

Curriculum Pathway



A curriculum resource for Community
Groups at Pleasant Valley Baptist Church



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About This Resource

The *Curriculum Pathway* is an addendum to the PV Community Group Leader Handbook. It was designed to replace the previous *Curriculum Guide*.

How do You Begin Using It?

For new groups starting, using the Pathway will be easy as you just start at the beginning and let it guide you along the way.

For existing groups, the first step is to identify where you are in the group Life Cycle. Some of this will be based on amount of time you've been together, but more important is gauging the level of relationships within the group. We encourage you to discuss this with your Community Director as you look over the descriptions on the following pages. Then, once you've identified where your group is in the Life Cycle, simply begin following the topical progression in determining what to study. As you follow the *Pathway*, it will help lead your group naturally through the Life Cycle.

Life Cycle & Curriculum Pathway

Many pictures have been used to illustrate the various stages of a group, but the one we think is especially helpful is that of the rooms of a house. The characterization of relationships a person is likely to have in the Foyer, Living Room, Kitchen and Patio of a house parallels four stages or phases of a group journeying through the group life cycle. Just as you approach the relationships in these various rooms differently, so, too, a leader must approach the leadership of the group differently based on the season the group is in. The chart on the next several pages is designed to serve as a "roadmap" of sorts, to help a group leader evaluate what phase of the life cycle the group is in, and then quickly determine how best to maximize that phase, effectively moving the group forward in its mission. Use this tool often in evaluation and planning.

Curriculum Pathway

Along with the relational progression of the Life Cycle, we recognize there should be a clear progression of content/Bible study. The included Curriculum Pathway is intended to help keep you on track in making progress, while being flexible enough to fit any group. Under each category/topic are listed multiple studies—you choose the one that best fits your group. Once complete, move to the next category. The exact studies you choose along the way is less important than making sure you follow the thematic progression laid out.



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Crucial Conversations

Toward the end of each phase of the Life Cycle is a *Crucial Conversation* for you to lead the group through. Usually one session is all you'll need for each of these. They are designed to help re-orient and propel the group forward, so don't skip these!

Curriculum Pathway Key

Maturity/Experience Scale

While any believer can benefit from just about any Bible study, we should recognize that some studies are going to be better suited for different audiences. The study options are listed with a maturity spectrum in mind. Those listed first, to the left, are best suited for groups primarily made up of individuals who are newer in the journey, or less experienced. Whereas, those listed to the right are generally better options for those who are more mature and experienced in doing Bible study.



Category/Topic

Choose one study for each category/topic.



Available for Checkout from PV Library

* For a 1-page overview, see *CG Leader Handbook Appendix: Group Life Cycle Overview*

FOYER

Connection Phase

LENGTH

1 - 4 Months

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Who is in my group?
Do I like these people?
Will this be worth it?

PURPOSE

- Build Relationships
- Establish Expectations

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Keep your study time shorter (no more than half your meeting time), and make everything geared toward building relationships (supplement with extended ice breakers or games, if needed)
- Avoid going too in-depth with Bible study—you are assessing the maturity and understanding of your group members

CURRICULUM PATHWAY TOPICS

- Theology of Community

LEADERSHIP FOCUS

Story. Explore personal background, Preferences, Beliefs/worldviews, Experiences.

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

- Complete **Group Agreement** (see *Starter Study*)



1. THEOLOGY OF COMMUNITY

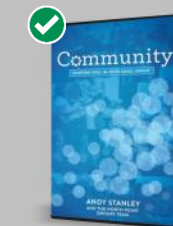
Establish a foundation for the purpose and role of community. Use this study to set the expectations for group participation and to solidify the relationships.

ESSENTIAL STUDY

COMMUNITY: STARTING WELL IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Andy Stanley

8 - 10 sessions



During this “starter study,” you will explore the purpose for your Community Group and what’s required of every person to make it work. You will have the opportunity to clarify the expectations for the group going forward, as well as allowing everyone to share their life story with the group.

Sermon Based Discussions

Do not start using the *Community* study until you have the number of participants you’re aiming for. In the meantime, use your time for building initial relationships (see *Appendix: Ice Breakers*) and have a discussion based on the current sermon series. All sermons are available via podcast or online: pleasantvalley.org/media/sermons

Here are some set questions you can use for just about any sermon...

