

BECOMING A BIBLICAL LEADER



A WORKBOOK FOR DEVELOPING
LEADERS IN THE CHURCH



XL MINISTRIES
EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

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LEADERS IN THE CHURCH



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Understanding Biblical Church Leadership and Cultivating Character for Biblical Church Leadership:
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Introduction

BECOMING A BIBLICAL LEADER: A WORKBOOK FOR DEVELOPING LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

The church matters. As Robert Saucy writes, “Throughout the course of history God has worked in the world in a variety of ways through individuals, nations, and peoples. The focus of His present work is the church. That which was begun in Scriptures, as men and women were called to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, continues today in fulfillment of Christ’s promise to build His church. Not only is Christ building His church, but it is the primary instrument through which He ministers in the world.”¹

Church leadership matters. Leaders in the church have a significant impact on the health and maturity of the congregation. This is why the New Testament provides such clear teaching regarding appointing leadership in the church, and why it spends a significant amount of time providing instruction to church leaders. Biblical church leadership looks very different than the leadership of the world and so it must be intentionally cultivated through the study and application of God’s word.

Becoming a Biblical Leader is designed to help develop individuals for church leadership by providing a general overview of the understanding, knowledge, and character necessary for biblical leadership through individual study and interaction with a mentor. While intended to equip those who may be potential future elders, deacons, or other ministry leaders, it is also appropriate for any believer as the character and knowledge required for leadership should be desired, pursued, and demonstrated in the daily life of every Christian.

Each chapter of *Becoming a Biblical Leader* contains three sections with individual preparation and questions for mentor discussion. The sections stand alone and do not need to be completed in one sitting, or even in sequential order. It is recommended to spread the work out over several weeks between meetings with your mentor to allow sufficient time to digest the content of each section.

1. UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP.

This section provides a biblical framework for understanding the church and biblical leadership. It includes biblical instruction regarding:

- **The nature and purposes of the church (Chapters 1-3)**, as properly understanding the church is vital if one is to lead within the church. Biblical leaders are to be careful *where* they lead others.

1 Robert Saucy, *The Church in God’s Program* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972), 7.

- **The characteristics of biblical leadership (Chapters 4–7)**, as the manner in which one leads is also of critical importance. Biblical leaders are to be careful *how* and *why* they lead others.
- **Ministry to others (Chapters 8–10)**, for biblical leaders in the church are not simply focused on getting people to follow, but on shepherding them well.

2. DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP. This section is designed to foster growth in the biblical and theological understanding that is vital for leaders in the church. It includes:

- **Bible Survey** based around directed readings and memory work to gain a broad understanding of each book of the Bible and their key themes and chapters.² It is recommended that book themes be memorized word for word. With the key chapter summaries, memorizing every word exactly may not be necessary to understand and recall the information. For example, saying Deuteronomy 5 is “the decalogue reiterated” would be word perfect. But saying Deuteronomy 5 is “when the Ten Commandments are given again” would also display sufficient understanding and retention of the content.
- **Systematic Theology** in order to understand sound doctrine by studying your church’s doctrinal statement, and to be prepared to defend sound doctrine by working to define and defend key theological ideas.
- Optional “going deeper” assignments are also available.

3. CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP. This section focuses on developing the Christ-like character that is required for biblical leaders in the church and is to be pursued by every believer, highlighting:

- **Spiritual Maturity** by considering the biblical qualifications for leadership that provide a standard of godly character for every believer.
- **Spiritual Disciplines** to utilize the means God has given to foster growth in the life of believers.

A key component of *Becoming a Biblical Leader* is regular meetings with a mentor – ideally someone who is already a leader in your church. The individual preparation for that chapter should be completed before each session. About an hour and a half should be planned for the mentor meeting to discuss each chapter, with approximately 30 minutes devoted to each of the three sections.

2 Timothy 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

² Key information about each book has been adapted from the ordination preparation resources of The Master’s Seminary and XL Ministries.

Chapter 1

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **Genesis:** Beginnings
 - **Exodus:** Redemption
 - **Leviticus:** Holiness
 - **Numbers:** Wilderness Wanderings
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Bibliology:** The Study of the Doctrine of the Word of God
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - Not a New Convert
 - Aspires to the Work
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Bible Reading

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Being a faithful and effective leader in the church involves many things. The Scriptures highlight God's grace in choosing and enabling leaders, apart from which they can do nothing. The Scriptures also instruct regarding the needed character and gifts for godly leadership.

But what, at its core, is leadership? John MacArthur writes, "To put it simply, leadership is *influence*."³ Being a leader is more than having a title or filling an office. It means having people follow.

However, being a biblical leader means not simply being concerned *that* people are following, but with *how* and *why* one motivates and compels others to follow. Unlike worldly leaders, biblical leaders do not lord it over for selfish gain, rather they serve and lead by example for the glory of Christ. They do not manipulate others with clever words but rather they clearly speak the truth of God so that He will be understood, exalted, and obeyed.

In addition to being careful *how* and *why* they lead, biblical leaders must also be intentional about *where* they lead others. They must have a clear biblical direction. This is why Paul wrote to Timothy, a young church leader, in 1 Timothy 3:15, "but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth." To lead the church, Timothy needed to understand and appreciate the church. Such is the case for every church leader.

THE CHURCH DEFINED

The English word *church* came from a word meaning *belong to* or *of the Lord*. The church is the Lord's. It is His church, and it comprises those who are His. The Greek word for church is *ekklesia*, which means *an assembly*.

In the New Testament, the church is referred to in two primary ways:

- 1. The Universal Church** – The *visible* universal church comprises all *professing believers*. The *invisible* universal church is all those who are *truly redeemed*.

3 John MacArthur, *Called to Lead* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), vi.

2. The Temple of God

- What do you learn about the church from the metaphor of a building or temple in the following verses?
 - 1 Corinthians 3:9–17

 - Ephesians 2:20–22

 - 1 Peter 2:4–5

- How should you faithfully live as a part of the “temple of God”?

3. The Household or Family of God

- What do you learn about the church from the metaphor of a household or family in the following verses?
 - Ephesians 2:19, 3:14–15, 4:6

 - 2 Corinthians 6:18

- How should you faithfully live as a part of the “family of God”?

4. The Bride of Christ

- What do you learn about the church from the metaphor of the bride of Christ in the following verses?
 - 2 Corinthians 11:1–2

- Ephesians 5:22–33

 - Revelation 19:7, 21:9
- How should you faithfully live as a part of the “bride of Christ”?

5. The Pillar and Support of the Truth

- What do you learn about the church from the metaphor of a pillar or support in the following verse?
- 1 Timothy 3:15
- How should you faithfully live as a part of the “pillar and support of the truth”?

6. The Flock of God

- What do you learn about the church from the metaphor of a flock in the following verses?
- John 10:16

 - Acts 20:28–29

 - 1 Peter 5:1–4
- How should you faithfully live as a part of the “flock of God”?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. How has this study helped clarify your understanding of the church?
3. What are some common ways the church is misunderstood today?
4. Why should the church be such a priority in the life of every believer?
5. Why is it so important for church leaders to have an accurate understanding of the church?

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

GENESIS

Genesis is the book of beginnings; it provides a dramatic account of the origins of mankind and his universe, the intrusion of sin into the world, the catastrophic effects of its curse on the race, and the beginnings of God's plan to bless the nations through His seed.⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| I. Primeval History – Four Events | (1–11) | A. Creation | (1–2) |
| | | B. Fall | (3–5) |
| | | C. Flood | (6–9) |
| | | D. Nations | (10–11) |
| II. Patriarchal History – Four People | (12–50) | A. Abraham | (12–24) |
| | | B. Isaac | (25–26) |
| | | C. Jacob | (27–36) |
| | | D. Joseph | (37–50) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Beginnings

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1 | Creation (broad perspective), God as Creator |
| 2 | Creation (focus on man; Adamic covenant) |
| 3 | Temptation; fall; curses |
| 4 | Cain and Abel; Cain's line – civilization |
| 6–8 | Flood: deliverance in the ark |
| 9 | Everlasting covenant; curse of Canaan |
| 11 | Babel: dispersion of nations |
| 18–19 | Sodom and Gomorrah |
| 37 | Joseph is sold by his brothers |

- Why is “beginnings” an appropriate theme for the book of Genesis?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Genesis in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Genesis.

⁴ J. F. Walvoord, R. B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983–c1985), 1:15.

EXODUS

Exodus narrates the liberation of Israel from Egyptian captivity and the migration of God's new nation to the wilderness of Sinai.... Chapters 1–18 relate Israel's exodus from bondage in Egypt, while chapters 19–40 record the instructions given by God on Mount Sinai to direct the life and worship of the nation.⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|---------|
| I. | Israel in Egypt | (1–13) |
| II. | Israel in the Wilderness | (14–18) |
| III. | Israel at Sinai | (19–40) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Redemption

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|------|---------------|
| 3–4 | Call of Moses |
| 7–11 | Ten plagues |
| 12 | Passover |
| 32 | Golden calf |

- Why is “redemption” an appropriate theme for the book of Exodus?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Exodus in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Exodus.

⁵ Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 12.

LEVITICUS

In Leviticus we learn that sin must be dealt with and that God demands holy living.... Leviticus tells how sinful people could approach a holy God and how they could live holy lives.⁶

OUTLINE:

- I. The Way to God – Sacrifice (1-17)
- II. The Walk with God – Sanctification (18-27)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Holiness

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 10 Nadab and Abihu
- 16 Day of atonement

- Why is “holiness” an appropriate theme for the book of Leviticus?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Leviticus in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Leviticus.

6 Herbert Wolf, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Pentateuch* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1991), 160.

NUMBERS

Numbers is so called because it records the numbering of the children of Israel and their organization and tasks by tribes. Carrying on from Exodus, it relates the Israelites' wanderings in the desert after they fail to enter the promised land through unbelief.⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------|---------|
| I. | Sinai | (1-10) |
| II. | Wilderness | (11-25) |
| III. | Plains of Moab | (26-36) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Wilderness Wanderings

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 13 | The journey and return of the 12 spies into Canaan |
| 22-24 | Balaam, Balak, and the talking donkey |

- Why is “wilderness wanderings” an appropriate theme for the book of Numbers?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Numbers in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Numbers.

⁷ Gerard Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama* (Canada: Day One, 2005), 78.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Genesis?
 - What is in Genesis 3?
 - What is the theme of Exodus?

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE - BIBLIOLOGY

Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

Bibliology is the study of the doctrine of God's word.

Some key issues and themes addressed in bibliology include:

- Revelation
- The Characteristics of Scripture
 - Inspiration
 - Inerrancy
 - Sufficiency
- The Canon of Scripture

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of God's word.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?
 - Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?
 - What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on Bibliology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE**HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE?**

- **Key passages to consider:**

- 2 Timothy 3:16–17
- 2 Peter 1:20–21

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue in *Biblical Theology*

Inerrancy means literally “without error.” When applied to Scripture, it means that the Bible is without error in the original copies. It is therefore free, when properly interpreted, from affirming anything that is untrue or contrary to fact....

Paul’s direct claim for Scripture is that it is inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16). It is the product of God’s own work through the human authors by means of his Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20–21). Since these written words are the words of the God of truth, they must be without error. Inspiration deals with the means by which the text was composed, but it also directly implies that it is the work of God. As such, the final product is attributed to him. Regardless of the involvement of human agency in the composition process, the integrity of the divine author is at stake in the doctrine of inerrancy.⁸

- Define the inerrancy of Scripture in your own words:

8 John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 109.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of God's word and your answers to the questions about it.

2. Practice answering the following question:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder.

- **Not a new convert**

1 Timothy 3:6 ...and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

- Define this qualification in your own words.
- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?
- Why is it important for all believers to be actively pursuing spiritual growth?
- Read 1 Corinthians 3:1 and Hebrews 5:12–14. Does this growth happen automatically with the passing of time? Why not? How do believers grow?

- **Aspires to the work**

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.

1 Peter 5:2 ...shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness...

- Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

- Read 1 Peter 4:10–11 and 1 Corinthians 12:4–7. Why is it important for every believer to be actively using their gifts to serve others?

- What ministry are you currently involved in? What other ministries would you like to become involved in in the future?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. Why is spiritual maturity necessary for church leaders?
3. Why should all believers, even those who do not aspire to leadership, strive to see the biblical character qualifications of leadership demonstrated in their lives?
4. Share your testimonies with each other.

Chapter 2

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **Deuteronomy:** Second Law/Renewed Covenant
 - **Joshua:** Conquer and Divide
 - **Judges:** Disobedience and Defeat
 - **Ruth:** Kinsman Redeemer
 - **1 Samuel:** Transition from the Judges to the Monarchy
 - **2 Samuel:** David's Reign as King
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Theology Proper:** The Study of the Doctrine of God
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - How would you define the Trinity?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - Above Reproach
 - Having a Good Reputation with Outsiders
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Fellowship

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Being a leader means influencing others. Being a biblical leader means caring *how* and *why* one influences others, and *where* that influence takes them. Worldly leaders lord it over their followers, using their authority for the furtherance of their own personal ambition and gain.

Faithful church leaders, on the other hand, recognize they are not leading others simply to follow themselves, but to follow Christ. As Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.” Biblical leaders understand their place relative to Christ. He is the perfect example that they are following. His glory, not their own, is the goal. And His authority is ultimate, for Christ is the head of the church.

Ephesians 1:22–23

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Colossians 1:18

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

- Read Revelation 1:12–20.
 - What are the lampstands?

 - What does Christ walking among the lampstands demonstrate about His relationship to the church?

The New Testament has much to say regarding the reality and the implications of Christ as head of the church.

CHRIST, THE SAVIOR

Christ is uniquely the head of the church because He alone is the savior of the church.

Ephesians 5:23–25

...Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body...
Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her...

Revelation 5:9

And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”

- How did Christ save the church?
- How should Christ’s love for the church motivate our love for the church?
- How should the fact that Christ is the savior of the church affect the church’s response to Him?

CHRIST, THE SOVEREIGN

As head of the church, Christ has authority over the church. He is the sovereign Lord.

Ephesians 1:22–23

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 5:23–24

...Christ also is the head of the church...the church is subject to Christ...

- How does Christ exercise authority over the church?

- In what ways should church leaders reflect Christ's authority over the church?
In what ways should they not?

- How should the fact that Christ is the sovereign over the church affect the church's response to Him?

CHRIST, THE SOURCE

Christ, the head, does not rule over the church as a distant, isolated king. Rather He is a head who is connected to the body and is the One from whom life and growth flow.

Ephesians 4:11–16

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Colossians 2:18–19

Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

- How does Christ produce growth in the body? Does He produce growth apart from the proper working of other parts of the body?

- Why can't the body grow apart from Him?

- How should the fact that Christ is the source of life and growth for the church affect the church's response to Him?

CHRIST, THE SHEPHERD

Christ is intimately involved in the care, provision and direction of His flock. While He uses elders to shepherd His flock, He is the Chief Shepherd.

1 Peter 5:1–4

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy...consists of a series of farewell messages by Israel's 120-year-old leader [Moses]. It is addressed to the new generation destined to possess the Land of Promise—those who survived the forty years of wilderness wandering. Deuteronomy, like Leviticus, contains a vast amount of legal detail, but its emphasis is on the layman rather than the priests and sacrifice. Moses reminds the new generation of the importance of obedience if they are to learn from the sad example of their predecessors.¹⁰

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---------------|---------|
| I. | Looking Back | (1–11) |
| II. | Looking Ahead | (12–32) |
| III. | Looking Up | (33–34) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Second Law/Renewed Covenant

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|----|----------------------|
| 5 | Decalogue reiterated |
| 28 | Blessings and curses |
| 32 | Song of Moses |
| 34 | Death of Moses |

- Why is “second law/renewed covenant” an appropriate theme for the book of Deuteronomy?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Deuteronomy in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Deuteronomy.

¹⁰ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 36.

JOSHUA

Joshua records God's faithfulness to His promises in bringing His people into the Promised Land.... The book of Joshua shows that Israel must trust and obey God to be victorious in warfare, and underlines the crucial value of God's Word.¹¹

OUTLINE:

- I. Conquering the Land (1–12)
- II. Dividing the Land (13–24)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Conquer and Divide

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 2 Rahab and the spies
- 6 Fall of Jericho
- 7 The sin of Achan

- Why is “conquer and divide” an appropriate theme for the book of Joshua?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Joshua in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Joshua.

11 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 106.

JUDGES

The book of Judges stands in stark contrast to the book of Joshua. There, an obedient people conquered the land through trust in the power of God. But in Judges, a disobedient and idolatrous people are frequently defeated because of their rebellion against God. In seven distinct cycles of sin, Judges show how the nation has set aside God's law and in its place 'everyone did what was right in his own eyes.' (21:25)¹²

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|---------|
| I. | Disobedience in Judges | (1-2) |
| II. | History of the Judges | (3-16) |
| III. | Apostasy in Judges | (17-21) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Disobedience and Defeat

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--------------------|
| 6-8 | Gideon's judgeship |
| 13-16 | Samson's judgeship |

- Why is "disobedience and defeat" an appropriate theme for the book of Judges?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Judges in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Judges.

¹² Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 58.

RUTH

Ruth records a love-story during Israel's seesaw time of the judges... It is not only an historical account of how God honours those who honour Him, to reverse the sad circumstances of Naomi and Ruth, but also is an enacted picture of the blessed role of a redeemer (Boaz).¹³

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------|-----|
| I. | Return of Ruth | (1) |
| II. | Reaping of Ruth | (2) |
| III. | Request of Ruth | (3) |
| IV. | Redemption of Ruth | (4) |

- Memorize the following and read the key chapter:

THEME: Kinsman Redeemer

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 4 | Boaz redeems Ruth and marries her |
|---|-----------------------------------|

- Why is “kinsman redeemer” an appropriate theme for the book of Ruth?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Ruth in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Ruth.

13 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 123.

1 SAMUEL

The First Book of Samuel describes the transition of leadership in Israel from judges to kings. Three characters are prominent in the book: Samuel, the last judge and first prophet; Saul, the first king of Israel; and David, the king-elect, anointed but not yet recognized as Saul's successor.¹⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---------|
| I. | Preparation for the Monarch – Samuel | (1–9) |
| II. | Period of the Monarch – Saul | (10–31) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Transition from the Judges to the Monarchy

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|------|------------------------|
| 8–10 | Israel chooses a king |
| 15 | Saul spares Amalekites |
| 16 | David anointed |

- Why is “transition from the judges to the monarchy” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Samuel?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Samuel in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Samuel.

¹⁴ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 70.

2 SAMUEL

The Second Book of Samuel records the highlights of David's reign, first over the territory of Judah, and finally over the entire nation of Israel. It traces the ascension of David to the throne, his climactic sins of adultery and murder, and the shattering consequences of those sins upon his family and the nation.¹⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|---------|
| I. | The Triumphs of David | (1–10) |
| II. | The Transgressions of David | (11–12) |
| III. | The Troubles of David | (13–24) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: David's Reign as King

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| 5 | David as king over all Israel |
| 11 | Bathsheba |

- Why is “David's reign as king” an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Samuel?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Samuel in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Samuel.

¹⁵ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 78.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.
2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Joshua?
 - What is the theme of Ruth?
 - What is found in 1 Samuel 16?
3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Numbers.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – THEOLOGY PROPER

Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Theology Proper is the study of the doctrine of God.

Some key issues and themes addressed in Theology Proper include:

- The existence of God
- The nature of God
- The names of God
- The attributes of God
- The decree or will of God

○ Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of God.

- What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on Theology Proper in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE TRINITY?

○ **Key passages to consider:**

- Deuteronomy 6:4
- Isaiah 44:6; 46:9–10
- Matthew 3:16–17
- Matthew 28:19
- 2 Corinthians 13:14

J.I. Packer in *Concise Theology*

The basic assertion of this doctrine is that the unity of the one God is complex. The three personal “subsistences” (as they are called) are coequal and coeternal centers of self-awareness, each being “I” in relation to two who are “you” and each partaking of the full divine essence (the “stuff” of deity, if we may dare to call it that) along with the other two. They are not three roles played by one person (that is *modalism*), nor are they three gods in a cluster (that is *tritheism*); the one God (“he”) is also, and equally, “they,” and “they” are always together and always cooperating, with the Father initiating, the Son complying, and the Spirit executing the will of both, which is his will also. This is the truth about God that was revealed through the words and works of Jesus, and that undergirds the reality of salvation as the New Testament sets it forth.¹⁶

○ Define the Trinity in your own words:

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church’s doctrinal statement on the doctrine of God and your answers to the questions about it.
2. Practice answering the following question:
 - How would you define the Trinity?
3. Review the following question:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?

16 J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 42.

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Augustine

Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

○ **Above reproach**

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach...

Titus 1:5–6 ...appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach...

- Define this qualification in your own words.
- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?
- Is this quality only necessary for leaders, or should every believer strive to be above reproach? Why?

- In what areas of your life are you not living in a manner that is above reproach? How can you grow in these areas?

- **Having a good reputation with outsiders**
1 Timothy 3:7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
 - Define this qualification in your own words.

 - Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

 - Read 1 Peter 2:11–12, 3:16. Why should every believer care about their reputation with others? Does living a godly life guarantee a good reputation with others?

 - How would you describe your reputation with unbelievers you know?

 - How can you grow in order to improve your reputation?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. How is being above reproach and having a good reputation different from being perfect?

3. In the pursuit of a good reputation, how can a believer guard against simply living to please people rather than the Lord?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

FELLOWSHIP

Hebrews 10:24–25

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

- Describe your regular practice of fellowship within the church.

