

THE  
**Discipleship**  
PROCESS



THE Discipleship PROCESS

# STEP ONE



**THE BIBLE PROJECT**  
8 Week Course Content

# Step One

## THE BIBLE PROJECT

The Bible is the sacred text of Christianity, Without it, we would lose our history and be uncertain about the future God has for us, It is beautifully crafted as a unified story that leads to Jesus, our Rescuer, Knowing the Bible and its place in our lives is the essential and first step in becoming a disciple of Jesus.

The first four weeks will be an overview of the Bible resources by the Bible Project's "How to Read the Bible" which can be found on our website under discipleship resources. The second four weeks will focus on four sections of the Gospels that easily lend themselves to personal study and group discussion.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

**Week One** :: Bible Project Videos (*Intro to the Bible 1-4*)

**Week Two** :: Bible Project Videos (*How to Read the Biblical Narrative 5-10*)

**Week Three** :: Bible Project Videos (*How to Read Biblical Poetry 11-16*)

**Week Four** :: Bible Project Videos (*How to Read Biblical Prose 17-19*)

**Week Five** :: The Woman Caught in Adultery (*grace*)

**Week Six** :: The Parable of the Good Samaritan (*mercy*)

**Week Seven** :: The Parable of The Prodigal Son (*provision*)

**Week Eight** :: Peter and Jesus on the beach (*restoration*)

## Week One

# Basic Overview Intro to the Bible

To prepare for each week's class, we ask that you watch a few short videos provided by The BibleProject. These videos do not exceed 7+ minutes. As you watch, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

## 1 | What is the Bible?

This is episode 1 of an ongoing series that explores the origins, content, and purpose of the Bible. Here you'll be introduced to a condensed history of how the Bible came into existence, and the different forms of the Bible in the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christian

### Discussion Questions

1. How does the Bible address not just the people of Israel, but all of humanity?

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2. How would you describe the three, distinct sections of the Jewish Bible?

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3. What was the main motivation for putting together this collection of writings?

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4. How is Jesus critical to the continuation of the story of the Jewish Bible?

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5. What types of writings make up the New Testament?

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6. Why do Protestants read a Bible that only contains the Old and New Testaments?

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## 2 | The Story of the Bible

Episode 2 summarizes the overall story of the Bible as a series of crossroad decisions. All humanity, followed by the Israelites, redefine good and evil and end up in Babylon. They are followed by Jesus, who takes a different path that opens up the way to a new creation.

### Discussion Questions

1. What specific power does the book of Genesis communicate about God?

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2. What does the Bible mean when it says we are made in God's image?

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3. What significance does Babylon have in the overall story of the Bible?

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4. In comparison to humanity, what was different about Jesus?

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5. What is the ultimate benefit of choosing the way, the tree of Jesus?

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6. Why did the Apostles (those who knew Jesus personally) write their letters?

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### 3 | Literary Styles

Episode 3 shows how reading the Bible wisely requires that we learn about the ancient literary styles used by the biblical authors. These writers expressed their ideas and claims through a variety of different types of literature, and this video will explore why it's important to tell them apart so we can hear their message on their terms.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to understand what literary styles the Bible contains?

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2. Stories (narrative) make up 43% of the Bible. Why do you think this style is such a large part of God's communication strategy?

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3. One out of every three chapters in the Bible is poetry. Why would God include this genre that many of us do not spend much time reading otherwise?

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4. What are the two, major goals of discourse in the Bible?

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5. What do you believe God is trying to communicate with the overall percentages of literature style found in the Bible?

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6. Can you point to your favorite literary style in the Bible?

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## 4 | Jewish Meditation Literature

Episode 4 explores the unique literary style of the Bible that is meant to draw its readers into a lifelong journey of reading and meditation. The Bible is designed as a multi-layered work, offering new levels of insight as you re-read it and allowing each part to help you better understand.

### Discussion Questions

1. The Bible is definitively Jewish in its makeup. In what ways can this make reading the Bible confusing for modern readers?

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2. The Biblical authors believed taking the risk of readers imposing their own culture on the writings was worth it. Why?

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3. How is the Bible communal?

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4. Who is the ideal Bible reader?

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5. How is the Bible intended to feel personal?

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6. What is one of the main benefits of meditating on the Bible?

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## Week Two

# How to Read the Biblical Narrative

To prepare for each week's class, we ask that you watch a few short videos provided by The BibleProject. These videos do not exceed 7+ minutes. As you watch, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

## 1 | Plot in the Biblical Narrative

An important part of reading biblical narratives is learning how to understand the nature of “the plot,” and how stories are arranged into a pattern of conflict and resolution. In this video we'll see how ignoring the sequence of the plot can lead to a distorted interpretation of biblical stories. We'll also explore how grasping the multi-layered nature of the narrative can help you see the unified story that leads to Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to understand each scene of a narrative in the context of the larger plot line?

