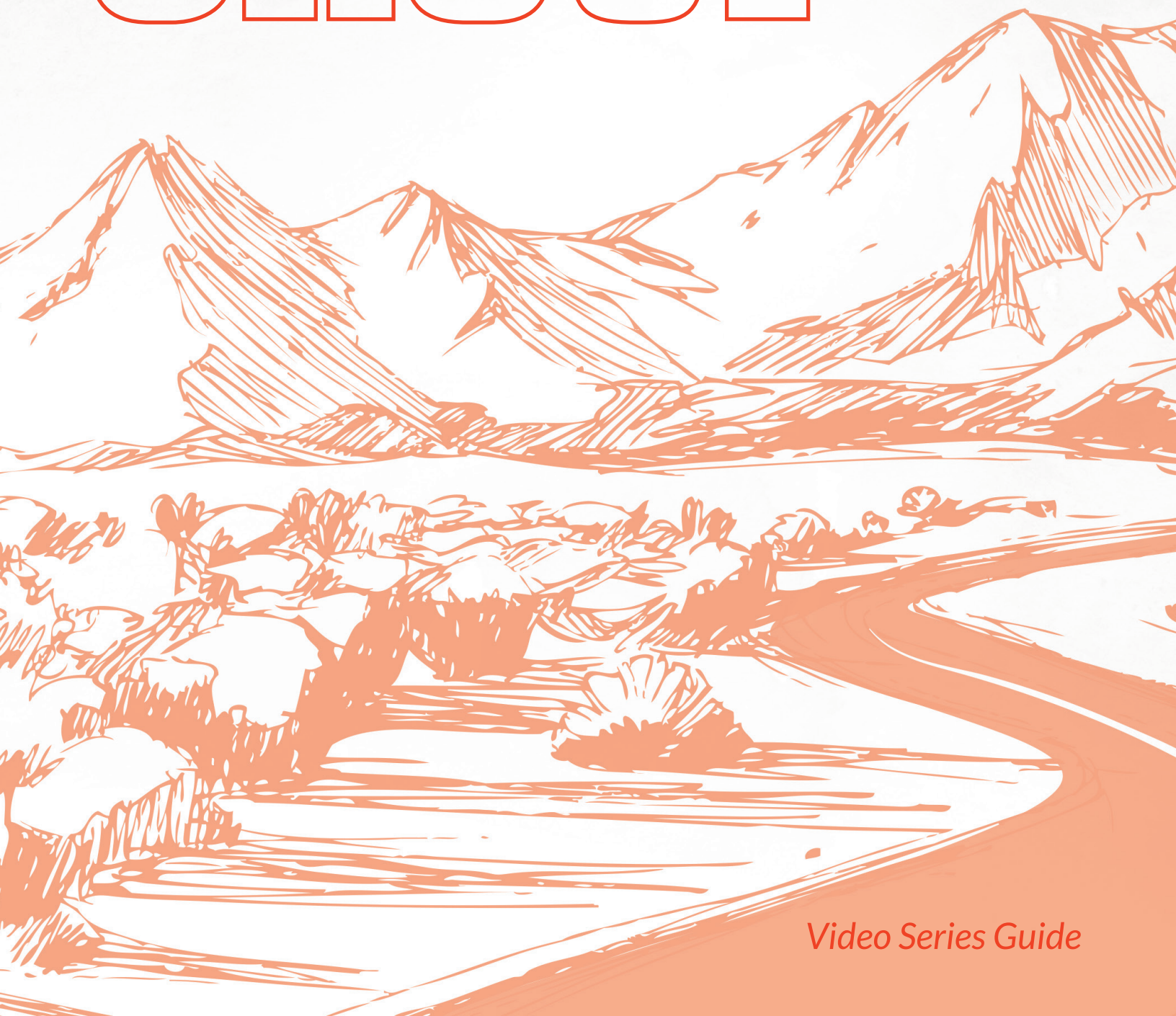


The Disciple's Journey

SMALL GROUP



Video Series Guide

Small Group Guidelines

Though we call these Basic Group Guidelines, these are also effective in all relationships and environments. We believe it is wise to observe these whether in a one-on-one conversation or in a group discussion.