- What was the one thing the Holy Spirit seemed to be impressing on you through the message? (Notice it may not be some thing that was explicitly said in the message)
- Was there anything you didn't understand or wasn't clear?
- In light of this message and our discussion, what is God calling you to do this week?
- How can we best pray for you in your current circumstances?

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

Essential Question

What are our expectations of each other as a group?

Essential Activity

- Complete **Group Agreement**

Why It's Important

Relationships breakdown at the point of expectations. So to make progress requires beginning with a set of mutually agreed upon expectations. The **Group Agreement** exercise at the end of the *Community* study will walk you through the process. Don't skip over it, though! It may feel unnecessary at this point, but it's actually essential to the long-term health of the group.

For additional explanation of the agreement, why use it, and help in completing the exercise, see *Appendix: Why Use a Group Agreement?*

LIVING ROOM

Discovery Phase



LENGTH

6 - 9 Months

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Am I opening up?
Am I being challenged?
Is this worth my time?

PURPOSE

- Establish safe environment for transparent sharing

LEADERSHIP FOCUS

MODELLING. Express feelings, Personal/spiritual struggles, Fears, desires, dreams
Connecting the Bible to life

GROUP ATMOSPHERE

- Solidifying relationships
- Sharing personal issues
- Establish group identity & routine

BETWEEN MEETINGS

- Learn group members passions, gifting, abilities
- Begin giving tasks away

CURRICULUM PATHWAY TOPICS

- Relationship v. Religion
- Spiritual Disciplines
- Faith & Life

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

- Identify potential Apprentice
- Establish place of regular service
- Group Agreement** self-assessment



LIVING ROOM



1. RELATIONSHIP V. RELIGION

Teaches group members how to journey with God and experience His presence and power in their lives, while also helping group leader assess spiritual maturity of group members.

2. SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Often referred to as "spiritual practices," spiritual disciplines are the exercises that shape and transform our hearts. Though foreign to some, and daunting to others, they're a foundational element of growing in relationship with Christ. Choose one of the following:

General Spiritual Disciplines. For those new to spiritual disciplines, do an introductory study that covers *what* and *why* of disciplines. For those more familiar, look for a fresh approach to engaging the disciplines differently.

Bible Study. Engaging God through His Word is one of the most fundamental disciplines. Help your group members engage skillfully in understanding God's Word.

Prayer. Many find prayer frustrating, confusing, and mysterious. So, address these struggles by exploring prayer together.

3. FAITH & LIFE

Having established a foundational understanding of our relationship with God and some practices for experiencing Him, now help your group members see how God's word speaks into everyday life by looking at margin, life purpose, the role of work, or spiritual gifts & serving.



1. RELATIONSHIP V. RELIGION



STARTING POINT THE SERIES

Andy Stanley
8 sessions

DVD & Study Guide

Explore what it would look like to hit the restart button on your faith. This is YOUR starting point. All videos available online: startingpointseries.com



NOT A FAN

Kyle Idleman
6 sessions

DVD & Study Guide

Examine what it means to deny one's self and truly follow Jesus, using an unconventional, cinematic journey through a series of six mini-movies



WITH REIMAGINING THE WAY YOU RELATE TO GOD

Skye Jethani
9 chapters

Book

Learn how we can stop living our lives under, over, from, and for God, and starting living in communion WITH Him!



BIBLE BOOK GOSPEL OF MARK OR GALATIANS

6 - 10 sessions

Focus in on the nature of the gospel and what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Suggested study guides:
NEW COMMUNITY SERIES
WALK THRU THE BIBLE SERIES




2. SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

* Choose 1 sub-category below, then choose 1 study within that sub-category.


General Spiritual Disciplines

FIVE THINGS GOD USES TO GROW OUR FAITH

 *Andy Stanley*
6 sessions
DVD/Study Gd


Discover how God uses practical teaching, providential relationships, private disciplines, personal ministry, and pivotal circumstances to grow your faith.

THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

 *John Ortberg*
12 sessions
DVD **OR** Book


Ortberg calls us back to the dynamic heartbeat of Christianity—God's power to bring change and growth—and reveals both the how and why of transformation.

CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE

 *Richard Foster*
13 chapters
Book

Explores the classic "disciplines," or central spiritual practices, of the Christian faith and discover a richer spiritual and deeper understanding of God.

THE APPRENTICE SERIES


 *James B. Smith*
9-12 chap.
Book (3 vol.)