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2. How does this idea inform a proper understanding of the story of Gideon?

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3. Overall, what's your understanding of the main point in Gideon's story?

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4. Which two parts of the plot help us to get closer to understanding what the Biblical author intended with their narratives?

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5. Who serves as the resolution for the larger plot line of the Bible?

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## 2 | Character in the Biblical Narrative

Most of us think of characters in the Bible as either sinners or saints, good or bad. At least that's how Bible stories are presented to children. In this video, we'll explore the ways biblical authors present characters as more complex and morally compromised than we usually imagine.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why do good stories have characters with relatable struggles?

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2. What main benefit do we receive from observing Biblical characters?

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3. How do we know the Bible is not just a book filled with children's stories?

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4. What important step is usually recorded in the life of the character?

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5. What should God's commitment to these flawed people show us about him?

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### 3 | Setting in Biblical Narrative

Every story has to take place somewhere, and very often locations have a special meaning or significance, evoked by events that already took place there. In this video, we explore how biblical authors use settings in the narrative to meet the reader's expectations, or mess with them. Paying attention to locations and time in biblical stories unlocks deeper layers of meaning.

#### Discussion Questions

1. How do the Biblical authors use setting to prepare the reader for what's coming?

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2. How does the Old Testament use this principle with Egypt?

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3. Is setting always a place on a map?

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4. What role do time and numbers play in a Biblical setting?

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5. How does the number 40 serve the purposes of highlighting the mission of Jesus?

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## 4 | Design Patterns in Biblical Narrative

Design patterns are one of the key ways the biblical authors have unified the storyline of the Bible. Individual stories across the Old and New Testaments have been coordinated through repeated words and parallel themes. These patterns highlight core themes of the biblical story and show how it all leads to Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

1. How would you define design patterns as used in the Bible?

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2. What is the best way to pick up on these patterns while reading the Bible?

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3. In light of this temptation pattern throughout the Bible, Jesus shows himself as unique. How?

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4. How does understanding Biblical design patterns infuse the Christian tradition of baptism with meaning?

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5. In the discovery of these patterns, what is the most important question a reader should ask?

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## 5 | The Gospel

The New Testament contains four ancient biographies of Jesus of Nazareth, and altogether they are called “the Gospel.” Each one tells the story as an announcement of good news that the crucified and risen Jesus is the true ruler of the nations. In this video, we explore why these accounts were written and how you can read them with greater insight.

### Discussion Questions

1. Is there a better way to read the Gospels, the ancient biographies of Jesus, than just knowing the details of individual stories?

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2. Why, knowing what we have learned so far, is the definition of the word GOSPEL so important?

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3. Sometimes, the Biblical authors connect Jesus to the rest of the Bible subtly. Why would they do this?

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4. Why was it necessary to include four biographies of Jesus in the Bible? Why not just one?

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5. Is knowledge about the Kingdom of God and Jesus as King the only goal of the Gospel writers?

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## 6 | The Parables of Jesus

Jesus of Nazareth was a master storyteller, and many of his most well-known teachings were told as parables. But these stories were designed to do much more than simply “teach.” Jesus said the parables were designed to both reveal and conceal his message about the arrival of God’s Kingdom. In this video, we explore the main themes in Jesus’ parables and ask why he used them as the primary vehicle for his message.

### Discussion Questions

1. Can you give a Biblical definition of the word parable?

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2. Why did Jesus, so often, use this form of storytelling?

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3. What separates Jesus' parables from that of other teachers in history that used short stories to make particular points? Why was it necessary to include four biographies of Jesus in the Bible? Why not just one?

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4. Why did Jesus cloak his very important message in this way?

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5. How would you explain the connection between Jesus' parables and a room full of treasure?

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## Week Three

# How to Read Biblical Poetry

To prepare for each week's class, we ask that you watch a few short videos provided by The BibleProject. These videos do not exceed 7+ minutes. As you watch, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

## 1 | The Art of Biblical Poetry

Did you know that a third of the Bible is ancient Israelite poetry? Poetry is a rich and artistic form of human communication, but often the most difficult to read. In this video we'll explore the unique characteristics of biblical poetry, so you can discover its beauty and power for yourself.

### Discussion Questions

1. Throughout the bible, where can you find ancient poetry?

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2. How does the biblical narrative include poetry when telling a story?

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3. Why did the authors write a story and a poem about the same exact thing?

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4. What are the major differences in Poetry and Biblical Poetry?