- Why is regular fellowship important for growth in spiritual maturity?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. Discuss your family's current involvement in the local church.

3. Discuss how you currently prioritize fellowship with other believers. What makes this a challenge?

Chapter 3

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **1 Kings:** United and Divided Kingdom
 - **2 Kings:** Fall of Israel and Judah
 - **1 Chronicles:** God's View of David
 - **2 Chronicles:** God's View of Judah's Kings
 - **Ezra:** Rebuilding of the Temple and People
 - **Nehemiah:** Rebuilding of the Walls
 - **Esther:** Preservation through Providence
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Christology:** The Study of the Doctrine of Christ
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - Husband of one wife
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Evangelism

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Biblical church leaders must lead the church to function according to Christ's design. This is more than simply a commitment to understanding and obeying the detailed commands of the New Testament. It starts with understanding His intent for the church. Why has God established the church? Why has He left His redeemed on the earth?

Church leaders who are not clear on or who lose sight of the purpose of the church may be well-intentioned, but they are likely to ultimately lead the church in a direction that neglects the priorities of Christ.

THE UPWARD PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH: WORSHIP

God created all things for His own glory. As has been famously stated, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."¹⁷ Every person exists for God's glory. The church exists for God's glory. And so, the primary purpose of the church is the exaltation or worship of God.

Robert Saucy

Worship is central in the existence of the church. The words of the apostle Paul that God has chosen and predestined sons unto Himself in Christ "to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:4–6) suggest that the ultimate purpose of the church is the worship of the one who called it into being.¹⁸

Christians today typically equate worship with singing. Singing is certainly a key part of biblical worship, but it is far from the sum of all that is included in the biblical idea. Jerry Bridges defines worship as "the specific act of ascribing to God the glory, majesty, honor, and worthiness which are His."¹⁹ All true worship flows from right thinking about God and the gospel that fills our heart with affection and praise for Him.

¹⁷ Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (William S. Young, 1851), 387.

¹⁸ Saucy, *The Church in God's Program*, 166.

¹⁹ Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*, 49–50.

Sinclair Ferguson

The foundation of worship in the heart is not emotional (“I feel full of worship” or “The atmosphere is so worshipful”). Actually, it is theological. Worship is not something we “work up,” it is something that “comes down” to us, from the character of God.²⁰

Unknown Author

Transcendent worship is directly related to the depth of comprehending divine truth. Those who understand the gospel most deeply worship God with the greatest exaltation and exhilaration.²¹

- Read Romans 11:33–12:1.
 - How does right and deep thinking about God fuel worship both individually and corporately?
 - How should a church foster worship? How is this different than the approach of many churches today?

Individually, all of life is to be lived as an expression of worship (Romans 12:1–2). Corporately, when the church gathers on the Lord’s Day (Acts 20:7, Revelation 1:10), worship should be expressed in a variety of ways consistent with what is prescribed in the New Testament. While Scripture does not dictate every detail of such worship and so congregations can and do look very different from one another, the worship of faithful churches will rightly be centered around that which God commands.

- What has Christ commanded in the following verses for the church to do when gathered:
 - Colossians 3:16
 - 1 Timothy 2:1–2, 8
 - 1 Timothy 4:13
 - 2 Timothy 4:1–5

20 Sinclair Ferguson, *A Heart for God* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1987), 110.

21 Author unknown, “*The Power of Expository Preaching*,” *The Master’s Mantle*, v. 13:2 (Fall/Winter 2006).

The gathered church will worship God through the reading and preaching of Scripture, the singing of biblical songs, prayer, and the regular practice of baptism and the Lord's supper.

- Read Acts 2:42–47 and Acts 20:7. What patterns of corporate worship are modeled in the early church?

In all of the worship of the church, God is the primary audience. Those up front in a church are not performing for the other people in the room. Rather every person in the gathered congregation is to be an active participant in worship, exalting and glorifying the Lord together.

THE INWARD PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH: EDIFICATION

The church not only has an *upward* purpose, focused on the worship and exaltation of God, but also an *inward* purpose, for the building up of the body. Christ's plan for the church includes giving gifted leadership "...for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12–13). The pastors and elders of the church are called to equip the saints, such that every member uses their gifts to build up the body into mature likeness to Christ.

- How are the saints equipped for ministry in the local church?

Ministry in the local church may come through formal opportunities to serve or through informal interaction with one another. It may involve speaking to others or serving them (1 Peter 4:10–11). But all members are to be exercising their gifts for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:4–27).

- What happens when many members of the church are not faithful to use their gifts to build up the body?

In addition to using their spiritual gifts in service, all members of the body are to fulfill the “one anothers” given in Scripture that should shape how the body of Christ interacts with each other.

- What instruction regarding relationships with “one another” in the body is found in the following verses:
 - John 13:34–35
 - Romans 12:10
 - Romans 12:16
 - Romans 14:13
 - Romans 15:7
 - Romans 15:14
 - Galatians 5:13
 - Ephesians 4:2
 - Ephesians 4:32
 - Ephesians 5:19
 - Philippians 2:3
 - Colossians 3:16
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:11
 - Hebrews 10:24–25
 - 1 Peter 4:9
 - 1 Peter 5:5
 - 1 Peter 5:14

When the church is functioning as it ought, God will be exalted and the body of Christ will be built up as each member is equipped for and faithfully serving one another.

THE OUTWARD PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH: EVANGELISM

In addition to the upward purpose of worship and the *inward* purpose of edification, God has given the church an outward purpose to the world. The church is to “...proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...” (1 Peter 2:9). The church will worship more faithfully in heaven. And at that point, the bride of Christ will be spotless and blameless, no longer needing to be equipped and matured. But the unique opportunity for evangelism will be no more. Christ’s final charge to His followers summarizes this mission of the church.

Matthew 28:18–20

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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 observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Acts 1:8

“...But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

The church is tasked with being Christ’s ambassadors on earth. We are to bear witness about Him and the truth of the gospel in order to make disciples who are then equipped in local churches and in turn become further ambassadors.

- What is the message of the gospel that we proclaim?

While the gospel should be regularly proclaimed in the corporate gathering and it is appropriate for the church to intentionally have evangelistic events and ministries, the primary focus of the church when assembled is worship and edification. It is as the church scatters into the world that it can primarily fulfill this outward mission of evangelism. This involves both proclaiming the truth about Christ (Romans 1:16, 2 Corinthians 5:18–21) and living like Him (1 Thessalonians 1:5, 1 Peter 3:15–16).

Will Metzger

Clearly the way we live is a primary aspect of our witness. Yet our life is to be coupled with telling God's truth. People need to be told who makes our lives different. Our lives, then, will illuminate the truth we express to non-believers.²²

- Why are both our words and lives essential in evangelism?

Each church and its members have the responsibility to proclaim Christ in their local community and to participate in the gospel going to the ends of the earth where it is not yet known. Some from the church should be sent, and the rest should be senders.

- Read Acts 13:1–3, Philippians 1:3–5, and 3 John 5–8. How can every member in the church be a part of God's mission of taking the gospel to the nations?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. How can a church get distracted from the primary purposes God has for the church?
3. How are you and your church participating in the spread of the gospel in your local community? In the world?

22 Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 52.

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

J. Oswald Sanders

Spiritual leaders of every generation will have a consuming passion to know the Word of God through diligent study and the illumination of the Holy Spirit.²³

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

23 J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1994), 102.

1 KINGS

The first half of First Kings traces the life of Solomon. Under his leadership Israel rises to the peak of her size and glory....However, Solomon's zeal for God diminishes in his later years, as pagan wives turn his heart away from worship in the temple of God. As a result, the king with the divided heart leaves behind a divided kingdom. For the next century, the Book of First Kings traces the twin histories of two sets of kings and two nations of disobedient people [Israel and Judah]...²⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|---------|
| I. | Kingdom United/Solomon | (1-11) |
| II. | Kingdom Divided/Many Kings | (12-22) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: United and Divided Kingdom

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Solomon is appointed king |
| 3 | Solomon chooses wisdom and judges wisely |
| 8 | Solomon's temple dedicated |
| 17 | Elijah predicts drought and raises the dead |
| 18 | Elijah on Mount Carmel |
| 19 | Elijah's flight to Horeb/appointment of Elisha |

- Why is "united and divided kingdom" an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Kings?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Kings in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Kings.

²⁴ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 84.

2 KINGS

The Book of Second Kings continues the drama begun in First Kings – the tragic history of two nations on a collision course with captivity. The author systematically traces the reigning monarchs of Israel and Judah....Nineteen consecutive evil kings rule in Israel, leading to the captivity by Assyria. The picture is somewhat brighter in Judah, where godly kings occasionally emerge to reform the evils of their predecessors. In the end, however, sin outweighs righteousness and Judah is marched off to Babylonia.²⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|---------|
| I. | Kingdom Divided/Israel Falls | (1–17) |
| II. | Kingdom which Survives/Judah Falls | (18–25) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Fall of Israel and Judah

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| 17 | Israel's fall/Assyrian captivity |
| 24–25 | The fall of Judah to Babylon |

- Why is “fall of Israel and Judah” an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Kings?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Kings in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Kings.

²⁵ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 92.

1 CHRONICLES

The books of First and Second Chronicles cover the same period of Jewish history described in Second Samuel through Second Kings, but the perspective in Chronicles is different. These books are no mere repetition of the same material, but rather are a divine editorial on the history of God's people. While Second Samuel and Kings give political history of Israel and Judah, Chronicles gives a religious history of the Davidic dynasty of Judah.²⁶

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|---------|
| I. | Royal Line of David | (1–9) |
| II. | Righteous Reign of David | (10–29) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: God's View of David

- Why is "God's view of David" an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Chronicles?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Chronicles in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire books of 1 Chronicles.

26 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 99.

2 CHRONICLES

The Book of Second Chronicles parallels First and Second Kings but virtually ignores the northern kingdom of Israel....Chronicles focuses on those kings who pattern their life and reign after that of godly king David. It gives extended treatment to such zealous reformers as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah....The book begins with Solomon's glorious temple, and concludes with Cyrus' edict to rebuild the temple more than four hundred years later!²⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|---------|
| I. | Reign of Solomon | (1-9) |
| II. | Reigns of Judah's Kings | (10-36) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: God's View of Judah's Kings

- Why is "God's view of Judah's kings" an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Chronicles?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Chronicles in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire books of 2 Chronicles.

²⁷ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 108.

EZRA

Ezra continues the Old Testament narrative of Second Chronicles by showing how God fulfilled His promise to return His people to the Land of Promise after seventy years of exile. Israel's 'second exodus,' this one from Babylonia, is less impressive than the Egyptian bondage because only a remnant choose to leave. Ezra relates the story of two returns from Babylonia, the first led by Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple (chs. 1–6) and the second under the leadership of Ezra to rebuild the spiritual condition of the people (chs. 7–10).²⁸

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| I. | The Return and Reconstruction under Zerubbabel | (1–6) |
| II. | The Return and Reform under Ezra | (7–10) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Rebuilding of the Temple and People

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Decree of Cyrus allowing the return; many Israelites respond |
| 3 | Foundation of the temple completed with much ceremony |
| 7–9 | Return under Ezra, including his prayer (9) |

- Why is “rebuilding of the temple and people” an appropriate theme for the book of Ezra?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Ezra in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Ezra.

²⁸ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 116.

NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah, contemporary of Ezra and cupbearer to the king in the Persian palace, leads the third and last return to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile....Granted permission to return to his homeland, Nehemiah challenges his countrymen to arise and rebuild the shattered wall of Jerusalem. In spite of opposition from without and abuse from within, the task is completed in only fifty-two days....By contrast, the task of reviving and reforming the people of God within those rebuilt walls demands years of Nehemiah's godly life and leadership.²⁹

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---|---------|
| I. | Rebuilding of the Walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah | (1-7) |
| II. | Revival of the People under Ezra | (8-10) |
| III. | Reinforcement of the Work under Nehemiah | (11-13) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Rebuilding of the Walls

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 3-7 Work on and completion of the walls; opposition; census

- Why is “rebuilding of the walls” an appropriate theme for the book of Nehemiah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Nehemiah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Nehemiah.

ESTHER

The story of Esther's life fits between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra, between the first return led by Zerubbabel and the second return led by Ezra.... God's hand of providence and protection on behalf of His people is evident throughout the book, though His name does not appear once. Haman's plot brings grave danger to the Jews and is countered by the courage of beautiful Esther and the counsel of her wise cousin Mordecai, resulting in a great deliverance. The Feast of Purim becomes an annual reminder of God's faithfulness on behalf of His people.³⁰

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--------|
| I. | The Threat to the Jews | (1–4) |
| II. | The Triumph of the Jews | (5–10) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Preservation through Providence

- Why is “preservation through providence” an appropriate theme for the book of Esther?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Esther in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Esther.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.
2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of 1 Kings?
 - What is the theme of Ezra?
 - What is found in Nehemiah chapters 3–7?
3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to 2 Samuel.

³⁰ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 131.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – CHRISTOLOGY

Hebrews 1:3–4

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...

Christology is the study of the doctrine of Christ.

Some key issues and themes addressed in Christology include:

- The Person of Christ
- The Deity of Christ
- The Humanity of Christ
- The Work of Christ

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of Christ.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on Christology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

HOW WOULD YOU DEFEND THE DEITY OF CHRIST?

- **Key passages to consider:**

- John 1:1–3, 14
- John 8:58
- John 10:30
- Philippians 2:6–11
- Colossians 1:15–20, 2:9
- Hebrews 1:1–3

Louis Berkhof in Systematic Theology

This denial [of the deity of the Son] is possible only for those who disregard the teachings of Scripture, for the Bible contains an abundance of evidence for the deity of Christ. We find that Scripture (1) *explicitly asserts the deity of the Son* in such passages as John 1:1; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; Tit. 2:13; 1 John 5:20; (2) *applies divine names to Him*, Isa. 9:6; 40:3; Jer. 23:5, 6; Joel 2:32 (comp. Acts 2:21); 1 Tim. 3:16; (3) *ascribes to Him divine attributes*, such as eternal existence, Isa. 9:6; John 1:1, 2; Rev. 1:8; 22:13, omnipresence, Matt. 18:20; 28:20; John 3:13, omniscience, John 2:24, 25; 21:17; Rev. 2:23, omnipotence. Isa. 9:6; Phil. 3:21; Rev. 1:8, immutability, Heb. 1:10–12; 13:8, and in general every attribute belonging to the Father, Col. 2:9; (4) *speaks of Him as doing divine works*, as creation, John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2, 10, providence, Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 17:2; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3, the forgiveness of sins, Matt. 9:2–7; Mark 2:7–10; Col. 3:13, resurrection and judgment, Matt. 25:31, 32; John 5:19–29; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Phil. 3:21; 2 Tim. 4:1, the final dissolution and renewal of all things, Heb. 1:10–12; Phil. 3:21; Rev. 21:5, and (5) *accords Him divine honour*, John 5:22, 23; 14:1; 1 Cor. 15:19; 2 Cor. 13:13; Heb. 1:6; Matt. 28:19.³¹

31 Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1938), 94–95.

- Answer the question, “How would you defend the deity of Christ?” in your own words.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church’s doctrinal statement on the doctrine of Christ and your answers to the questions about it.
2. Practice answering the following question:
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Philippians 3:17

Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Husband of one wife**

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be...the husband of one wife...

Titus 1:6 ...namely, if any man is...the husband of one wife...

- Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

- Read Matthew 5:27–30 and Ephesians 5:3–5. What is God’s standard for sexual purity? How should every Christian pursue sexual purity in mind and body?

- How do you need to grow in your battle for sexual purity?

- Read Ephesians 5:22–33 and 1 Peter 3:1–7. What should be some characteristics of every Christian marriage?

- How are you seeking to fulfill your biblical role toward your spouse? How can you grow to be more faithful in your marriage?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. How is sexual purity and marriage under assault in our culture? Why must Christians battle to maintain God’s standard?

3. Discuss some of the additional challenges and struggles that can come in marriage when serving in leadership of the church (i.e., what to share with your wife, demands of ministry, etc.).

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

EVANGELISM

John 17:18

“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”

Charles Spurgeon

If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms around their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled with the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.

- Describe your regular practice of sharing the gospel with unbelievers.

- Why is evangelism an important aspect of the life of every believer?

- How can you grow to be more intentional and effective in evangelism?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. Discuss recent opportunities you have had to share the gospel with unbelievers.

3. Share how you are intentionally building relationships with unbelievers for the purpose of evangelism.

Chapter 4

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- LEADERSHIP 101

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **Job:** Suffering and Sovereignty
 - **Psalms:** Pattern of Personal Worship
 - **Proverbs:** Wisdom for the Details of Life
 - **Ecclesiastes:** Vanity of Life in a Fallen World
 - **Song of Solomon:** The Joy of Married Love
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Pneumatology:** The Study of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - He Manages His Household Well
 - Having Children Who Believe
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Prayer

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP 101

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

To be a biblical church leader, one must have a proper understanding of the church. Of equal importance is a right understanding of leadership.

- What do you think comes to most people's mind when they think of a leader?

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Often, leadership is equated with a position. The president of the company or the country is a leader. The coach or principal at a school is a leader. The CEO or manager of a company is a leader. While it is true that leadership is often recognized with a formal role or title, such a designation is not leadership. Leadership is not a position; it is having influence.

Jerry Wragg

Leadership...is the God-given ability to influence others through the power of a godly life and the wisdom gained in the practice of truth.³²

John MacArthur

To put it simply, leadership is influence. The ideal leader is someone whose life and character motivate people to follow. The best kind of leadership derives its authority first from the force of a righteous example, and not merely from the power of prestige, personality, or position. By contrast, much of the world's "leadership" is nothing but manipulation of people by threats and rewards. That is not true leadership; it's exploitation. Real leadership seeks to motivate people from the inside, by an appeal to the heart, not by external pressure and coercion.³³

³² Jerry Wragg, *Exemplary Spiritual Leadership* (UK: Day One, 2010), 144.

³³ MacArthur, *Called to Lead*, vi.

- Who are some of the people who have had the most significant influence in your life?

- Why did they have such a powerful influence?

Worldly leaders exert influence in a variety of ways. It may be based on personality, charisma, or appearance, or on financial acumen or family name. It may come through manipulation, marketing, or motivation through promised threats or rewards. Biblical leadership has an entirely different foundation. What makes a biblical leader? How does a godly, faithful church leader influence others?

THE CHARACTER OF A BIBLICAL LEADER

When God gives the qualifications for elders in the church (1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1), the vast majority focus on character. When Paul writes to Timothy and Titus regarding appointing elders, he does not instruct them to appoint the most successful or the oldest or the most well-liked. He calls them to appoint men who are “above reproach.”

Character is always God’s primary concern when choosing leaders. When the apostles were choosing men to lead in the serving of widows, they instructed the congregation to choose “men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3).

Character is essential for biblical leaders because a primary factor in a leader’s influence is their example. When Paul wrote to Timothy, urging him to “continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of,” one of the compelling reasons to do so was “knowing from whom you have learned them” (2 Timothy 3:14). Instruction from God’s word is vital for biblical influence (2 Timothy 3:15–17), but it was the example of Paul, Lois, Eunice, and others that reinforced the truth they had taught Timothy.

C.H. Spurgeon

A man’s life is always more forcible than his speech. When men take stock of him they reckon his deeds as dollars and his words as pennies. If his life and doctrine disagree the mass of onlookers accept his practice and reject his preaching.

The character of a leader is not simply to be external. It is not to be a public persona. It is to be the reality that flows from the heart. Consider God's selection of David.

1 Samuel 13:14

"But now your [Saul's] kingdom shall not endure. The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

1 Samuel 16:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

- On what basis did God reject Saul and choose David?

- What does it mean to be a man after God's own heart?

David, while far from perfect, manifested key character qualities that are essential for biblical leaders. God summarizes David's leadership in Psalm 78.

Psalm 78:71–72

...From the care of the ewes with suckling lambs He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them with his skillful hands.

David's character was demonstrated prior to his formal leadership appointment. He had already been displaying faithfulness and responsibility in the care of ewes and suckling lambs before the Lord gave him responsibility to shepherd His people. Biblical leaders, like David, are **faithful** and **responsible**, even in small tasks that go unnoticed by most.

- How can you grow to be more faithful in little things?

As king, David shepherded God's people. He did not lord it over them. He did not domineer them. Rather he cared for them. Biblical leaders, like David, are **selfless**, putting the needs of those they lead over their own.

- Why is it so important for biblical leaders to use their influence for the good of others rather than their own gain?

David shepherded the people according to the integrity of his heart. David was a man after God's own heart. His love for God was demonstrated in his love for God's word and his zeal to keep God's word and to be a man of his word. Biblical leaders, like David, are **trustworthy**, living with integrity in both their words and conduct.

- How should integrity and trustworthiness be demonstrated in the life of a leader?

THE CAPABILITY OF A BIBLICAL LEADER

David, and every other biblical leader, will first and foremost have genuine, godly character that flows from the heart. But character, while essential for influence, is not all that makes a biblical leader, for David also “guided them with his skillful hands.”

Leaders influence others by their character, but they are also to guide others with skill and wisdom. The men chosen to lead in the serving of widows in Acts 6 were not simply men of character, they were also men “of wisdom.” This is not the wisdom of the world. It is not skill in marketing or oratory. Rather it is biblical wisdom. It is the ability to apply biblical truth to the various aspects of life including relationships with others.

While all leaders should be continually growing in their wisdom, biblical wisdom and leadership skill should be demonstrated before an individual is placed into formal church leadership. This is one reason why elders are to be those who already “manage their household well” (1 Timothy 3:4).

