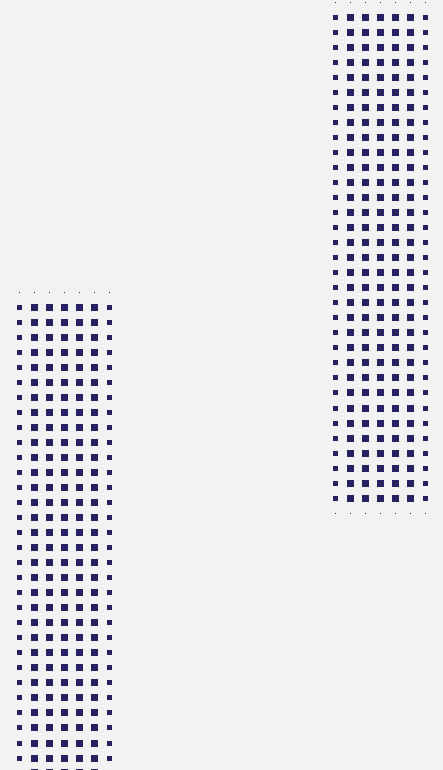




A SIX-WEEK
DISCIPLESHIP
MINISTRY
FOR STUDENTS

STARTING POINT



INTRO PAGE

WHY STARTING POINT?

Whether you have recently accepted Christ or you have been walking with Him for a while, we pray this six-week study will give you a foundation and an outline as you begin a discipleship relationship. When you are finished, we also pray that this will be something you can use to disciple someone else.

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

Let's define it by looking at one of the most well-known passages in Scripture, the Great Commission, in which Jesus says,¹⁹ *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"*²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age"* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Here we are commanded to do three things:

- Evangelize ("make disciples")
- Baptize ("baptizing them")
- Teach ("teaching them")

Discipleship can be defined as "investing into others by teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded of us in order to multiply ourselves into them." This is what *Starting Point* is designed to do!

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM THIS?

First, you are going to get out what you put into it. If you invest yourself into this and read/study what you are supposed to each week, you will get much out of it. If you come unprepared and don't spend any time on it, you won't get much out of it.

Second, you will memorize a verse each week. You may be thinking, "I don't know how to memorize six different verses!" In order to help you accomplish this, scan the QR code to the right and you will find helpful apps and methods to aid you in your memorization.



Third, communicate. If you are going to be late or miss a session, text and communicate that. If you need to reschedule, call and let us know. If you have questions about something in this book, ask about it.

Lastly, you will be launched to disciple a younger believer after this. Begin thinking and praying about whom that will be.

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Making Disciples

FAITH FORMATION

1

If you want to break this session into days, use this guide:

Day 1: 6-7

Day 2: 8-9

Day 3: 10-12

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Day 5: 15-16

Student-led pages: Empower your students to lead by giving them the following pages to lead during this session:

- Page 10
- Pages 11-12
- Pages 13-14

HERE WE GO

Throughout our mentoring study, we will spend a great deal of time exploring what it means to have faith in God.

The Bible defines faith like this:

“Now faith is *the* certainty of *things* hoped for, a proof of things not seen.” —Hebrews 1:11

Although we may not be able to comprehend all the circumstances in our lives, we can feel certain that our Lord constantly has our well-being in mind.

MEMORIZE *Romans 11:6*

Write the verse to help memorize it.

For the purpose of this study, we will define faith this way:

FAITH IS CHOOSING TO LIVE AS THOUGH GOD’S WORD IS TRUE, REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES, EMOTIONS AND CULTURAL TRENDS.

“And without *faith* it is impossible to please him (God)...”
—Hebrews 11:6

“...whatever does not proceed from *faith* is sin.”
—Romans 14:23

“for we walk by *faith*, not by sight.”
—2 Corinthians 5:7

CONSIDER THIS

When the Christian learns to live by faith, he or she learns to trust that, even though each day, each circumstance, and each trial may not make sense individually, God has a great, amazing plan in mind – an end product that will accomplish the goal. When you learn to live by faith, you learn to choose what God says in His Word over all else.

For example, look up Jeremiah 31:3, and answer the question:
“Does God love you?”

The process of working toward your end goal becomes much easier when you are all on the same page regarding what the end goal is and how to get there, even if you’re not involved in every step.

The Internet is full of information. Between the opinions of millions of people on social media and the ability to Google almost anything, there is an endless amount of information on any given topic.

There are tons of websites, apps and social media accounts devoted to encourage and help Christians develop a deeper relationship with Christ. While many Christians are familiar with these venues of information and encouragement, it is no secret that the lives of many who engage with these look no different than the lives of those who have no relationship with Christ.