- Guidelines give boundaries for people to operate within.
- They help with the flow and pace of the discussions.
- They help us value one another.
- They help people to be more comfortable sharing deep and meaningful things.

This is a Safe Group

Confidentiality is key, what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment: words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

No Crosstalk

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, checking phone, responding to text or email, etc.

Listen

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

No Rescuing or Fixing

We are not here to fix each other, Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

Use "I" Statements

It's easy to talk about the issues of others or respond with "we", "us", "the church". But for us to grow as disciples and build relationship we want to use "I" statements.

Don't Overtalk

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

Fight for Relationship

It's not "if" conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but "when". We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to that person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

Introduction

When we humble ourselves, submit to Jesus and accept His invitation to become a disciple, He is able to begin the journey of bringing us back into alignment with God's original design for every sphere of our lives. And then we can be His ambassadors to help reconcile all His creation back into relationship with Him and His design for their lives.

Watch:

<https://qrco.de/bdHskZ>



The Disciple's Journey: Week 1 - Abide Sphere

Opening Question:

How do you know if you know someone well? What qualities make a relationship close?



Watch this Video:

<https://qrco.de/bdHstO>

Main Point:

Abiding with Jesus is absolutely key in being a disciple of Christ. Our relationship with Jesus must be at the core of who we are in every sphere of our life.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 1:1-2:18

Questions:

What does it mean to abide?

How much time abiding with God is enough?

What do you do to hear from God?

Have you ever journaled, and has that helped your relationship with God?

Have you ever experienced pruning in your life, and how has that impacted your relationship with God?



What or who encourages you to be consistent in pressing into your relationship with Jesus?

How does abiding with Jesus change how we interact with others?

All relationships take some work, but it can be especially difficult or awkward to start communicating and listening to someone you can't see or hear audibly. Share how you started and have grown in your abiding relationship with God.

If you haven't yet started an abiding relationship with Jesus, what is stopping you now?

Supporting Scripture:

John 15:4-6, Romans 12:1-2, 1 John 2:28

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned." (John 15:4-6, ESV)

Helpful tips and resources:

Key ways to grow in an abiding relationship with God include: interacting with the Word, prayer, worship and community with other believers.

Cost of Discipleship - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Winning the War in Your Mind - Craig Groeschel

Videos and more resources can be found at thedisciplesjourney.org



The Disciple's Journey: Week 2 - Church Sphere

Opening Question:

What is your weirdest church experience?



Watch:

qrco.de/bdHuFg

Main Point:

The church is God's idea. We aren't just called to go to church, we are called to be the church. Every believer can and should play a role in their local church.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 2:19-4:16

"And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." (Ephesians 4:11-16, ESV)

Questions:

When you see other groups of people (sports groups, clubs, affinity groups, friend groups, etc), what is it that makes you want to be a part of that group?

What is the purpose of the church?

How does Ephesians 2:22 support the idea of being the church?

Do you think God cares about our relationship with the church? How so?



Who in your life has modeled how to be a part of God's family, the church?

How are relationships with other godly believers different from relationships with anyone else?

Do you have different expectations from relationships with other believers than you have from non-believers? What are they? Are these expectations fair and/or realistic?

How have you benefited from your relationship with the church?

How do you model the church to those in your life?

Supporting Scripture:

Galatians 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 3:14-15, Romans 12:9-13

Helpful tips and resources:

RLM Doctrinal Statement on the CHURCH:

We believe the church is the body and bride of Christ and also serves as the household of faith. It is a living temple where God dwells in each of His people. We believe that everyone that has been saved by Christ is a member of His church and called to be a connected and beneficial part of His body. We believe that the church is commanded to love God and others, thus relationship is the primary vehicle through which we share the gospel, and through which the church will grow to maturity. We believe that His church exists throughout the world and is witnessed and experienced in local autonomous gatherings of believers that are overseen by Elders. We believe submission to God's authority and the authority of the appointed Elders in the local church is essential for unity and reveals our spiritual maturity.

