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**▷ INTRODUCTION**

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Welcome to the **Steps to Discipleship Small Group Leader's Guide**. You are a vital part of the success and impact of program. The small group process will greatly contribute to the spiritual growth of your group members as they work through these next seven weeks. Please join us in praying that God will use you and your group to help each member deepen his or her walk with God. Thank you for being an important part of this exciting journey together.

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**▷ PURPOSE**

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This **Leader's Guide** is designed to help you as a small group leader or discussion coordinator to guide your group into deeper study of the topic and decision for the week. This topic is first presented in the Sabbath sermon, and then reviewed and expanded in the daily study guide for each participant.

This **Leader's Guide** will help you in your work with your group in several ways:

First, it will provide you a framework for the entire program so that you can understand where we are going throughout the seven weeks.

Second, this **Guide** will identify objectives for each week's study and discussion.

Finally, this material will give you a suggested process for each week's group meeting. Please use your judgment in adapting this process to meet the needs of your group. The most important objective is to help the members of your group connect with God and grow deeper in their relationship with Him as disciples.

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**▷ STEPS TO DISCIPLESHIP**

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The **Steps to Discipleship** material is designed to help individuals grow in their relationship with God and in an intentional discipleship process. It also invites individuals into discipleship as a lifestyle.

There are eight Sabbaths and seven weeks in the overall strategy. Participants have a personal **Study Guide** which guides them through daily study in Scripture, as well as time in reflection and prayer.

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**▷ PRINCIPLES**

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There are four foundational principles on which the **Steps to Discipleship** strategy is built. Two of these principles are biblical:

- God promised that we would find Him when we search for Him with all our hearts. (Jeremiah 29:13)
- Jesus promised that we would be drawn to the uplifted Christ. (John 12:32)

There are also two mental or psychological principles:

- People resist making a long-term commitment, but are willing to make a short-term one.
- If we do something daily for six to seven weeks, we develop a habit, and we want to build a habit of regular devotional time with God.

## ▷ OBJECTIVES

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There are three key objectives for the **Steps to Discipleship** program:

- To invite individuals into an intentional discipleship process of daily time with God in prayer and Bible study.
- To move people through a set of sequential discipleship decisions.
- To lead individuals to discipleship as a lifestyle.

## ▷ SEQUENTIAL DECISIONS

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The study material invites individuals to make a series of eight sequential decisions. It will help you as a group leader to keep these decisions in mind as you facilitate the discussion each week.

1. To try intentionally try God for seven weeks by giving Him 30-45 minutes a day in planned Bible study and prayer
2. To accept or affirm Jesus Christ as Savior and to accept the assurance of salvation based on grace and the gift of God.
3. To accept Jesus as Lord of our lives, surrendering control to Him of every area of life.
4. To accept the reality of Jesus Christ dwelling within us as the power for the daily Christian life.
5. To accept the invitation to the ministry of sharing with others what Jesus has done for us.
6. To accept being and living as part of the Church as the Body of Christ, and to explore what it means to be part of this Body.
7. To accept a personal ministry based on God's calling and the spiritual gifts He gives us.
8. To choose discipleship as a daily and long term lifestyle.

**▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK**

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To begin an intentional search for a deeper relationship with God.
2. To explore how God sees us.
3. To explore the depths of God's love for us.
4. To claim the promise that we will find God when we search for Him.

**▷ OPENING PRAYER**

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You will want to be sure to open the group study and discussion session with a prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

**▷ SHARING & PRAYER**

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

**▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW**

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Review the memory verses for this week, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this week are:

Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV) — “The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: *ëI have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.*”

Jeremiah 31:3 (KJV) — “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, *ëYea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*”

Psalms 34:8 (NIV)—“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.”

Psalms 34:8 (KJV)—“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

Then discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

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▷ DISCUSSION

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Now we want to explore the area of study for the week—seeking God. Help the group clarify and remember the purpose of this week’s study. The following questions will help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Read Jeremiah 29:11-13 — What does this passage tell us about how God looks at us? How do you think God sees us?
2. How does the life and death of Jesus Christ draw us to God? (See John 12:20-33)
3. Read Psalm 63:1. In what ways can we identify our own thirst for God? How does this thirst show up in our daily lives?
4. Time alone with God was important for Jesus. How is that time important for us, and what can we do to help make that time meaningful for us?
5. Read Matthew 1:21-23. Which of these two names for Jesus is most meaningful to you and why?
6. Share with the group one or two things you would like to accomplish in your journey with God during the next week.

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▷ CLOSING PRAYER

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Encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.