Grow in your understanding of who God is, what it means to be a Christian, and what it's like to live in community! apprenticeinstitute.org/apprentice-series/

*Choose 1 of 3 volumes


Discipline: Bible Study

WARREN'S BIBLE STUDY METHODS

 *Rick Warren*
12 chapters
Workbook

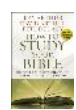
With simple, step-by-step instructions, this study guides you through twelve different approaches to studying God's Word for yourself.

30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR BIBLE

 *Max Anders*
12 chapters
Book


Introducing you to key characters, places, and events in chronological order, this user-friendly volume helps you think your way through Scripture and acquaint yourself with its core teachings in just 15 minutes a day.

HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

 *Kay & David Arthur*
17 chapters
Book & Workbook

Learn to cultivate the skills of observation, interpretation, and application - and become an active participant in God's Word!


LIVING BY THE BOOK

 *Howard Hendricks*
7 sessions
Book **OR** DVD & Workbk

Learn a practical three-step process that will help you master simple yet effective inductive methods of observation, interpretation and application.


Discipline: Prayer

TOO BUSY NOT TO PRAY

 *Bill Hybels*
12 chap / 6 sessions
Book **OR** DVD/Study Gd.


This book calls both young and old to make prayer a priority, and broadens our vision for what our eternal, powerful God does when his people slow down to pray.

THE PAPA PRAYER

 *Larry Crabb*
12 chapters
Book


For everyone who struggles to pray in a way that matters, who is bored with prayer and doesn't know where else to turn, this book whispers of hope for change.

PRAYER: EXPERIENCING AWE & INTIMACY WITH GOD

 *Timothy Keller*
11 chapters
Book

Using great model prayers from the Bible and great Christian teachers throughout history, Keller discusses ways to make prayers more personal and powerful, and how to establish a practice of prayer that works.

PRAYER: DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?


 *Philip Yancey*
22 chap / 6 sessions
Book **OR** DVD/Study Gd.

Yancey explores the enigmatic intersection where we meet God, asking---and answering---key questions about prayer.




3. FAITH & LIFE

THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE

 *Rick Warren*
6 sessions
Book

Living out the purpose you were created for moves you beyond mere survival and success to a life of significance—the life you were meant to live.

GUARDRAILS

 *Andy Stanley*
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.


Maybe your greatest regret could have been avoided if you had established guardrails. Learn to stop flirting with disaster and establish some personal guardrails.

CHRISTIAN

 *Andy Stanley*
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.


The words used to describe Christians today often bear no resemblance to what Jesus wanted his followers to be known for. Explore the truth and fiction behind one of the most famous brands in all of history.

THE TRUTH PROJECT

 *Focus on the Family*
13 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.

This study is the starting point for looking at life from a biblical perspective. Each lesson discusses in great detail the relevance and importance of living the Christian worldview in daily life.

ASK IT

 *Andy Stanley*
6 sessions
Book & DVD

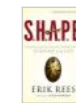
Stanley identifies the one question that makes it easy to determine the answer to all other questions. Learn how to make decisions with confidence simply by applying the question that brings clarity to life's most challenging decisions.

YOUR DIVINE DESIGN

 *Chip Ingram*
8 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.


Pinpoint your own primary spiritual gift and then learn a Biblical process to develop, and deploy your gift for greater ministry and significant impact.

S.H.A.P.E.

 *Erik Rees*
12 chapters
Book

Discover God's unique purpose for your life based on the way God has shaped you, including your passions, talents, experiences, temperament, and spiritual gifts.

TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT

 *Andy Stanley*
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.


Many people spend, acquire, and try to squeeze as much out of life as they can—and end up feeling empty in the process. Pull back from the edge and strike a balance by learning margin.

EVERY GOOD ENDEAVOR

 *Timothy Keller*
9 chapters
Book


Discover how to enjoy a successful career without sacrificing your soul! Learn to carry your beliefs to work, stay true to your values, and make God-honoring choices.

HOW TO FINISH THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

 *Sweeting*
8 sessions
DVD & Study Guide


Retirement from a career should never be mistaken for an absence of purpose. The end of the believer's journey is not a matter of dying but a challenge to live to the fullest to the glory of God.

NEARING HOME

 *Billy Graham*
9 chapters
Book

Explore the realities of growing older and look at your later years from God's perspective! Graham discusses the importance of facing life's transitions, making wise decisions, and understanding our glorious hope.