Want to go deeper?
SCAN THIS:



TALK IT OUT

With all the help that is available to this generation, why do you think people still struggle with living a successful Christian life? Write your answer below.

Many begin their Christian walk with great enthusiasm, yet often find that they are struggling to live by faith (which means to choose to live as though the Bible is true). By applying God's Word to our daily lives, we can walk by faith rather than be tossed about by our emotions, circumstances or the perception of those around us.

List some circumstances in your own life with which you are struggling. For example, perhaps you are having problems in your friend group; maybe you're giving in to the popular way rather than the right way; or maybe you're having conflicts with your family members.

Even though most of us recognize the role that faith plays at the moment of conversion, we seem to forget that faith is also essential to living the Christian life. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthians that *"we walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7). God also makes this clear in Hebrews: *"but my righteous one shall live by faith"* (Hebrews 10:38). These passages clearly state that faith is critical to living the Christian life, but what does it mean to "walk by faith?"

We discover in Ephesians 2:8 that we enter the Christian life by grace through faith. This means that it is because of God's kindness that we become rightly related to Christ through faith. It is through believing in the promises of God that we become His children. *"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him"* (Colossians 2:6).

Ask yourself: *How did you begin your Christian life? How do you live your Christian life?*

You will walk with Jesus as you began your life with Jesus. By grace through faith. We walk with Jesus day-by-day, moment-by-moment by grace through faith. Just as we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior by grace through faith, we also need to learn to live our lives as Christians by grace through faith. This will become clear as you discover the **Faith Formation** in the following pages.

What follows is called the Faith Formation. Romans 10:17 tells us: *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”* Once we begin to renew our minds with what God says in the Bible, then we can learn to trust the Lord in every area of our lives with all our heart, rather than leaning on our own understanding. The Faith Formation involves three simple yet profound steps that will radically transform the way you live your life. As you apply this process to different areas of your life, you will find that the promises of God are rich and liberating, that the life of faith is indeed a wonderful journey, and that our God, whom we serve, is a faithful Father.

» TRY IT

THE FAITH FORMATION: STEP 1: MEMORIZE THE TERM

If faith is genuine, it always affects **HOW** the believer lives his or her life. James writes that, “*So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead*” (James 2:17). In other words, faith is never merely an intellectual experience; it always changes one’s life. The first step is to internalize what is meant by the word *faith*. Living by faith is meaningless unless the believer truly understands what faith means. A good way to begin the process of internalizing and understanding the life lived by faith is to memorize the definition of faith.

Faith is _____ to live as though God’s
_____ is _____ regardless of
_____, _____ and cultural
_____.

What does it mean to live as though the Bible is true?

Regardless of the **circumstances** you may be facing, regardless of the **emotions** you may be feeling, and regardless of the **cultural** trends that may be influencing your life, you choose to live as though the Bible is true **by faith**.



THE FAITH FORMATION:

STEP 2: ASK THE FAITH QUESTION

The next step in the faith process will help you turn to the Bible as the object of your faith and begin living as though it is true, regardless of your circumstances, your emotions or the cultural trends that surround you. In order to live this way, you should begin asking the Faith Question in every situation in your life:

**Knowing that the Bible is true,
how does it affect your life?**

In Romans 12:2, Paul tells the believers: *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”* Notice how Paul connects *how a person thinks to how a person lives*. In other words, Paul is encouraging us to reject living life according to the world and its standards. The way you reject living life by the world and its standards is by renewing your mind, or changing the way you think. Continually asking the “faith question” will help you not only to renew your mind, but it will also help you in your effort to reject conformity to this world and its trends. Read Romans 12:2 and answer the questions on the next page.

TALK IT OUT

Why should we not let the world shape our beliefs?

What does it mean to renew our mind?

Now ask yourself: Knowing that Romans 12:2 is true, how do I live it out? Write your answer below.

Think back to when you experienced a time of intense uncertainty. Look up Isaiah 26:3. Knowing that Isaiah 26:3 is true, how would you live it out in a time of great uncertainty? Write your answer below.

Remember our first two steps?

STEP 1 was to memorize the term.

STEP 2 was to ask the faith questions.

Now on to STEP 3.

THE FAITH FORMATION:

STEP 3: ASK FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT'S HELP

John's letter contains one of Scripture's most wonderful promises. He writes, *"And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him"* (1 John 5:14-15). Since God is more concerned with our obedience than we are, we should have the confidence that He will hear us when we ask Him to help us live according to His Word. The third step is simply to ask the Holy Spirit of God to help you live as though the Bible is true. Just as Jesus reached out His hand and took hold of Peter when his faith was weak (Matthew 14:22-33), He is ready and willing to do the same for you.