- What “leadership skills” are typically praised in secular circles? How will these look similar or different in one who possesses biblical wisdom?

THE COURAGE OF A BIBLICAL LEADER

The fact that leaders lead means that they risk being alone if no one follows. Leaders can be tempted to lead based on what others will follow rather than based on what is right. While biblical leaders should be patient to bring along those under their influence, they must have courage to turn the tide or stand alone. When God gave Joshua his leadership orientation prior to leading the people into the promised land, He emphasized this need for courage.

Joshua 1:6

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.”

Such courage comes from knowing, believing, and obeying what the word of God says.

Joshua 1:7–8

“Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

- How was Joshua’s courage connected to His commitment to God’s word?

Biblical leaders display courage that comes from biblical convictions.

Albert Mohler

When a leader walks into the room, a passion for truth had better enter with him. Authentic leadership does not emerge out of a vacuum. The leadership that matters most is convictional—deeply convictional. This quality of leadership springs from those foundational beliefs that shape who we are and establish our beliefs about everything else. Convictions are not merely beliefs we hold; they are those beliefs that hold us in their grip. We would not know who we are but for these bedrock beliefs, and without them we would not know how to lead.³⁴

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. Why is character an essential element of leadership? What are potential consequences when church leaders lack godly character?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to leadership skills? How are you working to develop as a leader?
4. What are some biblical convictions that are essential for a leader to hold? When can leaders be most tempted to compromise their convictions?

³⁴ Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2012), 21.

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

JOB

[The book of Job] tells the story of a man who loses everything – his wealth, his family, his health – and wrestles with the question, Why? The book begins with a heavenly debate between God and Satan, moves through three cycles of earthly debates between Job and his friends, and concludes with a dramatic “divine diagnosis” of Job’s problem. In the end, Job acknowledges the sovereignty of God in his life and receives back more than he had before his trials.³⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|---------|
| I. | The Disasters of Job | (1–2) |
| II. | The Dialogues of Job | (3–37) |
| III. | The Deliverance of Job | (38–42) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Suffering and Sovereignty

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1–2 | Satan’s accusation and Job’s affliction |
| 38–41 | God’s speech and Job’s silence |
| 42 | Job’s repentance and restoration |

- Why is “suffering and sovereignty” an appropriate theme for the book of Job?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Job in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Job.

35 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 144.

PSALMS

This collection of ancient hymns represents a wide spectrum of life experiences....Wherever an individual finds himself on the journey of faith, the Psalms provide a place of rest and a time of repose and reflection, as well as a stimulus to send him on his way.³⁶

OUTLINE:

BOOK	PSALMS	AUTHORS
1	1-41	David
2	42-72	David & Sons of Korah
3	73-89	Mainly Asaph
4	90-106	Mainly Anonymous
5	107-150	David & Anonymous

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Pattern of Personal Worship

KEY CHAPTERS:

2	Messiah's reign
19	The works and word of God
22	Messiah's sufferings
23	The Great Shepherd
32	Blessing of forgiveness
51	Confession of sin
73	Apparent prosperity of the wicked
90	Man's transitoriness
119	God's word exalted
139	God and Holy Spirit are omniscient and omnipresent

- Why is "pattern of personal worship" an appropriate theme for the book of Psalms?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Psalms in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Psalms.

³⁶ C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1988), 111.

PROVERBS

Proverbs is perhaps the most practical book in the Old Testament because it teaches wisdom (lit., “skillful living”) in the multiple aspects of everyday life. In short pithy statements, maxims, and stories, Solomon and other contributors set forth about nine hundred proverbs—inspired precepts dealing with wisdom and folly, pride and humility, justice and vengeance, laziness and work, poverty and wealth, friends and neighbors, love and lust, anger and strife, masters and servants, life and death. These maxims are not theoretical but practical; they are easily memorized, timeless truths that touch on every facet of human relationships.³⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|--------|
| I. | Proverbs of Solomon | (1–29) |
| II. | Proverbs of Agur | (30) |
| II. | Proverbs of Lemuel | (31) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Wisdom for the Details of Life

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 3 | The pursuit and precepts of wisdom |
| 31 | The godly woman |

- Why is “wisdom for the details of life” an appropriate theme for the book of Proverbs?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Proverbs in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Proverbs.

³⁷ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 161.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes is a profound book recording an intense search by the Preacher (traditionally understood to be Solomon) for meaning and satisfaction in life – in spite of the inequities, inconsistencies, and seeming absurdities of life on earth. The key word in Ecclesiastes is vanity, the futile emptiness of trying to make sense out of life apart from God. Looked at ‘under the sun’ (8:17), life’s pursuits lead only to frustration. Power, prestige, pleasure – nothing can fill the God-shaped void in man’s life – except God Himself.³⁸

OUTLINE:

I.	The Problem that “All is Vanity”	(1:1–11)
II.	The Proof that “All is Vanity”	(1:12–6)
III.	The Prescription for Living with Vanity	(7–12)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Vanity of Life in a Fallen World

- Why is “vanity of life in a fallen world” an appropriate theme for the book of Ecclesiastes?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Ecclesiastes in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Ecclesiastes.

SONG OF SOLOMON

In contrast to the two distorted extremes of ascetic abstinence and lustful perversion outside of marriage, Solomon's ancient love song exalts the purity of marital affection and romance. It parallels and enhances other portions of Scripture which portray God's plan for marriage, including the beauty and sanctity of sexual intimacy between husband and wife.³⁹

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--------------|-------|
| I. | Courtship | (1-3) |
| II. | Consummation | (4-5) |
| III. | Celebration | (5-8) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: The Joy of Married Love

- Why is “the joy of married love” an appropriate theme for the book of Song of Solomon?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Song of Solomon in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Song of Solomon.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10-15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.
2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Job?
 - What is Psalm 51 about?
 - What is found in Proverbs 3?
3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Esther.

³⁹ John MacArthur, Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed., (Nashville, TN: Word, 1997), 940-41.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – PNEUMATOLOGY

2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Pneumatology is the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Some key issues and themes addressed in pneumatology include:

- The Person of the Holy Spirit
- The Deity of the Holy Spirit
- The Work/Ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - In the Old Testament
 - In the New Testament
 - During the Life of Christ

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on pneumatology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

HOW WOULD YOU DEFEND THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Psalm 139:7
 - Acts 5:3–5
 - 1 Corinthians 2:10–11
 - 2 Peter 1:20–21

Louis Berkhof in *Systematic Theology*

The deity of the Holy Spirit may be established from Scripture by a line of proof quite similar to that employed in connection with the Son: (1) *Divine names are given to Him*, Ex. 17:7 (comp. Heb. 3:7–9); Acts 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16 (comp. 2 Pet. 1:21). (2) *Divine perfections are ascribed to Him*, such as omnipresence, Ps. 139:7–10, omniscience, Isa. 40:13, 14 (comp. Rom. 11:34); 1 Cor. 2:10, 11, omnipotence, 1 Cor. 12:11; Rom. 15:19, and eternity, Heb. 9:14 (?). (3) *Divine works are performed by Him*, such as creation, Gen. 1:2; Job. 26:13; 33:4, providential renovation, Ps. 104:30, regeneration, John 3:5, 6; Tit. 3:5, and the resurrection of the dead, Rom. 8:11. (4) *Divine honour is also paid to Him*, Matt. 28:19; Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 13:14.⁴⁰

- Answer the question, “How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?” in your own words.

40 Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 97–98.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15-20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and your answers to the questions about it.

2. Practice answering the following question:
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?

3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

John MacArthur

To successfully learn spiritual convictions from others and to hold them as your own, it is necessary not only to hear them clearly taught but to see them consistently lived.⁴¹

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **He manages his household well; having children who believe**

1 Timothy 3:4–5 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)...

Titus 1:6 ...Namely, if any man is...having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.

- Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

⁴¹ John MacArthur, *2 Timothy* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1995), 135.

Chapter 5

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- THE OFFICES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP: ELDERS AND DEACONS

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **Isaiah:** Salvation
 - **Jeremiah:** God's Final Warning
 - **Lamentations:** Lament over Jerusalem
 - **Ezekiel:** Condemnation, Consolation, and Restoration
 - **Daniel:** God's Sovereignty over Human History
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Ecclesiology:** The Study of the Doctrine of the Church
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - What are the purposes of the church?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - Not Self-willed
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Bible Study

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

THE OFFICES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP: ELDERS AND DEACONS

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

There is a variety of formal and informal leadership roles that believers may fill within each local church and its ministries. However, the New Testament specifically identifies two leadership offices for the church: elders (or overseers) and deacons.

Philippians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons...

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue

The office of elder is primarily one of spiritual oversight—leading and feeding the flock. The office of deacon is primarily one of spiritual service—assisting the elders in meeting the needs of church members.⁴²

Scripture uses various terms to describe an **elder**, including elder, pastor or shepherd, and overseer. All three expressions are seen in close connection in 1 Peter 5 and Acts 20 (emphases added):

1 Peter 5:1–2

Therefore, I exhort the *elders* among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, *shepherd* the flock of God among you, *exercising oversight* not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness...

Acts 20:17, 28

From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the *elders* of the church....he said to them..."Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you *overseers*, to *shepherd* the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Each of these terms helps paint the picture of what should characterize such a man:

⁴² MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 772.

- An *elder* is a man of maturity, with character that is above reproach.
- A *pastor/shepherd* is a man who cares well for others entrusted to him by Christ, the Chief Shepherd.
- An *overseer* is a man who provides effective leadership and oversight.

Alexander Strauch summarizes this office, writing, “According to the New Testament concept of eldership, elders lead the church, teach and preach the Word, protect the church from false teachers, exhort and admonish the saints in sound doctrine, visit the sick and pray, and judge doctrinal issues. In biblical terminology, elders shepherd, oversee, lead, and care for the local church.”⁴³

The New Testament word used of **deacons** (*diakonos*) is often translated as “minister” or “servant.” Most uses of this word are more general rather than referencing the formal office of deacon. But its use for the office of deacon as well clearly indicates they are those who minister and serve. Deacons are therefore those who assist the elders in leadership of the church by serving. Given that every believer is to serve, it seems that what distinguishes the office of deacon from every faithful believer is providing oversight of service both through their leadership and example.

While there is debate as to the origin of the office of deacon in the early church, Acts 6 at a minimum gives a clear preview of how the offices of elder and deacon would complement one another.

Acts 6:1–6

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

- How do the “deacons” in this text assist the apostles in leadership of the early church?

43 Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership* (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1995), 16.

- How does this illustrate the related functions of elders and deacons?

THE PLURALITY OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

One of the significant features of New Testament instruction regarding elders and deacons is that they are almost always referred to in the plural, clearly implying that the normative practice of the church is leadership by a plurality of elders assisted by multiple deacons.

Acts 14:23

When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Philippians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons...

- What are the benefits of a plurality of leadership as opposed to that by a single individual?

- What are some key attitudes necessary for a plurality of leadership to work well together?

God has wisely designed the church to be led by a plurality. Multiple leaders provide greater wisdom and ministry than any individual could on their own.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

The desire to have a plurality of elders and deacons should not undermine the commitment to having qualified leadership. Elders and deacons must meet the qualifications outlined in Scripture as they are to serve as an example of spiritual maturity. The pattern of an elder's or deacon's life is to be such that if others follow them, they will also be imitating Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11).

- Read Titus 1:5–9 and 1 Timothy 3:1–10.
 - What are the biblical qualifications for elders?

- What are the biblical qualifications for deacons?

- Why is having biblically qualified leadership so important in the church?

One of the qualifications outlined in Scripture is that elders are to be men. While men and women are spiritually equal before God, He has given different, complementary roles to men and women in the home and the church. These role distinctions must be embraced in order to be faithful to Christ and His word.

While the Scriptures are clear regarding male elders, there is debate among those committed to the authority of Scripture about whether women can serve as deaconesses. Individual churches have the freedom to determine how they will handle this issue based primarily on their interpretation of whether the women identified in 1 Timothy 3:11 are deaconesses or the wives of deacons.

The primary qualification required of elders that is not required of deacons is the ability to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). While not every elder will be equally gifted, they must all be “able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9).”

- Why must elders be able to teach in order to fulfill their role as outlined in the following verses?
 - 1 Timothy 1:3–4
 - 2 Timothy 2:2
 - 2 Timothy 4:1–2
 - Ephesians 4:11–13

Some think of being a deacon as a stepping stone to becoming an elder. While that is certainly possible, the differing gifts required mean not every deacon will become an elder, or needs to aspire to that office. Jerry Wragg writes, “It is amazing to me how many good deacons try desperately to be elders because they’ve concluded that there’s greater impact or status at the elder level. The result is a person carrying leadership burdens he was never gifted to bear, while the need for godly deacons goes unmet.”⁴⁴ Those committed to serve faithfully in the church must be content to exercise the gifts God has given with faithfulness, recognizing every part of the body is vital to the growth of the body for the glory of Christ.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. How do the elders and deacons fulfill different roles in leadership in your church?
3. What teaching experience do you have, if any? Do you believe you are able to teach? If so, how has your giftedness to teach been affirmed by others?
4. How are potential elders and deacons identified and equipped in your church?

⁴⁴ Wragg, *Exemplary Spiritual Leadership*, 85.

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

ISAIAH

When Isaiah began his ministry in about 740 B.C., Israel was at a crisis point in its history. Assyria, its menacing neighbor to the northeast, was well on its way to becoming the dominant force in the ancient Near East. Both the northern and southern kingdoms were tempted to form political alliances either with or against Assyria. Meanwhile, both Israel and Judah were suffering the devastating fruits of religious and moral compromise. God commissioned Isaiah to call Israel and Judah to repent of their sins and unbelief and to trust him alone for both personal salvation and national deliverance.⁴⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---------|
| I. | Chastening of God | (1–39) |
| II. | Comfort of God | (40–66) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Salvation

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 6 | Isaiah's call and commissioning |
| 40–48 | Deliverance promised to Israel |
| 53 | Suffering Servant (Jesus Christ) |
| 66 | Glorious future in Zion; the consummation of history |

- Why is “salvation” an appropriate theme for the book of Isaiah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Isaiah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Isaiah.

⁴⁵ H. L. Willmington, *Willmington's Bible Handbook* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1997), 355.

JEREMIAH

Apostasy, idolatry, perverted worship, moral decay – these were the conditions under which Jeremiah lived and ministered. An avalanche of judgment is coming, and Jeremiah is called to proclaim that message faithfully for forty years. In response to his sermons, the tender prophet of God experiences intense sorrows at the hands of his countrymen: opposition, beatings, isolation, imprisonment. But though rejected and persecuted, Jeremiah lives to see many of his prophecies come true. The Babylonian army arrives; vengeance falls; and God’s holiness and justice are vindicated, though it breaks the prophet’s heart.⁴⁶

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------|---------|
| I. | Jeremiah’s Call | (1) |
| II. | Judah’s Prophecies | (2–45) |
| III. | Gentiles’ Prophecies | (46–51) |
| IV. | Jerusalem’s Fall | (52) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: God’s Final Warning

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 25 | Judah’s future judgment through Babylon for 70 years; Babylon judged; all nations |
| 31–32 | Restoration; new covenant; Jeremiah imprisoned; buys a field; God explains |
| 52 | Destruction of Jerusalem |

- Why is “God’s final warning” an appropriate theme for the book of Jeremiah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Jeremiah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Jeremiah.

⁴⁶ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 197.

LAMENTATIONS

Lamentations, perhaps the saddest book of the Old Testament, is penned by the mourning prophet Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem. In five “dirges of death,” Jeremiah expresses the horror and helplessness of seeing the Jews’ proudest city reduced to rubble. Defeat, slaughter, and ruination – the horrors so long promised and so frequently ignored – now fall from the hands of the brutal Babylonians. And yet, even as the prophet’s heart breaks, he pauses to proclaim a ringing testimony of deep faith in the goodness and mercy of God.⁴⁷

OUTLINE:

I.	The Ruin of Jerusalem	(1)
II.	The Wrath of God	(2)
III.	The Request for Mercy	(3)
IV.	The Review of the Siege	(4)
V.	The Request for Restoration	(5)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Lament over Jerusalem

- Why is “lament over Jerusalem” an appropriate theme for the book of Lamentations?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Lamentations in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Lamentations.

⁴⁷ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 206.

EZEKIEL

Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon in 597 B.C. ... [He] lived in Babylon during the final days of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. It is important to note that chapters 1–24 of Ezekiel were given before the final overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. These chapters speak of the sin and unbelief of Judah and are very stern pronouncements. But after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., Ezekiel’s message changes dramatically to prophecies of hope and consolation (chaps. 33–48).⁴⁸

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|---------|
| I. | Condemnation | (1–32) |
| II. | Consolation and Restoration | (33–48) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Condemnation, Consolation, and Restoration

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 8–11 | God’s glory departs |
| 36–37 | The mountains of Israel to be blessed; renewal of Israel; valley of dry bones; reunion of Israel and Judah; David to be their king |
| 38–39 | Prophecy against Gog and Magog |
| 40–48 | The temple; God’s glory; worship; land restored |

- Why is “condemnation, consolation, and restoration” an appropriate theme for the book of Ezekiel?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Ezekiel in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Ezekiel.

⁴⁸ Paul Benware, *Survey of the Old Testament* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1993), 233.

DANIEL

Deported to Babylon...and handpicked for government service, Daniel becomes God's prophetic mouthpiece to the gentile and Jewish world declaring God's present and eternal purpose.... In both his personal adventures and prophetic visions, Daniel shows God's guidance, intervention, and power in the affairs of men.⁴⁹

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---|--------|
| I. | Personal History of Daniel/The Remnant | (1) |
| II. | Prophetic Plan for the Gentiles/God is in Control | (2-7) |
| III. | Prophetic Plan for Israel/There is a Future | (8-12) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: God's Sovereignty over Human History

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 3 Nebuchadnezzar's idolatrous image; the fiery furnace
- 5 Belshazzar and wall writing
- 6 Darius' decree and Daniel in the lion's den
- 7 Daniel's four-beast vision
- 9 Daniel's seventy-week vision

- Why is "God's sovereignty over human history" an appropriate theme for the book of Daniel?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Daniel in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Daniel.

⁴⁹ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 221.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is found in Isaiah 53?
 - What is the theme of Jeremiah?
 - What is found in Daniel 9?

3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Song of Solomon.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – ECCLESIOLOGY

1 Timothy 3:15

...but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

Ecclesiology is the study of the doctrine of the church.

Some key issues and themes addressed in ecclesiology include:

- The Nature of the Church (Local and Universal)
- The Purposes of the Church
- The Government of the Church
 - Elders
 - Deacons
- The Ordinances of the Church
 - Baptism
 - The Lord's Supper

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of the church.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on ecclesiology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH?

Key passages to consider:

- Matthew 28:19–20
- Acts 2:42
- Ephesians 3:20–21, 4:11–16
- Colossians 1:28

John MacArthur & Richard Mahue, *Biblical Doctrine*

From the standpoint of how the church relates to its members, its purpose might be stated as follows: the church exists to glorify God (Eph. 1:5–6, 12–14; 3:20–21; 2 Thess. 1:12) by actively building its members up in the faith (Eph. 4:12–16), faithfully teaching the Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16–17), regularly observing the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38–42), proactively fostering fellowship among believers (Acts 2:42–47; 1 John 1:3), and boldly communicating the truth of the gospel to the lost (Matt. 28:19–20). This purpose can be summarized under the following three headings.

Exalting God - Because God is zealous for his glory (Isa. 48:9–11; cf. Isa. 43:6–7; 49:3), his people should likewise be consumed with a desire to glorify and exalt him (1 Cor. 10:31; cf. 6:20). Consequently, a faithful church is God centered, not man centered. The church has been redeemed so that believers might glorify him both by serving one another (1 Pet. 4:11) and by proclaiming “the excellencies of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

One of the primary ways in which the church exalts God is through worship and praise. Whenever the church gathers, worship ought to be the ultimate priority....

Edifying Believers - ...edification takes place through the ministry of the Word (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:15–17; 1 Pet. 2:2), the mentoring of godly leadership (Eph. 4:11–12), the selfless exercise of spiritual giftedness (1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Pet. 4:10), and the practice of the “one another” commands in the New Testament....

Evangelizing the Lost - A church that is passionately pursuing the glory of God will likewise have a strong emphasis on evangelism, both locally and around the world.... The church’s evangelistic commission is articulated by Jesus himself in Matthew 28:18–20.⁵⁰

- Answer the question, “What are the purposes of the church?” in your own words.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church’s doctrinal statement on the doctrine of the church and your answers to the questions about it.
2. Practice answering the following questions:
 - What are the purposes of the church?
 - What are the differences between elders and deacons?
3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?

50 MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 751–53.

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Clement

But the greater [a person] appears to be; the more humble he ought to be, and the more ready to seek the common good in preference to his own.⁵¹

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualification of an elder, recognizing it is not only required for elders but is to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Not Self-willed**

Titus 1:7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed...

- Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

51 *Clement's First Letter*, 48:6–49:1.

- Read 1 Peter 4:1–3. Why should every believer live for God’s will rather than for his own desires?

- How can you be tempted to live in a self-centered way:
 - At home?

 - At church?

 - At work?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. How does a self-willed leader destroy unity among leadership?

3. What will motivate a godly leader who is not self-willed?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

BIBLE STUDY

2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Jonathan Edwards

Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same⁵²

- Why is it important to not only read the Bible but to study it in greater depth?

- Describe your regular practice of Bible study. What tools do you typically use when you study?

- Why is regular personal Bible study important for growth in spiritual maturity?

52 "The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards," Desiring God, December 30, 2006, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-resolutions-of-jonathan-edwards>.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. How have you grown in your ability to study the Bible?
3. What have you recently learned through your Bible study?