BIBLE BOOK JAMES, COLOSSIANS, EPHESIANS, OR 1 CORINTHIANS

 8 - 12 sessions
Study Guide

Focus in on the practical outworking of our faith in daily life, relationships, and the church. Suggested study guides: **GOOD BOOK GUIDE SERIES** **OR** **NEW COMMUNITY SERIES**

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

Essential Question

Are we a healthy group and are we willing to go deeper?

Essential Activities

- Identify potential **Apprentice**
- Establish place of **regular service**
- Complete the **Crucial Conversation**

Why It's Important

Apprenticing is the only effective way to equip future leaders in a large-scale, relational, volunteer-driven organization like the church. The process begins by identifying a potential apprentice (someone in whom you see future leadership potential) and invite them to begin meeting regularly with you. **See Appendix: Intentional Apprenticing in the Leader's Handbook.*

Serving together as a group is the opportunity to engage in mission, while deepening relationships. As a group, serve together regularly (at least once a quarter) in a consistent place where you can build relationships. Consider one of PVs local mission partners as a good place to start. **See Appendix: Serving Together as a Group in the Leader Handbook.*

Use the **Crucial Conversation** to evaluate how well you're living up to your mutually agreed upon expectations, and identify areas of further growth.

Crucial Conversation Guide

Preparation

Pull out a copy of the **Group Agreement** you completed at the end of the starter study. Distribute copies to the group at least a week ahead of time and ask them to review the agreement and ask themselves three questions: [1] *As a result of participating in this group, where have you seen God bring about growth/transformation in your life?* [2] *Am I living up to what I agreed to in the Group Agreement? If not, why?* [3] *What barriers (internal or external) are keeping me from being more open and transparent with this group?*

Ask your group to come prepared to discuss these questions at the next group meeting. (It's important that all group members are present for this conversation, so emphasize making it a priority.)

(Continued on next page...)

Discussion

In your group meeting, use these kinds of questions to guide the discussion:

- *Share some of the ways you identified you've seen growth/transformation as a result of your participation in this group.*
- *What was your initial feeling as you re-read our Group Agreement? (encouragement, disappointment, excitement, dread, etc.) Why?*
- *Speaking for yourself, did you identify some areas where you're not living up to the agreement? Is there something we as group members can do to help you in this area?*
- *Where there any barriers (either internal or external) that you identified that are keeping you being more open and transparent with this group? Is there anything we as group members can do to help you grow in this area?*
- *Is there anything we need to add or change to the Group Agreement that will better help us take steps forward as a group:*
*If so, just make sure that everyone in the group is in agreement about making any changes.
- *Moving forward, what are you most excited about for yourself and this group?*

This may need to be more than one conversation. It's possible that through this discussion you identify some real barriers to the group growing deeper in their relationships. Keep the focus on what each individual is doing, so as to avoid blaming or finger-pointing. Ask them to spend some time reflecting on their part in helping this group take steps forward and then come back and re-visit at your next group meeting.

Desired Outcomes

- Be reminded of the things you agreed to as a group
- Identify areas of personal growth needed
- Identify any barriers and solutions
- Promote deeper levels of engagement, openness and transparency

Next Steps

Leading through this Crucial Conversation will help set the stage for seeing people go deeper in their transparency and trust in the relationships, which will ultimately help you move into the next season of the Life Cycle—the Kitchen.

KITCHEN

Transformation Phase

LENGTH

9 - 18 Months

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

*Am I willing to meet beyond meetings?
Am I seeing transformation?
Am I willing to be transparent?*

PURPOSE

Confront idols and Grow knowledge of God

LEADERSHIP FOCUS

TRUTH. Rigorous study of Scripture, Gender-specific sub-grouping, Exhortation to greater surrender

GROUP ATMOSPHERE

- Expanded self-disclosure
- Increased spiritual maturity
- Authentic prayer for each

BETWEEN MEETINGS

- Extensive fellowship (retreats)
- Do ministry/mission together
- Developing an apprentice

CURRICULUM PATHWAY TOPICS

- Spiritual Formation
- Doctrine / Bible Overview
- Key Relationships
- Generosity / Stewardship
- Evangelism

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

- Establish a timeline for group multiplication
- Celebrate life change in group



1. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Having established a foundational understanding in the Living Room of Relationship v. Religion and Spiritual Disciplines, build on that now by digging into a study with a spiritual formation topic. Focus in on what head and heart changes need to happen in order to grow in obedience.



2. KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Our true character shines is seen most clearly within our closest relationships; therefore, it only makes sense that God would use these key relationships as the context for the greatest growth in becoming more like Him. Focus in on singleness, marriage, or parenting relationships. Married groups, consider using separate men's and women's groups during this study.



3. DOCTRINE / BIBLE OVERVIEW

Establishes foundational truths about God and His kingdom that will aid group members throughout their lifelong spiritual journey. Many who are even quite familiar with the Bible often struggle to connect the various stories in the Bible in a cohesive understanding of the Scripture. Likewise, even within relatively familiar doctrines, there is often value in studying them as a unit.



4. GENEROSITY / STEWARDSHIP

Timothy Keller says, "To the extent you have truly understood the gospel, you will be generous [with your possessions and life]." For some that means getting control of their personal finances and learning better stewardship. Wherever your group is though, help see and embrace whole-life generosity as a mark of spiritual maturity.



5. EVANGELISM

For a minority of Christians, personal evangelism is a passion and nearly effortless. For the vast majority, it's a discipline which we must develop just like any other discipline—through practice and regular accountability. Focus on either the greater mission of God, or on a very practical how-to kind of study. Most importantly though, practice it and make speaking of Jesus a regular expectation within the group.



6. SPIRITUAL FORMATION [OPTIONAL]

If your group is not quite ready to enter into the Patio phase, circle back and choose another study from the Spiritual Formation category (see category #1 under Kitchen)



7. KEY RELATIONSHIPS [OPTIONAL]

If your group is not quite ready to enter into the Patio phase, circle back and choose another study from the Key Relationships category (see category #2 under Kitchen). Consider focusing on a different relationship than you did the first time through.



1. SPIRITUAL FORMATION



CRAZY LOVE

Francis Chan
12 chapters
Book

Do contemporary believers live the radically committed life Jesus calls his followers to live? Chan challenges church members to take responsibility for their apathy, engage in honest self-examination, and totally surrender to God's purpose.



FOLLOW

Andy Stanley
8 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Jesus' invitation to his first-century audience was an invitation to relationship. And it began with a simple request—follow me. Journey through the Gospels and trace Jesus' teachings on what it means to follow.

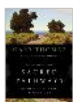


EXPERIENCING GOD

Henry Blackaby
13 sessions
DVD & Workbook

Through examination of biblical and contemporary illustrations, participants will understand and apply seven realities of experiencing God. Churches will be helped to better function as the body of Christ, as members understand how to experience God as a church.

SACRED PATHWAYS



Gary Thomas
11 chapters
Book

Explore nine different spiritual temperaments and understand the unique way in which God has designed you to relate best with Him.



GODS AT WAR

Kyle Idleman
6 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Idleman challenges our presumptions about sin by suggesting that all sin derives from the same source—idolatry. While there are many gods at war for our hearts, this study focuses on 4 in particular: the gods of love, money, pleasure, and power. This series is filmed in a docudrama style—and features real people telling real stories.



HOLY AVAILABLE

Gary Thomas
16 chapters
Book

Has your faith become a list of do's and don'ts, rather than a powerful revolution in your soul? Discover just how radical Christian transformation can be and learn to see with new eyes and a new heart.



BIBLE BOOK GOSPEL OF JOHN OR 1 & 2 PETER

8 - 16 sessions
Study Guide

John: Focus in on Jesus as Lord as you examine John's presentation of Jesus' life and ministry. Peter: Focus on gospel-fueled spiritual formation. Suggested study guides:
GOOD BOOK GUIDE SERIES
BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE
MACARTHUR STUDY GUIDES

SOUL KEEPING



John Ortberg
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd

Ortberg helps us discover what the soul is, why it is important, how to assess the soul's health, and how to care for it so that it contributes to the depth and beauty of our relationship with God and others.



RENOVATE

Northpoint
8 sessions
DVD & Workbk

This study will introduce you to the possibility of a personal renovation, exploring the foundation and blueprints of God's original design for us.



EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY

Pete Scazzero
8 sessions
Book OR DVD/Wkbk

You can't be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature. The combination of emotional health and contemporary spirituality unleashes the Holy Spirit inside us so that we might experientially know the power of an authentic life in Christ.



THE APPRENTICE SERIES

James B. Smith
9-12 chap.
Book (3 vol.)