Circle all the emotions, circumstances, or cultural trends that you tend to struggle with most.

Divorce

Self-esteem/Self-worth

Drugs

Loss of a loved one

Alcohol

Depression/Anxiety

Possessions

Friendships

Anger

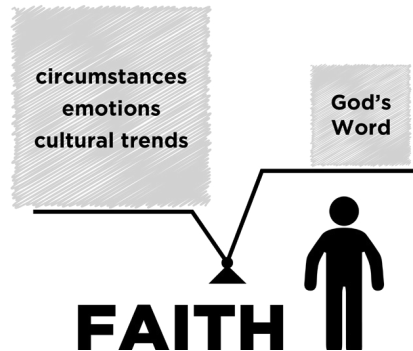
Relationships

Social media

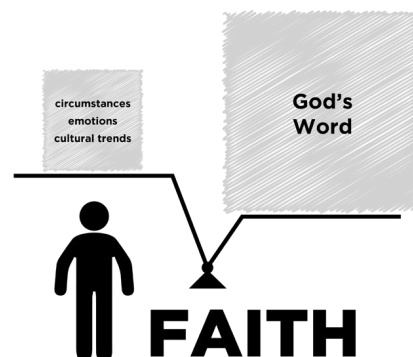


FAITH

Everyone has two boxes in their life. The left box is where we keep all of our circumstances, emotions and cultural trends. The right box is where we keep God's Word. Unfortunately, because we live in a world that affects us every moment of every day, we tend to make the left box larger than the right box. See the next illustration.



The act of faith is simply making the right box larger than the left. Faith is the act of giving God's Word priority in our lives and choosing to live as though it is true regardless of our circumstances, emotions or cultural trends. We shouldn't eliminate our circumstances, our emotions or cultural trends since God has given us emotions to enjoy Himself and His creation. He has also placed us in our specific circumstances to affect culture for the kingdom. However, as Christians, God's Word should always hold priority in our lives and weigh heavier on our hearts in order to guide every decision we make.



In this lesson, as we have discussed the faith definition, we have laid a necessary foundation for the other biblical principles that we will discuss in the coming lessons. Throughout this study, you will discover how your relationship with God affects your relationship with others. Then, you will be able to apply these principles in your own life as you learn to make the decision to choose faith in every situation and circumstance of your life. Instead of acting on what your emotions, circumstances or cultural influences tell you, you are going to learn to trust God and to act on the truth of His Word.

The Faith Formation and the Temptation of Sin

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. —1 Corinthians 10:13

Let us look at some examples of how to work out this process in the reality of life. There may be times in your life when you are tempted to sin. What should you do when you desire to do something that goes against what God has asked us to do?

First, you should recall the faith definition:

_____ is _____ to _____
as though God's _____ is _____
regardless of _____,
and _____.

Second, you should ask the faith question:

Knowing that the Bible is true, how does it affect your life?

Third, you should ask God to help you live as though this is true and to take hold of you, as He did with Peter, when the circumstances of your life are causing you to sink. For example, you could pray something like this:

“Father, since you have promised me in 1 John 5:11-13 that I can live forever with You in heaven, I am choosing to live as though that is true. Would You help me make the choice to rest in the assurance of Your Word? Please remind me several times a day that I have a promised place in heaven because of Your Word.”

BEFORE YOU FINISH

The Faith Process starts now. Living by faith is a life-changing process; it is a process of taking the Bible and choosing of your own will to live as though it is true regardless of circumstances, emotions or cultural trends. Faith is vitally dependent upon the Bible; therefore, you should make spending time studying God’s Word a priority in your life, if it is not already. Start memorizing verses of Scripture that will help you in the Faith Process. Most importantly, begin the process today by asking God to show you areas where you are not already living as though the Bible is true. Start the Faith Process now. Do it for the rest of your life.

Write the faith definition from memory.

What did you learn from this session?

RESOURCES

After reading this guide, you may have further questions. That's not unusual! Salvation is just the beginning; most Christians spend the rest of their lives growing in their relationship with Christ. Below are some wonderful resources that will help you navigate this journey as a Christ-follower.

PRESTONWOODSTUDENTS.ORG

The Prestonwood Students website is a great resource when it comes to your walk with the Lord, the church, and other believers. With resources from salvation to baptism to devotionals, it's a one-stop shop for many of your questions and needs.

PRESTONWOOD STUDENTS DEVOTIONALS

Need somewhere to begin your daily walk with Jesus? Take out your phone and text DEVO to 74788. When you do this, we will send a short devotional to your phone every morning Monday through Friday. This is just the beginning but we pray it's a launching point for you each day.

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