

## Small Group Guide

### THE STEWARDSHIP OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. Jim Shaddix

July 1, 2012

2 Timothy 1:3-2:2

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

### **Relate . . .**

*Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:*

***Welcome**—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.*

***Review**—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.*

***Prayer**—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.*

### **Reflect . . .**

*Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)*

#### **Message Outline**

#### **THE STEWARDSHIP OF DISCIPLESHIP**

2 Timothy 1:3-2:2

#### **What are we responsible for?**

- The good news of salvation
- The story of Jesus Christ
- The sovereign work of grace
- The key to spiritual health

#### **How do we be faithful to it?**

- Nurture the gospel (2 Timothy 1:6-7)
- Own the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-12)
- Live the gospel (2 Timothy 1:13)
- Protect the gospel (2 Timothy 1:14)
- Perpetuate the gospel (2 Timothy 1:15-2:2)

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#### *Message Summary*

In a relay race, the team that wins is the team whose last runner crosses the finish line first *carrying* the baton with each of the previous baton passes occurring in the required zones. Similarly, believers are entrusted to carry the gospel and to pass it on to others. This stewardship involves being both a disciple and a disciple-maker, and participation is not optional for Christ-followers. If we are not intentional in relaying the good news of Jesus Christ, there are people who may never even run in the race. As people who have experienced God's salvific grace, we can be faithful stewards by nurturing the gospel in our own lives, by unashamedly proclaiming this good news, by allowing it to impact everything about how we live, by guarding the gospel from being watered-down or misconstrued, and by passing it on to others who will continue to perpetuate it.

#### *Group Discussion*

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- As Christ-followers, we have been given a stewardship, which involves being both a disciple and a disciple-maker. On a scale of 1 to 10, evaluate your stewardship. Thus far, have you been faithful in obeying the commands of Christ and nurturing your relationship with Him? How have you managed the resources that He has entrusted to you? How have you leveraged your relationships for the perpetuation of the gospel? In whom are you investing your life and discipling?
- Paul utilizes four descriptions to explain what Timothy and all believers are responsible for passing on to others: the good news (vv. 8, 10), the story of Jesus Christ (v. 10), a work of grace (v. 9), and the key to spiritual health (vv. 13-14). Discuss the implications of these four descriptions of the baton we are to relay.
  - While you are only one person, how can your disobedience in relaying the gospel affect the eternity of others?
  - Do you know the gospel well enough to communicate it to others? Rehearse the gospel as a group.
  - Have one person identify an unsaved person whom they know. What is their perception of God and their understanding of sin and of Christ's work on the cross? What hinders them from following Christ? How would you relay the gospel to that specific person? As a group, pray for that person together.
  - Prior to creation, God planned to save people through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 1:9). Verse 10 discusses two particular acts that Christ has done. What is the significance of these two acts? How does death's defeat give us hope and help us persevere now?
  - Through Christ, God reveals the existence of an alternative reality for saved sinners – eternal life in Christ. How should this understanding of Christ's story affect your motivation to relay the gospel and to share in the suffering for the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8, 10-12)?
  - God has saved us, but it is not because of anything we have done. He has chosen to save us in spite of what we have done. What are common acts that people in our culture do to "earn" His affection, favor, and pardon? What does the Bible tell us about the effect of our efforts? What is the basis for God's love for us? How should this affect our hearts and how we live?
  - What is the "pattern of sound words" that Timothy heard from Paul (2 Timothy 1:13)? "Sound words" are life-giving and healthy. How is Paul's command to "follow the pattern of sound words" a key to spiritual health?
- In verses 5-6, Paul remarks of Timothy's "sincere faith" and of his calling, and exhorts Timothy to "fan into flame the gift of God" (2 Timothy 1:6). Although Timothy faced persecution, heretical teachers, illness, and people despising him for his youth, Paul reminds him of his commitment to his calling and appeals to Timothy to uphold his commitment. When faced with struggles and disappointments, how do we nurture the gospel in our own lives? How do we fan into flame our desire and efforts to spread the gospel and to make disciples?
- Perhaps you get bored over hearing so much talk about the gospel. Have you "gotten over" what Christ has done? If you have gotten over the gospel, then what else is there? What else but the gospel motivates you to obedience? Have you lost your sense of awe and gratitude over God's lavish display of

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mercy in saving sinners? What has diminished your excitement over the gospel? How should your heart respond to God and to the gospel? How can you fan back into flame your enthusiasm for who God is and what He has done?