Chapter 6

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **BIBLE SURVEY**

- **Hosea:** God's Loyal Love
- **Joel:** The Day of the Lord
- **Amos:** Social Injustice in Israel
- **Obadiah:** Edom's Judgment
- **Jonah:** God's Mercy on Repentant Gentiles
- **Micah:** The Justice of God vs. the Social Injustice of Judah
- **Nahum:** Nineveh's Destruction
- **Habakkuk:** Faith and Doubt in the Face of Judah's Exile
- **Zephaniah:** Future Global Judgment
- **Haggai:** Call to Restart the Rebuilding of the Temple
- **Zechariah:** Israel's Comfort and Glory (Preparation for the Messiah)
- **Malachi:** Call for Repentance; Waiting for the Messiah

- **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

- **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Anthropology and Hamartiology:**
The Study of the Doctrines of Man and Sin
- **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - How would you define total depravity?

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

- Not Quick-tempered or Pugnacious but Gentle and Peaceable

- **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

- Service

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Leadership is often grossly misunderstood. To many, leadership is primarily about having the authority to get other people to do what you want and about receiving the recognition and honor they believe should come with their position. Many, if not most, who aspire to leadership do so at least in large part with these goals primarily in mind. Even the disciples, having spent ample time with Jesus, had this self-centered perspective of leadership. Mark 10 records how, near the end of Christ's ministry, they expected Jesus to begin to rule and reign as king and they wanted to ensure their place of authority and honor beside Him.

Mark 10:35–41

James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, came up to Jesus, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask of You." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized. But to sit on My right or on My left, this is not Mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." Hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John.

James and John wanted places of honor and authority next to Jesus and they were unashamed to ask Him for such positions. The other disciples were indignant with them, likely "over the fact that they have got in first and tried to gain an unfair advantage over their colleagues in the competition for the highest places. On this issue they are all equally at fault."⁵³

Jesus took this opportunity to teach them about true leadership, about true greatness. He taught them, as J. Oswald Sanders writes, that "True greatness, true leadership, is found in giving yourself in service to others, not in coaxing or inducing others to serve you."⁵⁴

⁵³ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Paternoster, 2002), 418.

⁵⁴ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 15.

THE CLEAR CONTRAST OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Such servant leadership stands in stark contrast to the leadership of the world. Jesus wanted His disciples to be crystal clear on this distinction.

Mark 10:42–44

Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, “You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.”

- How can leaders lord it over others, as the rulers of the Gentiles did?

When Jesus highlighted the worldly leaders exercising authority, He was not denigrating authority itself. The Bible is clear that God is the ultimate authority and that He has established human authority structures for our good (Romans 13:1–2). Such authority is to be present in society, the church, and the home. But Jesus was making the point that true leadership, and greatness, is not primarily about exercising authority over others and that the use of such authority will be vastly different for leaders who follow Christ. Biblical leaders may well exercise authority according to God’s design, but they do so as a servant, or slave, of all.

Wayne Mack

According to [the Bible], a leader is first and foremost a servant. His concern is not for himself; his concern is not to give orders, to boss other people around, to have his own way. His concern is to meet the needs of others.⁵⁵

Matthew Henry

...Those that shall be put under your charge, must be as sheep under the charge of the shepherd, who is to tend them and feed them, and be a servant to them, not as horses under the command of the driver, that works them and beats them, and gets his pennyworths out of them.⁵⁶

55 Wayne Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1999), 33.

56 Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Carol Stream, IL: Hendrickson/Tyndale House, 1994), 1802.

- Read John 13:1–17. How should Jesus’ example affect your perspective and practice of leadership?

THE SELFLESS HEART OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

If leaders are to follow Christ’s example in being servants of others, they must not only imitate His deeds, but they must also share His heart. Jesus was a willing servant, even unto death, because of His great love. Some of the most familiar verses in the Bible focus on the connection between the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ (John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:7–10). As 1 John 3:16 says, “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us...” True servant leadership must likewise flow from a heart of love for God and for others.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 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. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

Robert Peterson & Alexander Strauch

For those of us who seek to be leaders and teachers of God’s people, Jesus Christ repeatedly insisted that we first be humble minded, that we not strive for prominence of place or reputation. He calls us to sacrificially serve one another, to forgive those who hurt us, and to treat one another as brothers and sisters in the family of God. We could summarize all these things in one word – love.⁵⁹

- Why is love essential for biblical leadership?

59 Robert Peterson and Alexander Strauch, *Agape Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1991), 8.

In addition to a self-giving heart of love, servant leadership must flow from a humble heart that is genuinely more concerned for others than oneself.

Stuart Scott

When someone is humble, they are focused on God and others, not self. Even their focus on others is out of a desire to love and glorify God. They have no need to be recognized or approved. There is no competition with God or others. They have no need to elevate self, knowing that they have been forgiven and that God's love has been undeservedly and irrevocably set on them. Instead, a humble person's goal is to elevate God and encourage others.⁶⁰

Jesus perfectly demonstrated such humility, being focused on the glory of the Father and the good of others rather than Himself. We are called to have that same attitude.

Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- What will be different when a leader is focused on the good of others rather than his own self-interest?

- Why is it easy for leaders to become focused on themselves? How can they guard against this temptation?

60 Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2002), 197.

Self-focused leadership is antithetical to Christ-like leadership and is soundly rebuked by God (e.g. Ezekiel 34:1–3). It is also ultimately crippling for the leader and harmful to those he leads.

Jerry Wragg

When our leadership is self-absorbed and sinfully fearful, we are like a man whose life is beset with mirrors into which he nervously gazes to protect his own image. Resources and relationships become mere objects to be used, not for the good of others, but to advance the reputation and significance of self. Vision and discernment flourish under a leader whose ultimate goal is larger than personal aggrandizement. A true servant-leader channels the energies and gifting of others toward worthy goals.⁶¹

- As a leader, how can you tell when you have become focused on self rather than on others and on Christ?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. What practical difference will having the mindset of a servant leader make in your leadership:
 - At home?
 - At work?
 - In the church?
3. How can you be tempted to lord it over others under your leadership? How should you view and treat them?
4. How should biblical leaders reflect Christ's example in their leadership?

61 Wragg, *Exemplary Spiritual Leadership*, 32.

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

John MacArthur

...A leader must know the Scriptures. He must believe with an unshakeable conviction that God's Word is true. And he must be able to communicate the truth of God's Word with confidence and conviction.⁶²

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

62 MacArthur, *Called to Lead*, 35.

HOSEA

The unhappy story of Hosea and his faithless wife Gomer illustrates the loyal love of God and the spiritual adultery of Israel. Hosea exposes the sins of Israel and contrasts them to God's holiness. The nation must be judged for its sins, but it will be restored in the future because of the love and faithfulness of God.⁶³

OUTLINE:

- I. Adulterous Wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
 - II. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Lord (4-14)
- Memorize the following:
- THEME:** God's Loyal Love
- Why is "God's loyal love" an appropriate theme for the book of Hosea?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Hosea in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Hosea.

63 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 230.

JOEL

This book looks back to a recent locust plague that decimated the land of Judah to illustrate the far more terrifying day of the Lord. The land will be invaded by a fearsome army that will make the locusts seem mild in comparison. Nevertheless, God appeals to the people to repent in order to divert the coming disaster. Because the people will not change, judgment will come, but it will be followed by great blessing.⁶⁴

OUTLINE:

- I. The Day of the Lord in Retrospect (1:1–2:17)
 - II. The Day of the Lord in Prospect (2:18–3:21)
- Memorize the following:
THEME: The Day of the Lord
 - Why is “the day of the Lord” an appropriate theme for the book of Joel?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Joel in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Joel.

64 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 239.

AMOS

Amos prophesied during a period of national optimism in Israel. Business was booming and boundaries were bulging. But below the surface, greed and injustice were festering. Hypocritical religious motions had replaced true worship, creating a false sense of security and a growing callousness to God's disciplining hand.... Amos, the country-farmer-turned-prophet, lashes out at sin unflinchingly, trying to visualize the nearness of God's judgment and mobilize the nation to repentance.⁶⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--|-----------|
| I. | The Eight Prophecies of Judgment | (1-2) |
| II. | The Three Sermons on Israel's Sin | (3-6) |
| III. | The Five Visions of Punishment | (7-9:10) |
| IV. | The Five Promises on Restoration of Israel | (9:11-15) |
- Memorize the following:
THEME: Social Injustice in Israel
 - Why is "social injustice in Israel" an appropriate theme for the book of Amos?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Amos in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Amos.

65 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 244.

OBADIAH

This obscure prophet of the southern kingdom directs his brief oracle to the nation of Edom that bordered Judah on the southeast. Edom (descended from Esau) refused to act as his brother's keeper toward Judah (descended from Jacob). Because they gloated when Jerusalem was invaded, their judgment would be nothing less than total destruction.⁶⁶

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------|
| I. | Judgment of Edom | (1:1–18) |
| II. | Restoration of Israel | (1:19–21) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Edom's Judgment

- Why is "Edom's judgment" an appropriate theme for the book of Obadiah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Obadiah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Obadiah.

66 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 250.

JONAH

The book [of Jonah] shows how God will forgive anyone who repents. This is as true for a disobedient servant of His as it is for the threatening enemies of His people, in this case the Assyrians of Nineveh. Jonah's reluctance and rebellion over going to preach repentance in the Assyrian capital of Nineveh is because he knows that God will have mercy on the Assyrians if they repent, and he sees them, quite correctly, as a great threat to Israel's safety. This book underlines the need for those who know God to obey Him unconditionally. It also reminds us that God is sovereign in His timing and in the way He arranges circumstances.⁶⁷

OUTLINE:

- I. God's Mercy upon Jonah (1-2)
- II. God's Mercy upon Nineveh (3-4)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: God's Mercy on Repentant Gentiles

- Why is "God's mercy on repentant Gentiles" an appropriate theme for the book of Jonah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Jonah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Jonah.

67 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 374.

MICAH

Micah prophesied during a period of intense social injustice in Judah. False prophets preached for riches, not for righteousness. Princes thrived on cruelty, violence, and corruption. Priests ministered more for greed than for God. Landlords stole from the poor and evicted widows. Judges lusted after bribes. Businessmen used deceitful scales and weights. Sin had infiltrated every segment of society... Micah enumerates the sins of the nation, sins which will ultimately lead to destruction and captivity. But in the midst of blackness there is hope. A Divine Deliverer will appear and righteousness will prevail. Though justice is now trampled underfoot, it will one day triumph.⁶⁸

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------|
| I. | Prediction of Retribution | (1-3) |
| II. | Prediction of Restoration | (4-5) |
| III. | Plea for Repentance | (6-7) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: The Justice of God vs. the Social Injustice of Judah

- Why is “the justice of God vs. the social injustice of Judah” an appropriate theme for the book of Micah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Micah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Micah.

NAHUM

Nineveh had been given the privilege of knowing the one true God. Under Jonah's preaching this great gentile city had repented, and God had graciously stayed His judgment. However, a hundred years later, Nahum proclaims the downfall of this same city. The Assyrians have forgotten their revival and have returned to their habits of violence, idolatry, and arrogance. As a result, Babylon will so destroy the city that no trace of it will remain— a prophecy fulfilled in painful detail.⁶⁹

OUTLINE:

- I. God's Majestic Holiness (1)
- II. Nineveh's Judgment (2-3)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Nineveh's Destruction

- Why is "Nineveh's destruction" an appropriate theme for the book of Nahum?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Nahum in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Nahum.

⁶⁹ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 267.

HABAKKUK

Habakkuk prophesies as the sun is about to set on the Assyrian empire and about to rise on the Babylonian empire. The book presents Habakkuk's problem, namely that he cannot understand why sin, violence, and injustice can proliferate. Then, when he is told that God will judge His people by oppression from the even more heathen and extremely cruel Chaldeans, he cannot grasp how God, who is holy, can use such evil people as His instrument of judgment on His own people. Without a perfect understanding, Habakkuk humbly prays for God's mercy and praises Him for His mighty power. He finds his comfort in God who is his strength and who remains faithful in all circumstances, even adverse ones.⁷⁰

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| I. | Habakkuk's Perplexities | (1-2) |
| II. | Habakkuk's Prayer/Praise | (3) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Faith and Doubt in the Face of Judah's Exile

- Why is "faith and doubt in the face of Judah's exile" an appropriate theme for the book of Habakkuk?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Habakkuk in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Habakkuk.

⁷⁰ Crispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 381.

ZEPHANIAH

In no uncertain terms, Zephaniah develops the theme of the coming day of the Lord as a day of awesome judgment followed by great blessing. Zephaniah begins with the coming judgment of Judah and broadens his scope to include the Gentiles as well. Because Judah refuses to seek the Lord, it stands condemned. But a Remnant will exult when God restores the fortunes of His people.⁷¹

OUTLINE:

- I. Prophecies of Judgment (1-2)
 - II. Prophecies of Future Blessing (3)
- Memorize the following:
THEME: Future Global Judgment
 - Why is “future global judgment” an appropriate theme for the book of Zephaniah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Zephaniah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Zephaniah.

71 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 277.

HAGGAI

After the Babylonian exile, the Jews began to rebuild the temple but allowed the work to stop while they rebuilt their own houses instead. Because of their failure to put God first, they were not enjoying His blessing in the land. Haggai urges the people to finish the temple because of God's promise that it would be filled with glory. After chastening the people for their contamination, Haggai closes with a promise of future blessing.⁷²

OUTLINE:

I.	Rebuke for Disobedience	(1:1–11)
II.	Rebuilding the Temple	(1:12–15)
III.	Return of God's Glory	(2:1–9)
IV.	Religious Questions	(2:10–19)
V.	Reign of God	(2:20–23)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Call to Restart the Rebuilding of the Temple

- Why is “call to restart the rebuilding of the Temple” an appropriate theme for the book of Haggai?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Haggai in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Haggai.

⁷² Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 282.

ZECHARIAH

A contemporary of Haggai, Zechariah also exhorts the Jews to complete the construction of the temple. Zechariah's method of motivating them is one of encouragement— the temple is central to Israel's spiritual heritage, and it is related to the coming of Messiah. Zechariah's series of visions, messages, and burdens offer some of the clearest messianic prophecies in Scripture. God reveals that His program for his people is far from complete.⁷³

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|---------|
| I. | The Call to Repentance | (1:1–6) |
| II. | The Eight Visions of Zechariah | (1:7–6) |
| III. | The Four Messages of Zechariah | (7–8) |
| IV. | The Two Burdens of Zechariah | (9–14) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Israel's Comfort and Glory (Preparation for the Messiah)

- Why is “Israel's comfort and glory (preparation for the Messiah)” an appropriate theme for the book of Zechariah?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Zechariah in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Zechariah.

73 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 288.

MALACHI

By the time of the last Old Testament prophet [Malachi], the spiritual and moral climate of the people has grown cold. Their worship is meaningless and indifferent, and as they grow more distant from God, they become characterized by religious and social compromise.⁷⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|------------|
| I. | God's Pronouncements against Israel | (1-3:15) |
| II. | God's Promise to Israel | (3:16-4:6) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Call for Repentance; Waiting for the Messiah

- Why is “call for repentance; waiting for the Messiah” an appropriate theme for the book of Malachi?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Malachi in your study Bible or basic Old Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Malachi.

74 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 294.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Hosea?
 - What is the theme of Nahum?
 - What is the theme of Zechariah?

3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Daniel.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – ANTHROPOLOGY AND HAMARTIOLOGY

Genesis 1:27

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Anthropology is the study of the doctrine of man.

Hamartiology is the study of the doctrine of sin.

Some key issues and themes addressed in anthropology:

- Creation of Man
- Image of God
- Nature of Man
 - Body and Soul
 - Gender

Some key issues and themes addressed in hamartiology:

- The Fall
 - Depravity
 - Death
-

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrines of man and sin.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on anthropology and hamartiology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE TOTAL DEPRAVITY?

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Jeremiah 17:9
 - Romans 3:10–18
 - Ephesians 2:1–3
 - Ephesians 4:17–19

J.I. Packer in Concise Theology

The phrase *total depravity* is commonly used to make explicit the implications of original sin. It signifies a corruption of our moral and spiritual nature that is total not in degree (for no one is as bad as he or she might be) but in extent. It declares that no part of us is untouched by sin, and therefore no action of ours is as good as it should be, and consequently nothing in us or about us ever appears meritorious in God's eyes. We cannot earn God's favor, no matter what we do; unless grace saves us, we are lost.

Total depravity entails total inability, that is, the state of not having it in oneself to respond to God and his Word in a sincere and wholehearted way (John 6:44; Rom.

8:7–8). Paul calls this unresponsiveness of the fallen heart a state of death (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13), and the Westminster Confession says: “Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto” (IX. 3).⁷⁵

- Define total depravity in your own words:

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church’s doctrinal statement on the doctrines of man and sin and your answers to the questions about it.
2. Practice answering the following question:
 - How would you define total depravity?
3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?
 - What are the purposes of the church?

⁷⁵ Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, 83–84.

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Albert Mohler

Character is indispensable to credibility, and credibility is essential to leadership.⁷⁶

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Not quick-tempered or pugnacious but gentle and peaceable**
 - Titus 1:7** For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward...not quick-tempered...not pugnacious...
 - 1 Timothy 3:2–3** An overseer, then, must be above reproach...not...pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable...
- Define these qualifications in your own words.
- Why are these qualities necessary for leadership?

⁷⁶ Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 72.

- What warnings and admonitions do the Scriptures give to all believers about these qualities in the following verses:
 - Proverbs 14:17
 - Proverbs 15:18
 - Proverbs 16:32
 - Romans 12:18
 - Philippians 4:5
 - James 3:17
 - Titus 3:1-2
- Read James 4:1-3.
 - How do quarrels and conflicts arise from sinful desires in the heart?
 - How can believers be tempted to excuse or justify sinful conflicts?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. How can a godly leader be gentle and peaceable while still maintaining strong biblical convictions?
3. When should a godly leader be willing to compromise? When should they stand firm?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

SERVICE

1 Peter 4:10–11

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Donald Whitney

Two of the deadliest of our sins – sloth and pride – loathe serving. The paint glazes on our eyes and put chains on our hands and feet so that we don't serve as we know we should or even as we want to. If we don't discipline ourselves to serve for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom (and for the purpose of Godliness), we'll "serve" only occasionally or when it's convenient or self-serving. The result will be a quantity and quality of service we'll regret when the Day of Accountability for our service comes.⁷⁷

- Describe your regular practice of serving within the church.

- Why is regular service an important aspect in the life of every believer?

- What hinders some believers from using their gifts to serve the body?

77 Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 117.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. Why is service both a demonstration of spiritual maturity and important for growth in spiritual maturity?

3. Discuss how the Lord has gifted you for service.
 - How are you regularly using your gifts in the body?
 - How can you more faithfully steward the gifts Christ has given you?

Chapter 7

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- BIBLE SURVEY
 - **Matthew:** Jesus as King
 - **Mark:** Jesus as Servant
 - **Luke:** Jesus as the Son of Man
 - **John:** Jesus as the Son of God
- SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Soteriology (Part 1):** The Study of the Doctrine of Salvation
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?
 - Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ.

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- SPIRITUAL MATURITY
 - Not Fond of Sordid Gain and Free from the Love of Money
- SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
 - Bible Memorization

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

For the believer, all of life is to be lived as worship. Even the most mundane of tasks should be done with a desire to glorify God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

This desire to glorify God in all things affects both the motivation of an individual's work and the manner in which various tasks will be completed. Believers work hard, not to earn salvation, but because they have received it freely by grace. Believers strive for excellence, not to merit Christ's favor, but as an act of worship to the one who deserves their best.

While addressed to first century slaves, Paul's exhortation in Colossians 3 regarding working with excellence rings true for every believer today.

Colossians 3:23–24

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Christians in any setting should work as though they are serving Christ because that is exactly what they are doing.

John Stott

Our great need is the clear-sightedness to see Jesus Christ and to set him before us. It is possible for the housewife to cook a meal as if Jesus Christ were going to eat it, or to spring-clean the house as if Jesus Christ were to be the honoured guest. It is possible for teachers to educate children, for doctors to treat patients and nurses

to care for them, for solicitors to help clients, shop assistants to serve customers, accountants to audit books and secretaries to type letters as if in each case they were serving Jesus Christ.⁷⁸

LEADING WITH EXCELLENCE

Biblical church leaders must seek to fulfill their role with excellence. This is not to be done so they receive praise or acclaim, but out of a desire to please Christ and to see Him exalted. We should serve “...as good stewards...so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:10–11)

The response desired ought not be, “what a great job you are doing” but rather “what a great God you are serving.” Biblical leaders are eager to see the spotlight shining on Christ, rather than themselves. And leading with excellence for the sake of Christ does just that.

Excellence is sometimes thought of as being the same as perfection. But that is not the biblical standard for our work or our leadership. God has designed each of us with various gifts, roles, and responsibilities. Excellence does not mean everything is done as well as it possibly could be. Rather it means working hard to faithfully fulfill what God has called you to do for His glory as best you can with the time and resources available given your biblical priorities and purposes. A man who spends all day on a Saturday working in his yard may well have a better-looking yard than a man who only spent a few hours on it, but he may also have neglected other biblical priorities and responsibilities in the process.

- Why is it impossible to do every task “to the best of your ability”? How can one maintain a commitment to excellence while balancing the various priorities and responsibilities God has given?

Leading with excellence requires not only the commitment to doing things well, but also the wisdom to rightly determine priorities and the appropriate time and energy that each deserve.