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**▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK**

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To face our need for salvation.
2. To understand that salvation is a gift of grace.
3. To accept and/or affirm the gift of salvation.
4. To believe and rejoice in salvation.
5. To accept and explore our new life in Christ.

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**▷ OPENING PRAYER**

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

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**▷ SHARING & PRAYER**

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

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**▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW**

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Review the memory verses for this week, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this week are:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)—“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)—“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

1 John 5:13 (NIV)—“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

1 John 5:13 (KJV)—“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life . . .”

Then discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

**▷ DISCUSSION**

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Take time to explore the subject of salvation and assurance in Christ. This is the focus of this week's study. Help the group clarify and remember the purpose of this week's study. The following questions will help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Read Ephesians 2:4-9 — What does this passage tell us about salvation and how God sees us?
2. What does the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10 tell us about how Jesus dealt with sinners?
3. Read Psalm 32:1-8. What does this passage tell us about God's forgiveness?
4. Read 1 John 1:5-9 and 2:12. What is the basis or foundation for God's forgiveness?
5. Discuss how forgiveness changes our lives.
6. In light of John 3:1-17 and 1 John 5:11-13, what level of assurance of salvation can be ours? What impact can this assurance have on how we live?
7. Share with the group one or two things you would like to accomplish in your journey with God during the next week.

**▷ CLOSING PRAYER**

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Encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.

## WEEK 3 • SUGGESTED GROUP PROCESS IT'S ALL ABOUT SURRENDER

### ▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To understand the lordship of Jesus Christ.
2. To choose to accept His lordship.
3. To begin the process of integrating His lordship into the way we live our daily lives.

### ▷ OPENING PRAYER

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

### ▷ SHARING & PRAYER

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

### ▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW

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Review the memory verses for the last seven days, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this week's group study are:

1 John 5:13 (NIV)—“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

1 John 5:13 (KJV)—“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life ...”

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)—“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV)—“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

## WEEK 3 • SUGGESTED GROUP PROCESS IT'S ALL ABOUT SURRENDER

### ▷ DISCUSSION

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Take time to explore the subject of Jesus as Lord. Help the group explore and clarify the purpose of this week's study. The following questions are designed to help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Read John 1:1-14—How does Christ's role as Creator give Him the right to be Lord of our lives? What are the implications of His power as Creator? How can He make a difference in our lives?
2. Read John 13:1-17—How does the picture of Jesus the Lord as servant impact on how we should think and act as His disciples?
3. Read Philippians 4:10-19—What confidence can be ours with Jesus as Lord, and why?
4. Read John 20:24-29—What is the difference between doubt and wanting to experience Jesus first-hand?
5. Read Luke 6:1-10—What is the relationship between the Sabbath and Jesus as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier? How does this make Him Lord of the Sabbath and what are the implications for our daily lives?
6. Read and discuss Romans 13:11-14—How can we clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ?

### ▷ CLOSING PRAYER

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Once again, encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.



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**▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK**

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The objectives for this week's study and discussion are:

1. To understand the biblical reality that Christ wants to dwell in us.
2. To understand how to accept Jesus as living within us.
3. To explore the implications of an intimate union with God.

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**▷ OPENING PRAYER**

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

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**▷ SHARING & PRAYER**

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

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**▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW**

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Review the memory verses for the last seven days, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this week's group study are:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 (NIV)—“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

Ezekiel 36:26-27 (KJV)—“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)—“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”

2 Peter 1:3-4 (KJV)—“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

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▷ DISCUSSION

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Our focus for discussion this week is the reality of the indwelling Christ. Help the group explore and clarify the purpose of this week's study. The following questions are designed to help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Reflect on the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-41. Who are we most like? How does this impact on our spiritual journey?
2. Read John 14:16-21. What are the key elements of this promise? What does verse 20 tell us about intimacy with God?
3. Read Isaiah 43:1-2. Explore what this promise can mean for us. Does it mean that we will never have problems or disasters? What else could this mean for us?
4. Read and reflect on 2 Peter 1:3-4. What are the implications of this promise?
5. Read Ephesians 2:4-10. What do these verses tell us about obedience or "good works?"
6. Read Ephesians 3:16-21. What part of this passage speaks to you the most and why?

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▷ CLOSING PRAYER

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Once again, encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.

**▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK**

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To understand the power of witnessing.
2. To recognize that we are each called to the ministry of sharing Jesus with others.
3. To commit ourselves to share when and when God provides the opportunity.
4. To prayerfully identify those God brings to us to learn about Jesus.