- The motivation for evangelism and discipleship is not natural; therefore, pouring into others is not something that we can be passive about. We must be intentional in feeding on the Word and reminding ourselves of the gospel in order to give fuel to our passion. Are you nurturing the gospel in your own life? How are you teaching others to nurture the gospel in their own lives?
- As a prisoner in Rome, Paul reminds Timothy of the important role that suffering plays in the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-12). How does God utilize the suffering of Christ? How does He wield the suffering of His saints to display His power? How does this understanding affect how we view suffering and how we respond to suffering in our own lives? How can you propagate the gospel through your personal trials?
- In verses 12-18, Paul gives Timothy both negative and positive examples of stewards. Upon examination of the outworking of salvation in your own life, would your family say your life aligns more with Paul and Onesiphorus or with Phygelus and Hermogenes? How are you owning the gospel in your daily life? God presents you with an opportunity to join with Him in drawing others to Himself. What hinders you from participating with Him in this work?
- We have been saved *by God for God*. Are you faithfully representing Him in both word and deed? Is your salvation evident not just in the things you think, say, and do but also in the things you do *not* think, say, or do? In what areas of your life do you need your small group to pray that you will more faithfully live out the gospel each day?
- In verse 14, Paul charges Timothy to “guard the good deposit.” The good deposit is the gospel, but what does guarding the gospel entail? How can you protect the gospel in your own life? False teaching is the context of this exhortation (see 2 Timothy 2:14-3:9). What are some misconceptions of Scripture and heretical teachings about the gospel that you encounter in this culture? How can you protect the gospel in light of such erroneous teachings?
- In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul urges Timothy to identify faithful people, like him, to whom he can relay the gospel so they can relay it to others. Who are you currently discipling? If there is no one whom you are intentionally investing your life, who are people whom God has already placed in your path whom you could disciple? Are you obeying the command of Christ and advancing the gospel in this generation? As a group, pray for those whom you are discipling to continue growing in knowledge and obedience, and pray for your own faithfulness in perpetuating the gospel.
- As a group, pray for brothers and sisters whom you know or whom you’ve heard about that are facing persecution to protect the gospel. Pray that they will not to be ashamed of identifying themselves as Christ-followers or to tell others about Him. Pray that they will exemplify the power, love, and self-control that is promised to believers in 1 Timothy 1:7. Pray for each other to boldly proclaim the gospel each day.

## **Respond . . .**

*Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today’s study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:*

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

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***Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)***

- *Lives and Church: This Sunday we will be looking at the stewardship of discipleship. It has been said that “disciples are made, not born.” Paul seemed to have this in mind when he charged Timothy to be faithful to the stewardship of advancing the gospel in his generation and passing it on to the next. Christians today have been entrusted with the same responsibility. We are called to preserve and propagate the gospel in our day, and intentionally invest it in others who can be trusted to do the same in their day. The stakes are high – a generation of gospel advancement is at stake. Pray that our church would take the great responsibility of advancing the gospel seriously. Pray that God would send every member out into their neighborhoods and workplaces with the message of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Pray that God would bring many into the kingdom through us as a people.*
- *Local: This week we are praying for Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Dr. Gary Fenton, Pastor. We are also praying for Jessie’s Place, which provides shelter for homeless and hurting women and their children. They also provide counseling, Bible studies, and career readiness training for the women and various other programs for the children.*
- *Global: This week, we are praying for our team of students serving in New York City. We are also praying for Brook Hills member organization, Spear International, serving in Kenya. Spear equips and empowers individual Christians and churches to discover and fulfill their role in the Great Commission primarily through the establishment of strategic partnerships with indigenous ministries around the world.*