

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 two pages are the participant handout.
9. Please remember that our focus, purpose and practice is to **Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples.**

Let's Go- Love That Helps People See

1) Scripture: Mark 10:46-52; John 9:39-41

A. Parallel accounts- Matt 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43

i) *The vividness of the account (e.g., v. 50) suggests that it was an eyewitness report from one such as Peter. The three Synoptic Gospels record this event with some divergent details. Matthew mentioned two blind men (Matt 20:30), and Luke placed the incident at Jesus' approach to Jericho instead of His exit (Luke 18:35). Probably two blind men were involved but Mark and Luke focused on one, perhaps the more vocal or well known. Also, there were two Jerichos - an old and a new city - and the healings could have occurred as the crowd was leaving old Israelite Jericho (Matt 20:29; Mark 10:46) and entering new Herodian Jericho (Luke 18:35), though the evidence that old Jericho was inhabited at that time is not certain. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)*

2) Objective: After studying the listed scripture and participating in the discussion, each person should be able to list the most important thing about themselves that God would have them know right now.

3) Resources: Book of Mark, Grassmick. The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord & Zuck. Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Lockyer, Thomas Nelson Publishers

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 describe how your life would change in one way if you embraced and practiced the values of Jesus as He taught them in last week's passage. 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. "Tonight, we'll see Jesus and His disciples on their journey to Jerusalem. They have left the hill district of Perea and are passing through Jericho (See the map on page 2 of your handout). Jesus is going to restore the sight of a blind man named Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus loudly proclaims Jesus as the Messiah prior to his being healed. In another account in the Gospel of John, Jesus speaks to a different kind of blindness that He wants us to know about. Jesus wants the blind

to see and He wants the spiritually blind to see their blindness so that they might be healed of it.

- C. When we are done, I am going to ask each of us to pray about what God wants to help us see and know about ourselves right now that we might be having trouble seeing.”

7) The study

A. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:46-48.

B. Ask “What do you think it means that the blind man addressed Jesus as ‘the Son of David?’”

i) *If both the pharisees and the common people used the phrase ‘Son of David’ to mean the Messiah that was promised by God, it was almost certainly commonly understood and used that way.*

ii) *While ‘Rabbi’ could be used as a respectful title, to repeatedly cry out to Jesus as ‘the Son of David’ is to loudly and publicly acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah.*

C. Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:49-52

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) “What did the blind man ask for and what did he receive?”

(1) *He twice asked for mercy and then his sight.*

(2) *His faith was commended and then his sight was restored.*

E. Ask for a volunteer to read John 9:39-41.

F. 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) “In John 9:1-34, Jesus gives sight to a man born blind. The Pharisees reject the miracle and Jesus as the miracle worker, calling Him a sinner. Jesus’ disciples miss the point entirely when the only two possibilities for the man being born blind they recognize are the man’s sin or his parent’s sin. As you compare the blind man in Mark, who acknowledged Jesus as messiah before he was he healed, and the blind man in John, who only acknowledged Jesus as Messiah after he was healed, what does Jesus statement in John 9:39 mean to you?”

(1) *Only a few will receive physical healing from blindness. Only someone who recognizes that they are spiritually blind (the judgement) can receive healing from that blindness (the mercy).*

(2) *God cares about our physical condition as well as our spiritual condition.*

(3) *Physical blindness is a good lesson about spiritual blindness.*

(4) *If Jesus can routinely heal physical blindness, maybe I should pay attention to the spiritual blindness He describes.*

G. **Follow-up Question** “If we think of spiritual blindness as the inability to see our own spiritual condition, what specific things does it keep us from seeing?”

i) *It is hard to find the way out if I can't see the door.*

ii) *It is hard to know what my problems really are if I am just groping after them in the dark.*

iii) *It is easy to think I am all alone in the dark.*

H. 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 your eyes have adjusted to the dark, it is painful and disorienting to have your vision suddenly flooded with light. Perhaps this is why God usually only reveals our true nature to us progressively. Is there anything God is revealing to you currently? This might be a sin that needs your repentance, a step of faith He wants you to take, a relationship you need to develop or end or something about yourself or your relationship with Him that He wants you to know. It could be almost anything. You don't have to share it out loud but writing it down often helps to see it for what it is.” *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) *There is no sample answer for this.*

I. 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) “Will you commit to asking the Holy Spirit several times this week to help you clearly see the most important thing about yourself that He would have you know right now?”

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

Let's Go- Love That Helps People See

Mark 10:46-52

1) What did the blind man ask for and what did he receive?

2) In John 9:1-34, Jesus gives sight to a man born blind. The Pharisees reject the miracle and Jesus as the miracle worker, calling Him a sinner. Jesus' disciples miss the point entirely when the only two possibilities for the man being born blind they recognize are the man's sin or his parent's sin. As you compare the blind man in Mark, who acknowledged Jesus as messiah before he was he healed, and the blind man in John, who only acknowledged Jesus as Messiah after he was healed, what does Jesus statement in John 9:39 mean to you?

3) If your eyes have adjusted to the dark, it is painful and disorienting to have your vision suddenly flooded with light. Perhaps this is why God usually only reveals our true nature to us progressively. Is there anything God is revealing to you currently? This might be a sin that needs your repentance, a step of faith He wants you to take, a relationship you need to develop or end or something about yourself or your relationship with Him that He wants you to know. It could be almost anything. You don't have to share it out loud but writing it down often helps to see it for what it is.

4) Will you commit to asking the Holy Spirit several times this week to help you clearly see the most important thing about yourself that He would have you know right now?

For next time... Read Mark 11:1-11