**▷ OPENING PRAYER**

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

**▷ SHARING & PRAYER**

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

**▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW**

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Review the memory verses for the last seven days, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this period are:

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)—“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (NIV)—“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”

Then discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

**▷ DISCUSSION**

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Our focus for discussion this week is on our ministry as disciples who have experienced salvation. Christ invites us to share the good news with those around us. Help the group explore and clarify the purpose of this week's study. The following questions are designed to help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Reflect on Luke 10:1-4—Who has the responsibility for providing workers for the spiritual harvest?
2. Reflect on the story of the first disciples in John 1:35-50—What was the power of Andrew's and Philip's invitation? How was this invitation better than some argument?
3. Read 1 Peter 3:15-16. What is the "reason for our hope?"
4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. What do the phrases "ministry of reconciliation" and "ministry of reconciliation" mean to you?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 9:16-23. What key principles from this passage can help shape our ministries?

**▷ CLOSING PRAYER**

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Once again, encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.

**▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK**

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To explore what it means to be the Church—the Body of Christ.
2. To discover our new identity as members of the Body of Christ.
3. To identify biblical ways of functioning as the Church.

**▷ OPENING PRAYER**

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

**▷ SHARING & PRAYER**

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

**▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW**

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Review the memory verses for the last seven days, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this period are:

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)—“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect . . .”

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV)—“Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?”

Then discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

**▷ DISCUSSION**

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Our focus for discussion this week is on being the Church of God as the Body of Christ. This is our new identity in Christ, and it can have a powerful impact on how we live. Help your group explore and clarify the purpose of this week's study. The following questions are designed to help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Reflect on 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16-17—What are the implications of being God's temple as a church?
2. Reflect on 1 Corinthians 12:12-27—How can we put these principles to work in how we live as God's Church?
3. Read Ephesians 4:11-16. What points from this passage inspire you with God's vision for His Church?
4. Read Romans 12:9-18. What are the key points in this passage about relationships within God's Church?
5. Read Mark 10:35-44. What key principles from this passage can help shape our relationships?

**▷ CLOSING PRAYER**

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Once again, encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.

## WEEK 7 • SUGGESTED GROUP PROCESS WHY NOT MAKE IT A LIFESTYLE?

### ▷ OBJECTIVES FOR WEEK

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The objectives for this week's study are:

1. To understand that each one of us is a minister.
2. To understand the concept of spiritual gifts.
3. To accept our calling to ministry.
4. To begin exploring our calling to ministry and identifying our spiritual gifts for ministry.

### ▷ OPENING PRAYER

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Once again you will want to open the group study and discussion session with prayer. You may want to ask one of the group members to have the opening prayer. In order to avoid embarrassment, it would be good to plan ahead and ask the person if he or she is willing to lead the group in prayer.

### ▷ SHARING & PRAYER

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Invite the group members to spend a few minutes in sharing with each other the highlights of the week, and any prayer requests they might have. Then spend a few minutes praying for those requests. This can be done as an entire group, or by teaming up in two's or three's.

### ▷ MEMORY VERSE REVIEW

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Review the memory verses for the last seven days, and discuss the meaning of each verse. Invite the members to share which of the verses spoke most directly to them, and how. The two verses for this period are:

Galatians 6:1-2 (NIV)—“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)—“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Then discuss any possible application to our lives as individuals and as a church family. Look especially for points that fit in with the objectives for this week's study.

## WEEK 7 • SUGGESTED GROUP PROCESS WHY NOT MAKE IT A LIFESTYLE?

### ▷ DISCUSSION

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Our focus for discussion this week is on the fact that God calls each of us to ministry. He also equips each of us for ministry. Help your group explore and clarify the purpose of this week's study. The following questions are designed to help you in this discussion. Remember, you do not have to complete all the questions below if your time does not allow. What is important is that the group members process what they have been learning in their daily study, and explore how to apply these things to their lives. You may choose from any or all of these questions.

1. Reflect on 1 Peter 2:4-10. What does it mean to be part of a priesthood? In what way are we priests?
2. Reflect on John 14:1-14. How can we do "greater things" than Jesus did during His ministry?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12. What can we learn from this chapter about our spiritual gifts?
4. Read Ephesians 4:7-16. What do these verses tell us about the pastor's role in comparison with the role of each member?
5. Reflect on Matthew 28:16-20. What can we learn from these verses about our ministries?
6. Reflect on Ephesians 3:14-21. What does it mean to comprehend God's love? What does it mean to be filled to "the fullness of God?"

### ▷ CLOSING PRAYER

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Once again, encourage the group members to follow through on their commitment of daily time with God. Then close your group session with prayer.