Church is a Team Sport - Jim Putman

The Other Half of Church - Jim Wilder and Michael Hendricks

Videos and more resources can be found at thedisciplesjourney.org



The Disciple's Journey: Week 3 - Home & Family Sphere

Opening Question:

What is one of your favorite childhood memories?



Watch:

<https://qrco.de/bdHuOz>

Main Point:

Discipleship at home requires us to be intentional about bringing Christ into our discussions and actions with the people we are closest to.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 5:21-6:4

"submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word," (Ephesians 5:21-26, ESV)

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:1-4, ESV)

Questions:

We all have different family configurations, what does the home sphere look like for you? What does it mean to submit to one another? How did Jesus model this?

What expectations have you had for your family in the past? Were those appropriate expectations to have?

What things have you implemented in your home sphere to bring your family closer to Jesus?

What have you chosen to do differently in your home than what you experienced in the home you grew up in?

Repentance is a significant marker of the christian faith. How hard is it for you to be honest and say you're sorry to your family?

How is God asking you to live humbly in your home and family sphere?
What could you implement starting now to increase your intentionality in the home and family sphere?

Supporting Scripture:

Matthew 7:24-27, Deuteronomy 6:1-10, Colossians 3:12-17, Proverbs 21:9

Helpful tips and resources:

Seeds Family Worship seedsfamilyworship.com

Marriage and parenting classes are available reallifeministries.com/classes

Sacred Marriage - Gary Thomas

Built to Last - Chris and Sara Short

Hope for the Prodigal - Jim and Bill Putman

Videos and more resources can be found at thedisciplesjourney.org



The Disciple's Journey: Week 4 - World Sphere

Opening Question:

What is the worst job experience you've ever had?



Watch:

<https://qrco.de/bdHuR2>

Main Point:

We are called to be Christ's ambassadors where we work, live, and play. How we conduct ourselves in the world is how others will see Jesus.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 4:17-5:20, 6:5-9

"Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him." (Ephesians 6:5-9, ESV)

Questions:

Who would you consider to be in your world sphere?

How have you been treated by employers/employees in the jobs you've had in the past?

Have you ever struggled to honor God within your workplace? How?

Who have you seen being intentional about bringing Jesus into their work environment?

What is one thing you could do to be intentional about representing God in your current world sphere?

Being a disciple requires sacrifice. How have you experienced sacrifice in your world sphere as a result of being obedient to Christ?

Is there an area of your life that you haven't put under the submission of the Lord? What is God asking you to do with that?

Why is it important to be the same person (character) in all spheres of life?

Who in your world sphere are you praying for this week? Suggestion to end the group: Have everyone in the group say a one sentence prayer for someone in their world sphere.

Supporting Scripture:

Phil 2:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, Matthew 5:13-16

Helpful tips and resources:

Be nice to the people you work with!

The Case for Christ - Lee Strobel

The Revolutionary Disciple - Jim Putman and Chad Harrington

The Hiding Place - Corrie Ten Boom

Videos and more resources can be found at thedisciplesjourney.org



The Disciple's Journey: Week 5 - Spiritual Realm Sphere

Opening Question:

Opening Question: If you could only have one piece of the armor of God, which one would you choose? And why?



Watch:

<https://qrco.de/bdHuUM>

Main Point:

There is a spiritual battle going on. Many people are not even aware of what is happening in the spiritual realm that they can't see. We are called to fight in this spiritual war, and we shouldn't try to do it alone.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-24

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints," (Ephesians 6:10-18, ESV)

Questions:

How does the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17) help us remain consistent in our spiritual battle?

Looking at the armor of God, which piece of armor do you struggle to put on? Which is easy for you to put on?

If you were your own enemy, how would you strategize to take you off your game spiritually? What are the dangers of isolation for a disciple of Jesus?

What relationships do you have that help you fight your spiritual battles?

What piece of armor are you relying on most in this season of your life?