78 J. R. W. Stott, *God's New Society: The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 252.

WORKING WITH DILIGENCE AND DISCIPLINE

Doing things well takes hard work and discipline. Paul reminded Timothy that his life of leadership was to be lived with the discipline and diligence of a soldier, athlete, and farmer (2 Timothy 2:3–6). There is no place for laziness in leadership.

- Read Proverbs 6:6–11 and 26:13–16. What characterizes one who is diligent in contrast to the sluggard?

In addition to working hard, leaders must also steward their time well. As J. Oswald Sanders writes, “Our problem is not too little time, but making better use of the time we have.”⁷⁹ This does not mean living a life of frantic busyness, for God has designed us with human limits and commands us to take time for rest and refreshment. Rather we must rightly prioritize the use of our time as was the pattern of our Lord.

Kevin DeYoung

[Jesus] was busy, but never in a way that made Him frantic, anxious, irritable, proud, envious, or distracted by lesser things....Jesus knew the difference between urgent and important. He understood that all the good things He could do were not necessarily the things He ought to do.⁸⁰

Leaders who steward their time well will be busy about the right things and they will guard against the peril of procrastination. Waiting to do something difficult for no other reason than it is difficult robs one of joy under the burden of a task yet unfinished and tends to distract from other tasks at hand.

Being busy about the right things does not mean we should be burdened and bothered by the interruptions that God brings into our lives. Rather than chafing against God’s providence, godly leaders will seek to build margin into their lives such that they can embrace the often unplanned opportunities for ministry that unexpectedly arise from the hand of God. Such is the perfect example of Christ.

⁷⁹ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 96.

⁸⁰ Kevin DeYoung, *Crazy Busy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 54–55.

J. Oswald Sanders

How interesting that the gospel accounts contain no hint of any interruption ever disturbing the serenity of the Son of God. Few things are more likely to produce tension in a busy life than unexpected interruptions. Yet to Jesus, there were no such things. “Unexpected” events were always foreseen in the Father’s planning, and Jesus was therefore undisturbed by them.⁸¹

- How can you steward your time well, leaving room for the unplanned interruptions God will undoubtedly bring?

- What are some common hindrances to a life of diligence and discipline? How can you combat the hindrances and cultivate these characteristics in your life?

IDENTIFYING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

Maintaining excellence means leaders must work to identify and solve problems. It is ideal when leaders recognize a potential problem and work to preemptively provide a solution. But sometimes problems are pointed out by others. Often this is done in the form of criticism and it is not always constructive. How a leader responds to such criticism reveals much about his character and leadership.

- What are some wrong ways of responding to criticism? How should a leader respond to criticism of themselves or an area over which they provide leadership?

81 Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 96–97.

In Acts 6:1–6 the apostles provide a helpful example of problem solving. A complaint was brought to them regarding certain widows being overlooked in the daily serving of food. Rather than responding defensively or blame-shifting, the apostles proactively worked toward a solution that included others' involvement and did not distract them from the priorities God had given them.

EQUIPPING AND DELEGATING TO OTHERS

One of the keys to solving the problem in Acts 6 was delegating responsibility to others. Oftentimes issues arise or potential opportunities are missed because leaders have limits. A leader may be unable to devote the necessary time and energy to an area or individual that needs help because of the volume of responsibilities they shoulder. Or a leader may miss or neglect an additional opportunity simply because their plate is already full.

The solution to this is not to do more or work harder. Rather it is to recognize that one of the most important roles of a biblical leader is to identify and equip other faithful servants, and then delegate responsibility to them.

J. Oswald Sanders

One facet of leadership is the ability to recognize the special abilities and limitations of others, combined with the capacity to fit each one into the job where he or she will do best. To succeed in getting things done through others is the highest type of leadership. Dwight L. Moody, a shrewd judge of people, once said that he would rather put a thousand men to work than do the work of a thousand men.⁸²

- Read Exodus 18:13–26. Why was it so important, both for Moses and for the people, that he delegated leadership to others who were faithful?

- Why might a leader be hesitant to delegate to others?

82 Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 137.

- What must a leader be careful of when delegating to others?

MAINTAINING THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

In addition to maintaining a commitment to biblical excellence themselves, church leaders must help others see and strive for that same standard. While this may involve pointing out areas of improvement, this is not to be done by criticizing others when they fall short of your standard. Rather it requires helping others see God clearly as worthy of all honor and glory so they are motivated to worship Him in the details of life and ministry. It also involves helping them understand what excellence looks like in their area of service given their gifting, and spurring them on to do their best for the glory of Christ. At times it may also involve directing someone to a different role they are better suited for based on their gifts or current level of spiritual maturity.

- What are some wrong ways a leader can seek to motivate others to do better in their role?
What are some right ways a leader can seek to motivate improvement?

What greater joy in leading the church than to see God's people faithful in their service to Him, regardless of whether that involves cleaning bathrooms, preparing meals, playing an instrument, holding a baby, or teaching God's word.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15-20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. What are your strengths in regard to leading with excellence? How do you need to grow in order to provide more excellent leadership (e.g. greater self-discipline, delegation, etc.)?
3. Share about your work and work history. How do you seek to honor the Lord in your work? What leadership experience have you had in your employment?
4. What challenges come in balancing the demands of work and other priorities and being involved in leadership of the church? How do you or will you navigate these things to pursue excellence in all the various areas of life?

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

Alexander Strauch

Knowledge without love inflates the ego and deceives the mind. It can lead to intellectual snobbery, an attitude of mockery and making fun of others' views, a spirit of contempt for those with lesser knowledge, and a demeaning way of dealing with people who disagree.⁸³

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

83 Alexander Strauch, *Leading with Love* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 2006), 11.

MATTHEW

Since Matthew is concerned with setting forth Jesus as Messiah, the King of the Jews, an interest in the OT kingdom promises runs throughout this gospel. Matthew's signature phrase "the kingdom of heaven" occurs 32 times in this book (and nowhere else in all of Scripture). The opening genealogy is designed to document Christ's credentials as Israel's king, and the rest of the book completes this theme.... He demonstrates that He is the fulfillment of dozens of OT prophecies regarding the king who would come. He offers evidence after evidence to establish Christ's kingly prerogative. All other historical and theological themes in the book revolve around this one.⁸⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|---------|
| I. | The Presentation of the King | (1-10) |
| II. | The Rejection of the King | (11-28) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Jesus as King

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 4 | The temptation and introduction to Jesus' ministry;
call of Peter, Andrew, James and John |
| 5-7 | Sermon on the Mount |
| 10 | The twelve sent out to preach |
| 13 | Kingdom parables: sower, wheat and tares, mustard seed, leaven and meal, etc. |
| 18 | Woes to stumbling blocks; church discipline; unforgiving slave |
| 23 | Seven woes to the "Scribes and Pharisees" |
| 24-25 | Olivet discourse |

- Why is "Jesus as king" an appropriate theme for the book of Matthew?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Matthew in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Matthew.

⁸⁴ MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1389.

MARK

Mark was not one of the twelve apostles, but was a very close associate of the apostle Peter and no doubt drew from Peter's experience of Christ. His Gospel is written largely for Gentiles, especially Romans....It underlines Jesus as a servant, and thus carries no genealogy, for who is concerned about the family tree of a servant? It is the shortest and simplest of the Gospels....The teaching ministry of Jesus is, of course, authoritatively portrayed here, but it is the deeds of Christ, rather than His words, which are accentuated.⁸⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------|
| I. | Sent to Serve | (1-10) |
| II. | Sent to Save | (11-16) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Jesus as Servant

- Why is "Jesus as servant" an appropriate theme for the book of Mark?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Mark in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Mark.

85 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 416.

LUKE

Luke, a Gentile non-apostle, was closely associated and identified with the apostle Paul and wrote, under the influence of God's Holy Spirit, mainly for other Gentiles. To do this, he coordinated and collated reliable reports to write this book. His Gospel harmonizes perfectly with the other Gospels, yet with authentic variety. This third Gospel portrays Jesus as a man, and thus traces his genealogy, to the first man (Adam) through Mary's line. The key-phrase is 'the Son of Man'. Jesus' humanity is underlined by the inclusion in the Gospel of the ten prayers that he prays. But Jesus is both fully man and fully God, and His deity shines forth from this Gospel as from the other three.⁸⁶

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--|---------|
| I. | The Birth of the Son of Man | (1-3) |
| II. | The Ministry of the Son of Man | (4-19) |
| III. | The Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Son of Man | (20-24) |

- Memorize the following and read the key chapter:

THEME: Jesus as the Son of Man

KEY CHAPTER:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 2 | Birth of Christ |
|---|-----------------|

- Why is "Jesus as the Son of Man" an appropriate theme for the book of Luke?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Luke in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Luke.

⁸⁶ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 426.

JOHN

John is written partly to complement the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, but mainly to show and prove that the Lord Jesus Christ is the everlasting Son of God and, at the same time, God the Son....Because He is God, there is no genealogy. He always has been, always is, and always will be! Thus John stresses the Lord Jesus Christ's eternity, creatorhood, incarnation and deity. He is God, despite being despised and rejected by some of those He came to save. Signs are given in His miracles to help the humble observer see who Jesus is. Salvation by faith in Him is clearly portrayed....John is written to the 'whomever' of any generation and any national, religious or ethnic background.⁸⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--|---------|
| I. | The Public Ministry of Jesus | (1-12) |
| II. | The Private Ministry of Jesus – Upper Room | (13-17) |
| III. | The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus | (18-21) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Jesus as the Son of God

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|----|---|
| 2 | Wedding in Cana (first sign); cleansing of the temple |
| 3 | Nicodemus; John the Baptist's testimony |
| 4 | Samaritan woman |
| 10 | Good Shepherd; debate on His deity |
| 13 | Last supper/foot washing; Judas' betrayal; Peter's denial predicted |
| 14 | Q & A: He's "the way" (14:6); "in the Father" (14:9ff); sending the Holy Spirit (14:26ff) |
| 15 | Relationships: God – vine/branches; believers – "love one another"; world – "hates you" |
| 16 | Revelation of what is to come: rejection; Holy Spirit; resurrection; Father |
| 17 | High Priestly prayer |
| 21 | Jesus appears to the disciples in Galilee |

- Why is "Jesus as the Son of God" an appropriate theme for the book of John?

⁸⁷ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 445.

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to John in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of John.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.
2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Matthew?
 - What is the theme of Mark?
 - What is found in John 17?
3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Malachi.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church’s doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the “Defending Sound Doctrine” question(s).
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – SOTERIOLOGY (PART 1)

Titus 3:5

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit...

Soteriology is the study of the doctrine of salvation.

Some key issues and themes addressed in soteriology include:

- The Gospel
 - Redemption
 - God’s Plan of Redemption
 - Redemption Accomplished
 - Redemption Applied
-
- Read the portion of your church’s doctrinal statement on the doctrine of salvation.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

 - Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Begin reading the chapter(s) on soteriology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

WHAT MUST A PERSON DO TO BE SAVED? IS REPENTANCE ESSENTIAL TO CONVERSION?

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Mark 1:15
 - Romans 10:9–10

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue in *Biblical Doctrine*

Together, repentance and faith make up the single act of conversion.

It should be apparent that repentance and faith are intimately related and even inseparable from one another. They are truly two sides of the same coin. In the first place, their connection follows a simple logic: it is impossible for someone to turn away from something without turning toward something else. Conversely, one cannot turn toward something without turning away from whatever was previously occupying his attention. Further, it is impossible to look in two different directions at the same time. But the inseparability of repentance and faith is also a theological necessity. It is inconceivable that one who finally perceives sin and Christ as they actually are should pursue Christ without forsaking sin or should forsake sin without embracing Christ...

For this reason, the gospel call to salvation is a summons to both repent and believe. According to Mark, the content of “the gospel of God” that the Lord Jesus proclaimed can be summarized as follows: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15)... In true conversion, there is always a turning from sin (repentance) and a simultaneous turning to God in Christ (faith). It is impossible that one should occur without the other.⁸⁸

- Answer the questions, “What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?” in your own words:

EXPLAIN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST.

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Mark 10:45
 - Romans 3:21–26
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21

Paul Enns in *The Moody Handbook of Theology*

The death of Christ was substitutionary—He died in the stead of sinners and in their place. This is also described as *vicarious*, from the Latin word *vicarius*, meaning “one in place of another.” The death of Christ “is vicarious in the sense that Christ is the Substitute who bears the punishment rightly due sinners, their guilt being imputed to Him in such a way that He representatively bore their punishment.” There are many passages that emphasize Christ’s substitutionary atonement in the place of mankind. Christ was a substitute in being made sin for others (2 Cor. 5:21); He bore the sins of others in His body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24); He suffered once to bear the sins of others (Heb. 9:28); He experienced horrible suffering, scourging, and death in place of sinners (Isa. 53:4–6).⁸⁹

- Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ in your own words:

⁸⁹ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, J. Vincent & A. Sholes, eds.; Revised and Expanded (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2014), 335–37.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of salvation and your answers to the questions about it.

2. Practice answering the following questions:
 - What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?
 - Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ.

3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?
 - What are the purposes of the church?
 - How would you define total depravity?

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

John MacArthur

According to Scripture, virtually everything that truly qualifies a person for leadership is directly related to character. It's not about style, status, personal charisma, clout, or worldly measurements of success. Integrity is the main issue that makes the difference between a good leader and a bad one.⁹⁰

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Not fond of sordid gain and free from the love of money**
1 Timothy 3:2–3 An overseer, then, must be above reproach...free from the love of money.
Titus 1:7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward...not fond of sordid gain...
 - Define this qualification in your own words.
 - Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

⁹⁰ John MacArthur, *Grace to You Newsletter*, Oct. 15, 2004.

- Read 1 Timothy 6:10. What sins often flow from the love of money? Why is the love of money such a serious issue in the life of a believer?

- Read Hebrews 13:5. How can you cultivate contentment?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. How can a church leader be tempted to use his authority or position for sordid gain?
3. How can individual leaders and the church as a whole protect against this temptation?
4. What should motivate church leaders instead of financial gain?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

BIBLE MEMORIZATION

Psalm 119:11

Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.

Jerry Bridges

God's Word must be so strongly fixed in our minds that it becomes the dominant influence in our thoughts, our attitudes, and our actions. One of the most effective ways of influencing our minds is through memorizing Scripture.⁹¹

- Describe your regular practice of Bible memorization.

- Why is regular Bible memorization important for growth in spiritual maturity?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. What spiritual benefits have you seen from memorizing God's word in your own life and the lives of others you have ministered to?

3. What practical helps or tips have been useful in your Scripture memorization?

⁹¹ Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1996), 86.

Chapter 8

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **MINISTRY TO OTHERS: HELPING PEOPLE CHANGE**

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **BIBLE SURVEY**
 - **Acts:** Birth and Growth of the Church
 - **Romans:** The Gospel of God
 - **1 Corinthians:** Correction and Condemnation
 - **2 Corinthians:** Defense of Apostleship
 - **Galatians:** Justification by Faith Alone
 - **Ephesians:** The Eternal Plan of God
- **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Soteriology (Part 2):** The Study of the Doctrine of Salvation
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - Define the doctrine of election.
 - Define the doctrine of regeneration.
 - Define the doctrine of justification.
 - Define the doctrine of sanctification.
 - Define the doctrine of glorification.
 - Define the doctrine of eternal security.

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**
 - Not Addicted to Wine but Sensible, Self-controlled, Temperate, and Prudent
- **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**
 - Bible Meditation

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

MINISTRY TO OTHERS: HELPING PEOPLE CHANGE

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Biblical church leaders must be personally committed to helping others grow into Christlikeness and must equip the entire church to strive together to such spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:11–13).

Colossians 1:28

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Growing to spiritual maturity requires a radical change in the desires, attitudes and conduct of every believer. We must live “the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God” (1 Peter 4:2). If we are to be changed ourselves, and help others change, we must first understand what the Scriptures teach about how we change.

THE FOUNDATION OF BIBLICAL CHANGE: REGENERATION

Colossians 3 gives one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the change that should characterize believers. Verses 5–9 record a series of sinful desires and actions that are to be put off; verses 12–17 give corresponding righteous desires and actions that are to be put on. But notice how the chapter begins.

Colossians 3:1

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ...

The change described in Colossians 3 is only possible if one has been raised up with Christ. The foundation of biblical change is new life in Him through the gospel. Prior to salvation, an individual is dead in their sins (Ephesians 2:1) and a slave to sin (Romans 6:16–18). But once a person is regenerated and has responded to the gospel in repentance and faith, they are no longer what they once were. Real, lasting change is now both possible and expected. No matter how much a caterpillar may want to fly, it cannot. But once it becomes a butterfly, a whole new manner of life is possible. No less dramatic of a transformation is also true for the believer.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

For this reason, believers seeking to help others change must begin with the gospel and the new life it brings when understood and embraced. This is one reason Paul began letters like Colossians with an emphasis on the gospel and its transforming work (e.g. Colossians 1:3–6, 1:21–23, 2:9–14).

- Why is it necessary to seek to discern a person's understanding of and response to the gospel before seeking to help them work on a specific issue in their life?

THE PROCESS OF BIBLICAL CHANGE: SANCTIFICATION

God promises to complete the work He begins at regeneration by bringing those who are His to glorification (Romans 8:29–30, Philippians 1:6), to full conformity to Christ. While this will ultimately occur when we see Jesus face to face (1 John 3:2), God is at work progressively making His children more like Christ. The Bible calls this process sanctification.

The primary means of sanctification is the word of God. As Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17). As we see Christ through His word – by reading it, studying it, memorizing it, meditating on it, and listening to it preached – the Spirit transforms us into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18). But this is not a passive process. Believers are to “work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12–13).

This working out of our salvation necessitates a general reorientation of our lives around Christ and His word.

Colossians 3:1–2

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Working out our salvation also involves working toward specific changes in our attitudes and behavior. Joel James clearly summarizes this biblical process of change in his helpful resource.

Joel James in *Counsel with Confidence*

God's plan for practical daily change is: **put off / be renewed / put on** (Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 3:8–14). That plan includes the following components:

Put off:

- Use the Bible to identify sin (Ps. 19:10–11; 119:9).
- Acknowledge personal responsibility for that sin, and ask forgiveness for it (James 1:14; 1 John 1:9).
- Be willing to change (Ps. 119:10, 30–32).
- By God's grace, stop doing the sin (1 Peter 4:1–3).
- Organize life to make it hard to do the sin again (Rom. 13:14).

Be renewed in your mind:

- Pursue a thorough biblical reorientation of your thinking by studying God's Word (Deut. 5:29; Ps. 95:10; Prov. 4:23; Rom. 12:1–2).

Put on:

- Replace sinful thoughts, words, and actions with their godly opposites (Rom. 12:21; Eph. 4:25–32; Col. 3:10–17).⁹²

Often, believers desire to put off sin and put on righteousness, but they fail to adequately consider the root issues in their heart and mind. Without this inner renewal, change is often temporary or fleeting, as it is based primarily on one's level of self-control rather than true, lasting heart change.

Choose an area of sin that you need to grow in. Fill out the following chart to help you work through that issue of change in your life and heart, using the example as a model.

⁹² Joel James, *Counsel with Confidence* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd, 2018), 22–23.

<i>Put Off</i>	<i>Renew Your Mind/Heart</i>		<i>Put on</i>
Sinful attitudes and actions	Wrong thoughts and desires	Right thoughts and desires (biblical truths and specific Scriptures)	Christlike attitudes and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lying (exaggerating my accomplishments when talking to my coworkers)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I must be well thought of by others.</i> • <i>I will do whatever it takes to get a promotion.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pleasing God is more important than people</i> • <i>God never lies (Num. 23:19)</i> • <i>Lev. 19:11; Eph. 4:25</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Speak truthfully (use care to accurately represent my contributions)</i>

Meditating on the truth of God’s word is one of the most important ways to renew our heart and mind such that we see lasting change in our life. Often, believers simply take a cursory glance at the truth and move on with their day. But being a doer of the Word requires looking “intently at the perfect law...” (James 1:22–25). Such careful meditation leads to obedience (Joshua 1:8).

THE FACILITATION OF BIBLICAL CHANGE: DISCIPLESHIP

Biblical truth is the primary means of change, and that truth is often delivered one-person-to-another in a discipleship relationship. While God's truth is unchanging, our faithfulness in a relationship with the person we are seeking to help will either amplify or distract from that truth being heard.

- How do the following verses help you understand the importance of relationships in the communication of biblical truth?
 - Proverbs 27:6, 9
 - Acts 20:18–21, 31
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:7–12

In addition to establishing a relationship with those we are seeking to help, biblical leaders will be careful to work to understand the issues involved and the condition of the person before seeking to address the issues biblically (Proverbs 18:2, 13; 1 Thessalonians 5:14). Just like a doctor must accurately diagnosis a patient in order to treat them effectively, so believers must work to accurately understand others before giving counsel and help. For the goal is not simply to say things that are biblically true, but to speak that which is fitting and most appropriate (Proverbs 15:23).

Jeremy Pierre and Deepak Reju summarize how to help others change in this way by moving “from listening to considering to speaking.

- *You listen to the problem* – to understand the context of the person's life and troubles (Prov. 18:2, 13; James 1:19).
- *You consider heart responses* – how the person's heart is responding to God, to self, to others, and to circumstances (Prov. 20:5).
- *You speak truth in love* – in order to teach, comfort, warn, encourage, advise, and admonish as appropriate (2 Corinthians 1; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:14).⁹³

93 Jeremy Pierre and Deepak Reju, *The Pastor and Counseling*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 48–49.

- What are the key biblical principles for faithfully helping another person change?

- How might you help others understand and work through the biblical process of change in their life?