Grow in your understanding of who God is, what it means to be a Christian, and what it's like to live in community!
*Choose 1 of 3 volumes
apprenticeinstitute.org/apprentice-series/



2. KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Singleness and Marriage

THE SACRED SEARCH

Gary Thomas
19 chapters / 8 sessions
Book OR DVD & Book

Designed for singles searching for the "right one," explore why it's so important to know the why of marriage before you know the who of marriage and receive practical advice for building a relationship with eternal purposes.

YOU & ME FOREVER

Francis Chan
12 chapters
Book & Workbook

The way to have a great marriage is by not focusing on marriage. Whether single, dating or married, *You & Me Forever* will help you discover the adventure that you were made for and learn how to thrive in it.

IMARRIAGE

Andy Stanley
6 sessions
DVD & St Gd

Learn to transform your expectations and look to God in order to experience marriage as God designed it.

THE ART OF MARRIAGE

FamilyLife
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd

Learning to blend two colorful personalities to make marriage work is a divinely inspired art form that is challenging, but worth it!

STAYING IN LOVE

Andy Stanley
4 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Falling in love is easy; staying in love requires a plan. Through this study, develop that proven plan to help you keep romance alive and deepen your commitment to one another

SACRED MARRIAGE

Gary Thomas
13 chapters / 6 sessions
Book OR DVD/Study Gd.

What if God designed marriage to make us holy more than to make us happy? See how God can use marriage as a discipline and a motivation to reflect more of the character of Jesus.

LOVE & RESPECT

Emerson Eggerichs
24 chapters
Book

Communication between a husband and wife is often frustrated because of the vastly different ways in which men and women perceive love.

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Timothy Keller
8 chapters / 6 sessions
Book OR DVD/Study Gd.

Keller frankly discusses difficulties couples experience and show how God's Word can provide a blueprint for a healthy, loving, lifelong relationship.

Parenting

SPIRITUAL PARENTING

Michelle Anthony
8 sessions
Book OR DVD/Study Gd.

Learn to create a home environment that is conducive to shaping the hearts and minds of children.

READY TO LAUNCH

J.D. Greear
7 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Plumbs the wisdom of the Bible about the goals of parenting, the stages of discipline, and strategies to shape the heart toward the gospel.

EFFECTIVE PARENTING IN A DEFECTIVE WORLD

Chip Ingram
12 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Ingram delivers thought-provoking principles and specific exercises to help your family draw closer, even as the world tries to pull you apart. Discover practical, biblical principles that can help you raise kids who stand out from the crowd.

ARTIFICIAL MATURITY

Tim Elmore
14 chapters
Book

Raise kids who can handle the real world. Too often we mistake children's superficial knowledge for real maturity. Through practical steps, learn to furnish the experiences kids need to balance their abilities with authentic maturity.



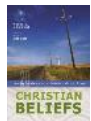
3. DOCTRINE / BIBLE OVERVIEW



GOD AS HE LONGS FOR YOU TO SEE HIM

Chip Ingram
10 session
DVD & Study Gd.

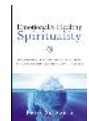
As you begin to see God for who He really is and what His true desires for your life are, it will change the way you pray, the way you live, and the way you think about the world around you.



CHRISTIAN BELIEFS: 20 BASICS EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW

Wayne Grudem
20 chapters
Book

This readable guide to twenty basic Christian beliefs is a condensation of Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, designed for the average layperson. Each chapter includes questions for group discussion.



GOD'S BIG PICTURE: TRACING THE STORY-LINE OF THE BIBLE

Vaughn Roberts
12 chapters
Book

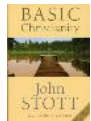
Does the Bible sometimes seem like a confusing jumble of books, authors, and stories? Take a wide-angle view of Scripture, seeing how the various parts of the Bible consolidate into one united theme: the kingdom of God.



30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR BIBLE

Max Anders
12 chapters
Book

Introducing you to key characters, places, and events in chronological order, this user-friendly volume helps you think your way through Scripture and acquaint yourself with its core teachings in just 15 minutes a day.



BASIC CHRISTIANITY

John R.W. Stott
11 chapters
Book

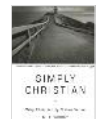
Embark on a compelling study that first defends the basic claims of Christianity and then defines the proper *outworkings* of those main beliefs in the daily lives of believers.



KNOWING GOD

J. I. Packer
14 chapters
Book

Written in an engaging and practical tone, this thought-provoking classic work *seeks* to transform and enrich the Christian understanding of God.



