

Let's Go Group Studies

Leader's Notes

1. We're providing this material to you to remove some of the stress and frustration of developing a plan to lead a specific group study. It isn't meant to replace your individual preparation to lead. Our hope is that you would use it as a guide to your engagement with the text and the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you as you help your study's participants to have their own relevant encounter with scripture and the Holy Spirit.
2. This plan isn't meant to constrain you to lead in any specific way. **Please do modify it to better meet the needs of your group and to honor your gifting and authentic style.** For example, when and how you pray and share prayer needs should be in a rhythm that is good for your group as long as you are praying as a group. For another, who reads and how scripture is read should fit your group and its needs as long as it is read somehow.
3. **Be authentic.** If you find yourself saying "They are asking" as in, 'I didn't write this question and I don't really understand why it is being asked.' Don't ask it. Ask something else. It is okay not to understand everything. No one understands everything. If you don't believe in what you're saying, why should anyone else believe it? One way to turn this into a positive is to admit to the group that you are struggling with figuring out a particular bit and allow someone else to contribute their God-given wisdom.
4. Some questions, especially earlier in the study, aren't meant to be a mile deep or transformative. These questions are intended to prompt the participants to notice what is there. They give the participants a way to begin to care about the specific words on the page and to begin to discuss the relevance of the scripture to their needs.
5. Portions of the plan in quotes are meant to be spoken out loud to the group as in, "Who's buried in Grant's Tomb?" You don't have to repeat the question or statement exactly as it appears. Restate it in a way that feels comfortable and natural for you.
6. Portions of the plan in *italics* are meant to be notes to you that you can use as prompts in aiding group discussion and aren't intended to be read verbatim to the group. They may not be the definitive answer but should be a good possible answer. As part of your preparation, please add to and edit the notes to fit where you intend to lead the discussion.
7. A **Follow up question** helps participants open up a little more and look a little deeper and is meant to be asked after there has been some discussion of the prior question.
8. The last page is the participant handout.
9. Please remember that our focus, purpose and practice is to **Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples.**

Let's Go- What Must I do to Go to Heaven?

- 1) Scripture: Mark 10:17-31; Rom 2:13; James 2:10; John 3:16; Rom 3:23-24
 - A. Parallel accounts- Matt 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30
- 2) Objective: After studying the listed scripture and participating in the discussion, each person should be able to list anything in their life that is, or may be, getting between them and the 'faith like a child' that God wants them to enjoy.
- 3) Resources: Book of Mark, Grassmick. The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord & Zuck, Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006, 2010 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)
- 4) Preparation:
 - A. Pray for guidance
 - B. Review Leader's Notes and read entire lesson plan
- 5) Prayer requests & Open in prayer
- 6) Intro:
 - A. "Last time I asked you to identify one practical way you can demonstrate this week that your faith in Christ and His kingdom is growing closer to that of a child's. Would anyone be willing to share if you were able to do that and tell us how you feel about the results?" *If you closed last time's study with a different question or application, substitute your closing for this one.*
 - B. This week we are going to study a passage usually titled 'The Rich Young Ruler' or 'The Rich Man.' This man is wealthy and believes that he has been keeping the law but obviously feels that he lacks something to receive eternal life. When the man asks Jesus what that something is, Jesus tells him where he has failed the law and how to overcome that failure. Jesus' answer doesn't bring him joy, only sadness. Let's look together at where we might be finding sadness instead of the joy that God intends.
 - C. When we are done, each of us should be able to find anything in our life that is, or may be, getting between us and the 'faith like a child' that God wants us to enjoy."
- 7) The study
 - A. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:17
 - B. Ask "Do you think this man asked the right question? Why or why not?"