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5. Define couplets and their purpose in biblical poetry:

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6. Name the 3 ways couplet lines are developed:

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## 2 | Poetic Metaphor

Understanding how metaphors are used in the Bible is an essential tool for reading biblical poetry. Anytime someone describes one thing to describe another thing, they are using metaphorical thinking, whether they realize it or not. Metaphors are everywhere in the Bible and in our everyday speech. In this video, we'll explore this crucial aspect of biblical language.

### Discussion Questions

1. How does the Bible Project define Poetic Metaphor?

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2. Why do we need to remember that these biblical metaphors were written by people who lived in an ancient culture?

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3. Describe the relationship between biblical narratives and biblical metaphors:

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### 3 | The Book of the Psalms

The book of Psalms is the largest collection of poetry in the Bible. In this video, we'll explore the design, shape, and main themes of this marvelous book, which was crafted to be read from beginning to end. The Psalms are an invitation to a literary temple where you can meet with God and hear the entire biblical storyline retold in poetic form.

#### Discussion Questions

1. What differentiates the book of Psalms from other books of poetry?

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2. What is a literary temple?

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3. What is the purpose of a temple?

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4. The Babylonians invaded Jerusalem, plundered and burned the temple, and took many Israelites into exile. If the temple was destroyed, where did the exiles go to meet with God?

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5. Describe how Psalms design allows its readers to meet with God and hear the entire biblical story poetically:

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6. List the sections and main themes that the Psalms covers below:

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7. How are David's poems in Psalms so relatable to its readers today?

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## 4 | The Prophets

The books of the Old Testament prophets are packed with dense poetry and wild imagery. If you've tried to read them, odds are you were both intrigued and confused. In this video, we'll learn how these prophetic books contribute to the storyline of the Bible, and why it's worth learning how to read them more attentively.

### Discussion Questions

1. Describe biblical prophets:

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2. What were the prophets' roles and how did they enforce them?

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3. Who arranged the books of the prophets, and why are they important in our lives today?

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## 5 | The Books of Solomon

The wisest king of Israel, King Solomon, is associated with three books of the Bible: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Each book offers a unique perspective on how humans can rule with wisdom and the fear of the Lord. In this video, we briefly explore how the message of each book fits into the overall story of the Bible.

### Discussion Questions

1. To appreciate the story of King Solomon, we have to go back to the Garden of Eden where God created humanity- Adam & Eve. As we know, Adam & Eve chose their own wisdom over God's wisdom, which created division not only in their intimacy with each other and God, but throughout the world. How was Solomon different from Adam and Eve, and the leaders that came after them?

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2. When we read the books of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs) we are invited to gain wisdom from his success and failures. Briefly summarize what each book teaches us, and what we can learn from Solomon's wins and losses:

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## 6 | Apocalyptic Literature

It's the apocalypse! But what exactly does that mean? The Bible is filled with dreams and visions about human history coming to a climax, and they're usually packed with intense imagery and strange symbols. In this video, we'll explore the meaning of the word "apocalypse" in the Bible, and we'll learn some basic steps for reading this literature with more wisdom and insight.

### Discussion Questions

1. Define Apocalypse:

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2. Apocalyptic literature is written in a poetic, imaginative style, and it's packed with symbolism. How can we know what these symbols mean?

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3. The last book of the Bible, The Revelation, is entirely an apocalypse. It begins with John the visionary transported to God's throne room where he sees the risen Jesus as the exalted king of the world.

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4. In The Revelation there is tons of cosmic destruction. Describe the design pattern used:

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5. How does such a destructive book end in a message of hope?

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6. How are David's poems in Psalms so relatable to its readers today?

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## Week Four

# How to Read Bible Prose Discourse

To prepare for each week's class, we ask that you watch a few short videos provided by The BibleProject. These videos do not exceed 7+ minutes. As you watch, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

### 1 | Biblical Law

Have you ever wondered why there are so many ancient biblical laws in the first books of the Bible? What are modern readers supposed to do with them, and why are some of them so odd? In this video, we explore why the laws were given to ancient Israel and how they fit into the overall storyline of the Bible.

#### Discussion Questions

1. At their base, what are the ancient laws given to Israel intended to do?

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2. According to the storyline of the Bible, what are the predictable results of ignoring the laws of God?

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3. How does the priority God places on justice impact the law?

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4. How does the concept of sacred time and the use of the number 7 impact your understanding of the Sabbath?

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5. What important teaching did Jesus give connected with the law?

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## 2 | New Testament Letters: Historical Context

In the New Testament, there are 21 letters, or epistles, written by early Christian leaders to communities of Jesus' followers in the ancient Roman world. A wise reading of these letters involves learning about their historical context. Who were the letters written to, where did the recipients live, and what prompted sending the letter? In this video, we explore the different layers of historical context with these letters, so that we can better understand the wisdom they still have to offer

### Discussion Questions

1. Who were the new testament letters written to and by who?

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2. What are the different levels of context we need to understand when reading these letters?