SIMPLY CHRISTIAN

N.T. Wright
16 chapters
Book

Wright makes the case for Christian faith from the ground up, assuming that the reader is starting from ground zero with no predisposition to and perhaps even some negativity toward religion in general and Christianity in particular. His goal is to describe Christianity in as simple and accessible, yet hopefully attractive and exciting, a way as possible, both to say to outsiders "You might want to look at this further," and to say to insiders "You may not have quite understood this bit clearly, yet."



JESUS AMONG SECULAR GODS

Zacharias & Vitale
8 chapters
Book

Challenging society's beliefs in the "secular gods" of atheism, scientism, relativism, and others, Zacharias and Vitale skillfully point out the fallacies in their claims. Presenting compelling evidence for absolute truth as found in the Bible, they help you articulate why Jesus is who he said he is and defend the claims of Christ to others.



BIBLE BOOK GENESIS OR ROMANS

8 - 16 sessions
Study Guide

Focus in on the doctrinal and thematic elements of one of these books.

Suggested study guides:

GOOD BOOK GUIDE SERIES
BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE
MACARTHUR STUDY GUIDES



4. GENEROSITY / STEWARDSHIP



BALANCED

Northpoint
6 sessions
DVD & Wrkbk

Embark on a compelling study that first defends the basic claims of Christianity and then *defines* the proper outworkings of those main beliefs in the daily lives of believers.



HOW TO BE RICH

Andy Stanley
4 sessions
DVD & Study Gd.

Generosity changed everything. It changed the world once, it could happen again. Learn to *look* at richness differently, which might just lead our families, communities, and world to looking at Christians differently.



ALL: GOD'S PICTURE OF WHOLE-LIFE GENEROSITY

PVBC
6 sessions
DVD & Study Gd

Begin to see God's picture of generosity *through* looking at Scripture and hearing others' stories, because when you understand God's picture of generosity you will be led into a new way of knowing, feeling and doing whole-life generosity.



MANAGING OUR FINANCES GOD'S WAY

Crown
7 sessions
DVD & Workbk

God graciously gives us everything we have so we can partner with him to accomplish His good purposes on earth. Learn to manage your finances God's way.



5. EVANGELISM



BECOMING A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN

Hybels & Mittleburg
6 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Avoiding stereotyped approaches that feel intimidating to your friends, learn to share your *faith* in a natural and effective way while being the person God made you to be.



JUST WALK ACROSS THE ROOM

Bill Hybels
4 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Using Jesus as a model and drawing from personal experiences, be equipped to *step* out of their comfort zone and share their faith stories with others.



THIS INVITATIONAL LIFE

Steve Carter
8 sessions
Book & DVD / Study Guide

Challenging you to step out and risk your faith, Carter helps you overcome your fears, initiate non-threatening conversations with seekers, and sensitively share your beliefs through Scripture and your own story.



TELL SOMEONE

Greg Laurie
6 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

In reality, evangelism is simply telling two stories: Jesus' and yours (how Jesus changed your life forever). Everybody loves to tell and hear stories. The goal is not to win arguments but to win souls. We share the gospel because we love God and we love other people.



THE QUESTIONS CHRISTIANS HOPE NO ONE WILL ASK

Mark Mittleburg
10 chapters
Book

With warmth and openness, Mittleburg tackles the 10 most troubling questions facing today's Christians--- and answers them. Discover how to respond to queries about heaven and hell, suffering, homosexuality, the authority of Scripture, and more.



THE REASON FOR GOD

Tim Keller
6 sessions
DVD & Study Guide

Captured live and unscripted, Pastor Timothy Keller meets with a group of people to address their *doubts* about Christianity. In this 6-session study, he uses literature, philosophy, real-life experiences, and the Bible to teach you how to respond when confronted with skeptics' objections to your beliefs.

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

Essential Question

What is our transformation leading us to do?
Who is God showing us that needs community?

Essential Activities

- **Establish a timeline** for group multiplication
- **Celebrate life change** in the group members

Why It's Important

We will always gravitate toward what's comfortable and familiar, so we need to regularly be asking Where are we going and why? It's normal that you as the leader will sense the need to begin talking about where this group is heading before those in your group do, but this is the nature of leadership!

In having this conversation, it doesn't mean you're ending right away, but your goal is to simply establish a timeline for group multiplication. Some of this will depend on the life circumstances of group members, as well as the readiness of your apprentice or others to lead.

