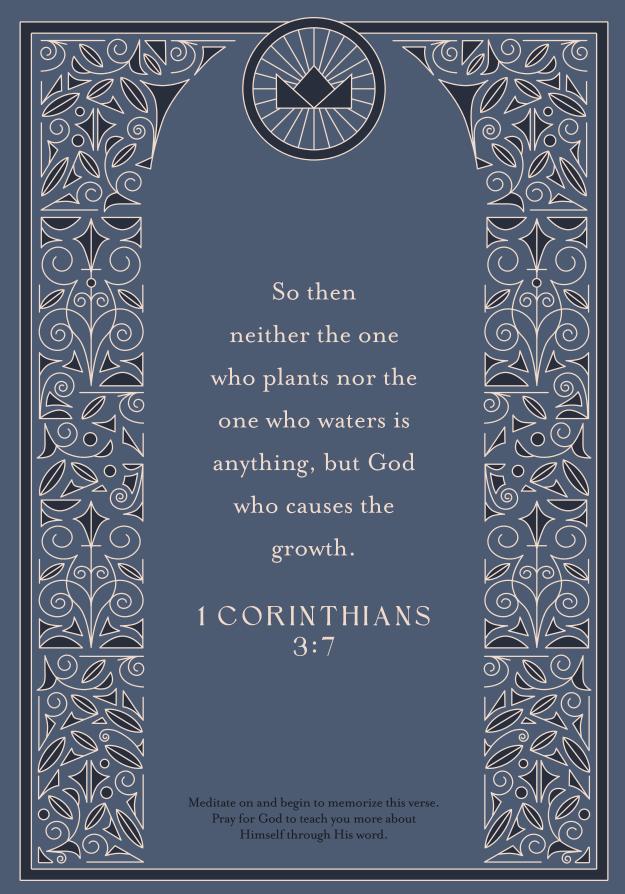


#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 1





### LESSON 2

## UNITY

1 Corinthians 3:1-4:5





## LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read all of 1 Corinthians 3:1-4:5.

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-15

1 And I, brothers and sisters, could not speak to you as spiritual people, but only as fleshly, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to consume it. But even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like ordinary people? 4 For when one person says, "I am with Paul," and another, "I am with Apollos," are you not ordinary people? 5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. 8 Now the one who plants and the one who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder



I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each person must be careful how he builds on it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, 13 each one's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each one's work. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet only so as through fire.

#### **OBSERVATION SKILL: INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS**

Like last week, read the passage and write down your observations and list primary themes.

This week, we will begin to write our own questions as well. Simply record the questions that naturally come to mind as you try to understand the passage. If you need help getting started, you can use these examples:

WHO IS	WHAT IS THE	WHY DID THE AUTHOR	HOW
the author talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

- 1. List your interpretive questions.
- 2. List any primary themes or big ideas you see in the whole section (3:1-4:5).
- 3. Highlight any analogies and figurative language you see in this passage (3:1-15).

27 C



## THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

#### INTERPRETATION SKILL: STUDY CROSS REFERENCES

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related e

to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Greek" on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong's definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a "Word Search" that will provid all Biblical references that use the English term.
1. Look back at 1:10-4:5 and answer the following questions.
What things cause disunity in the church body?
What things promote unity in the church body?
2. How does 3:1-15 further develop Paul's exhortations toward spiritual maturity?
3. While the Corinithians view Paul and Apollos as competitors, how does Paul see himself, his ministry, and his fellow workers in 3:5-9 and 4:1-21? Why is this significant?



4. According to 3:10-15, on what basis does God evaluate and reward His servants?
How is this a contrast to the way people evaluate and reward each other? (see also 3:21-4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:7-8)?
5. What is the relationship between spiritual maturity and unity of the body? Can you have one without the other?

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#### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

**29** 



## MAKE IT REAL

#### APPLICATION

The goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. This leads us into a deeper relationship with Him and to becoming more like Him.

- Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you. Answer the reflection questions designed to demonstrate how each passage relates to our lives.
- Next, step back and look at the passage as a whole and begin to list things God has shown you including ideas, images, biblical truths and principles. A principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is relevant to our lives. A principle is not specific to a particular person or time.
- Finally, prayerfully decide on specific action steps that you will begin to take right away to live out biblical truth in your daily life.

#### 3 STEPS TO APPLY→ REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Have you ever experienced disunity within a local church? How did you respond? How would you respond again in the same situation?

2. Do you see your life as wholly dedicated in service to God or are you looking to other people, groups, or causes for identity and belonging?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?



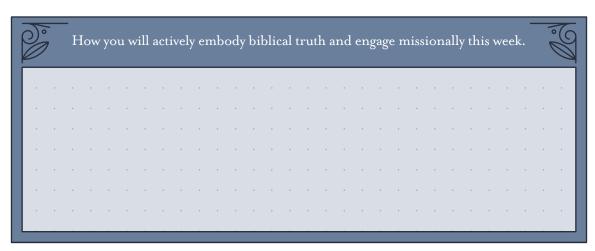


4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that
God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.

#### ENGAGE TOOL

Continue to add names to your map on page 133. Pray for opportunities to love, serve, and engage with your friends this week.



31



## GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

#### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Did you see God working in any specific ways?
- 2. Gratitude: read a Psalm, make a list of what your group is thankful for, offer short praise prayers.
- 3. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
- 4. Were you able to connect with any friends from your Every Neighbor Map?

#### WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to share why they prioritize biblical community in their life. Pray for your time together.

#### GROW

#### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-15. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What primary themes or big ideas did you notice in this passage?
- 3. How does asking questions like who, what, when, where and how help us understand scripture?

#### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

What is the significance of looking up cross references when studying the Bible? Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

#### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Have you ever experienced disunity within a local church? How did you respond? How would you respond again in the same situation?
- 2. Do you see your life as dedicated in service to God or are you looking to others for identity and belonging?
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### ENGAGE TOOL Every Neighbor Map (p.133)

Continue to share your maps with your group and discuss any opportunities to practically bless and share God's love with these friends.

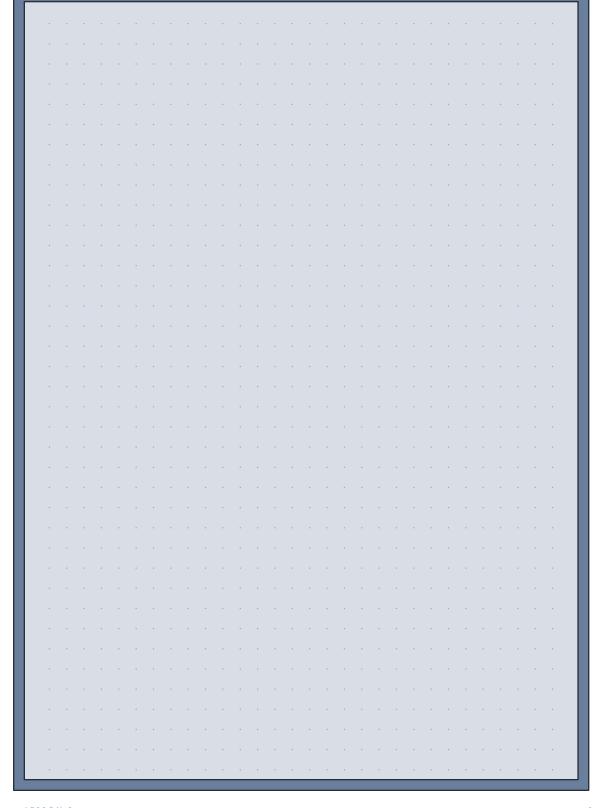
#### RESPONSE

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

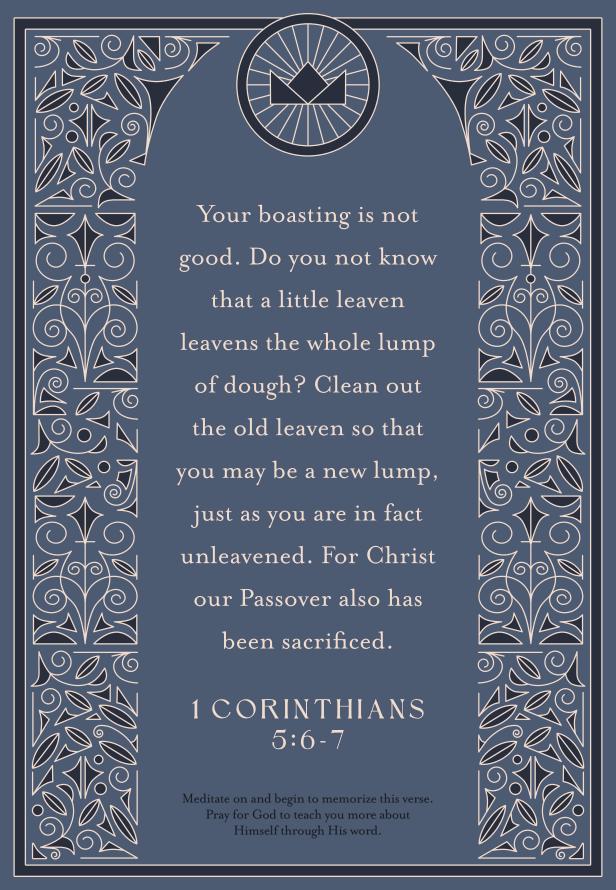


#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 2





### LESSON 3

## HUMILITY

1 Corinthians 4:6-6:8





## LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read all of 1 Corinthians 4:6-6:8

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

body, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

#### I CORINTHIANS 5:1-13

immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, namely, that someone has his father's wife. 2 You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.

3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 I have decided to turn such a person over to Satan for the destruction of his

1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and sexual

6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? 7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. 8 Therefore let's celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

40

9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people; 10 I did not at all mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the greedy and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to leave the world. 11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is a sexually immoral person, or a greedy person, or an idolater, or is verbally abusive, or habitually drunk, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a person. 12 For what business of mine is it to judge outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? 13 But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the evil person from among yourselves.

### OBSERVATION SKILL: CIRCLE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES

This week continue to write down your observations and list primary themes. Then begin to circle key words or phrases. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage). Include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates.

- 1. List any primary themes or big ideas you see in the entire section (4:6-6:8).
- 2. What key words did you notice in this passage?

### OBSERVATION SKILL: UNDERLINE ALL VERBS

A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place or that a state or condition exists. Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author's flow of thought.

- 3. Underline the verbs, especially ones that indicate commands.
- 4. What is Paul's tone in this section of the letter?

37 C



### THINK IT THROUGH

### INTERPRETATION

### INTERPRETATION SKILL: LOOK UP KEY WORDS

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as net.bible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Greek" on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong's definition in the opposite window. For even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a "Word Search," "Strong's Search," or "Word Study." The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books and many hours now takes one internet browser and a few seconds!

1. How does Paul's description of himself and his relationship with the Corinthians in 4:6-21 relate to his instructions to the church in Chapter 5? Why does he call attention to their arrogance?

2. Use 5:1-13 and these cross-references to answer the following questions: Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14-15.

What impact can an individual's sin have on a community of believers?

What responsibility does a community of believers have towards a sinning brother or sister in Christ?

3. How do you reconcile 5:3 ("I... have already judged him") with 4:5 ("do not go on passing judgment before the time")? What does it mean to judge?

Start by looking up the word "judge" using the instructions above. Then list a few possible options and decide which option is most likely.



Does it make a difference if the person is a believer or not? See also 5:11-13.