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3. What prompted the authors to send letters to each participant?

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4. If these letters were specific to ancient churches, then what should we get out of it?

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### 3 | New Testament Letters: Literary Context

In the New Testament, there are 21 letters written by early Christian leaders to communities of Jesus' followers in the ancient Roman world. These letters are rich with theology and guidance for what it means to be a community of Jesus followers, but they can also be dense and hard to understand. In this video we'll explore the literary style of ancient letter writing and show you how to trace the core ideas from a letter's beginning all the way to its end.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Who wrote the new testament letters?

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2. Describe how each letter is crafted, then written down and how the reader is intended to recite them:

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3. Why is the organization of the letter important?

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## Week Five

# The Woman Caught in Adultery

### John 8:1-11 | The Grace of God

As you read through John 8:1-11, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

### Discussion Questions

1. What clues related to setting are given to the reader from the opening of the story?

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2. How does the reference to the Law of Moses invite you to a deeper understanding of what the author is trying to communicate?

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3. Why, as you engage your imagination over this story, do you believe Jesus took time before he answered the accusers?

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4. What does Jesus' response to the men communicate to us?

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5. In a powerful moment, Jesus addresses the woman eye to eye. Why did Jesus ask her a question he already knew the answer to?

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6. How do you believe this experience, and the way Jesus handled it, impacted the religious accusers?

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7. Write two, main takeaways you have from your time of study over this passage.

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## Week Six

# The Parable of the Good Samaritan

### Luke 10:29-37 | The Mercy of God

As you read through Luke 10:29-37, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

### Discussion Questions

1. The Bible takes special care to give us the motivation of the lawyer, while asking his question of Jesus. Why?

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2. What is the significance of the road where this story predominantly takes place?

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3. How does the lack of compassion from the first two men call out an emotional response from you as the reader?

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4. Assuming a largely Jewish audience, why did Jesus name the nationality of the one man who did help?

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5. This parable is a call to action based on corrective instruction. In what ways do the Good Samaritan's actions show us the personally sacrificial nature of compassion?

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6. How, in your own opinion, do you believe the Innkeeper was able to trust the word of the Good Samaritan in regard to future payment?

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7. How does Jesus' final instruction remind you of last week's study on the woman caught in adultery?

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## Week Seven

# The Parable of The Prodigal Son

### Luke 15:11-32 | The Provision of God

As you read through Luke 15:11-32, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

### Discussion Questions

1. Jesus places conflict in the first moments of this story. Why are the actions of the younger son so shocking?

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2. When Jesus says that the son came to his senses, what does he mean?

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3. What emotional response do you have to the fact that the father was, quite obviously, looking over the horizon for his wayward son?

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4. Have you ever rehearsed what you were going to say to God? What does the father's reaction to the son's speech show us about the character of God?

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5. The Biblical theme of lost and found shows up quite often. Why do you think it is included here?

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6. How does our judgment of how God treats others only end up costing us in the long run?

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7. Which brother are you?

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# Week Eight

# Peter and Jesus on the Beach

## John 21:1-20 | The Restoration of God

As you read through John 21:1-20, be mindful of the following three questions below.

- **What stood out to you most?**
- **What is something new you learned?**
- **Did new questions come to mind while watching the videos?**

Please answer the following discussion questions prior to class.

### Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe that God's supernatural ability was behind the lack of results when the disciples went fishing?

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2. Why is Jesus' instruction of the casting of the net so important?

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3. Slow down and imagine what must have been in Peter's mind to cause him to swim the 100 yards to Jesus. Why do you think he was so eager?

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4. How do the actions of Jesus on the beach that day give us a template for how to deal with people after their points of failure?

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5. Where else do fish and bread show up in the Gospels?

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6. Never one to shy away from the difficult, Jesus gives Peter a foreshadowing of his death. What do you think motivated Jesus to do this?

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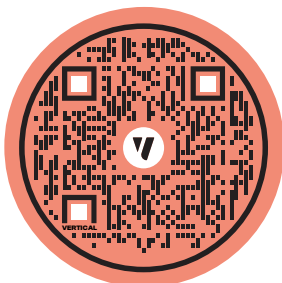
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7. If you could place an emotion on what Jesus sounded like with his final instructions to Peter, "Follow me," what would it be?

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**Congrats, you made it through Step One!**

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What's Next?

SIGN UP FOR

# STEP TWO



Our story has a big impact on how we view God and the world around us. Without a road map to discover how what's happened to us has affected us, it is nearly impossible to find authentic connection with God. Knowing ourselves is the second vital component of establishing trust in the one who made us.



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