- i) *We are going to come back to this man's question further on. Briefly examine it now because it sets the context for Jesus' response. Please notice the contrast between how this man approaches the acquisition of eternal life and what Jesus just taught us in the previous four verses.*
- ii) *'Good Teacher', he is close on this, he shows respect for Jesus' knowledge but doesn't recognize Jesus' divinity or lordship.*
- iii) *'what', makes it a question.*
- iv) *'shall I do', a broad verb (poieo (poy-eh'-o) Strongs NT:4160) to make or do.*
- v) *'to inherit', good theology. We don't receive a token to get into Heaven. We become heirs.*
- vi) *'eternal life', means what it says.*
- vii) *You don't need to belabor any of these points. I listed them so you can move through the question efficiently and with some confidence. Unlike the scribes and pharisees' questions, this seems to be a genuine, heartfelt question.*

C. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:18-22.

D. Ask everyone to complete question 1 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

- i) "Why do you think Jesus zeros in on the man's possessions as his problem?"
 - (1) *In his love for the man Jesus prescribes the genuine cure, give it all away and come and follow me. The man needs to turn from his false god of wealth and learn to know the one true God.*
 - (2) *To be perfect by the law is to keep all of it completely. Jesus was pointing out the transgression. See also Rom 2:13, James 2:10*
 - (3) *Note that this was a problem for this man and not a mandatory course of action for all believers.*
 - (4) *Again, think of this in the context of accepting Jesus with the faith of a child. This course of action is a practice of such a faith. Jesus loves the man and wants him to find what he seeks. Jesus isn't teasing him by holding salvation just out of his reach.*

E. Ask "Look again at the man's question in verse 17. He has been told exactly how to get the thing he just genuinely asked for and he went away sad. Try and put yourself in his brain. What is the root cause of your sadness?"

- i) *I can't visualize anything making me more happy than my wealth.*
- ii) *My wealth is my identity. Who would I be if I gave that up?*

iii) *I need to do this myself. I don't trust God to do it.*

F. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:23-27

G. Ask everyone to complete question 2 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

i) "What is so hard about accepting that we can't save ourselves and that our wealth can make our salvation harder?"

(1) *We like to do things for ourselves. It makes us feel like we are self-reliant and in control.*

(2) *We view our wealth as ours and that it protects us from hardship and unhappiness.*

(3) *These views oppose how God runs the universe and designed us and are a rejection of God Himself.*

H. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:28-31

I. Ask "What is Jesus promising here?"

i) *What you give up for the kingdom will be restored to you in greater ways than you can imagine. Estranged from your family for your faith? A better one is waiting for you. The family of Christ is pretty big.*

ii) *Same for hearth and home.*

iii) *Persecution should be expected.*

J. Ask "What does it benefit you to seek importance, or unimportance?"

i) *Nothing. There is no 'If-Then', cause and effect statement here. For Jews of this time (and pretty much everybody else for all times including our own) earthly importance and wealth were a strong indication of favor with God. Jesus doesn't think so.*

K. Ask everyone to complete question 3 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

i) "If you were keeping score, you may have noticed that Jesus doesn't give a direct, 'this equals that' answer for going to Heaven in this passage (You can start with John 3:16 and Rom 3:23-24 for that). What main point or points do you think Jesus was trying to teach us here?" *Ideally, these answers come from the participants. Whether they get them from the study, the Sunday sermon or elsewhere, the best thing that can happen here is they are verbalized by the participants. If they struggle to answer...*

(1) *Trying to live a good life that is pleasing to God is impossible for us and won't buy us salvation. Only God can make this right.*

(2) *There are things of this earthly life that can get in our way of following God. Wealth can be one of those things.*

(3) *Having to give up people and things dear to us should be expected. We are promised that we will be given much more than we give up.*

L. Ask everyone to complete question 4 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

i) "What in your life is, or may be, getting between you and the 'faith like a child' that God wants you to enjoy? What are you afraid will happen if you give that thing away? Will you pray several times this week that the Holy Spirit will give you the clear guidance of what to do and the courage to do it?"

8) Summary:

A. Encourage your group members to apply the ideas or principles they developed from question 4. Plan on asking them next week about the results.

B. Close in prayer