- 4. Paul's discipline of this individual seems very severe in 5:5-11. What does it mean to "turn such a person over to Satan"? What is the spiritual condition of the one being disciplined (see Acts 5:1-10; 1 Corinthians 11:27-30; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 1 John 5:16)?
- 5. How does Paul exhort the church to relate to those within the church who are being judged? What does it mean to not "associate" with someone (see also 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15)? Look up the word "associate" using the instructions above.
- 6. Why does Paul admonish the Corinthians for their legal disputes with each other (6:1-11)? How is this related to the problem of immorality in Chapter 5?



### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

39



### MAKE IT REAL

### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. W	hy do we usually find it hard to nan	ne and confront sin	amongst brothers	and sisters
in th	e body of Christ? What factor does	arrogance or lack o	f sorrow over sin ]	play in these
situa	tions?			

2	. How might	your	personal	conduct	affect	the re	putation	of the	Church	in	the v	vorl	d?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that
God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.

### **ENGAGE TOOL**

### STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Simply talking about Jesus as part of your everyday conversations is a great way to bring His light into the spiritual darkness all around us. Be sure your conversations include asking lots of questions and listening! Most people are open to talking about spiritual things IF they feel heard and respected.

Turn to page 134 and to learn how to turn conversations toward spiritual things. Also, watch the video on Starting a Spiritual Conversation at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

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### GROUP DISCUSSION

### CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share high or low from the week.
- 2. Ask 1-2 people to take five minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.
- 3. Goals: how did you do on your application of truth last week?

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose.

Pray for your time together.

### GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What were some of the key words and verbs you saw in this section?
- 3. What is Paul's tone in this section of the letter?

### **DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:**

Discuss the skill of looking up keywords. How is it helpful in studying the Bible? Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Why do we usually find it hard to name and confront sin amongst brothers and sisters in the body of Christ? What factor does arrogance or lack of sorrow over sin play in these situations?
- 2. How might your personal conduct affect the reputation of the Church in the world?
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

### ENGAGE TOOL Starting a Spiritual Conversation (p.134)

Read over and discuss how to start a spiritual conversation. What has been your experience talking about your faith with friends? Is there a friend or neighbor you could have a spiritual conversation with this week? Pray for opportunities!

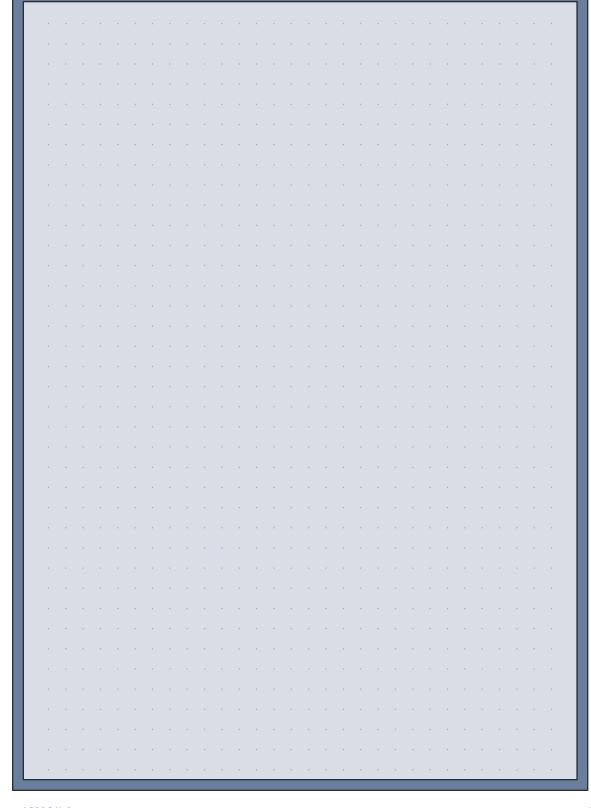
### RESPONSE

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

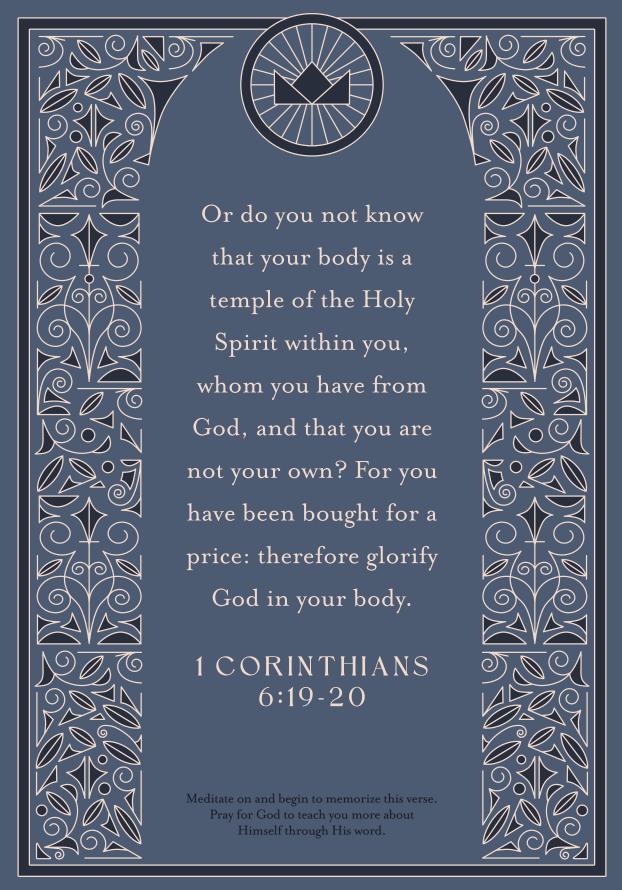


### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 3





### LESSON 4

# BODIES

1 Corinthians 6:9-7:40





### LOOK IT OVER

### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 6:9-7:40.

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

### 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-20

9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor those habitually drunk, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

12 All things are permitted for me, but not all things are of benefit. All things are permitted for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. 13 Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, however God will do away with both of them. But the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. 14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are parts of Christ? Shall I then take away the parts of Christ and make them parts of a prostitute?

40

is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." 17

But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18 Flee sexual immorality. Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned (circling key words, underlining verbs).

### OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART ONE)

These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses.

**COMPARISON:** either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so.

**CONTRAST:** points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include *but*, *rather*, *yet*, *however*.

**PURPOSE**: indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include *that*, *so that*, *in order that*.

**RESULT:** very similar to "purpose," but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include that, so that, as a result, with the result that.

- 1. Box all connecting words you see in this passage.
- 2. What big ideas or themes do you observe in this entire section (1 Corinthians 6:9-7:40)?
- 3. Highlight every time you see the word "body."



### THINK IT THROUGH INTERPRETATION

### COMPARE MULTIPLE TRANSLATIONS

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful re

interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at netbible.org. You can find and compar numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.
1. What contrast does Paul highlight as a motivation for pursuing holiness in 6:9-11?
2. What beliefs within the Corinthian church and culture was Paul countering in 6:12-13? How does comparing multiple translations specifically enhance your understanding (Hint: look for when some versions use quotes to identify common cultural slogans)?
3. Paul says that our bodies are "parts of Christ" and a "temple of the Holy Spirit." What do each of these descriptions mean? And how do they motivate us to seek holiness?
"Parts (of a body) of Christ" (see also 12:27; Ephesians 1:22-23)
Meaning:

Motivation for holiness:



"Temple of the Holy spirit" (see also 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16-17)
Meaning:
Motivation for holiness:
4. What are some of the ways that we "glorify God in [our] body" (see also 9:27; Romans 6:13; 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; and James 3:8-10)?
5. How does 7:1-40 relate to 6:9-20? What similarities tie these sections together especially when considering both marriage and singleness? How does Paul identify the unique advantages and challenges of both marriage and singleness?

### D).

### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

49 C



### MAKE IT REAL

### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

- 1. We are all tempted and distracted in various ways. Currently, what is keeping you from undivided devotion to God?
- 2. What steps are you taking now to ensure your sexual integrity?

3. Whether married or single, what are some ways you can utilize your body as God's gift to you to love others self-sacrificially?

4. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





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5. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.	
6. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.	
ENGAGE TOOL	

### STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Continue to pray for opportunities to turn everyday conversations toward spiritual things.

Turn to page 134 to review this tool.

Also, watch the video on Starting a Spiritual Conversation at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

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51



### GROUP DISCUSSION

### CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a highlight or struggle you experienced.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
- 3. Did you have any chances to talk about your faith journey with friends?

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some ways to overcome the temptation to skip group time? Pray for your time together.

### GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-20. Share some of your observations.
- 2. How did seeing the connecting words help to grasp the flow of the passage?

### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

How is looking a multiple translations helpful when studying scripture? Discuss 2-3 questions.

### ENGAGE

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. We are all tempted and distracted in various ways. Currently, what is keeping you from undivided devotion to God?
- 2. Whether married or single, what are some ways you can utilize your body as God's gift to you to love others self-sacrificially?

### ENGAGE TOOL Starting a Spiritual Conversation

Continue to discuss and pray for opportunities to turn everyday conversations toward spiritual things.

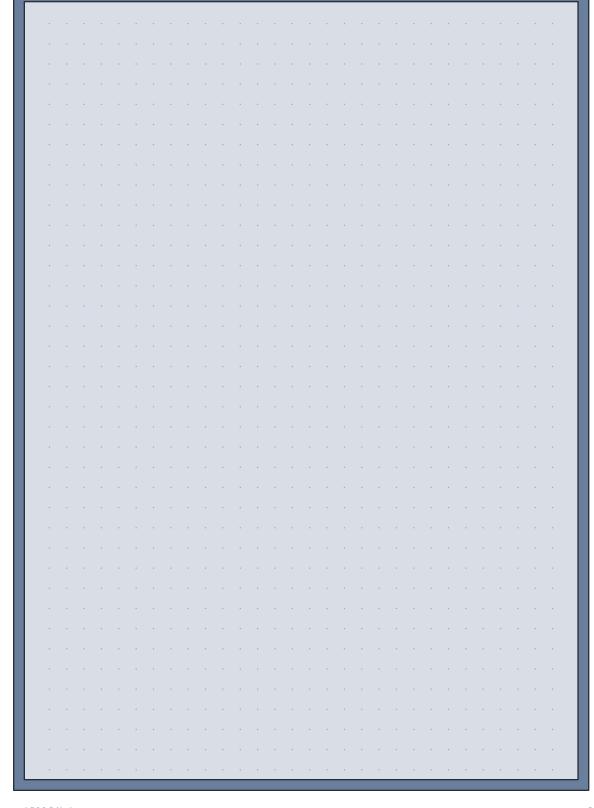
### RESPONSE

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

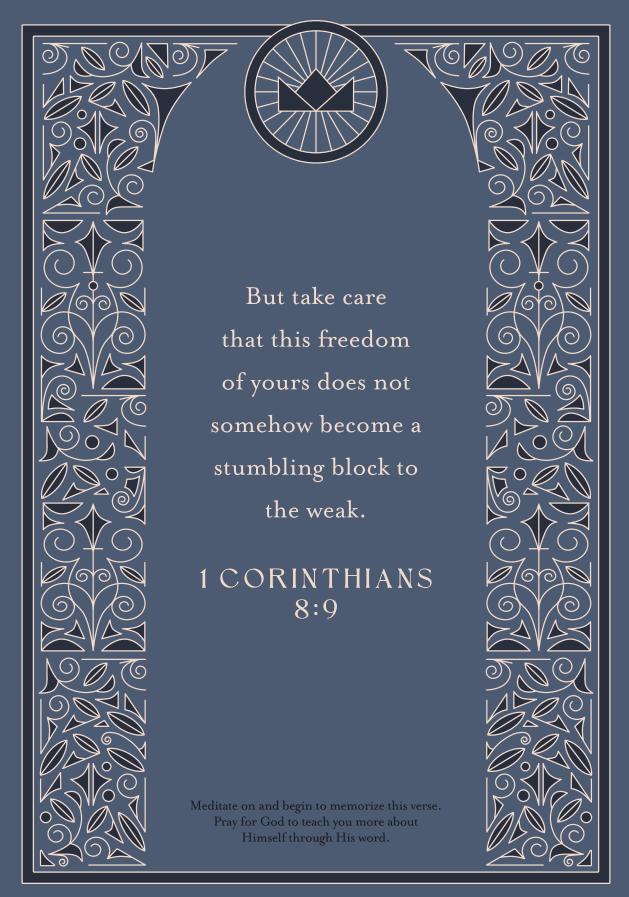


### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 4





### LESSON 5

## RIGHTS

1 Corinthians 8:1-9:14



### LOOK IT OVER

### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 8:1-9:14

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-13

I Now concerning food sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge.