THE PURSUIT OF OTHERS FOR BIBLICAL CHANGE: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

There are times when a professing believer in the church demonstrates no desire to change in an area in which they are clearly sinning. In such cases the rest of the body cannot simply step back and allow them to continue in a clear pattern of hard-hearted rebellion.

Out of love and concern for the individual, a desire to maintain the purity and testimony of the church, and ultimately a commitment to glorify Christ, those who know that individual and the rest of the body must be committed to follow Christ's instructions regarding church discipline. This is a much maligned and misunderstood idea in the church today, and it is often viewed as harsh, unkind, and antiquated. But a proper biblical understanding reveals that in actuality it flows from a heart of love for the individual and for Christ. There is nothing we can do to more faithfully care for a rebellious professing believer than to follow the steps outlined by our Lord.

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue

Though the word *discipline* carries negative connotations, the practice of church discipline ought to be motivated by a positive, loving desire both to preserve the purity of the church (2 Cor. 7:1; cf. Acts 5:11; 1 Cor. 5:1–13; 2 Thess. 3:6–15; 1 Tim. 1:19–20; Titus 1:10–16) and to restore sinning brothers and sisters to the fellowship (cf. Luke 15:3–8; Jude 23). Church discipline should never be motivated out of self-righteous pride, political agendas, a desire to exercise power in an unbiblical way, or an intent to embarrass people. Rather, it should be overseen by the elders who, as shepherds of the flock, sincerely long to see wandering sheep repent, return, and be restored (cf. Gal. 6:1).⁹⁴

94 MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 793.

Church discipline is the intentional, increasing confrontation of clear, hard-hearted sin within the church – always done patiently with the desire to see the sinning brother or sister restored to fellowship with the Lord and others, not the desire to punish or shame. The **first step** in this process is when an individual sees such sin in another and goes to them privately to confront that sin.

Matthew 18:15

If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Galatians 6:1

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

If there is no repentance, additional people, often church leadership, are brought into the confrontation as a **second step** to confirm the reality of such sin and to seek to bring additional biblical clarity with the goal of repentance and reconciliation. The matter is still to be handled as privately as possible out of consideration for that person and care to obey Christ.

Matthew 18:16

“But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.”

If there is still no repentance, as the **third step** the church must be apprised of the situation, so that the entire body can pray for them and pursue them, urging them to repent. If they do not listen to the church, then, as the **fourth step**, they are to be treated as an unbeliever rather than as a part of the church, as their clear and ongoing rebellion against Christ calls into question their profession of faith in Him and so their membership within the church.

Matthew 18:17

“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

Treating one as an unbeliever does not mean the church should be unkind to them or avoid them. It simply means they should be viewed as needing to be evangelized, rather than as one with whom fellowship is enjoyed.

- Why do many churches refuse to practice church discipline? What are the consequences of neglecting this process as commanded by Christ?

Even those in leadership must be held accountable for their sin, though care should be given to follow the instruction of 1 Timothy 5 in doing so.

1 Timothy 5:19–20

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.

- How does church discipline motivate the entire body to carefully obey Christ?

While no believer will relish the thought of confronting others in sin, all believers, especially those in leadership, must be willing to embrace Christ's wisdom in this area. Each believer must both graciously confront clear sin in others and be receptive to such confrontation themselves as this is vital to pursuing Christlikeness together.

D. A. Carson

...Christian leaders dare not overlook their responsibility to lead the people of God in living that is in conformity with the gospel....And if the people of God dig in their heels in disobedience, there may come a time for Christian leaders to admonish, to rebuke, and ultimately to discipline firmly those who take the name of Christ but do not care to follow him. The sterner steps must never be taken hastily or lightly. But sometimes they must be taken. That is part of the responsibility of Christian leadership.⁹⁵

95 D. A. Carson, *The Cross and Christian Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993), 129.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. How has this chapter helped you be more equipped to:
 - Work toward change in your own life?
 - Help others change?
3. How can you grow to be more faithful and skilled in helping others change?
4. Why is the commitment to practice church discipline when biblically appropriate necessary for the growth and maturity of the body? What questions do you have about the practice of church discipline in your local church?

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

2 Peter 1:2–3

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

ACTS

Luke begins the Book of Acts where he left off in his gospel. Acts records the initial fulfillment of the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19–20 as it traces the beginning and growth of the New Testament church. Christ’s last words before His ascension were so perfectly realized in the Book of Acts that they effectively and concisely outline its contents: “You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem [chs. 1–7], and in all Judea and Samaria [chs. 8–12], and to the end of the earth [chs. 13–28]” (1:8). Thus, Acts traces the rapid expansion of the gospel, beginning in Jerusalem and spreading throughout the Roman Empire.⁹⁶

OUTLINE:

GEOGRAPHICAL	I.	Jerusalem	(1–7)	ca. 3 yrs
	II.	Judea and Samaria	(8–12)	ca. 11 yrs
	III.	The Ends of the Earth	(13–28)	ca. 18 yrs
APOSTLES	I.	Peter	(1–12)	
	II.	Paul	(13–28)	

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Birth and Growth of the Church

KEY CHAPTERS:

1	40 days post-resurrection; choosing of Matthias
2	Pentecost; coming of Holy Spirit
5	Ananias and Sapphira; persecution; deity of the Holy Spirit
6	First deacons
7	Stephen’s sermon and martyrdom
9	Saul’s conversion – Paul
13–14	First missionary journey
15	Jerusalem council
27–28	Paul’s passage to Rome

- Why is “birth and growth of the church” an appropriate theme for the book of Acts?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Acts in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Acts.

⁹⁶ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 351.

ROMANS

The theme of this book is the gospel itself, as applying not only to Jews but to the lost sinners everywhere. Romans is basically about justification by faith based on the righteousness of God in Christ and on the promises of God....It shows how all the people are sinners under God's righteous condemnation and how the answer is in Christ whose righteousness is credited to the repentant sinner trusting Him, just as that sinner's sin is debited to Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross. This produces a practical application and outworking of God's righteousness in the sanctification of the believer through God's Spirit. Christian conduct will always flow from the correct application of biblical doctrine.⁹⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|---------|
| I. | Revelation of God's Righteousness | (1-8) |
| II. | Vindication of God's Righteousness | (9-11) |
| III. | Application of God's Righteousness | (12-16) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: The Gospel of God

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 3-5 | Justification |
| 9-11 | Israel – past election, present rejection, future restoration |
| 12-13 | Responsibilities toward God, government and society |
| 14-15 | Christian liberty – principles and practices |
| 16 | Conclusion – praise and greeting |

- Why is “the gospel of God” an appropriate theme for the book of Romans?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Romans in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Romans.

⁹⁷ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 477.

1 CORINTHIANS

The basic theme of this epistle is the application of Christian principles on an individual and social level. The cross of Christ is a message that is designed to transform the lives of believers and make them different, as people and as a corporate body, from the surrounding world. But the Corinthians were destroying their Christian testimony because of immorality and disunity. Paul wrote this letter as his corrective response to the news of problems and disorders among the Corinthians. It was designed to refute improper attitudes and conduct and to promote a spirit of unity among the brethren in their relationships and worship.⁹⁸

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------|--------|
| I. | Divisions in the Church | (1–4) |
| II. | Disobedience in the Church | (5–6) |
| III. | Difficulties in the Church | (7–16) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Correction and Condemnation

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|------|--|
| 3 | Immaturity; foundation; fleshliness; rewards |
| 5 | Incest/attitude toward a sinning brother |
| 6 | Lawsuits/suing; immorality/liberty |
| 7 | Guidelines for marriage and singleness |
| 8–10 | Christian liberty |
| 11 | Order! Women/communion |
| 12 | Basic principles of spiritual gifts |
| 13 | The priority of love over spiritual gifts |
| 14 | Procedure and order in spiritual gifts |
| 15 | Resurrection |

- Why is “correction and condemnation” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Corinthians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Corinthians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Corinthians.

⁹⁸ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 382.

2 CORINTHIANS

[In 2 Corinthians,] Paul builds on and follows up his first letter to the Corinthian church in three main divisions, namely, Paul's ministry seen in action, his appeal to give to others through Christian concern, and his defense of his God-given apostleship. As well as relating to the situation he addressed in his first letter, he also covers new ground. Whereas the first letter largely reveals Paul's message, the second letter reveals even more of Paul's character. Although written to a church it is personal, giving his biographical details.⁹⁹

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--|---------|
| I. | Character: Paul's Explanation of His Ministry | (1-7) |
| II. | Collection: Paul's Collection for the Saints | (8-9) |
| III. | Credentials: Paul's Defense of His Apostleship | (10-13) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Defense of Apostleship

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 3 | Validation of apostolic ministry through changed lives;
fading glory of Moses versus transforming glory of sanctification |
| 5 | Ministry motivations |
| 8-9 | Giving |

- Why is "defense of apostleship" an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Corinthians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Corinthians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Corinthians.

⁹⁹ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 497.

GALATIANS

Paul wrote Galatians to counter judaizing false teachers who were undermining the central NT doctrine of justification by faith....Ignoring the express decree of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:23–29), they spread their dangerous teaching that Gentiles must first become Jewish proselytes and submit to all the Mosaic law before they could become Christians....Shocked by the Galatians’ openness to that damning heresy (cf. 1:6), Paul wrote this letter to defend justification by faith, and warn these churches of the dire consequences of abandoning that essential doctrine.¹⁰⁰

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|-------|
| I. | Justification by Faith Defended | (1–2) |
| II. | Justification by Faith Explained | (3–4) |
| III. | Justification by Faith Applied | (5–6) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Justification by Faith Alone

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 | Paul dealing with other apostles; rebukes Peter |
| 5 | Christian liberty; free to serve; walk by the Spirit |

- Why is “justification by faith alone” an appropriate theme for the book of Galatians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Galatians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Galatians.

¹⁰⁰ MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1786–87.

EPHESIANS

The first half of the letter is doctrinal and is written to the Christians to correct the errors and teach sound doctrine by emphasizing all that they have in the glorious Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. The second half is practical and encourages the outworking of God-honouring teaching in practical living. In so doing, important themes and issues are dealt with, including God's purpose and plans for His church. Key teaching is given on election, predestination, redemption through shed blood, the resurrection, the church as the body of Christ, salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ, working out what God works in, Christ as the cornerstone, God's plans to save Gentiles, true Christian oneness, the ascension, God's gifting to the church, sanctification and not grieving the Spirit, conduct in special relationships including marriage, and the Christian armour. It is a letter of great encouragement and doctrinal depth.¹⁰¹

OUTLINE:

- I. Christian Position (1-3)
- II. Christian Practice (4-6)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: The Eternal Plan of God

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 1 Chosen and sealed
- 2 Saved by grace; unity in one body
- 3 The mystery of the church
- 4 Unity in the body; spiritual gifts; the former life
- 5 Walking in the Spirit; home responsibilities
- 6 Slaves and masters; believer's armor

- Why is "the eternal plan of God" an appropriate theme for the book of Ephesians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Ephesians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Ephesians.

¹⁰¹ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 507.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Romans?
 - What is the theme of 2 Corinthians?
 - What is found in Ephesians 5?

3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to John.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – SOTERIOLOGY (PART 2)

Ephesians 2:4–9

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Soteriology is the study of the doctrine of salvation.

Some key issues and themes addressed in soteriology include:

- The Gospel
- Redemption
 - God's Plan of Redemption
 - Redemption Accomplished
 - Redemption Applied

- Reread the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of salvation.
 - What additional questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Continue reading the chapter(s) on soteriology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

- **Key passages to consider:**

- Romans 8:28–30
- Romans 9:8–16
- Ephesians 1:3–6

Wayne Grudem in *Systematic Theology*

We may define election as follows: Election is an act of God before creation in which he chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign good pleasure.¹⁰²

- Define the doctrine of election in your own words:

¹⁰² Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity; Zondervan, 2004), 670.

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF REGENERATION.○ **Key passages to consider:**

- John 3:3–8
- Ephesians 2:4–5
- Titus 3:5

J. I. Packer in *Concise Theology*

The concept [of regeneration] is of God renovating the heart, the core of a person's being, by implanting a new principle of desire, purpose, and action, a dispositional dynamic that finds expression in positive response to the gospel and its Christ. Jesus' phrase "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5) harks back to Ezekiel 36:25–27, where God is pictured as symbolically cleansing persons from sin's pollution (by water) and bestowing a "new heart" by putting his Spirit within them....

Regeneration is monergistic: that is, entirely the work of God the Holy Spirit. It raises the elect among the spiritually dead to new life in Christ (Eph. 2:1–10). Regeneration is a transition from spiritual death to spiritual life, and conscious, intentional, active faith in Christ is its immediate fruit, not its immediate cause.¹⁰³

○ Define the doctrine of regeneration in your own words:

103 Packer, *Concise Theology*, 157–58.

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Romans 3:21–26
 - Romans 5:1–2
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21

Louis Berkhof in *Systematic Theology*

Justification is a judicial act of God, in which He declares, on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that all the claims of the law are satisfied with respect to the sinner. It is unique in the application of the work of redemption in that it is a judicial act of God, a declaration respecting the sinner, and not an act or process of renewal, such as regeneration, conversion, and sanctification. While it has respect to the sinner, it does not change his inner life. It does not affect his condition, but his state, and in that respect differs from all the other principal parts of the order of salvation. It involves the forgiveness of sins, and restoration to divine favor.¹⁰⁴

- Define the doctrine of justification in your own words:

¹⁰⁴ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 513.

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION.○ **Key passages to consider:**

- 1 Corinthians 1:2
- Philippians 1:6
- Philippians 2:12–13

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue in *Biblical Theology*

Though sanctification is primarily understood to be a process in which the believer is conformed into the image of Christ (e.g., Scripture speaks of believers as “those who are *being* sanctified,” Heb. 10:14), that process has a definite beginning at regeneration. The present-tense aspect of sanctification is often called progressive sanctification, whereas the past-tense aspect may be called either initial, positional, or definitive sanctification.¹⁰⁵

○ Define the doctrine of sanctification in your own words:

105 MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 632.

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF GLORIFICATION.

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Romans 8:29–30
 - 1 Corinthians 15:50–53
 - Philippians 3:21

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue in *Biblical Theology*

Glorification is the radical transformation of both the body and the soul of believers, perfecting them in holiness, and thereby fitting them for eternal life on the new earth in perfect communion with the triune God. Murray helpfully describes glorification as “the complete and final redemption of the whole person, when in the integrity of body and spirit, the people of God will be conformed to the image of the risen, exalted, and glorified Redeemer, when the very body of their humiliation will be conformed to the body of Christ’s glory” (cf. Phil. 3:21).¹⁰⁶

- Define the doctrine of glorification in your own words:

¹⁰⁶ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 653.

DEFINE THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL SECURITY.○ **Key passages to consider:**

- John 10:27-29
- Philippians 1:6
- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 1 John 2:19

Rolland McCune in *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity*

(1) Preservation and eternal security are synonymous. The perspective of *preservation* is from God's viewpoint. God keeps the believer saved and safe. A kindred doctrine, *perseverance*, looks at it from the believer's viewpoint; that is, the believer will progress in the Christian life until the day of final redemption.

(2) Eternal security deals only with those who are truly saved, not just professing Christians. Only true believers are considered....

(3) Eternal security does not mean that a believer may never backslide. A Christian can never be sinless in this life, and it is even possible for a believer to fall into grievous disobedience. But, as seen in the preceding chapter on sanctification, there is a definite limit to what a genuine believer can get into in this regard. Sin will never again have mastery over him (Rom 6:14). The decisive and eternal break with sin via union with Christ (in His death and resurrection; Rom 6:2, 6-10) precludes a complete abandonment of the believer's faith and loss of eternal life....¹⁰⁷

○ Define the doctrine of eternal security in your own words:

¹⁰⁷ Rolland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity: The Doctrines of Salvation, the Church, and Last Things*, vol. 3 (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), 159-60.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of salvation and your answers to the questions about it.

2. Practice answering the following questions:
 - How would you define the doctrine of election?
 - How would you define the doctrine of regeneration?
 - How would you define the doctrine of justification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of sanctification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of glorification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of eternal security?

3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?
 - What are the purposes of the church?
 - How would you define total depravity?
 - What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?
 - Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ.

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

1 Corinthians 9:25–27

Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Not addicted to wine but sensible, self-controlled, temperate, and prudent**
1 Timothy 3:2–3 An overseer, then, must be above reproach...temperate, prudent...not addicted to wine...
Titus 1:7–8 For the overseer must be above reproach...not addicted to wine...but...sensible...self-controlled...
- Define these qualifications in your own words.

- Why are these qualities necessary for leadership?

- Read Ephesians 5:18-21. What should control the thinking and behavior of every believer? What will this produce in the believer's life?

- How can you demonstrate self-control and sober-mindedness in your:
 - Thinking?

 - Decision-making?

 - Interactions with others?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.

2. How should someone who is spiritually mature balance the seriousness of life and ministry with the enjoyment of life? How might this look different for different believers?

3. When might a leader be tempted toward rash or reckless speech or conduct? How can they guard against these temptations?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following spiritual discipline that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

BIBLE MEDITATION

Joshua 1:8

“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

David W. Saxton

Divine meditation has a multifaceted value. It provides us spiritual discernment; improves our Bible reading and prayer lives; applies the general truths of the Bible personally and specifically; strengthens our hearts by focusing on spiritual truths; and provides lasting benefit from dwelling on the truths we know.¹⁰⁸

- Describe your regular practice of Bible meditation.

- Why is regular Bible meditation important for growth in spiritual maturity?

108 David W. Saxton, *God's Battle Plan for the Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage, 2015), 5.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. What spiritual benefits have you seen from meditating on God's word in your own life and in the lives of others you have ministered to?
3. What practical helps or tips have been useful in your Scripture meditation?

Chapter 9

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **MINISTRY TO OTHERS: CARING FOR THE SUFFERING**

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **BIBLE SURVEY**
 - **Philippians:** Basic Christian Living
 - **Colossians:** All-Sufficiency of Christ
 - **1 Thessalonians:** Growth of a New Church; the Model Church
 - **2 Thessalonians:** Comfort and Correction
 - **1 Timothy:** A Manual for Church Life
 - **2 Timothy:** Ministry as Spiritual Combat
 - **Titus:** Adorning the Doctrine of God
 - **Philemon:** Manual on Forgiveness
- **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - **Eschatology:** The Study of the Doctrine of Last Things
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - Give a general timeline of end-time events.

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**
 - Hospitable
- **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**
 - Review

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

MINISTRY TO OTHERS: CARING FOR THE SUFFERING

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Caring well for those in the body who are suffering is a critical responsibility of church leadership. Suffering will be a reality in every local church, because suffering is an inherent part of life in a fallen world.

Heath Lambert

Living in a sinful world brings pain. Whether we suffer because of our own sin, the direct sin of others, the sins of the world, the pain of others, the operations of the Devil, our own confusions, or the slow decline of our bodies toward death, we suffer.¹⁰⁹

But in the midst of suffering, there is hope. Biblical leaders have the privilege and responsibility of bringing hope and help to those that are suffering.

UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING AND SIN

Understanding the relationship between sin and suffering is vital to caring well for those facing trials in this life. Suffering, as a whole, is the result of sin. There was no suffering in Genesis 1 or 2. Nor is there any suffering at the end of Revelation. But from Genesis 3 through Revelation 20, suffering abounds because sin and its consequences abound.

But an individual's suffering is not always the direct result of his or her sin. Sometimes, in fact, believers suffer for doing good (1 Peter 2:19–21). Suffering is always an opportunity to glorify God. Consider Jesus' interaction with his disciples regarding a man born blind.

John 9:2–3

And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

Some of the most misguided “ministry” to those who are suffering comes from having an insufficient understanding of the relationship between sin and suffering. Job's friends did well to come be with him to “sympathize with him and comfort him” as he was suffering (Job 2:11–

¹⁰⁹ Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 255.

13). But their words, undoubtedly intended to help, heaped blame on Job in a way that was neither true nor a source of comfort.

Job 4:7–9

“Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright destroyed? According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it. By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of His anger they come to an end.”

Job’s friends had an oversimplified understanding of the relationship between sin and suffering. They believed that any individual who was suffering had sinned and so deserved to suffer. If one would just repent, the suffering would end and life would go well. As a result, they lacked compassion for Job and ultimately grew harsh in their critique and confrontation of him.

It is true that as sinners we all deserve God’s wrath and judgment (Genesis 2:16–17; Romans 6:23). Indeed, none have “perished being innocent” (Job 4:7). On the one hand, any suffering we endure in this life is deserved. And it is actually better than we deserve, for we deserve death. It is also true that sin has consequences in this life and that there are times when God brings discipline, including suffering, into someone’s life in response to specific sin so that they will repent (1 Corinthians 11:27–30; Hebrews 12:4–11).

So, it is appropriate when suffering to examine oneself and to consider how one’s own sin may have contributed to that suffering. It is appropriate when suffering to hate sin and long for the day when the curse of sin will be no more. But it is also true that suffering is often simply a general reality of life in a fallen world and not the direct result of specific sin in that individual’s life. Everyone will suffer at times in this life.

Job 5:7

“For man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward.”

This is not to say that everyone will suffer equally. God sovereignly allows just the right amount of suffering in the life of every believer to accomplish His perfect plan for His glory and for their good.

Romans 8:28–29

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son...

God defines the good He is working out as becoming “conformed to the image of His Son.” Suffering is an opportunity for our understanding of God to be sharpened, our character to be refined, and our hope of and longing for eternity to be strengthened.

- How will our ministry to those who are suffering be impacted by a deficient understanding of the relationship of sin and suffering?