Crucial Conversation Guide

Preparation

Let the group know that at your next meeting you plan to evaluate where the group is and where you're headed. In preparation, ask them to consider these questions: [1] *As a result of participating in this group, where have you seen God bring about growth/transformation in your life?* [2] *Where have you seen the greatest evidence of life change in the other members of this group? (be specific)* [3] *What is God leading you to do as a result of the transformation he's done in you?*

Ask your group to come prepared to discuss these questions at the next group meeting. (It's important that all group members are present for this conversation, so emphasize making it a priority.)

(Continued on next page...)

Discussion

In your group meeting, use these kinds of questions to guide the discussion:

- *As a result of participating in this group, where have you seen God bring about growth/transformation in your life?*
- *What has surprised you about how God has worked through this group to change you?*
- *Where have you seen the greatest evidence of life change in the other members of this group? (be specific)*
- *What is God leading you to do as a result of the transformation he's done in you? (Is there a new passion He's awakened in you? Is there a next step of service, leadership, boldness, commitment?)*
- *Who is God showing you that needs to experience transformational community?*
- *As we consider where we are in the Life Cycle, life circumstances, and annual calendar,*

This will most likely need to be more than one conversation. Anytime you begin talking about change, you need to leave adequate time for group members to acclimate to that. If there's initial resistance or questions, don't be put-off by that—it's entirely normal. However, make it clear that it's a conversation you're going to continue to revisit.

If you sense the group is legitimately not ready to move into the final season of the Life Cycle, go back do additional studies from the Spiritual Formation, Key Relationships, or Evangelism sections of the Kitchen Curriculum Pathway.

Desired Outcomes

- Be reminded that this group is leading toward multiplication
- Have greater awareness about new passions and areas of service God is leading toward
- Begin creating awareness of those in need of community

Next Steps

Make prayer for unbelievers and those without community a regular point of prayer time together as a group. Leverage one-on-one conversations with group members outside of your group meetings to push and prepare them for next steps toward group multiplication.

PATIO

Strategic Ending Phase

One of the measures of healthy community is that disciples who can make other disciples are reproduced. This will often be in the form of an apprentice leader launching a new Community Group, but the bottom line is that this is a season of change and preparation for



LENGTH

1 - 3 Months

PURPOSE

Reproduce an equipped apprentice

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Why are we ending?
Was it worth it?
Will we survive the transition?

LEADERSHIP FOCUS

END STRATEGICALLY. Reality of those without life-giving community, Recognizing spiritual gifts/calling, Celebration of God's work

GROUP ATMOSPHERE

- Accountability decreases
- Relationships more comfortable
- Members ready to invite others into their community

BETWEEN MEETINGS

- Intentional preparation of apprentice leader
- Vision casting for new group/next steps

CURRICULUM PATHWAY TOPICS

- Preparing to Launch
- Celebration

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

- Celebrate life change in group members
- Help group members identify their next steps



BIBLE BOOK: ACTS [OPTIONAL]

6 - 8 sessions

Focus on how God moved through community in the early Church. Focus on the multiplication and the sending of individuals in God fulfilling his mission.

Suggested study guides:
GOOD BOOK GUIDE SERIES | BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE | WALK THRU THE BIBLE

ESSENTIAL STUDY

PREPARING TO LAUNCH: JESUS' MODEL FOR REPRODUCTION

PV

6 sessions



The Bible is clear that our continued spiritual growth and vitality is dependent on movement. Never does God let one of His servants stay in one place forever, but He pushes us out of our comfort zones in order that our relationship with Him and our influence of others can continue to grow. This study will help your group grapple with the issues that accompany a group's reproduction of a new leader.

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION

Essential Question

Why are we ending and what are our next steps?

Essential Activity

- Celebrate life change in group members
- Launch an apprentice leader
- Help group members identify their next steps

Why It's Important

Anytime you talk about "ending" there's a natural fear of loss and uncertainty about what the future holds. It's essential that you help guide your group members through the natural grieving process to see that just because the formal group structure is changing, you don't lose the relationships or the experience you've shared together.

Don't rush through this, but also don't get stuck just talking about it. Lay out the possible scenarios for multiplication and reassure group members that you will help them walk through this transition. The more ownership/input they have in the multiplication process the better!

Curriculum Pathway



A curriculum resource for Community
Groups at Pleasant Valley Baptist Church