Knowledge makes one conceited, but love edifies people. 2 If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know; 3 but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

4 Therefore, concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols, we know that an idol is nothing at all in the world, and that there is no God but one. 5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, 6 yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

7 However, not all people have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 8 Now food will not bring us close to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat. 9 But take



care that this freedom of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if someone sees you, the one who has knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will his conscience, if he is weak, not be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols? 11 For through your knowledge the one who is weak is ruined, the brother or sister for whose sake Christ died. 12 And so, by sinning against the brothers and sisters and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to sin.

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions that occur to you. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

### OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART TWO)

These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses.

**CAUSE**: expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include *because*, *since*, and sometimes *for*.

**EXPLANATION:** what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the keyword *for*. **INFERENCE:** provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include *therefore*, *for this reason*.

**CONDITION:** presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is *if*.

- 1. Continue to box all connecting words.
- 2. Highlight any repeated words or phrases.
- 3. What big idea does this passage address?

57



### THINK IT THROUGH

### INTERPRETATION

### LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Notes" on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

### MEAT OFFERED TO IDOLS

"... the eating of cultic meals was a regular part of worship in antiquity. In the Corinth of Paul's time, such meals were still the regular practice both at state festivals and private celebrations of various kinds. There were three parts to these meals: the preparation, the sacrifice proper, and the feast. ... The significance of these meals has been much debated, but most likely they involved a combination of religious and social factors. The gods were thought to be present since the meals were held in their honor and sacrifices were made; nonetheless, they were also intensely social occasions for the participants. For the most part the Gentiles who had become believers in Corinth had probably attended such meals all their lives; this was the basic 'restaurant' in antiquity, and every kind of occasion was celebrated in this fashion."\*

- 1. Why does Paul include verses 1-3 before he begins to address one of the problems facing the Corinthian church specifically? What does his pastoral approach reveal?
- 2. Referencing the background article, why was eating meat creating such a problem within the Corinthian church (see also 8:7 and 10:19-31)?



3. How would Paul define a "right" (see also 8:9 and 9:1-6)? Hint: what other words do different translations use for "right" in these verses?
4. What reasons did Paul give to legitimize his right to receive income from his gospel ministry in Chapter 9 (see also Luke 10:1-7 and 1 Timothy 5:17-18)?
5. What motivated Paul to sacrifice his own rights and liberties (see also 9:19-23)?

### $\bigcirc$

### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

59 C



### MAKE IT REAL

### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. Does knowledge or love drive your attitude/approach to situations and relationships? Why do you think you lean this way?

2. Have you ever been in a situation where you laid down your rights for someone else? What were the circumstances? What have you learned from this situation as you look back on it?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that	
God revealed to you during your study.	

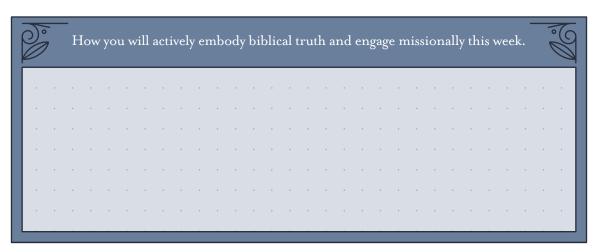
5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.

### **ENGAGE TOOL**

### SHARE YOUR STORY

One of the most powerful ways to help people find Jesus is to share with them your own story of meeting and trusting in Him.

Turn to page 135 and write a simple draft of your faith story. For more insight, watch the Share Your Story video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.



61



### GROUP DISCUSSION

### CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share something you are celebrating or that disappointed you during the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
- 3. Did anyone try practicing hospitality this week? How did it go?

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some reasons you stay committed to our group? Pray for your time together.

### GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-13. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What were some of the connecting words you saw in this passage?

### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

What is the benefit of looking up cultural background and historical information? Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Does knowledge or love drive your attitude/approach to situations and relationships? Why do you think you lean this way?
- 2. Have you ever been in a situation where you laid down your rights for someone else? What were the circumstances? What have you learned from this situation as you look back on it?
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

### ENGAGE TOOL Sharing Your Story (p. 135)

Read over and discuss how to share your story. In pairs, practice sharing a story of what God has done for you. To whom could you share your story of finding and following Jesus this week?

#### RESPONSE

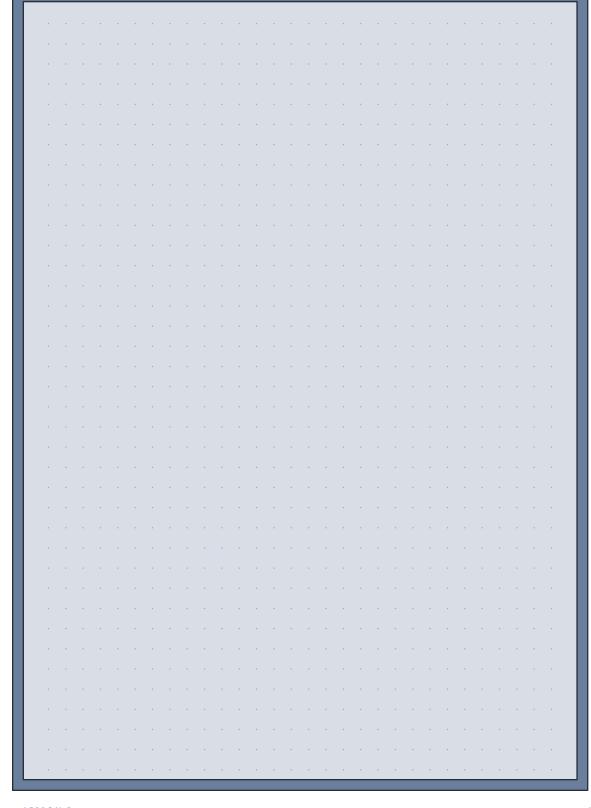
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?



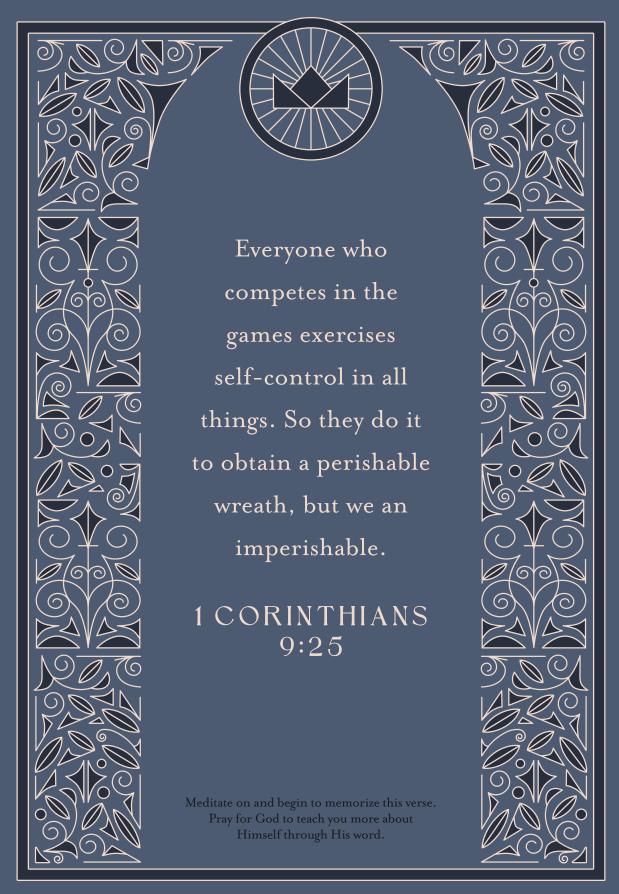


### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 5





# LESSON 6 MISSION

1 Corinthians 9:15-11:1



### LOOK IT OVER

### **OBSERVATION**

### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 9:15-11:1

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:15-27

15 But I have used none of these things. And I have not written these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than that.

No one shall make my boast an empty one! 16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast about, for I am under compulsion; for woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. 17 For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a commission nonetheless. 18 What, then, is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

19 For though I am free from all people, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may gain more. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might gain Jews; to those who are under the Law, I became as one under the Law, though not being under the Law myself, so that I might gain those who are under the Law; 21 to those who are without the Law, I became as one without the Law, though not



being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might gain those who are without the Law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak; I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some. 23 I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. So they do it to obtain a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way as not to run aimlessly; I box in such a way, as to avoid hitting air; 27 but I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

### **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

- 1. What key words do you notice in this passage?
- 2. What themes or ideas from earlier in the book do you see repeated here?

67 C



### THINK IT THROUGH

### INTERPRETATION

1. According to 9:15-27, why does Paul lay aside his personal rights and freedoms? How does this reasoning connect Chapter 9 to Chapter 8?

2. What is the "reward" or "prize" that Paul hopes to receive (see also 3:8-15; 9:17-18, and 9:24-27)?

3. In what ways did Paul intend Israel's example to be a warning to the Corinthian church (see also Hebrews 3:7-11, 16-19)?



4. How do the instructions found in 10:13-31 identify relevant temptations and the way of
escape for churches as they face unique cultural challenges today?

5. How does 10:31-11:1 provide a fitting summary of these last three chapters?

### $\bigcirc$ ) $_{\circ}$

### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

69 C



### MAKE IT REAL

### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. Does Paul's example and story encourage you? Or does it feel out of reach for you? Why or why not?

2. In what ways could you, your family, or your group sacrifice your freedoms this week in order to actively engage people with the gospel message?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.
5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.
ENGAGE TOOL
SHARE YOUR STORY
Continue to work on a simple draft of your faith story.
Turn to page 135 for more insight and also watch the Share Your Story video at grace-bible. org/disciplemaker.
How you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.
LESSON 6



### GROUP DISCUSSION

### CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a high or a low from the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

What would happen if we just focused on one of these - Connect, Grow, Engage? Pray for your time together.

#### GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 9:15-27. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What key ideas from earlier in the book are repeated here?

### **DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:**

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

### PLAN TO SPEND EXTRA TIME ON ENGAGE THIS WEEK

It can be challenging to cover all that you would like to in a group meeting! Often the Engage section, which includes applying scriptural truth to our actual lives and preparing to actively engage with the people around us who may not know Jesus, can get the least amount of time.