How is your life different knowing that God is for you and not against you?

Supporting Scripture:

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, 1 Peter 3:22, Philippians 2:12-13

Helpful tips and resources:

Heaven - Randy Alcorn

This Present Darkness - Frank Peretti

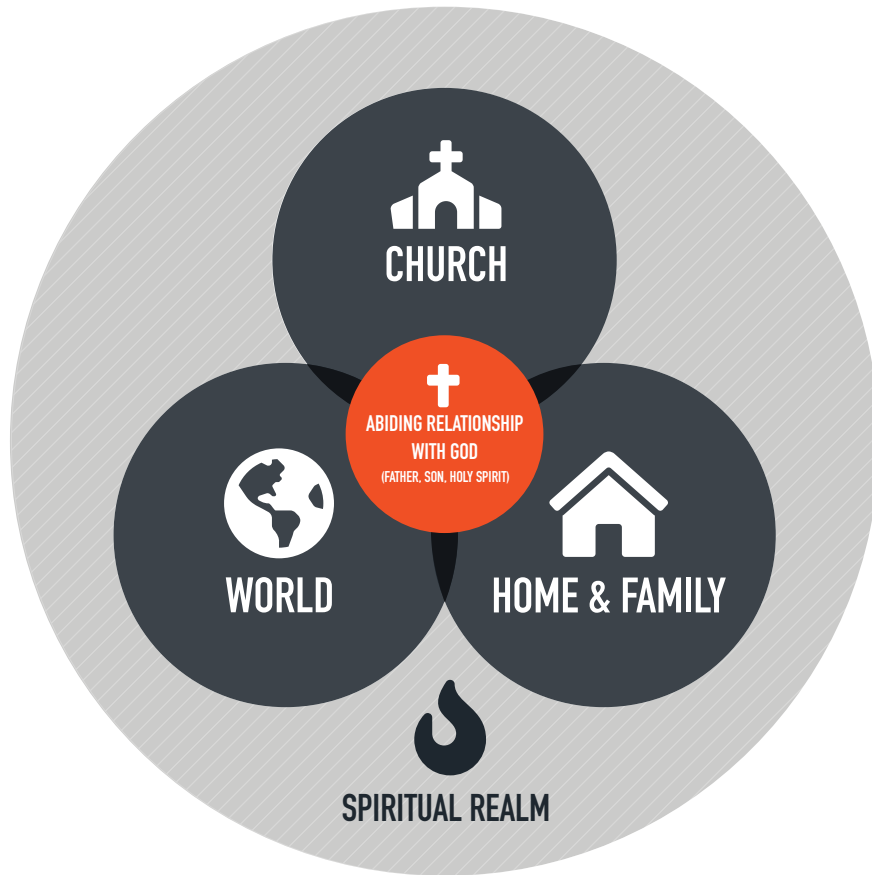
Screwtape Letters - C.S. Lewis

Videos and more resources can be found at thedisciplesjourney.org



The Five Spheres

Our relationship with Jesus brings about change in every part of our lives. As you abide with God, He leads you to change the way you think and act in the home, the church, and the world. As you spend time with Jesus, that inner sphere changes your heart and character in the other three spheres of your life. These spheres are the manifestation of your spiritual walk in your physical life. Indicating sphere icons are on class descriptions.



✝ Abiding Relationship with God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit): strengthening and deepening your personal relationship with Jesus. (Eph. 1:1-2:10)

⛪ Relationships within the Church: small groups, ministry teams, loving the family of God, and conflict resolution. (Ephesians 2:10-5:20)

🏠 Relationships within the Home & Family: spouse, father, mother, children, extended family, and singleness. (Ephesians 5:21 - 6:2)

🌐 Relationships within the World: employer, employee, friends, hobbies, neighbors, community, etc. (Ephesians 6:2-9)

🔥 Spiritual Realm: God is at work all around us and gives us the opportunity to join him in what He is doing. (Ephesians 6:10-24)

Notes:

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REAL LIFE
MINISTRIES

www.thedisciplesjourney.org