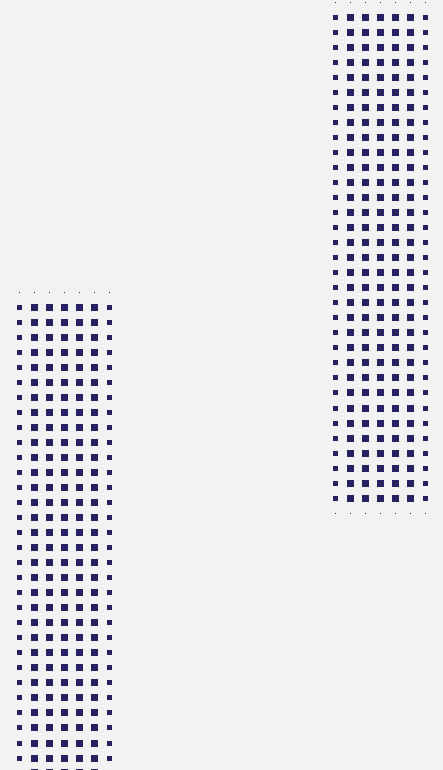




A SIX-WEEK
DISCIPLESHIP
MINISTRY
FOR STUDENTS

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

**CAN YOU BE
SECURE IN YOUR
RELATIONSHIP
WITH CHRIST?**

3

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

Day 1: 44-45 Day 4: 50-52
Day 2: 46-47 Day 5: 53-55
Day 3: 48-49

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

- Pages 50-51
- Pages 52
- Pages 53-55

HERE WE GO

Be Accountable for Your Bible Reading

- Be sure to discuss your Bible reading time with your discipleship partner before you begin this session.
- What did you read?
- How did God speak to you?
- How did you apply your reading to your life?

We have talked about how, at the end of our discipleship time, you will begin meeting with a younger student to go through *Starting Point*. Let's begin praying about who that will be. Does anyone come to mind whom you would like to meet with? If so, who is that? If not, let's begin praying that God would give you a name of someone you would like to meet with.

With whom could you begin to meet?

In this session, we will learn the key principles of being eternally secure in our relationship with God, which means that we will find out how we can have confidence that our relationship with God is secure and unchangeable regardless of our performance, emotions or experience as His followers.

MEMORIZE *1 John 5:11-12*

Write the verse to help memorize it.



Fill in the blanks to help memorize it.

¹¹ And this is the _____, that God gave
us _____, and this _____
is in his _____. ¹² Whoever has the _____
has _____ whoever _____
have the Son of God _____ have life.

Write the memory verse from last week on the lines below.

Fill in the blanks for the faith definition.

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

CORE CONCEPT

*Entering into an eternal relationship with God
is a gift that we received at the moment we
trusted Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins.
This gift will last forever.*



CONSIDER THIS

Caleb attended church as a kid with his grandfather, but he quit going to church when he started high school. He spent most of his free time hanging out with his friends and playing sports. When he was 16, his parents bought him a new car and agreed to pay for his summer baseball league and private lessons if he made the team. Sure enough, he made the team. Life could not have been better.

Halfway through his junior year, however, things began to fall apart. Caleb and his friends started to party more than study, and his grades started to drop. The pressures from school and getting ready for college became more and more noticeable. Eventually he was kicked off the baseball team when he got caught for underage drinking at a party one weekend. This was not how he had envisioned his high school career.

As all this was happening, a friend from school invited him to church one Wednesday night. At church, Caleb heard the Gospel and made the decision to become a follower of Jesus. Initially, he was excited to explore his relationship with God. He attended a weekly Bible study with his friend, and he started to see some positive changes in his personal life, school and even in his relationship with his parents.

Over time, however, the partying started again. As the pressure started building up again, Caleb decided just to try to ignore it by messing around with drugs. During this time, Caleb attended the funeral of his grandfather. Although a solemn occasion, many people celebrated his life as a man who desired to follow God. As friends and family recounted memories of his grandfather, they also expressed their assurance that he was in heaven.

Caleb began to question whether he had a relationship with God in the same way that he had a relationship with his grandfather because he was not confident that his life had changed since his decision to follow Jesus. After all, his actions did not seem to match how he thought a Christian should live. He started to wonder whether Jesus was really in his life, and at times he questioned whether he had ever had a relationship with God in the first place.



DISCUSS

- Have you ever felt as Caleb felt?
- Knowing this story, can Caleb be confident in his relationship with Jesus?
- Read Romans 7:24-8:2.
- Using this passage, how would you answer Caleb in the midst of his struggle?



EXPLORE

IS SECURITY POSSIBLE?

Many Christians have questions about the certainty of their relationship with God. Some may ask, “How can Jesus be in my life when my performance is so dismal?” Others wonder, “How can forgiveness and eternal life be a gift? There has to be more to it than accepting Christ.”

It is not uncommon for followers of Jesus to struggle with these thoughts. When these thoughts come, how should Christians respond? To answer this question, it is helpful to look at the role of your mind and your emotions in your relationship with God.

THE ROLE OF YOUR MIND

Christianity is not a blind leap of faith. It is a personal relationship with the God of the universe, revealed in space and time through Jesus Christ.