Are there any of the Engage Tools that our group needs more time to discuss and practice? Take time this week!

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Does Paul's example and story encourage you? Or does it feel out of reach for you? Why or why not?
- 2. Spend some time thinking creatively about ways our group could sacrifice our freedoms this week in order to actively engage people with the gospel message. What could we do together?

### ENGAGE TOOL Sharing Your Story (p.135)

Continue to practice sharing your story of coming to faith in Jesus.

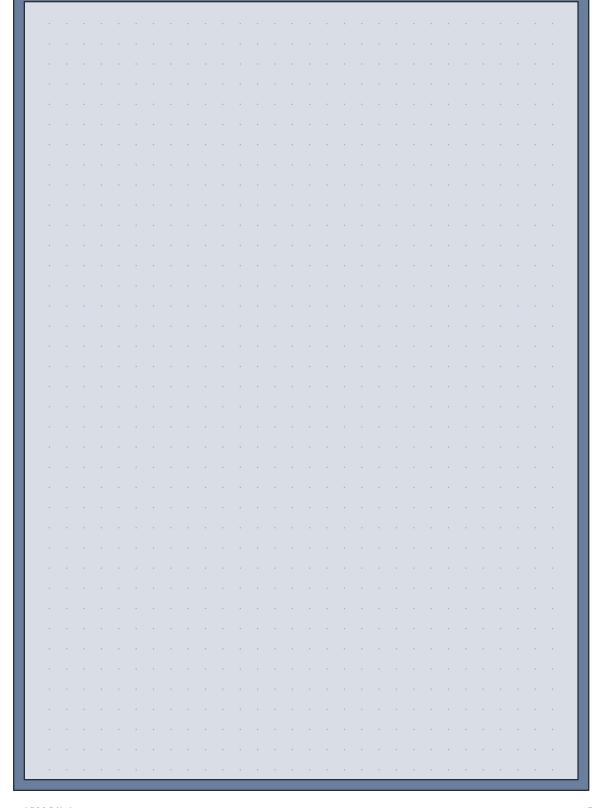
### RESPONSE

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

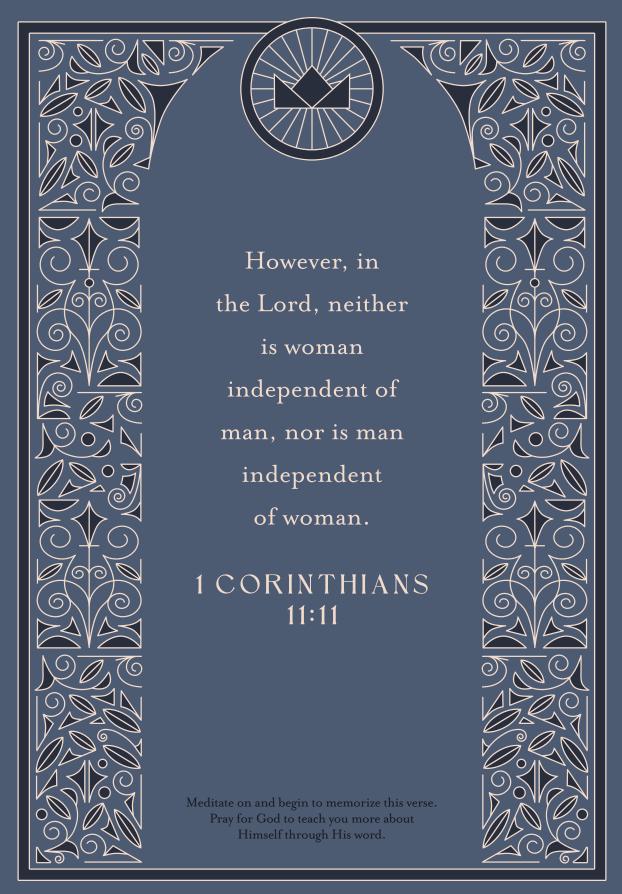


#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 6





### LESSON 7

## ORDER

1 Corinthians 11:2-34





### LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 11:2-34

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:2-22

2 Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I handed them down to you. 3 But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

4 Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. 5 But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for it is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. 6 For if a woman does not cover her head, have her also cut her hair off; however, if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, have her cover her head.

7 For a man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. 8 For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. 10 Therefore the woman should have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

ll However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as the woman originated from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. 13 Judge



for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14

Does even nature itself not teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to

him, 15 but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her

as a covering. 16 But if anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice,

nor have the churches of God.

17 Now in giving this next instruction I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better, but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it.

19 For there also have to be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. 20 Therefore when you come together it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21 for when you eat, each one takes his own supper first; and one goes hungry while another gets drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What am I to say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I do not praise you.

#### **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

- 1. What key words do you notice in this passage?
- 2. Where do you see the contrast between honor and shame throughout this passage?
- 3. What is the primary setting in Paul's mind within this chapter?
- 4. What interpretive questions do you have?

### THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

Note: This section of l Corinthians is complex! The prevailing cultural customs and difficulty in determining the meaning of crucial terms can make interpretation challenging. Additionally, texts regarding men and women can feel really personal to some people. Please extend grace to yourself and others as you interact with these passages, praying for the Spirit's illumination.

1.	Looking at this passage	as a whole,	what	underlying	problems	in the	church	link	11:2-22
aı	nd 11:23-34 together?								

2. Why does Paul write this much on the topic of head coverings? What did it represent in
the life of the church and within the Corinthian culture at large (Hint: use background skill
instructions in Lesson 5)?

What is the timeless principle applicable to us today in his instructions to the Corinthian church regarding head coverings?

3. What does Paul mean in verse 3 by the word "head" to describe the three pairings of relationships mentioned? (Hint: look up this key word using the instructions in Lesson 3).

As you consider the range of possible meanings that exist for "head," keep in mind that in the New Testament, it is used to mean an actual, physical head the majority of the time. When it is used as a metaphor, what could Paul have in mind (see also Colossians 1:16-18; Ephesians 1:22; 5:23)?



How do you think Paul is using the word within this chapter (see also 15:24-28)? Do you think he only has one meaning in mind? Why or why not?

4. How do you reconcile Paul's allowance for women to pray and prophesy in the church (11:5) with his command that they "keep silent in the churches" (14:34)? See also 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

5. How do the themes of honor and shame further our understanding of Paul's different instructions to the church throughout this chapter?



#### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

79 \_\_\_\_C

### MAKE IT REAL

#### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. How do you see God-ordained gender distinctions being diminished today in our culture? What light did this passage shed on this topic for you?

2. How can you extend honor to other believers as you worship and serve in the church this week?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

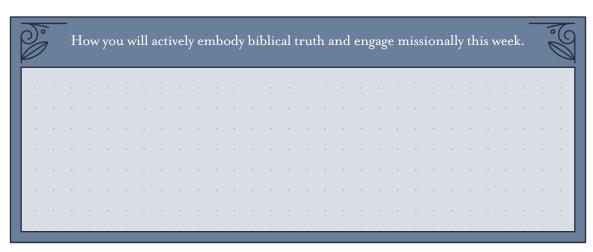
How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





4. Continuing in prayer, write d	own the main biblical truth	, principle, idea,	or image that
God revealed to you during your	study.		

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.



81



### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

#### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a high or a low from the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

Pray for your time together.

#### GROW

#### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-22. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What are Paul's commands in verses 25-32? What idea or thought connects most of these commands together?

#### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

Note: This section of l Corinthians is complex! The prevailing cultural customs and difficulty in determining the meaning of crucial terms can make interpretation challenging. Additionally, texts regarding men and women can feel really personal to some people. Please extend grace to yourself and others as you interact with these passages, praying for the Spirit's illumination.

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

#### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. How do you see God-ordained gender distinctions being diminished today in our culture? What light did this passage shed on this topic for you?
- 2. How can you extend honor to other believers as you worship and serve in the church this week?
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### RESPONSE

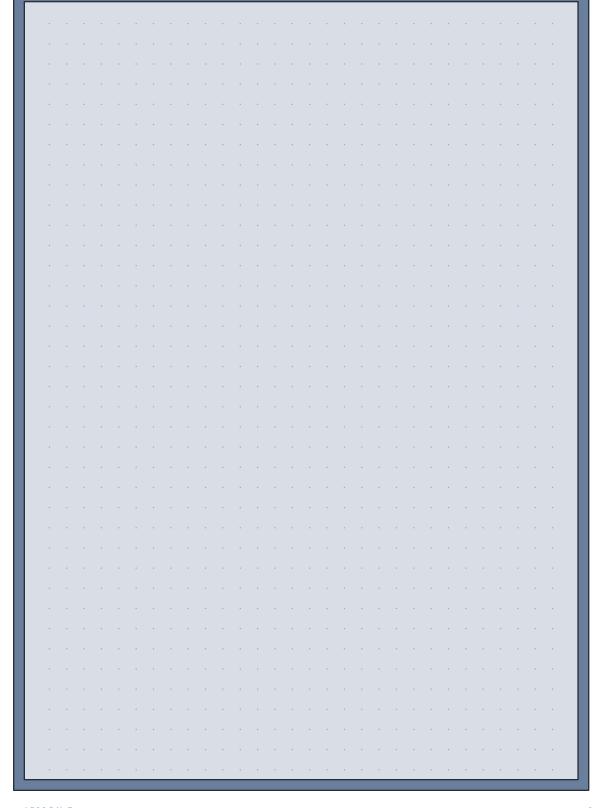
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?



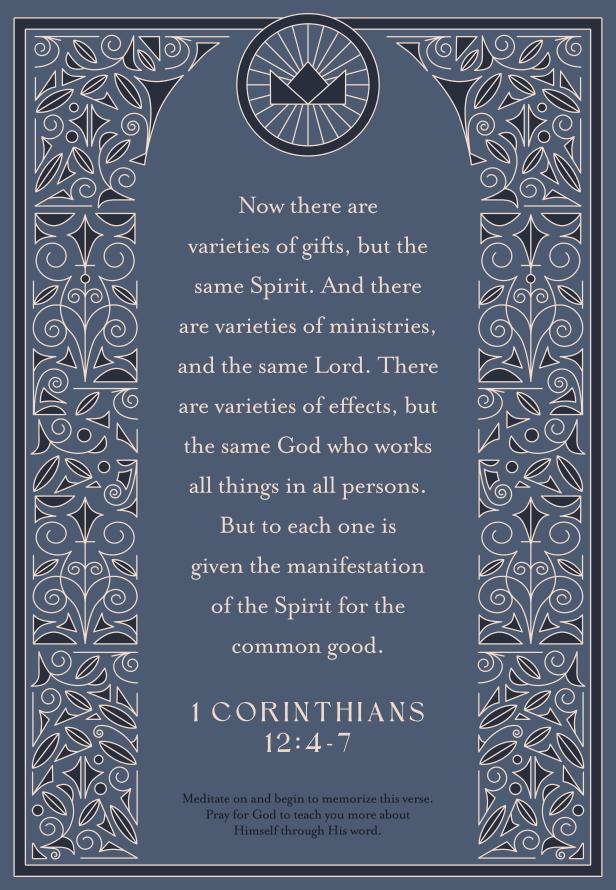


#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 7





### LESSON 8

## GIFTS

1 Corinthians 12+14



### LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 12 and 14.

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-20

I Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

40

12 For just as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one part, but many. 15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has arranged the parts, each one of them in the body, just as He desired. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many parts, but one body.