RESPONDING TO SUFFERING

Jesus was characterized by compassion for those who were distressed in the midst of suffering (Matthew 9:36, 14:14, 15:32, 20:34; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:13). Biblical leaders should share His heart of compassion. This compassion will fuel the desire to alleviate suffering and to comfort and care for those who are suffering. God often prepares us to compassionately comfort others through the comfort we have received in the midst of our own suffering.

- Read 2 Corinthians 1:3–5. How does God provide comfort in our afflictions? How does this prepare us to comfort others?

In addition to caring for and comforting those who are suffering, biblical leaders will also seek to come alongside them in order to help them respond in a way that honors the Lord. God calls believers to **trust** Him in the midst of their suffering, recognizing His sovereignty, goodness, wisdom, faithfulness and love. A fundamental question everyone who suffers must answer is “Will I allow this suffering to drive me away from God in anger or bitterness, or will it drive me to Him in trust and worship?”

- Read Job 1:1–2:10. Contrast Job’s response to suffering with that of his wife.

It is only as a believer remains focused on the word of God and the character of God that they will be comforted and able to trust Him in the midst of the difficulties of life. After describing the anguish of suffering in Lamentations 3:1–20, Jeremiah identifies that which gives him hope and allows him to continue to trust the Lord in the following verses.

- Read Lamentations 3:21–38. What about God’s character did Jeremiah recall to mind in order to maintain a proper perspective in the midst of his suffering?

God not only calls believers to trust him in the midst of their suffering, but He also commands them to **rejoice**. Such joy is not found in the suffering itself, but in the hope of the gospel (1 Peter 1:3–6) and in the confidence one can have in God’s continued work (James 1:2–4). When believers respond to suffering with trust and rejoicing, they often have significant opportunities to proclaim the gospel, as these are not the normal human responses to suffering (Philippians 1:12–14).

- How can you help others to rejoice in their suffering without minimizing the pain and anguish they are facing?

God, in His goodness and wisdom, uses suffering to refine and shape His people into conformity to His image. Like a silversmith purifying a precious metal, God uses the heat of trials to purify His own. Believers are to recognize trials as a primary means God uses to cause them to **grow**. Believers must humbly submit to and endure those trials, seeking to learn all that God would teach them through the suffering He allows as He prepares them for glory.

Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Estes

Earth’s pain keeps crushing our hopes, reminding us this world can never satisfy; only heaven can. And every time we begin to nestle too comfortably on his planet, God cracks open the locks of the dam to allow an ice-cold splash of suffering to wake us from our spiritual slumber.¹¹⁰

110 Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Estes, *When God Weeps* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 202.

- Read Romans 5:3–5, James 1:2–4, and 1 Peter 1:6–7. How does God use trials for good in the life of the believer?

Biblical leaders will encourage those who are suffering to trust the Lord, rejoice in Him, learn all God intends to teach them, and take full advantage of the ministry opportunities that come through their difficult circumstances. These priorities should also be reflected in our prayers for those who are suffering, as prayer is an essential aspect of ministry to them.

Faithful ministry also involves the willingness to patiently and graciously speak into their life when they are struggling with sins such as bitterness, grumbling, or anger.

Joel James

When a person has been sinned against or is facing painful trials, we should express compassion. However, we must also understand that his or her response is either sinful or righteous. Being shouted at by one's husband and contracting cancer are not sin: but how one responds to them might be. As a counselor, when dealing with sins of response, you must walk a difficult line. You must express compassion and patience, and gently point out ungodly responses (Rom. 12:15; Gal. 6:1–2).¹¹¹

- When and how should you patiently confront someone who is responding to suffering in a way that is sinful? What factors might affect how you approach such confrontation?

VISITING THE SICK

One specific aspect of caring for those that are suffering is visiting the sick. Jesus spent considerable time and energy ministering to those who were dealing with various physical issues and illnesses (Matthew 4:23–24). Such will be true for those who are faithful to love Christ and His people. In Matthew 25:34–40, Jesus makes it clear that by visiting the sick we are not only caring for them, but are serving Christ as He says, “to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me” (vs. 40).

¹¹¹ James, *Counsel with Confidence*, 37.

During Jesus' ministry on earth, He often healed those who were sick as a demonstration of His compassion, power, and the realities of His coming kingdom (Matthew 4:23–24). Biblical leaders today should likewise have genuine concern for the physical well-being of others and should pray for healing in accordance with God's will (James 5:14–16). But the focus of ministry to and prayers for the sick should be on their spiritual health and growth in the midst of their physical illness or injury.

Richard Baxter

We must be diligent in visiting the sick, and helping them prepare either for a fruitful life, or a happy death.¹¹²

Charles Spurgeon

I venture to say that the greatest earthly blessing that God can give to any of us is health, with the exception of sickness. Sickness has frequently been of more use to the saints of God than health has.¹¹³

It is important when visiting someone who is sick or injured to give thought to appropriate questions, Scripture passages, and priorities for the visit, while also maintaining flexibility to adapt interactions to the spiritual and physical condition of the individual.

- What questions might you ask an individual who is sick, or even nearing death, in order to gauge their spiritual health and turn the conversation toward biblical truth?

When interacting with those who are physically suffering, it takes wisdom and discernment to:

- Give sufficient time to encourage and help the individual while being sensitive to the length of visit given their need for rest or privacy.
- Ask questions about physical health out of genuine concern while carefully avoiding giving medical advice.
- Demonstrate care for the current temporal, physical challenges while also seeking to direct them to eternal spiritual realities. Often asking “How can I pray for you?” can be a helpful, practical way to turn the conversation toward spiritual issues and it enables you to appropriately pray with them before you leave.

112 Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, ed. William Brown (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2001), 102.

113 Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *An All-Round Ministry* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1960), 384.

Sometimes visiting the sick leads to opportunities to minister to other family members or friends who may also be present. While it is appropriate to focus on the sick individual, so long as they are able to interact, opportunities to proclaim the gospel to others should not be neglected, either by sharing it with those in the room or by including the gospel in your prayer.

Visiting the sick is not always comfortable or convenient. But it reflects our Lord's heart and should be a priority for biblical leaders and for the entire body.

Brian Croft

When we are deliberate about visiting the sick and afflicted in our churches, we can trust that a divine task is being done, souls are being loved and nurtured, we are being changed, the gospel is being revealed, and God is being glorified.¹¹⁴

COMFORTING THE GRIEVING

Another unique opportunity for caring for those that are suffering is that of comforting those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. There are many different circumstances that may surround such a death that lead to unique needs of those who are grieving. A young widow with children will have different needs for support and care than a couple who lost a child or an older widower. The death of a believing loved one will warrant a very different response (1 Thessalonians 4:13) than that of an unbelieving one. At the same time, hope and help are consistently found in God's word and the care of His people.

Even though they may not always know what to say, biblical leaders will bless and encourage those who are grieving by being with them – weeping with them (Romans 12:15), reflecting with them, praying with them, and graciously directing their hearts toward the Lord and His word.

- How can you comfort those who are grieving a loss with your presence and your words?

Often, care for the grieving is focused on the time immediately following the death. But it is important to remember that there are long-term needs for support, care, and fellowship.

Paul Tautges

Ministering to those who have lost a loved one is a unique privilege and responsibility, and one that requires long-term attention.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Brian Croft, *Visit the Sick* (UK: Day One, 2009), 56.

¹¹⁵ Paul Tautges, *Comfort the Grieving* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 56.

CARING FOR THE NEEDY

Biblical leaders also faithfully minister to others and honor the Lord by caring for the needy.

Proverbs 14:31

He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, but he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

God's people have always been characterized by caring for those in need (Deuteronomy 15:10–11, Acts 2:44–45). Believers will be generous (Proverbs 22:9), recognizing God's generosity toward them in Christ (2 Corinthians 9:15).

In seeking to care for the needy, individuals and the church must balance generosity and compassion with the biblical wisdom needed to be wise stewards. While being generous and eager to give, the church must also encourage diligence and hard work from those who are able (2 Thessalonians 3:6–13) and equip family members to fulfill their responsibility toward one another (1 Timothy 5:8, 16). Biblical church leaders must also balance the priority of supporting those within the church with the commands to care generally for the poor in our midst (Galatians 6:9–10). Oftentimes, churches will have a benevolence policy to help direct the care of the needy in such a way.

- Read your church's benevolence policy.
 - What biblical principles regarding caring for the needy are reflected in it?

- What questions do you have about the policy or its implementation?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Discuss any of the questions from the above study.
2. How has this chapter equipped you to respond biblically to suffering? To help others who are suffering? To pray for those who are suffering?
3. Discuss any helpful practical considerations when visiting the sick. What factors might affect:
 - How you coordinate a timely visit?
 - What questions you ask the individual about their physical condition?
 - How long to stay?
 - Whether or not to physically touch the individual (i.e., hold their hand while praying, etc.)?
4. How can the church care well for those who have lost a loved one?
How might the surrounding circumstances affect that care?

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

2 Timothy 4:13

When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

Ligon Duncan

Paul is only months away from death. He has written the bulk of the letters of the New Testament. He has a lifetime of ministry behind him. And what does he want to do? Study! Winter is approaching and so Paul asks for his cloak, but more importantly he asks for books and parchments. Though almost at the end of his course, Paul aims to keep learning and growing by spiritual reading.¹¹⁶

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional “going deeper” work as desired.

116 Thomas Ascol, ed., *Dear Timothy: Letters on Pastoral Ministry* (Cape Coral, FL: Founders, 2004), 198.

PHILIPPIANS

This letter was written to convey Paul's love and gratitude for the believers at Philippi and to exhort them to a lifestyle of unity, holiness, and joy. Paul evidently enjoyed a very warm relationship with the Philippian church.... Philippians was not written because of any crisis, but to express Paul's affection for them, his gratitude for their gift, his encouragement concerning their Christian growth, his admonitions against false teaching, and his thoughts about his circumstances.¹¹⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----|
| I. | Partakers with Christ | (1) |
| II. | People of Christ | (2) |
| III. | Pursuit of Christ | (3) |
| IV. | Power of Christ | (4) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Basic Christian Living

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Unity of the body; the kenosis; work out your salvation; deity of Christ;
Timothy and Epaphroditus |
| 3 | Warnings against Judaizers; justification |

- Why is “basic Christian living” an appropriate theme for the book of Philippians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Philippians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Philippians.

117 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 407.

COLOSSIANS

Colossians is one of the most Christ-centered books of the Bible. In it, Paul stresses the supremacy of the person of Christ and the completeness of the salvation He provides in order to combat a growing heresy in the church at Colossae. Christ, the Lord of creation and Head of the body which is His church, is completely sufficient for every spiritual and practical need of the believer. The believer's union with Christ in His death, resurrection, and exaltation is the foundation upon which his earthly life must be built.¹¹⁸

OUTLINE:

- I. Sufficiency of Christ (1–2)
- II. Submission to Christ (3–4)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: All-Sufficiency of Christ

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 1 Paul's prayer; the exalted Christ
- 3 Position and practice of the believer

- Why is “all-sufficiency of Christ” an appropriate theme for the book of Colossians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Colossians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Colossians.

1 THESSALONIANS

The church at Thessalonica was in many ways a model church. Paul had many things to commend the believers for: their exemplary faith, diligent service, patient steadfastness, and overflowing joy. But in the midst of his commendation, Paul voices a word of caution. Abounding in the work of the Lord is only one step removed from abandoning the work of the Lord through complacency. Thus, Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to excel in their faith, to increase in their love for one another, and to give thanks always for all things.¹¹⁹

OUTLINE:

- I. Personal Experience (1–3)
- II. Practical Exhortation (4–5)

- Memorize the following and read the key chapter:

THEME: Growth of a New Church; the Model Church

KEY CHAPTER:

- 4 Purity; disciplined living; the rapture

- Why is “growth of a new church; the model church” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Thessalonians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Thessalonians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Thessalonians.

¹¹⁹ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 416.

2 THESSALONIANS

2 Thessalonians builds on the teaching in the first letter and emphasizes that it [the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ] has not yet happened. It gives milestones that need to be passed before Christ will return, including the apostasy to come and revelation of the man of sin, who will be destroyed by the breath and brightness of the all powerful coming Lord! But the second coming of Christ, that comforts the believer in his Sovereign God, should strike terror in the heart of those who are lost and facing God's condemnation. 2 Thessalonians also has a pastoral theme centered on the need to live a Christian life, which includes working hard and not using the eagerly expected coming of Christ as a rationale or excuse for laziness.¹²⁰

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|-----|
| I. | Encouragement in Persecution | (1) |
| II. | Explanation of the Day of the Lord | (2) |
| III. | Exhortations to Readiness | (3) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Comfort and Correction

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 | Before the Day of the Lord – apostasy and antichrist (man of lawlessness) will come and delude the world |
| 3 | Exhortations to diligence in light of the coming Day of the Lord |

- Why is “comfort and correction” an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Thessalonians?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Thessalonians in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Thessalonians.

120 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 520–21.

1 TIMOTHY

Paul, the aged and experienced apostle, writes to young pastor Timothy who is facing a heavy burden of responsibility in the church at Ephesus. The task is challenging: false doctrine must be erased, public worship safeguarded, and mature leadership developed. In addition to the conduct of the church, Paul talks pointedly about the conduct of the minister. Timothy must be on his guard lest his youthfulness become a liability, rather than an asset to the gospel. He must be careful to avoid false teachers and greedy motives, pursuing instead righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness as befitting a man of God.¹²¹

OUTLINE:

- I. For Timothy (1–3)
- II. For Timothy to the Church (4–6)

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: A Manual for Church Life

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 2 Duty of men to pray in public worship; role of women in public worship
- 3 Qualifications of elders; qualifications of deacons; purpose of the letter
- 5 Duties toward the young, widows, elders

- Why is “a manual for church life” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Timothy?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Timothy in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Timothy.

¹²¹ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 426.

2 TIMOTHY

2 Timothy continues some of the themes of 1 Timothy and majors on the need to be bold and faithful, and to serve and teach faithfully, as false teachers extend their ungodly influence. Paul's close relationship with Timothy is evident as he stresses the need to study God's Word, to stay faithful, and be aware that 'the last days' will usher in increased spiritual and moral wickedness and darkness. Paul faces the prospect of his imminent death and gives his closing instructions and testimony to his younger protégé.¹²²

OUTLINE:

- I. Instructions for Spiritual Combat (1-3)
- II. Commission to Spiritual Combat (4)

- Memorize the following and read the key chapter:

THEME: Ministry as Spiritual Combat

KEY CHAPTER:

- 3 The peril of and protection from apostasy

- Why is “ministry as spiritual combat” an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Timothy?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Timothy in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Timothy.

¹²² Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 527.

TITUS

Titus, a young minister, is left on the island of Crete by Paul to begin the challenging task of organizing new converts into local churches. In this letter, Paul shares with Titus some practical wisdom regarding church organization and administration. Leaders must be chosen based on proven character and conduct; false teachers must be quickly detected and removed; church members of all ages must be encouraged to live lives worthy of the gospel they claim to believe. Young and old, leader and laity, must demonstrate the reality of their faith by being “careful to maintain good works” (3:8).¹²³

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---------------|-----|
| I. | As Leaders | (1) |
| II. | In the Church | (2) |
| III. | In the World | (3) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Adorning the Doctrine of God

- Why is “adorning the doctrine of God” an appropriate theme for the book of Titus?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Titus in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Titus.

¹²³ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 437.

PHILEMON

Philemon had been saved under Paul's ministry...several years earlier. Wealthy enough to have a large house...Philemon also owned at least one slave, a man named Onesimus... Onesimus was not a believer at the time he stole some money (v. 18) from Philemon and ran away... Through circumstances not recorded in Scripture, Onesimus met Paul in Rome and became a Christian...By stealing and running away from Philemon, Onesimus had both broken Roman law and defrauded his master. Paul knew those issues had to be dealt with, and decided to send Onesimus back... Along with Onesimus, Paul sent Philemon this beautiful personal letter, urging him to forgive Onesimus and welcome him back to service as a brother in Christ.¹²⁴

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------|------------|
| I. | Prayer | (vs 1–7) |
| II. | Petition | (vs 8–16) |
| III. | Promise | (vs 17–25) |
- Memorize the following:
THEME: Manual on Forgiveness
 - Why is “manual on forgiveness” an appropriate theme for the book of Philemon?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Philemon in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Philemon.

124 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1890.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Philippians?
 - What is the theme of 1 Thessalonians?
 - What is found in 1 Timothy 3?

3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Ephesians.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Carefully read the assigned portion of your church's doctrinal statement and answer the corresponding questions.
- Answer the "Defending Sound Doctrine" question(s).
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – ESCHATOLOGY

Titus 2:13

...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus...

Eschatology is the study of the doctrine of last things.

Some key issues and themes addressed in eschatology include:

- Death
- Heaven
- Hell
- Timing and Nature of Future Events
 - Rapture
 - Bema Seat Judgment
 - Tribulation
 - Second Coming of Christ
 - Millennial Kingdom
 - Great White Throne Judgment
 - New Heavens and New Earth

- Read the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of last things.
 - What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the chapter(s) on eschatology in a systematic theology.

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

.....

GIVE A GENERAL TIMELINE OF END-TIME EVENTS.

- **Key passages to consider:**
 - Daniel 9:24–27
 - Matthew 24–25
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17
 - Revelation 19–21

Paul Enns in *The Moody Handbook of Theology*

The rapture. The term *rapture* comes from the Latin translation, meaning “caught up,” in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The rapture, which is distinguished from the second coming of Christ, is taught in John 14:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:51–57; and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18. Prior to the advent of the tribulation, Christ will descend from heaven, catching up the church to be with Himself while the tribulation is unleashed on an unrepentant and unbelieving world....

The tribulation. The tribulation is the seventieth week of Daniel (Dan. 9:24–27), a week according to the prophet’s terminology equaling seven years....

...The tribulation will involve the judgment of God upon an unbelieving world, as detailed in Revelation 6–19. The consecutive series of seals, trumpets, and bowl

judgments of Revelation detail God's judgment upon unbelievers, climaxing in the triumphant return of Christ to earth with His bride, the church. (Rev. 19:11-21)...

Second coming of Christ. At the end of the tribulation Christ will return physically to earth (Zech. 14:4) to render judgment and to inaugurate the millennial kingdom. (Zech. 14:9-21; Matt. 25:31; Rev. 20:4)...

Millennial kingdom. When Christ returns to earth He will establish Himself as King in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne of David (Luke 1:32-33). The unconditional covenants demand a literal, physical return of Christ to establish the kingdom....

At the end of the millennium the unsaved dead of all ages are resurrected and judged at the great white throne. They will be condemned and cast into the lake of fire, their final abode (Rev. 20:11-15). The Devil, the Beast (the Antichrist), and the False Prophet are also cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

Eternal state. Following the millennium, the heavens and the earth are judged (2 Peter 3:10), because they were the domain of Satan's rebellion against God. The eternal state, the abode of all the redeemed (Heb. 12:22-24), will be ushered in (Rev. 21-22).¹²⁵

- Give a general timeline of end-time events in your own words.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss the portion of your church's doctrinal statement on the doctrine of last things and your answers to the questions about it.

2. Practice answering the following:
 - Give a general timeline of end-time events.

3. Review the following questions:
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?
 - What are the purposes of the church?
 - How would you define total depravity?
 - What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?
 - Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ.
 - How would you define the doctrine of election?
 - How would you define the doctrine of regeneration?
 - How would you define the doctrine of justification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of sanctification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of glorification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of eternal security?

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

I defy you to read the life of any saint that has ever adorned the life of the Church without seeing at once that the greatest characteristic in the life of that saint was discipline and order. Invariably it is the universal characteristic of all the outstanding men and women of God....They have all disciplined their lives and have insisted upon the need for this; and obviously it is something that is thoroughly scriptural and absolutely essential.¹²⁶

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualification of an elder, recognizing it is not only required for elders but is to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Hospitable**

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach...hospitable...

Titus 1:7–8 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward...hospitable...

- Define this qualification in your own words.

¹²⁶ Martyn D. Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 210.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

- Read Romans 12:13, 1 Peter 4:9, and Hebrews 13:2. Why is hospitality to characterize the life of all believers, not just leaders?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. What opportunities do you have to show hospitality to:
 - Strangers?
 - Those in your church?
3. Why is hospitality such an important aspect of ministry to others?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Review the following spiritual disciplines that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

BIBLE INTAKE

- **READING**
- **STUDY**
- **MEMORIZATION**
- **MEDITATION**

Donald Whitney

No Spiritual Discipline is more important than the intake of God's Word. Nothing can substitute for it. There simply is no healthy Christian life apart from a diet of the milk and meat of Scripture....Therefore if we would know God and be Godly, we must know the Word of God intimately.¹²⁷

- How have you grown in your practice of regular Bible intake in recent months?

- Why is regular Bible intake vital for growth in spiritual maturity?

¹²⁷ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 28.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. What have you recently been learning through your Bible reading and study?
3. What verses have you recently memorized and been meditating on? How have these impacted your Christian life?

Chapter 10

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **MINISTRY TO OTHERS: PRAYING FOR OTHERS**

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **BIBLE SURVEY**
 - **Hebrews:** Superiority of Christ
 - **James:** The Effects of True Saving Faith
 - **1 Peter:** Standing Firm through Suffering
 - **2 Peter:** Genuine and False Christianity
 - **1 John:** Tests of Eternal Life
 - **2 John:** Christian Hospitality and False Teachers
 - **3 John:** Christian Hospitality and Faithful Ministers
 - **Jude:** Beware of the Pretenders
 - **Revelation:** Revelation of Jesus Christ
- **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**
 - **Understanding Sound Doctrine**
 - Your Church's Doctrinal Distinctives
 - **Defending Sound Doctrine**
 - Review

CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**
 - Loving What Is Good
 - Just
 - Devout
- **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**
 - Review

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

MINISTRY TO OTHERS: PRAYING FOR OTHERS

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Many associate leadership with visibility. Leaders are out front or up front. While often that is true, some of the greatest ministry of biblical leaders will never be seen or recognized, as it is the ministry of praying for others.