It would be foolish to believe or trust in someone or something if there were no rational basis for that belief. For example, a person may believe with all his heart that he can jump off a tall building and not get hurt. Unfortunately for him, the law of gravity, not his leap of faith, will dictate the outcome of his decision to jump.

We first need to ask if there is any clear reason for following Jesus. Let us look at the claims Jesus made about Himself and see what evidence He provided to support those claims.

Match the Scripture reference with the Scripture below by looking up each one in your Bible.

John 11:23-26

I and the Father are one. The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."

John 10:30-33

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. ^[a] From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

John 14:6-9

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. ^[a] Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?

Mohammed claimed to be a prophet; Buddha was an agnostic; Confucius was an ethical teacher. Jesus claimed to be God. Since Jesus was the only one to claim confidently His divinity, He is the only one who risked His reputation. If Jesus lied about being God, then He placed everything He stood for in jeopardy. If He claimed to be God, and then was proven to be wrong, His whole ministry would have been destroyed.

Look up each of the two Scripture passages and fill in the blanks to complete the verses.

²³ And when he got into the _____, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And behold, there arose a great _____ on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the _____; but he was _____. ²⁵ And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you _____, O you of little _____?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great _____. ²⁷ And the men _____, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" —Matthew 8:23-27

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ _____ for our _____ in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was _____, that he was _____ on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five _____ brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. —1 Corinthians 15:3-6

Think back to when you accepted Christ into your life. What does John 5:24 say Jesus did for you the moment you accepted Him as your Savior?

What is the significance of knowing you have eternal life rather than just wishing that you have eternal life?

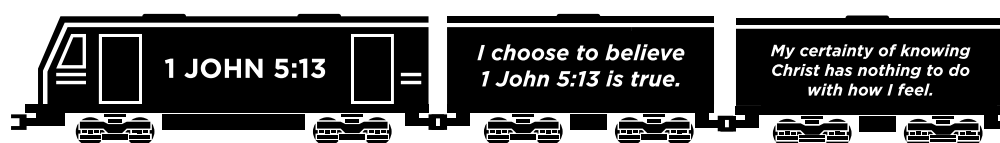
THE ROLE OF YOUR EMOTIONS

Emotions can be defined as feelings or reactions to events or experiences. Since God created emotions, they are a very important part of your life and your experiences. Because emotions change often, however, they are not a valid basis for determining whether or not you have a relationship with God.

The following illustration shows the relationship between fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word) and feelings (the responses to our experiences).



Use 1 John 5:13 to illustrate this relationship:



Do not depend upon feelings. The promise of God's Word, not our feelings, is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship between fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling. The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be futile to attempt to pull the train with the caboose. In the same way, as Christians, we do not depend upon feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God (fact) and the promises of His Word.

Probably no one thing has caused more people to lack the assurance of a vital, personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ than a wrong emphasis on emotions. Seeking an emotional experience contradicts faith – the very thing that pleases God. The Bible says, “And without faith it is impossible to please him (God)…” Hebrews 11:6.

—Bill Bright

You can be sure of your relationship with God if you have responded to His offer of forgiveness through Jesus. The promise of God's Word, not your feelings, is your authority.

Finish the following statement:

I know that I will go to heaven because

Fill in the blanks to complete the verses.

⁸ For by _____ you have been _____
through _____. And this is not your _____
doing; it is the _____ of God, ⁹ not a result of
works, so that no one may boast. —Ephesians 2:8-9

TALK IT OUT

How certain would you be of your relationship with God if you trusted in your emotions?

How certain would you be of your relationship with God if you trusted in His Word?

In a world full of uncertainty and hopelessness, to be able to live a life in which you were certain of your eternal salvation is revolutionary. Those who are able to grasp and hold to the assurance of their salvation are those who are able to live a life of hope and purpose.

What happens if we do not accept God's gift of forgiveness?

Have you ever felt insecure in your spiritual life? Explain.

CONSIDER THIS

YOUR SECURITY WITH GOD

From the moment you receive Jesus by faith, you can rest in the certainty that you will spend eternity with God.

Put Romans 10:9-10 in the correct order below.

- _____ and is saved.
- _____ because, if you confess with your mouth
- _____ For with the heart one believes
- _____ that Jesus is Lord
- _____ and with the mouth one confesses
- _____ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,
- _____ you will be saved.
- _____ and is justified,

**Knowing that Romans 10:9-10 is true, how do you live it out?
Write your answer below.**

Look up John 10:27-30. Which of the below verses is correct?

- A.** ²⁷ My sheep hear my song, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my box. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."
- B.** ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has

given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

- C.** ²⁷ My goats hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Knowing that John 10:27-30 is true, how do you live it out? Write your answer below.

Write out Romans 8:38-39.

Knowing that Romans 8:38-39 is true, how do you live it out? Write your answer below.

Look up 1 John 5:11-12. Use the verse to fill in the blanks below.

¹¹ And this is the _____, that _____ gave us _____ life, and this _____ is in his _____. ¹² Whoever has the _____ has _____; whoever _____ have the _____ of God _____ have life."

Knowing that 1 John 5:11-12 is true, how do you live it out?
Write your answer below.

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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