#### **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

- 1. What key words do you notice in this passage?
- 2. List everything you observe about the Spirit in this section.
- 3. List 2-3 of your own interpretive questions for this section.

87 C

### THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

1.	What big idea(s) unites all of Chapters 11-14? How does Chapt	er 12 fit in	to tha
di	iscussion? How does Chapter 14 fit into that discussion?		

2.	What beliefs and practices does Paul correct within the Corinthian church in	Chapters l	2
ar	nd 14? To answer, look up background information (see Interpretation skill in	Lesson 5)	
ar	nd read the box below.		

#### PAGAN PRACTICES

"Paul indicates that prophesying is not necessarily a sign of godliness; pagans prophesied too, and at Greek oracular shrines, possessed persons prophesied ecstatically, inspired by gods other than the Christian God. ... Paul can thus point to some of his hearers' former behavior in paganism as a warning that ecstatic activity by itself cannot constitute proof that they are obeying God."\*

3. Referring also to Romans 12:4-8 and Ephesians 4:11-16, list all of the spiritual gifts mentioned in these three passages.

For what purpose does God give spiritual gifts?

Does everyone have a gift (see 1 Peter 4:10-11)?





4. According to 12:14-30, why does God distribute these gifts as He does? What does this teach us about the church?

5. Paul describes the proper use of tongues and prophecy in the church in Chapter 14.

What are these two gifts specifically and how were they exercised?

What purposes did these two gifts serve in the Corinthian church?

6. We seem to witness healing, tongues, and prophecy much less frequently in the Western church today compared to the 1st century church. Why is this? How would you defend your answer biblically (see also Hebrews 2:3-4)?

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#### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?

89 C



### MAKE IT REAL

#### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. Do you see certain spiritual gifts more valued than others within the church today? If so, which ones?

2. Do you know what spiritual gifts the Lord has given you specifically? If so, what are they? If not, we have provided you with an assessment on our website at https://giftsurvey.grace-bible.org/.

3. Are you using your spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ? If so, how have you seen your gifting and experience complement the diversity of other people and gifts within the church? If not, why has it been difficult to find ways to serve?

4. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

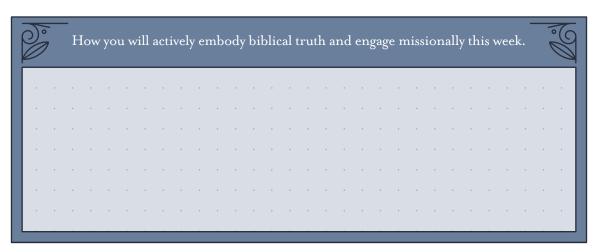
Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?



5. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth	n, principle, idea, or image that
God revealed to you during your study.	

6. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.



91 C



### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a high or a low from the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

#### GROW

#### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-20. Share some of your observations.
- 2. What were some of the interpretation questions you asked?

#### **DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:**

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

#### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

- 1. Do you see certain spiritual gifts more valued than others within the church today? If so, which ones?
- 2. Ask if your group members know and use their spiritual gifts. Remind them of the online assessment tool at https://giftsurvey.grace-bible.org/. Discuss their experience using their gifts in the body of Christ.
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### RESPONSE

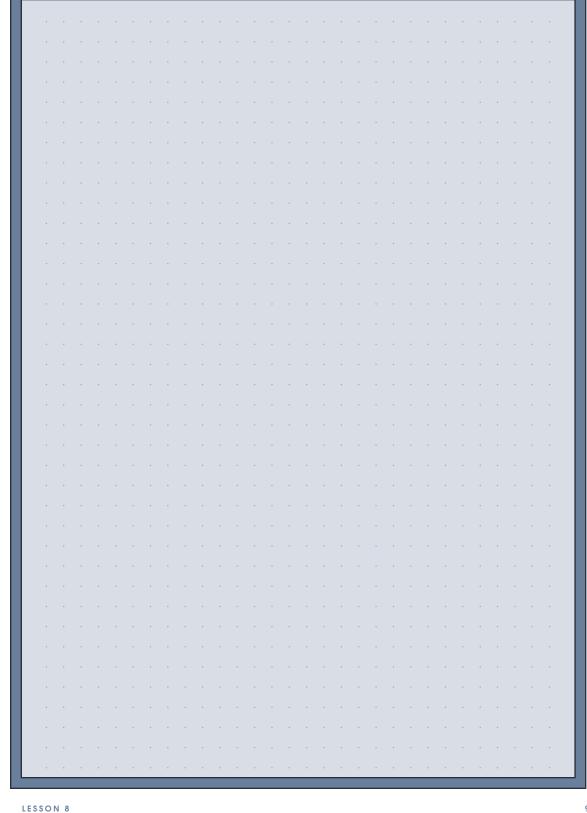
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

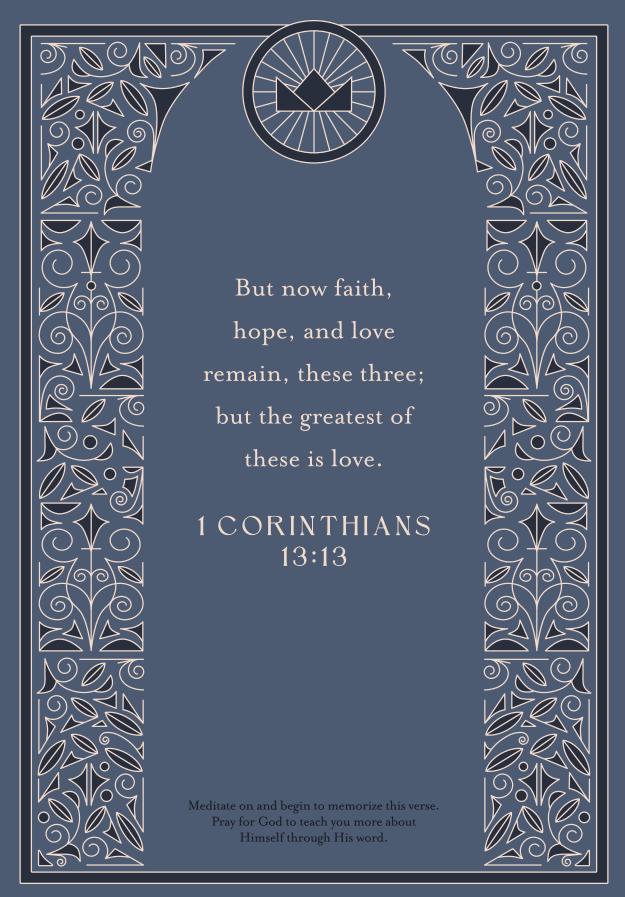




#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.







LESSON 9

## LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:1-13



### LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13

If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give away all my possessions to charity, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good.

4 Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5 It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own benefit; it is not provoked, does not keep an account of a wrong suffered, 6 it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away with; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done

70

away with. 9 For we know in part and prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away with. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

#### **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

1. What key words or themes do you notice in this passage?

- 2. List the characteristics of love in this passage. Group them by any categories that you see.
- 3. List 2-3 of your own interpretive questions for this section.

97 \_\_\_\_\_\_C



### THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

1. How does this section relate to the discussion of spiritual gifts in Chapter 12 and tongues in Chapter 14?

2. Why is love more valuable in God's eyes than spiritual gifts and even faith and hope (see also Matthew 22:34-40; John 13:34-35)?





3. In what relational contexts are we obligated to love this way? Whom are we obligated to love this way (see also 14:22-25; Luke 10:29-37)?
4. What is Paul's point in verses 9-12? How does this section fit into the rest of the chapter?

#### SUM IT UP

In a sentence or two, summarize the main ideas of this passage.

### MAKE IT REAL

#### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. What things other than love do believers typically view as evidence of Christian maturity? In your opinion, where does love fit on this list?

2. How does the Bible's description of love differ from our culture's portrayal of love today?

3. Which characteristic of biblical love listed in verses 4-7 is typically the most difficult for you? Why?

4. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





5. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that
God revealed to you during your study.

6. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your response in the box below.

#### **ENGAGE TOOL**

#### SHARE THE GOSPEL - 3 CIRCLES

As we pray, ask questions and listen to people with a heart of compassion, the Holy Spirit may lead us into sharing with someone how they can turn from trusting in themselves to trusting in Jesus. This simple tool using a diagram of three circles is really helpful to share the good news of the gospel with people.

Turn to pages 138-139 and practice sharing the gospel this week. Pray for opportunities to share with non-believing friends. See a demonstration video at *grace-bible.org/disciplemaker*.

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101



### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a high or a low from the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

#### GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Share some of your observations.
- 2. Did you see any categories of "love" in the passage description?

#### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

- 1. What things other than love do believers typically view as evidence of Christian maturity? In your opinion, where does love fit on this list?
- 2. How does the Bible's description of love differ from our culture's portrayal of love today?
- 3. Which characteristic of biblical love listed in verses 4-7 is typically the most difficult for you? Why?
- 4. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### ENGAGE TOOL: 3 Circles Gospel (pp.138-139)

Practice sharing the 3 Circles Gospel tool together in groups of 2 or 3.

#### RESPONSE

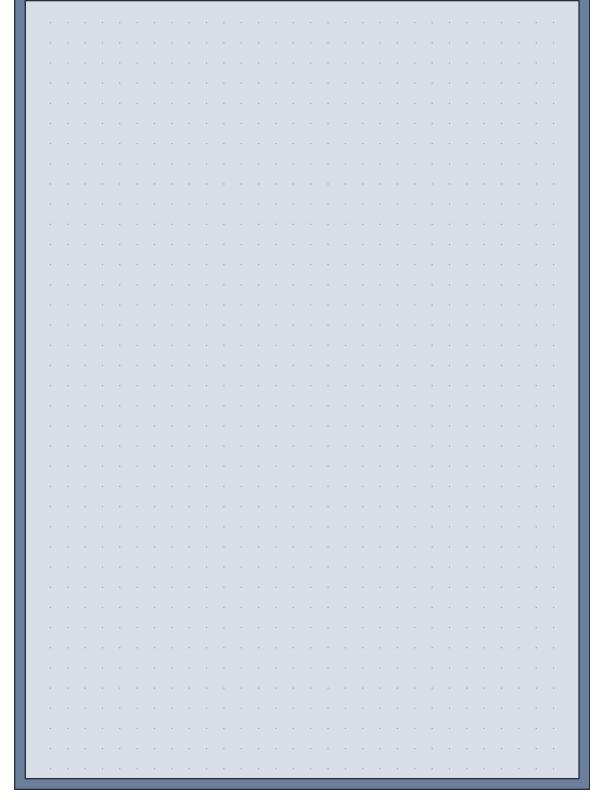
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?