J. Oswald Sanders

Great leaders of the Bible were great at prayer.¹²⁸

Donald Whitney

Men and women of God are always men and women of prayer.¹²⁹

Moses faithfully sought the Lord and interceded for the people in prayer (Exodus 33:12–19, Numbers 21:7). Samuel was committed to directing the people to confess their sin and to pray on their behalf (1 Samuel 7:3–5). David regularly sought the Lord for protection and help (e.g. Psalms 17, 86) and expressed his heart of worship to the Lord in prayer (e.g. Psalm 145), writing countless psalms to lead the people to do the same. Daniel prayed regularly, even at great cost to himself (Daniel 6:10), and responded to the word of God with prayer (Daniel 9:1–3). Ezra led the people to pray for safety (Ezra 8:21) and in confession (Ezra 9:5–15). Nehemiah prayed on behalf of the people and that God would graciously grant success (Nehemiah 1:4–11). Paul was unceasing in his prayers for others (e.g. Philippians 1:4, Colossians 1:3). Even our Lord, the incarnate God Himself, lived a life of prayer.

J. Oswald Sanders

The Christian leader who seeks an example to follow does well to turn to the life of Jesus Himself. Our belief in the necessity of prayer comes from observing His life. Surely if anyone could have sustained life without prayer, it would be the very Son of God Himself. If prayer is silly or unnecessary, Jesus would not have wasted His time at it. But wait! Prayer was the dominant feature of His life and a recurring part of His teaching.¹³⁰

Biblical leaders pray. They will pray as an act of worship. They will pray to confess sin. They will

128 Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 92.

129 Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 82.

130 Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 86–87.

pray for wisdom, provision and protection. And they will pray for others. Biblical leaders will be faithful to minister to others through intercessory prayer.

THE VITAL MINISTRY OF PRAYER

How many times have you said or heard another believer say something like, “I will be praying, but what else can I do to help?” or “I wish I could do more than just pray”?

It is certainly appropriate that believers are eager to love one another in very practical ways and so are looking for opportunities to tangibly care for each other. But often these and similar such statements betray a mindset that minimizes the importance of praying for one another, when prayer is in reality a vital aspect of ministry to others.

The Scripture exhorts all believers to be praying for one another.

Romans 12:10–12

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love...devoted to prayer...

Ephesians 6:18–19

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel...

Colossians 4:2–3

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned...

2 Thessalonians 3:1

Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you...

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Recognizing their own inadequacy to change hearts, godly leaders will prioritize this key component of ministry to others. In Acts 6, the apostles recognized the need for greater service

to widows. While they diligently worked to see that need met, they did not allow that need to keep them from the ministry of the word and prayer (Acts 6:4).

Paul was devoted to travelling, preaching, and letter writing to impact the Roman empire for the gospel and to strengthen the early church. But he understood that no matter where he was, he could always faithfully minister to the churches by praying for them.

Philippians 1:4

...always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all...

Colossians 1:3

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you...

1 Thessalonians 1:2

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers...

Biblical leaders should be like Epaphras, “...a bonds slave of Jesus Christ...always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers...” (Colossians 4:12).

THE COMMON HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

While any believer who has read the Bible has some understanding of the importance of prayer, J. Oswald Sanders acknowledges the reality that “We sometimes pay lip service to the delight and power of prayer. We call it indispensable, we know the Scriptures call for it. Yet we often fail to pray.”¹³¹

What keeps believers, and specifically church leaders, from praying as they ought? Often, believers are well-intentioned, intending to pray and yet the **distractions of life and mind** hinder them from having regular times of prayer. The discipline to keep regular times and locations for prayer, as was the pattern of Christ (Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16), is vital to being consistent in prayer given all that will scream loudly for a leader’s time and attention. Those who struggle with distractions while praying may be aided by praying out loud, praying through the Scriptures, writing out prayers in a journal, or even walking and praying.

Leaders can also struggle to pray because of **issues in our own hearts**. Oftentimes a lack of prayer flows from a *proud heart*, from failing to recognize our dependence on and need for the Lord and His grace. The *lack of love for others*, often due to bitterness, will hinder our prayers for them and for others. Praying for others is one of the best ways to see our hearts grow more

¹³¹ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 85.

tender toward them. A focus on self and the issues of one's own life will also keep us from praying for others. Sometimes we fail to pray because we *lack faith*. We allow our feelings that God is distant or uncaring to keep us from bringing our requests to him. We may doubt God's goodness or wisdom and so be hesitant to submit to his will. *Unconfessed sin* will likewise keep believers from prayer as it destroys our fellowship with God.

Leaders can also be deterred from praying by **theological confusion**. Misguided believers can allow a confidence in God's sovereignty to lead to the neglect of our biblical responsibilities, including prayer. In reality, God is both sovereign and responsive to prayer. While we as humans cannot fully fathom this, a biblical leader will believe it and live in light of it.

D. A. Carson

The Bible insists that we pray, urges us to pray, gives us examples of prayer. Something has gone wrong in our reasoning if our reasoning leads us away from prayer; something is amiss in our theology if our theology becomes a disincentive to pray.¹³²

- What are the greatest hindrances to prayer in your life and heart?

THE SPIRITUAL FOCUS OF PRAYER

- What kinds of requests do people typically share with others in the church?

It is certainly appropriate that we pray for physical issues such as safety and protection when traveling (Ezra 8:21) and healing from illness or injury (Numbers 12:13, James 5:16). But when we pray with a biblical lens, the focus of our prayers for others will go far beyond the physical and temporal. We will thank God for the work He is doing in and through them and will pray for their spiritual growth and ministry. There is no greater example of this than the prayers of Paul recorded for us in the Scriptures.

132 D. A. Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), 147.

Carefully read the following sampling of Paul's prayers. Circle the reasons Paul gave thanks for others. Underline the requests Paul made on behalf of others.

Romans 1:8–10

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

Romans 15:5–6

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:4–8

I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:15–19

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe....

Ephesians 3:14–19

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:3-5, 9-11

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. ...And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:3-5

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel...

Colossians 1:9-12

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account, as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith? Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

2 Thessalonians 1:3, 11-12

We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another

grows ever greater;... To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon 4–6

I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

○ How do the prayers of Paul give you a greater understanding of how you should pray for others?

○ What are some specific, biblical priorities you can pray for:

○ Those who are facing difficult circumstances?

○ Those having opportunity to interact with unbelievers (family at the holidays, co-workers, neighbors, etc.)?

○ Any believer?

SECTION 2: DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Becoming a biblical church leader involves more than head knowledge, but not less. A faithful, godly leader in the local church must have a deep knowledge of the Bible and of key doctrines to help others grow and to defend the truth.

Proverbs 9:9

Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.

Donald Whitney

Wise and righteous people can never get enough wisdom or knowledge. Those unteachable or prideful about their learning only reveal how shallow they really are. There is a humility with the truly wise because they know there is so much they have yet to learn.¹³⁴

BIBLE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Read and consider the overview and outline of each book.
- Memorize the theme and key chapters of each book.
- Read the key chapters for each book.
- Answer the question about each book's theme.
- Complete any optional "going deeper" work as desired.

¹³⁴ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 224–25.

HEBREWS

The book of Hebrews warns and urges any lingering on the borders of salvation to enter by faith in Christ, or face God's judgement. Those who have entered into forgiveness are assured of their salvation and encouraged to persevere. Hebrews provides an amazing and inspiring analysis of salvation through Christ, and illustrates vividly the need and comforts of faith in Him and in God's promises. This book is truly Christ-centered in all its teaching. The key thought is 'better'. The word itself is used twelve times and demonstrated many times more. Salvation in Christ is so much better than everything in Judaism, all of which was intended to prepare for and point to Christ.¹³⁵

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|---|------------|
| I. | Superiority of Christ's Person | (1–7) |
| II. | Superiority of Christ's Work | (8–10:18) |
| III. | Response of Faith is Perseverance and Obedience | (10:19–13) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Superiority of Christ

KEY CHAPTERS:

- 1 Christ the Son is God's full revelation; exalted above angels, enthroned as God, awaiting the subjection of the world
 - 3 Christ is greater than Moses; beware of an unbelieving heart
 - 5 Christ, a sympathetic High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek
 - 6 Warning of apostasy; God's oath to Abraham; our sure hope through Christ
 - 7 Melchizedek priesthood superior to inadequate Aaronic priesthood; Christ's priesthood is eternal
 - 10 Animal sacrifices are not efficacious; Christ's sacrifice of lasting value; access to God guaranteed in Christ, but willful sinners are doomed; readers need perseverance
 - 11 Faith: defined and illustrated
 - 12 The fatherly discipline of God; need of sanctification; Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion contrasted
 - 13 Christian living: love, hospitality, marriage, doctrine, obey leaders; benediction
- Why is "superiority of Christ" an appropriate theme for the book of Hebrews?

¹³⁵ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 533.

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Hebrews in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Hebrews.

JAMES

Faith without works cannot be called faith. It is dead, and a dead faith is worse than no faith at all. Faith must work; it must produce; it must be visible. Verbal faith is not enough; mental faith is insufficient. Faith must move into action. Throughout his epistle to Jewish believers, James integrates true faith and everyday practical experience by stressing that true faith “works.” It endures trials; it obeys God’s Word; it produces doers; it harbors no prejudice; it controls the tongue; it acts wisely; it provides the power to resist the devil; it waits patiently for the coming of the Lord.¹³⁶

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|-----|
| I. | Trials and Temptations | (1) |
| II. | Favoritism and Faith | (2) |
| III. | Tongue and Truth | (3) |
| IV. | Conflict and Confidence | (4) |
| V. | Riches and Righteousness | (5) |

- Memorize the following:
THEME: The Effects of True Saving Faith
- Why is “the effects of true saving faith” an appropriate theme for the book of James?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to James in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of James.

¹³⁶ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 462.

1 PETER

Since the believers addressed were suffering escalating persecution...the purpose of this letter was to teach them how to live victoriously in the midst of that hostility...Christians, though most greatly privileged, should also know that the world will treat them unjustly. Their citizenship is in heaven and they are strangers in a hostile, Satan-energized world. Thus the Christian life can be summed up as a call to victory and glory through the path of suffering. So, the basic question that Peter answers in this epistle is: How are Christians to deal with animosity? The answer features practical truths and focuses on Jesus Christ as the model of one who maintained a triumphant attitude in the midst of hostility.¹³⁷

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------|-------------|
| I. | Salvation of the Believer | (1:1–2:12) |
| II. | Submission of the Believer | (2:13–3:12) |
| III. | Suffering of the Believer | (3:13–5:14) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Standing Firm through Suffering

- Why is “standing firm through suffering” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 Peter?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 Peter in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 Peter.

137 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1937.

2 PETER

2 Peter deals with opposition attacking the inside of the church, via false teaching. It seeks to meet, rebut, and repel these false teachers who deny Christ and seek to exploit the church through covetousness. 2 Peter underlines the facts supporting the truth of the Christian gospel and how this truth should be worked out in a growing lifestyle of purity, integrity and loyalty. This is altogether different from the corrupt and immoral example of the false teachers, whose lifestyle reflects their erroneous teaching.¹³⁸

OUTLINE:

- I. Holiness (1)
- II. Heresy (2)
- III. Hope (3)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Genuine and False Christianity

- Why is “genuine and false Christianity” an appropriate theme for the book of 2 Peter?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 Peter in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 Peter.

138 Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 546–47.

1 JOHN

Going back to fundamentals, 1 John combats [false teaching]...The answer to the attacks is both objective and subjective. It is found in the objective truths of Jesus Christ and the gospel message. It is manifested, too, in the genuine personal experience of Christ that enables the Christian convert to know he has been raised from death to life....How does a person know that he knows Christ? By obeying God, loving Christian brethren, resisting worldliness, practicing righteousness, living a pure life, and not living for sin. These are tests given in the letter. The truth that, once a person is saved, he (or she) will always be saved is put in the context of testing oneself to see if the evidence of salvation is there. This gives deep assurance, without shallow presumption, to the one trusting Christ.¹³⁹

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| I. | Salvation; Word of Life | (1) |
| II. | Sin; Love of the World | (2) |
| III. | Sanctification; Pursuit of Truth | (3) |
| IV. | Spirit; Submission to Spirit | (4) |
| V. | Certainty; Assurance of Salvation | (5) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Tests of Eternal Life

- Why is “tests of eternal life” an appropriate theme for the book of 1 John?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 1 John in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 1 John.

¹³⁹ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 549.

2 JOHN

2 John mirrors, in briefer treatment and addressed to a family, the question of false teaching in 1 John, Gnosticism, and how to deal with it and its many false teachers....This involves the question of Christian hospitality. Should a Christian give hospitality to someone who comes specifically to peddle error and specifically to deny the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as God who has come in the flesh? The answer is 'no', and the reasons are given. Clear Christian teaching and holiness are the bases for true fellowship of believers in Christ. Thus truth is the touchstone. Real love discerns against identification with error that will eternally condemn the lost.¹⁴⁰

OUTLINE:

- I. Abide in God's Commandments (vs 1-6)
- II. Abide Not with False Teachers (vs 7-13)

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Christian Hospitality and False Teachers

- Why is "Christian hospitality and false teachers" an appropriate theme for the book of 2 John?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 2 John in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 2 John.

¹⁴⁰ Chrispin, *The Bible Panorama*, 553.

3 JOHN

In First John the apostle discusses fellowship with God; in Second John he forbids fellowship with false teachers; and in Third John he encourages fellowship with Christian brothers. Following his expression of love for Gaius, John voices his joy that Gaius is persistently walking in the truth and showing hospitality to the messengers of the gospel. But John cannot commend certain others in the assembly. Diotrephes, for example, has allowed pride to replace love in his life, even rejecting the disciplining words of John. Everything that Gaius is, Diotrephes is not! John uses this negative example as an opportunity to encourage Gaius. Godly character and loyalty to the truth are never easy, but they bring God's richest commendation—and John's as well!¹⁴¹

OUTLINE:

- I. Servanthood – Gaius (vs 1–8)
 - II. Selfishness – Diotrephes (vs 9–14)
- Memorize the following:
THEME: Christian Hospitality and Faithful Ministers
 - Why is “Christian hospitality and faithful ministers” an appropriate theme for the book of 3 John?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to 3 John in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of 3 John.

141 Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 495.

JUDE

Jude is the only NT book devoted exclusively to confronting “apostasy,” meaning defection from the true, biblical faith....He wrote to condemn the apostates and to urge believers to contend for the faith. He called for discernment on the part of the church and a rigorous defense of biblical truth....While Jude never commented on the specific content of their false teaching, it was enough to demonstrate that their degenerate personal lives and fruitless ministries betrayed their attempts to teach error as though it were truth. This emphasis on character repeats the constant theme regarding false teachers—their personal corruption. While their teaching is clever, subtle, deceptive, enticing, and delivered in myriads of forms, the common way to recognize them is to look behind their false spiritual fronts and see their wicked lives.¹⁴²

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------|------------|
| I. | Purpose of Epistle | (vs 1–3) |
| II. | Path of Apostates | (vs 4–16) |
| III. | Practice of Believers | (vs 17–25) |

- Memorize the following:

THEME: Beware of the Pretenders

- Why is “beware of the pretenders” an appropriate theme for the book of Jude?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Jude in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Jude.

142 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1983–84.

REVELATION

Unlike most books of the Bible, Revelation contains its own title: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1)...What this book reveals or unveils is Jesus Christ in glory....Revelation begins with John, the last surviving apostle and an old man, in exile on the small, barren island of Patmos. While on Patmos, John received a series of visions that laid out the future history of the world. When he was arrested, John was in Ephesus, ministering to the church there and in the surrounding cities....To those churches, Revelation provided a message of hope: God is in sovereign control of all the events of human history, and though evil often seems pervasive and wicked men all powerful, their ultimate doom is certain. Christ will come in glory to judge and rule.¹⁴³

OUTLINE:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------|--------|
| I. | The Glory of Christ | (1) |
| II. | The Church of Christ | (2–3) |
| III. | The Future Plans of Christ | (4–22) |

- Memorize the following and read each key chapter:

THEME: Revelation of Jesus Christ

KEY CHAPTERS:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1 | The glory of Christ |
| 2–3 | Messages to 7 churches |
| 4–5 | God’s throne |
| 8–9, 11 | Trumpets |
| 12 | Description of last 3 ½ years of tribulation; persecution of Jews |
| 16 | Bowls |
| 17–18 | Babylon |
| 19 | Return of Christ and Armageddon |
| 20 | Millennium and Great White Throne |
| 21–22 | Eternal state |

- Why is “revelation of Jesus Christ” an appropriate theme for the book of Revelation?

GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL):

- Read the introduction to Revelation in your study Bible or basic New Testament survey.
- Read the entire book of Revelation.

143 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1989–90.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~10–15 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss any questions you have about the books covered in this section of Bible Survey.

2. Review the memory work in this section of Bible Survey by asking questions such as:
 - What is the theme of Hebrews?
 - What is the theme of 1 Peter?
 - What is found in Revelation 2–3?

3. Review any of the themes and key chapters from Genesis to Philemon.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

- Complete the following.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING SOUND DOCTRINE – YOUR CHURCH’S DOCTRINAL DISTINCTIVES

- Carefully read any of your church’s distinctives or supplemental statements on your beliefs and practice. Answer the following questions.

- What are some of the key truths that are expressed?

- Why do these truths matter? What are the consequences of misunderstanding or neglecting these truths?

- What questions do you have about the truths that are stated?

PART 2: DEFENDING SOUND DOCTRINE

- Briefly review all the “Defending Sound Doctrine” questions you have answered in previous chapters, listed below. Go back and review any you still have questions about or do not feel equipped to answer. Note any helpful reminders below.
 - How would you define the inerrancy of Scripture?
 - How would you define the Trinity?
 - How would you defend the deity of Christ?
 - How would you defend the deity of the Holy Spirit?
 - What are the purposes of the church?
 - How would you define total depravity?
 - What must a person do to be saved? Is repentance essential to conversion?
 - Explain your understanding of the substitutionary death of Christ.
 - How would you define the doctrine of election?
 - How would you define the doctrine of regeneration?
 - How would you define the doctrine of justification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of sanctification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of glorification?
 - How would you define the doctrine of eternal security?
 - Give a general timeline of end-time events.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15–20 MINUTES):

1. Briefly discuss your church’s distinctives or supplemental statements on your beliefs and practice, and your answers to the questions about them.
2. Review the questions listed above.

SECTION 3: CULTIVATING CHARACTER FOR BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The Scriptures clearly define character qualifications for those who serve in church leadership, as they are to be an example to others (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10–11). While not perfect, leaders in the church are to be spiritually mature such that others can imitate them in every aspect of life. All believers are to strive to see these characteristics of Christlike spiritual maturity demonstrated consistently in their lives. Such maturity does not come by accident, but through a faithful, disciplined life.

Jerry Wragg

Spiritual credibility springs from a holy and pure life. Righteousness may not get the popular vote, but it should have no rivals in the preparation of an effective leader. From the pulpit to the pew, nothing is more stabilizing, more admirable, more compelling among the leadership qualifications than our personal holiness.¹⁴⁴

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Consider the following biblical qualifications of an elder, recognizing they are not only required for elders but are to be the goal for every believer as they grow toward spiritual maturity.

- **Loving what is good**

Titus 1:7–8 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward...loving what is good...

- Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

¹⁴⁴ Wragg, *Exemplary Spiritual Leadership*, 23.

- Read Romans 12:9. What does it look like in the life of a believer to abhor what is evil and cling to what is good?

- **Just**
Titus 1:7–8 For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward...just...
 - Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

- Read 1 John 2:29 and 3:7. What are some specific ways a believer should imitate Christ in living a life that is just or righteous?

- **Devout**
Titus 1:7–8 For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward...devout...
 - Define this qualification in your own words.

- Why is this quality necessary for leadership?

- Why should believers desire to live holy lives, fully devoted to God?

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. How is pursuing a life of holiness different than a life of legalism. Why are the two often confused in the church today?
3. How has this study of the biblical qualifications required for elders shaped your character? What are the primary areas of your life, if any, that still need significant growth in order to meet these qualifications?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION:

Review the following spiritual disciplines that should regularly characterize the life of every believer as a means toward and manifestation of growing maturity and godly character.

- **FELLOWSHIP**
- **EVANGELISM**
- **PRAYER**
- **SERVICE**

1 Timothy 4:7–8

...Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

Donald Whitney

...The Spiritual Disciplines have always been what can make a Godly person out of a busy person. The Spiritual Disciplines aren't intended only for Christians who have a lot of spare time on their hands (where are they?). They are the God-given means by which busy believers become like Christ.¹⁴⁵

- How have you grown in your practice of these disciplines in recent months?

- How will you continue to prioritize the regular practice of these spiritual disciplines in the future?

¹⁴⁵ Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 236.

MENTOR DISCUSSION (~15 MINUTES):

1. Discuss your answers to the questions from this section.
2. What spiritual benefits have you seen from practicing these spiritual disciplines in your own life and the life of others you have ministered to?
3. What practical helps or tips have been useful in the establishment of the regular practice of these spiritual disciplines?



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