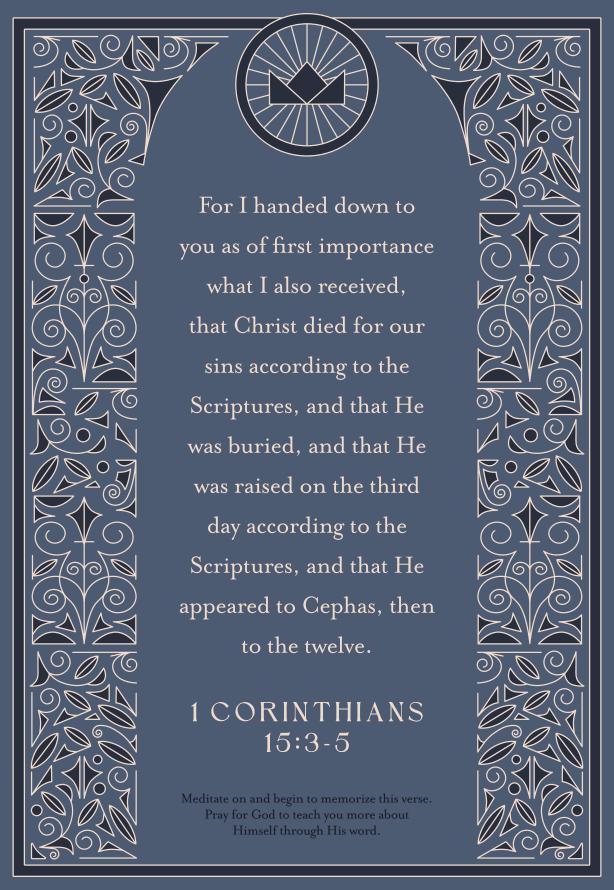


#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 9







# LESSON 10 RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15-16



LESSON 10



### LOOK IT OVER

#### **OBSERVATION**

#### Read ALL of 1 Corinthians 15-16

Then record your observations in the margin as you read the key section below.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-24

1 Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, 2 by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no



resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised; 14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain. 15

Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18

Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have hoped in Christ only in this life, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20 But the fact is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 21 For since by a man death came, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, 24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to our God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

#### **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

Continue to write down your observations and interpretive questions. Continue to mark the passage using the skills you have learned.

- 1. What key words do you notice in this passage?
- 2. Make a list of all the evidence for Christ's resurrection noted in this section.
- 3. List 2-3 of your own interpretive questions for this section.



### THINK IT THROUGH

#### INTERPRETATION

l. In 15:1-4, why does Paul repeatedly highlight that the gospel that he's handed down	is
something that was "received" and "according to the Scriptures"?	

2. According to this passage, what are the core elements of the gospel as Paul taught it?

3. According to 15:12-19, why is the resurrection so essential to the Christian faith? What arguments does Paul provide for the validity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ?





4. How does Paul depict the culmination of all of human history in this passage in verses 22-28? Specifically, what events will transpire?

5. How will our existence be different in our resurrection bodies compared to our current bodies (see also 15:42-43, 51-57; Philippians 3:20-21; and Luke 24:39-43)?

#### D)<u>.</u>

#### SUM IT UP

How does this section support Paul's aim to bring the Corinthian church to maturity in its thinking and practices?



# MAKE IT REAL

#### **APPLICATION**

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

1. How does the promise of a physical resurrection give you hope today	1.	How	does	the	promise	of a	physical	resurrection	give yo	u hope	today	1:
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2. How might your knowledge of God's eventual climax of human history change your present priorities in this life?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?





God revealed to you during your study.										
5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What										
specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and										
play? Write your response in the box below.										
ENGAGE TOOL										
SHARE THE GOSPEL - 3 CIRCLES										
Continue to practice sharing the 3 Circles Gospel found on pages 138-139.										
How you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.										
LESSON 10										

4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that



# GROUP DISCUSSION

#### CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

- 1. How was your week? Share a high or a low from the last week.
- 2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

#### GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-24. Share some of your observations.
- 2. Discuss the evidence for Christ's resurrection noted in this section.

#### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

#### ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

- 1. How does the promise of a physical resurrection give you hope today?
- 2. How might your knowledge of God's eventual climax of human history change your present priorities in this life?
- 3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

#### ENGAGE TOOL: 3 Circles Gospel (pp.138-139)

Continue to practice sharing the 3 Circles Gospel tool together in groups of 2 or 3.

#### GOALS

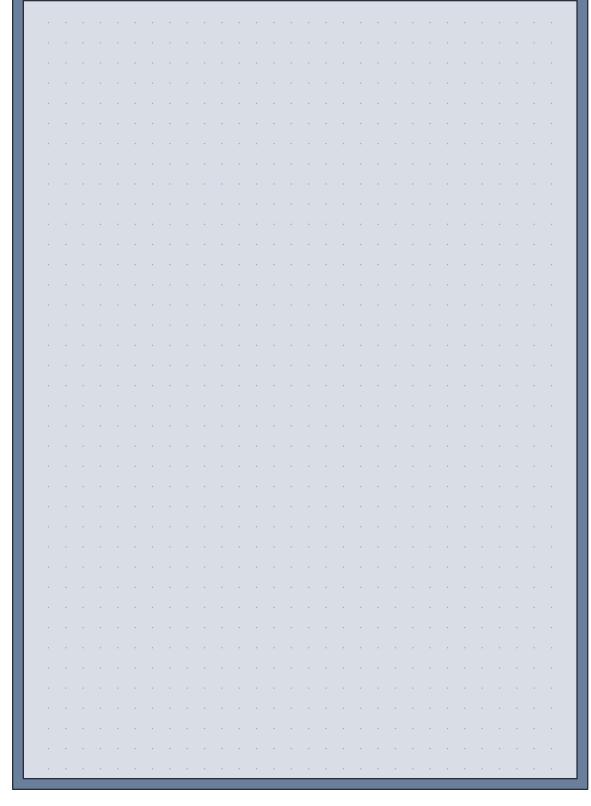
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?





#### PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



LESSON 10





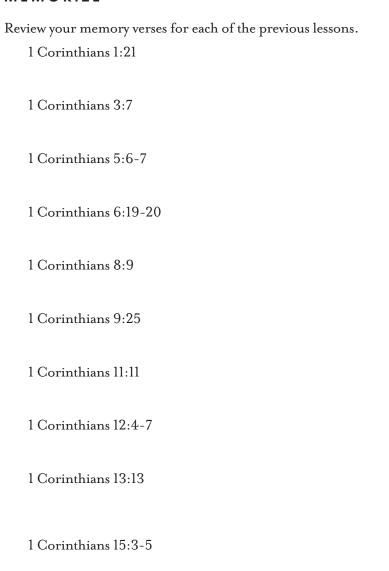
# SYNTHESIS





# PUT IT BACK TOGETHER

#### **MEMORIZE**



Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement ... please realize how much you have grown as a student of God's Word through your study of 1 Corinthians! Each week, you've learned how to better observe, interpret, and apply the stories of Scripture. Those same three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God's story throughout the Bible. Continue to practice and refine these skills so that you become, "a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

#### WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Looking back at the wise counsel of l Corinthians, answer the following questions.

1. What values would the church family live by?

2. What key beliefs would they never compromise on?

3. What activities or ministries would they make sure to practice on a continual basis?

4. Overall, what adjectives would describe a truly healthy church based on the guidance of 1 Corinthians?

Now it is time to draw our detailed study to a useful conclusion, a process known as synthesis. Our goal is to create an overall summary of the book of 1 Corinthians that we can quickly review any time in the future to remind us of the flow and content of the book.

#### OUTLINE THE BOOK

The first step of the synthesis is to create your own outline of the book. Review the work you completed each week. Then, create your own brief outline on the next page. Feel free to use any outlining style, but here is an example of how you might start:

- 1. Greetings from Paul to the saints in Corinth (1:1-9)
- 2. Divisions in the Church (1:10-4:21)
  - a. The Case of Divisions (1:10-17)
  - b. The Causes of Divisions (1:18-4:5)
    - i. Misunderstanding of the Message (1:18-2:16)
      - ii. Misunderstanding of the Ministry (3:1-4:5)
  - c. The Cure of Divisions (4:6-21)



# MY 1 CORINTHIANS OUTLINE



The second step of the synthesis is to record what you learned or were reminded of. This is more personal than your outline. Create a list of the theological truths and life lessons you have either learned for the first time or been reminded of from your study of 1 Corinthians. As an example of a theological truth, you might write "I was taught that the Holy Spirit is a pledge or guarantee of our eternal inheritance to come in the future (1:13-14)." As an example of a life lesson, you might write "This book reminded me that spiritual growth is a community project pursued not just individually but also corporately." List at least ten theological truths and ten life lessons on this page that you learned from your study of 1 Corinthians, and record the verses where each one is addressed.

THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS I'VE LEARNED

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create entirely new applications. Whatever your choice, two things must be true about them:

- 1. Both applications should relate to areas of your life where you are currently in need of growth. Do not choose "be kind to others" if this is already something you do very well.
- 2. Both applications should be specific with a clear plan for growth and the name of someone who will hold you accountable. "Study the Word more" is not specific enough. Instead, develop a specific plan, such as, "I will read through Romans this month and write down my observations, interpretive questions, and applications in a journal. Steve will hold me accountable on a weekly basis."



#### APPLICATION #1

Principle from 1 Corinthians:
Verses where it's discussed:
verses where it's discussed.
Plan of Action: I will
APPLICATION #2
Principle from 1 Corinthians:
Timespectrom T Gottmanum.
Verses where it's discussed:

Plan of Action: I will ...

SYNTHESIS

# APPENDIX

LEADER HELPS 122

STUDY TOOLS 124

CHRONOLOGY 130

**ENGAGE TOOLS** 132

ADDITIONAL STUDY 142
RESOURCES





# LEADER HELPS

#### WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

The best preparation for leading a Bible study is following Jesus closely yourself.

- Spend time with God daily to keep your relationship with Him fresh and growing! Healthy leadership is ultimately an overflow of your personal relationship with God.
- Spend time in the passage throughout the week.
- Pray regularly with your co-leader for each person in your group.
- Prepare ahead of time and make a plan (see below) for your group time. Discuss with your co-leader.
- •As a facilitator of discussion rather than a teacher, you are encouraged to be a colearner with your group. Your job is not to know "everything." It is acceptable to leave some questions partially answered or unresolved, trusting for clarity at a later time. Reach out to ministry leaders and pastors at your church for clarification as needed.
- Lead and walk by faith in the Holy Spirit's work in your life and in the lives of your group members.

#### LEADING WELL

- Set a regular meeting place and time. Consistency helps avoid obstacles that will keep people from being there and a plan helps people know what to expect.
- Create a welcoming environment! Learn people's names and make sure everyone is introduced to each other. Possibly have a snack each week, alternating between healthy and "less healthy." Everyone likes a snack!
- Regularly remind people of the group's purpose to:

**CONNECT** Relationally

**GROW** Biblically

**ENGAGE** Missionally

- Regularly break up into smaller groups of 2-3, starting from the very first meeting. Smaller groups help people feel known. Keep the groups no bigger than three. This will pay off in the long run.
- Stress confidentiality about what is shared in the group.
- Try reaching out to different people each week to grab lunch or coffee outside of group time as your schedule allows.



#### MAKE A PLAN EACH WEEK

Utilize the Group Discussion Guide (located at the end of each lesson). Divide your time into three relatively equal thirds that focus on CONNECT, GROW, ENGAGE. For example, if your group meets for one hour, try intentionally focusing about 20 minutes on Connect, 20 minutes on Grow, and 20 minutes on Engage. Each one of us can easily drift towards overemphasizing one category and neglecting another, which is why making a plan is an important step. Here are some leading tips for connecting, growing, and engaging.

#### 1/3

#### CONNECT

Build group community by using the connect suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Depending on your group size, try getting into groups of 2-3 for an icebreaker question, to catch up on application from last week, and for prayer. The question could vary from more fun or more serious. For example: "What was a highlight and lowlight of your week?" or "How did you apply last week's lesson?"

Then pray in the small groups. (Prayer at the beginning is a good way to help make it an emphasis.) Suggest something for them to pray for as a group, that is bigger than themselves and the group. Some ideas: For neighbors, family members, friends, or classmates who they would like to point to Jesus; for a missionary or a people group in need of the gospel.

#### 2/3

#### GROW

Gather back as one group and have one person pray for your time in God's Word. Discuss the passage using the Grow suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Summarize or read aloud the passage together.

#### 3/3

#### ENGAGE

Read and discuss the tool or spiritual practice in the lesson. Give time to try out sharing the tool or spiritual practice as a group. Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week. Create a plan of action to apply what you have learned. Gather in small groups (of 2-3) again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.

123 C



# STUDY TOOLS

#### **OBSERVE**

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, "What do I see?" This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below. All examples are taken from the book of Galatians.

#### **OBSERVATION TASK 1**

Mark up the passage by visually identifying the following specific elements:

**Underline all verbs**. A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place ("we will reign with Him") or that a state or condition exists ("we are faithless"). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author's flow of thought.

Circle key words or phrases. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like "gospel" in 1:6) or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage) such as "approved" and "works of the law" in 3:2,5,10.

**Highlight repeated words or phrases.** Also, include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as "suffer hardship" and "endure suffering"). You'll also want to highlight things that are repeated from previous passages (such as "son" in 4:23 and 4:30)

**Box connecting words.** These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:

- 1. **Comparison** either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include *and*, *like*, *as*, *just as*, *also*, *so also*, *even so* (e.g., "like the Gentiles" in 2:14).
- 2. **Contrast** points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include but, rather, yet, however (e.g., "No longer I... but Christ" in 2:20).
- 3. **Purpose** indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words and phrases include *that*, so that, in order that (e.g., "Christ redeemed us... in order that in Christ Jesus..." in 3:13-14).
- 4. **Result** is similar to "purpose," but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words and phrases include that, so that, as a result, with the result that (e.g., "The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy." in 2:13).
- 5. Cause expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include *because*, *since*, and sometimes *for*. (e.g., "Why the Law then? It was added on account of the violations," in 3:19)
- 6. **Explanation** is what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word *for.* (e.g., "For prior to the coming of some men from James," in 2:12).
- 7. **Inference** provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words and phrases include *therefore* and *for this reason*. (e.g., "Therefore, recognize that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham." in 3:7)
- 8. Condition presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be



hypothetical). Key word is if. (e.g., "For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise..." in 3:18)

#### **OBSERVATION TASK 2**

List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week.

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as "humility" in 5:16-26. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

#### **OBSERVATION TASK 3**

Write two or more observations per verse.

Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

#### **OBSERVATION TASK 4**

Ask your own interpretive questions.

Here are a few examples:

WHO IS	WHAT IS THE	WHY DID THE AUTHOR	HOW
the author talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

#### OBSERVATION TASK 5 Figurative Language

As every writer knows, one of the most powerful ways to emotionally engage an audience with your words is to use figurative language. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE uses words and phrases in an unexpected way to create a vivid image in the mind of a listener. This image adds color to the author's message, holds the listener's attention, forces the listener to slow down and reflect on the idea being communicated, makes the abstract more concrete, and aids in retention of the author's point. While there are many types of figurative language, here are the eight major types you should be looking for as you study the Bible:

- l) Simile: compares two things by using the explicit formula *like* or *as*. "He will be like a tree planted by streams of water," Psalm 1:3
- 2) Metaphor: compares two things but omits *like* or *as* and instead simply equates them (A is B) "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;" Matthew 5:14
- 3) Metonymy: one word is substituted for another word closely associated with it, such as referring to military officers as "brass." A biblical example would be James' use of "tongue" to refer to one's speech (e.g. James 3:5).
- 4) Hyperbole: conscious exaggeration for the sake of effect or emphasis "I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you;" 2 Corinthians 11:8
- 5) Personification: treating something non-human (and frequently inanimate) as though it

125

were a human. Example: "And their tongue parades through the earth." Psalm 73:9 "Then the moon will be ashamed and the sun be put to shame," Isaiah 24:23

- 6) Anthropomorphism: attributing human characteristics, even body parts, to God. Example: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short that it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear." Isaiah 59:1
- 7) Apostrophe: addressing a thing as if it were a person or an imaginary person as if he were present. Example: "where, o death, is your victory? where, o death, is your sting?" 1 Corinthians 15:55
- 8) Symbol: a concrete image that points to or embodies other meanings. Examples include "light" used to represent God, goodness, truth, or blessing (such as in Psalm 27:1) and "throne" to represent power and authority (such as in Psalm 89:4 and 14).

#### INTERPRET

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions. Also, make sure to familiarize yourself with the three "Principles of Interpretation" on page 128.

#### INTERPRETATION METHODS

#### **Interpretation Method 1** | Use the context.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author's flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead in the book for clues.

#### Interpretation Method 2 | Study cross-references.

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Greek" on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong's definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a "Word Search" that will provide all Biblical references that use the English term.

#### **Interpretation Method 3** | Look up key words.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Greek" on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong's definition in the opposite window. For



even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a "Word Search," "Strong's Search," or "Word Study." The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books & many hours now takes one internet browser & a few seconds!

#### **Interpretation Method 4** | Look up background information.

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that "NET2" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for "Notes" on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

#### **Interpretation Method 5** | Tackle tough questions step-by-step.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

- 1. List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
- 2. List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.
- 3. Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.
- 4. Decide on your certainty level. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

#### Interpretation Method 6 | Compare multiple translations.

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read.

127 C

Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at netbible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

#### INTERPRETATION PRINCIPLES

There are three fundamental principles of interpretation that help us to use our interpretive skills accurately.

#### Interpretation Principle 1 | Discern Author's Intended Meaning

Your goal is to discern the author's intended meaning to the original audience.

Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, "What does this passage mean to me?" While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning, the author's intended meaning, and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps:

- 1. Always start your study with prayer, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
- 2. Avoid inserting your 21st century circumstances and theological issues into the text as they can skew understanding.
- 3. Work diligently to see the text from the point of view of the original readers. To do this: (a) dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and (b) spend a few moments thinking about the original audience's religious understanding by asking, "What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? About Jesus? About salvation? etc."

#### Interpretation Principle 2 | Assume "Normal" Use of Language

The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for "hidden" meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the "normal" techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

- 1. Study the grammar. Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
- 2. Remember that chapter divisions came later. When Paul wrote Corinthians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

#### Interpretation Principle 3 | Let Scripture Interpret Scripture

This is the third and last principle of interpretation. Because God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word. This has two practical applications:

- 1. Check your conclusions. Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of scripture as a whole. If you find your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
- 2. Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages. Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.



One last caution: remember that God revealed scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the New Testament era, we must believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

#### APPLY

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And lest we underestimate the value of this last step, remember that in God's eyes it is the person who does not just know His Word, but also obeys His Word that truly loves Him (see John 14:21). So how do we apply a passage to our lives? Application involves the following two tasks:

#### APPLICATION TASK 1

#### List potential principles from your passage.

A "principle" is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g., "do not leave Jerusalem" in Acts 1:4). It is often helpful when listing principles to consider the following questions:

Is there something to worship or thank God for?

Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?

Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?

Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?

Is there any relationship I need to work on?

#### **APPLICATION TASK 2**

#### Choose one principle, and create a plan to apply it to your life this week.

Once you complete your principle list, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on (Do not just choose the easiest to apply!). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

- 1. What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.
- 2. Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

## CHRONOLOGY

#### EVENT |

#### APPROXIMATE DATE

Crucifixion of Jesus

Pentecost (Acts 2)

May 33

April 33

Paul's conversion (Acts 9)

Summer 35

Paul in Jerusalem, 1st visit (Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20)

35-43

Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26)

Spring 43

Epistle of James written

45

Paul in Jerusalem, relief visit (Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10)

Autumn 47

Paul to Antioch (Acts 12:25-13:1)

 $Autumn\ 47-Spring\ 48$ 

Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)

April 48 – September 49

Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-16)

Autumn 49

Galatians written from Antioch

Autumn 49

Paul in Jerusalem, Jerusalem council (Acts 15)

Autumn 49

Paul in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35)

Winter 49/50

Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)

April 50 – September 52

1 & 2 Thessalonians written

Spring – Summer 51

Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch

End of September 52; Winter 52/53

Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:16)

Spring 53 – May 57

1 & 2 Corinthians written

Spring – Fall 56

Romans written

Winter 56/57

Ephesian elders visit Paul at Miletus (Acts 20)

May 57

Paul in Jerusalem

Eve of Pentecost, May 27, 57

Paul's arrest and trial before Felix (Acts 21:26-24:22)

June 57

Paul's appearance before Felix (Acts 24:24-26)

June 57

Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 24:27)

June 57 - Aug 59

Paul's trial before Festus (Acts 25:7-12) & Agrippa (Acts 26)

July 59; Aug 59

Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:29)

Aug 59 – Feb 60

Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30)

Feb 60 – Mar 62

Luke written

60





Acts Written 60

Ephesians written Autumn 60

Colossians and Philemon written | Autumn 61

Philippians written | Spring 62

Paul's release | Spring 62

Mark written 62

Paul in Ephesus and Colossae | Spring – Autumn 62

Peter in Rome 62

Paul in Macedonia Summer 62 – Winter 62/63

1 Timothy written Autumn 62

Paul in Asia Minor | Spring 62

Peter martyred | Summer 64 (67?)

Paul in Spain and Crete | Spring 64 – Spring 66; Summer 66

Titus written Summer 66

Paul arrested and taken to Rome Autumn 67

2 Timothy written | Autumn 67

Paul's death | Spring 68

Matthew written 60's

Hebrews written 60's

Destruction of Jerusalem | September 2, 70

Jude written 60's or 70's

John written 80's or 90's

1,2,3 John written | 80's or 90's

Revelation written Early 90's

Adapted from Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, Harold H. Hoehner, Zondervan, 1978.



# ENGAGE TOOLS

Because God loves all people, He is constantly working to draw men and women to Himself. He invites believers to partner with Him in this great mission of redemption and restoration. We do this by helping people find and follow Jesus — this is disciple-making. Jesus summarized this calling in Matthew 28:18-20.

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

On the following pages are some foundational tools, practices, and resources to engage in helping people find and follow Jesus.

Visit grace-bible.org/disciplemaker for more resources.





#### **EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP**

Just as Jesus entered into a specific time and place, God has placed each of us into a unique context in which to share His love and to represent Him. Our context includes anyone that we commonly encounter on a regular basis which gives us the ability to have influence in their lives.

Think about the people in your spheres of influence; the people with whom you live, learn, work, and play who are near to you but might be far from God.

Also, think about people that are just beyond your normal spheres. Perhaps there is an acquaintance that you don't know well, or a neighbor who is different from you ethnically or socio-economically, or a community member that the Holy Spirit has put in your path but is more a stranger than friend. Be creative and think outside the box!

### Pray Big - diligently pray for these friends to find and follow Jesus.

Map - write down at least three names in each of these spheres.

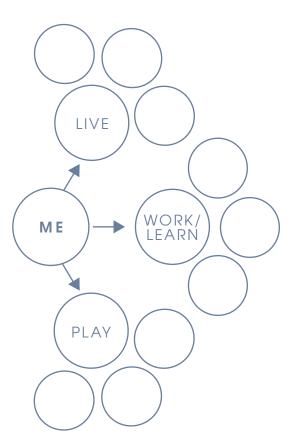
Ask God:

Who might be seeking Him or is asking hard questions about life?

Who needs acts of love and concern shown to them?

How to serve and share the love of Christ with them?

For opportunities to share your story and the gospel.





#### STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

During His life on earth, Jesus told stories using illustrations from everyday life that created an interest in His Kingdom. Jesus made His message accessible to those who would hear. Sadly, we have become conditioned to put on a filter and not speak of Jesus because we imagine that it is awkward, pushy, or politically incorrect. What would it be like to take off this filter and grow in boldness and love as we share stories about who He is and what He is about?

Marking ourselves as a "spiritual" person can help us gauge whether others are interested in God and His message. Some people will "lean in" as you speak about such topics, asking additional questions, sharing their own beliefs, telling about their own journey. Some will not; they will "lean back" and change the topic, become silent, or shut down altogether. Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you as you initiate and let Him do the work of speaking to a person's soul.

#### Practice talking about two or three of the following "interest creating" topics:

Recently, God/Jesus has been teaching me that...

I am realizing more and more that God has blessed me by...

I used to struggle with (insert fear, stronghold, idolatry) but now I see God wants me to believe...

I decided to follow Jesus because...

I've really been learning to pray more lately. Do you have anything in your life that I can commit to pray for?

Think of common topics that come up as you meet people, for example: career, living situation, family history, educational background. Pick one of these and tell how God changed your path in the past, or how He is guiding you in the present.

#### As you practice talking about these things, try to end with a learning question such as:

Have you ever considered God in this way before?

Do you think God is teaching/blessing/asking you to believe anything right now?

Do you consider yourself on a spiritual journey? What is that like?

What does your tradition say about Jesus?

Your questions are to gauge a response and to allow space for them to interact with your story.

Now, be prayerful and alert as to who God brings across your path!





#### SHARING YOUR STORY

You have a unique story of how you came to know and follow Jesus. Your story is one of the most powerful tools you have for helping other people find and follow Jesus as well. As you begin to let people know that you are following Jesus, simply ask, "Can I share with you the story of my spiritual journey?" Those who are interested in spiritual things are likely to demonstrate their interest in one way or another (asking questions, making a comment) and that often provides an open door to share your story.

#### HOW TO BEGIN

Write out your thoughts on the following topics and questions. These ideas will help you share the story of your spiritual journey, sometimes called your "testimony."

#### MY LIFE BEFORE JESUS

My life revolved around \_\_\_\_\_\_, and I found my identity, happiness and security from \_\_\_\_\_\_. Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc.?

How did this disappoint me? How was this unfulfilling? How did I come to realize this? What was I struggling with (if anything) just before I believed in Jesus?

Note: Some people trusted Jesus when they were very young, and don't have clear memories of the time before they knew Him. If that is you, simply share this as part of your story.

#### HOW I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

This part of your story is where you came to a transition in your life.

When and how did I first hear about Jesus?

What did I learn about the life He offers all who believe in Him?

When and why did my perspective about Jesus begin to change?

Why did I decide to believe in Jesus?

Note: Some of us may be able to point to specific times or circumstances regarding how or when we believed. For others of us, we can only point to a time period or gradual understanding. Both are great. Everyone's story is significant and the biggest point is that you now believe in Jesus.

#### MY LIFE SINCE I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude, and perspective on life.

How am I motivated differently now? What do I live for now?

How do I experience God now?

#### BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Think about your answers to the questions above, and ask yourself the following:

Is this a continuous story that makes sense?

Are there any consistent themes in my story?

Can I share my story in 3-4 minutes?

Was I clear about what I believed about Jesus?

135



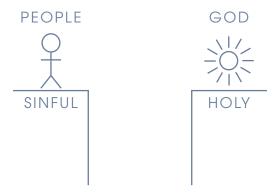
#### SHARING THE GOSPEL: THE BRIDGE

In the Christian faith, the word "gospel" simply means the "good news" about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed!

Let's look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.



God created people to enjoy a relationship with Him and represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries that protect and allow us to enjoy our relationship with Him and with other people. (Genesis 2:15-16)

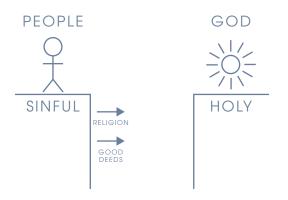


Everyone has fallen short of God's standards. The Bible calls that "sin." Our sin results in our separation from God. Unless our sin is forgiven, we deserve eternal punishment, separated from God forever.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

"For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23a



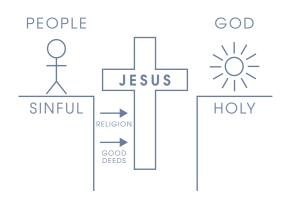


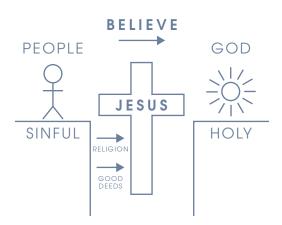
Some try to reach God through religion or by trying to be a good person. But the Bible tells us that there is only one way to God and that is through belief in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and freely give us eternal life. God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took on Himself the punishment that our sin deserves. Then, Jesus rose from the dead. He conquered sin and death forever.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8





Everyone who believes in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins receives eternal life. To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and salvation. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 5:24



#### SHARING THE GOSPEL: THREE CIRCLES

In Christianity, the word "gospel" simply means the "good news" about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed!

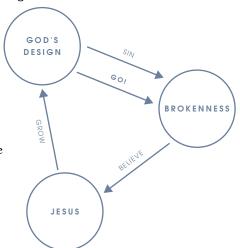
Let's look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.

These three circles help us explain the gospel according to the Bible.

Read each section and the scripture verses that follow.

#### GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).



#### **BROKENNESS**

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust. This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way. Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23) Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a) Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

#### **JESUS**

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

#### BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).



Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live (John 3:16-17).

Which circle or arrow in the diagram best represents your life right now? Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?

#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS AND NEXT STEPS:

#### "Yes."

Ask: "Tell me about that. When and how did that happen for you?" Try to discern if the person is trusting in anything other than Christ alone. Move to Grow and Go

#### "No, but I want to."

Affirm their decision to believe and help them to tell God in prayer of their belief in Jesus.

Example: "Thank you God for loving me by sending your Son Jesus to die for me. I believe in His life, death and resurrection to rescue me from my sin and spiritual death. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me the free gift of eternal life."

Welcome them to the Family of God!

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:13

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." 2 Corinthians 5:17 Move to Grow and Go

#### "Not Sure" / "Not Yet" / "No."

Ask: "What is keeping you from trusting in Jesus?"

Try to discern their willingness or unwillingness to believe.

For those willing, help answer their questions if possible.

For those unwilling, offer to pray for them and talk further at another time.

#### GROW

Everyone who believes in Jesus should then grow in their relationship with God. We grow by knowing God more deeply and living more like Him personally.

We begin to know Him and we become like Him by following His way of living (Ephesians 4:15).

#### GO

Followers of Jesus have the great calling and opportunity to go into the broken world to share the love of God and the good news of the gospel message (Matthew 28:19-20).

139 C



#### DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Discovery Bible Study is an easy and meaningful way to read the Bible with friends in your life who do not know Jesus. The simple practice consists of reading a section of scripture and answering five basic questions. The goal is to facilitate an encounter between God's truth and your friend's heart. Be praying for God to reveal Himself to your friend through His Word.

Choose a passage of scripture, read it aloud (1-2 times).

Ask someone to retell it in their own words. Answer these five questions:

- 1. What does this passage teach about God?
- 2. What does this passage teach about people or myself?
- 3. What stands out most in this passage?
- 4. Since God's word is true, how should I change as a result? What will I do in response to this passage? Consider the following:

Is there an example for me to follow? Is there a sin for me to avoid? Is there a command for me to obey? Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a challenge for me to face?

5. With whom am I going to share this passage and what I am learning from the Bible?

#### Suggested Passages

Read through these 4 Core Passages about Jesus:
John 3:1-21 (You must be born again)
Mark 2:1-12 (Jesus has authority to forgive)
Luke 7:36-50 (Forgive much/Love much)
Luke 18:7-14 (Self-righteous/irreligious)

Read through the book of John.

#### Creation to Christ

Read through these passages for bigger picture of the Biblical narrative.

- Genesis 1:1-25
- ☐ Genesis 2:4-24
- Genesis 3:1-13
- ☐ Genesis 3:14-24
- ☐ Genesis 6:5-8
- Genesis 6:9-8:14
- Genesis 8:15-9:17
- Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-7
- Genesis 22:1-19
- ☐ Exodus 12:1-28
- ☐ Exodus 20:1-21
- Leviticus 4:1-35
- ☐ Isaiah 53
- Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20
- ☐ Matthew 3; John 1:29-34
- ☐ Matthew 4:1-11
- ☐ John 3:1-21
- ☐ John 4:1-26, 39-42
- Luke 5:17-26
- ☐ Mark 4:35-41
- ☐ Mark 5:1-20
- ☐ John ll:l-44
- ☐ Matthew 26:17-30
- ☐ John 18:1-19:16
- Luke 23:32-56
- Luke 24:1-35
- Luke 24:36-53
- ☐ John 3:1-21



#### PRAY MODEL

PRAY\* is a simple acronym to help frame your time of prayer.

#### P - PAUSE

- · Take a deep breath and center your mind and heart on God's presence with you.
- · Don't rush; be still and sit quietly with Him.
- · Slowly let go of distractions surrounding you and focus on the nearness of God.

Silence and stillness reorient our minds and hearts to pray from a place of love, joy and peace.

"But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord God my refuge," Psalm 73:28

#### R - REJOICE

- Begin praising God for who He is and for how He loves His good creation; the natural world, all people and you.
- Thank Him for specific things in your life, family, church, community and the world.
- · Acknowledge your identity as a "gift recipient" of the abundant grace of God.

"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." **John 1:16** "Everything that has breath shall praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!" **Psalm 150:6** 

#### A - ASK

- Tell God what is on your heart and mind.
- · Ask Him for what you need and want.
- Cast your burdens upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).
- · Listen to Him as He reveals His heart to you as well.
- Try keeping a list of people and specific areas of your life that you are praying about.

Prayer is a conversation of talking and listening; communion and communication.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." **Philippians 4:6** 

#### Y - YIELD

- Finish your prayers with a heart posture of surrender; trusting in His love for you.
- Try opening your hands, palms up, as an outward expression of your inward desire.

Jesus is our great example of both asking God for His deepest needs and of yielding the outcome to the Father's will.

"And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

Matthew 26:39



# ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

netbible.org | cross references, word studies biblestudytools.net | word studies blueletterbible.org | word studies planobiblechapel.org/soniclight | commentary bestcommentaries.com | commentary database

Grace Bible Church does not always agree with the views of these commentaries. These are good tools to help understand hard passages, but the particular theological views reflect the author of the commentary and not those of Grace Bible Church.

#### DISCIPLESHIP/BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

Living By the Book by Howard Hendricks and Charles Swindoll

A more in-depth book on how to study the Bible using the tools discussed in this packet.

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman

A highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making by Leroy Eims

This practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

A Survey of Bible Doctrine by Charles Ryrie

An easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

Rooted by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX

Nine conversations that establish a new believer with foundational truths and practices to follow Jesus for a lifetime. https://www.grace-bible.org/resources/bible-study/46/rooted



