

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

How to Not Lose Heart

GREAT CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE

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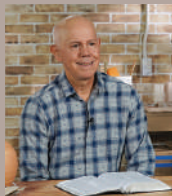


- Session 1: Your Attitude Toward Others
- Session 2: Your Attitude Toward Yourself
- Session 3: Your Attitude Toward God
- Session 4: The Secret of Endurance

Great Chapters of the Bible, a video-based small group series, takes you on a verse-by-verse study through a life-changing passage from God's Word.

Each volume of this series was designed to bring God's wisdom to life in vivid detail. By studying one chapter over several weeks, you will explore Scripture's rich, life-changing truths in an especially meaningful way.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR: We are all tempted to lose heart at times. Even Jesus talks about having a troubled heart before he went to the cross (John 12: 27). 2 Corinthians 4 is honest about the emotions we face in this struggle and encourages us to not lose heart in the midst of the pressures and problems that are a part of all of our lives. In this study, your group will have the opportunity to encourage each other as you discuss God's direction for not losing heart in our attitude toward others, ourselves, and God—and how endurance is key to living as Jesus did.



Tom Holladay

TAUGHT by TOM HOLLADAY

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

How to Not Lose Heart

TAUGHT by TOM HOLLADAY

A four-session, video-based study for small groups



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2CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

How to Not Lose Heart

TAUGHT by TOM HOLLADAY

A four-session, video-based study for small groups

Great Chapters of the Bible

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR: How to Not Lose Heart

A Small Group Study Guide

Edition 1.0

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR **STUDY GUIDE**

Here is a brief explanation of the features of this study guide.

CHECKING IN: You will open each meeting with an opportunity for everyone to check in with each other about how you are doing with the weekly assignments. Accountability is a key to success in this study!

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

KEY VERSE: Each week you will find a key verse or Scripture passage for your group to read together. If someone in the group has a different translation, ask that person to read it aloud so the group can get a bigger picture of the meaning of the passage.

VIDEO LESSON OUTLINE: There is a video lesson for the group to watch together each week. Fill in the blanks in the lesson outlines as you watch the video, and be sure to refer back to these outlines during your discussion time.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS: Each video segment is complemented by several questions for group discussion. Please don't feel pressured to discuss every single question. There is no reason to rush through the answers. Give group members ample opportunity to share their thoughts. If you don't get through all of the discussion questions, that's okay.

LIVING ON PURPOSE: In his book *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren identifies God's five purposes for our lives. The purposes are worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism. We will focus on one of these purposes in each lesson and discuss how they relate to the subject of the study. This section is very important, so please be sure to set aside time.

PRAYER DIRECTION: At the end of each session you will find suggestions for your group prayer time. Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of small group life. Please don't take it for granted.

A TIP FOR THE HOST

The study guide material is meant to be your servant, not your master. The point is not to race through the sessions, but to take time to let God work in your lives. It is not necessary to “go around the circle” before you move on to the next question. Give people the freedom to speak, but don’t insist on it or make it mandatory. Your group will enjoy deeper, more open sharing and discussion if people don’t feel pressured to speak.





HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO CURRICULUM

Follow these simple steps for a successful small group meeting:

- Open your group meeting by using the **Checking In** sections of your study guide.
- Have someone in the group read the **Key Verse** aloud.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

- Watch the video lesson together and follow along while filling in the blanks in the accompanying **Video Lesson Outline**. Each video is about 15 minutes long.
- Complete the rest of the discussion materials for each session. Be sure to review the **Living on Purpose** section that discusses how God's five purposes for our lives relate to the subject of the study. Commit to fulfilling any assignments before your next session.
- Close your time together by reviewing the **Prayer Direction** suggestions that follow.

SESSION 1:
YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS
2 CORINTHIANS 4:1–6

CHECKING IN

1. If you are meeting for the first time as a group, this is a great time to get to know each other. You might share where you were born, some info about your family, and something that you love to do.

If you've been meeting for a while as a group, the start of a new study is a great time to catch up on how God is at work in each of your lives.

2. What are you hoping to get out of a study about how to not lose heart?

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

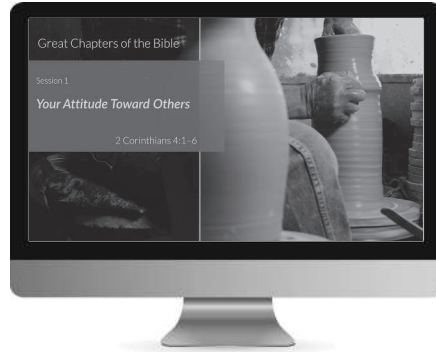
2 Corinthians 4:1-6

KEY VERSE

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. VERSE 1

VIDEO LESSON OUTLINE

Watch the video lesson now, and take notes in your study guide. Refer back to your notes during group discussion.



YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS

To not lose heart, you must demonstrate faith with your attitude toward others, toward yourself, and toward God.

Two Words to Build Your Life On

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. VERSE 1

1. Build your life on _____.

"... we have this ministry..." VERSE 1

"Your attitude must be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give my life as a ransom for many." MATTHEW 20:28 (TLB)

SESSION 1: Your Attitude Toward Others

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

2. Build your ministry on God's _____ .

"... since through God's mercy..." VERSE 1

MERCY:

God's _____

Three Blessings of a Life Well Built

1. You find strength to _____ .

We do not lose heart. VERSE 1

2. You don't have to _____ .

Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. VERSE 2

3. You keep the focus on _____ .

For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

VERSE 5

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. What are some gifts you have received because you chose to serve others? *Verse 1*
2. How has God's mercy kept you encouraged when it became difficult to serve others? *Verse 1*
3. Describe the freedom that you've experienced—or hope to experience—when you stop pretending in a certain area of your life. *Verse 2*
4. What helps you to keep the focus on Jesus rather than on yourself? *Verse 5*

LIVING ON PURPOSE

EVANGELISM , DISCIPLESHIP, FELLOWSHIP, MINISTRY, & WORSHIP

This week we focus on the purpose of ministry.

Paul talks about “having this ministry.” Take some time this week to think about the specific ministry that God has given you, and write it out in a few sentences. The ministry God has called you to could seem smaller or larger than you imagined. Remember that all ministry is significant to God!

PRAYER DIRECTION

Pray that Jesus will give each person in your group the wisdom to see the specific ministry that God has for them, the faith to choose serving others, and the strength to live a life of ministry.

Pray for each other's requests.

SESSION 2:
YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD YOURSELF
2 CORINTHIANS 4:7–12

CHECKING IN

1. Take some time to share with each other what you identified this past week as the specific ministry God has given to you.
2. Remind each other that none of us are alone by taking a few moments to share some of the struggles you have with yourself, which cause you to lose heart.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

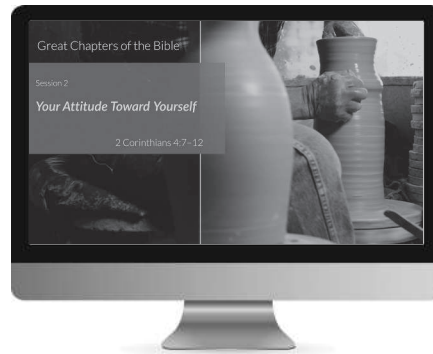
KEY VERSE

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

VERSE 7

VIDEO LESSON OUTLINE

Watch the video lesson now, and take notes in your study guide. Refer back to your notes during group discussion.



YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD YOURSELF

Sometimes we think too much of ourselves—and lose heart. Sometimes we think too little of ourselves—and lose heart. How do we think rightly about ourselves so that we don't lose heart?

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

VERSE 7

SESSION 2: Your Attitude Toward Yourself

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

Three Truths to Accept about Yourself

1. You are _____ .
2. You contain _____ .

Haven't you yet learned that your body is the home of the Holy Spirit God gave you, and that he lives within you? 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 (TLB)

3. You show _____ .

ALL-SURPASSING:

Life As a Jar of Clay

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. VERSES 8-9

We are sore pressed at every point, but not hemmed in; we are at our wit's end, but never at our hope's end; we are persecuted by men, but never abandoned by God; we are knocked down, but not knocked out. VERSES 8-9 (BARCLAY)¹

¹ William Barclay's "Commentary on 2 Corinthians 4:4" "William Barclay's Daily Study Bible," <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/2-corinthians-4.html>. 1956-1959. These files are public domain. Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. Used by Permission.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

THE JAR WILL BE:

Pressured	—	_____
Perplexed	—	_____
Persecuted	—	_____
Struck down	—	_____

THIS TREASURE PROMISES:

You will be pressured,
you cannot be _____ .

You will be perplexed,
you need not be _____ .

You will be persecuted,
you will never be _____ .

You will be struck down,
you cannot be _____ .

SESSION 2: Your Attitude Toward Yourself

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

The secret to living a “jar of clay” life: _____

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. VERSES 10–12

And this is the secret: Christ in your hearts is your only hope of glory. COLOSSIANS 1:27 (TLB)

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. GALATIANS 2:20 (NIV)

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. How do you see the picture of a “jar of clay” reflected in your life? *Verse 7*
2. What have you found best reminds you that there is a treasure in the jar of clay? *Verse 7*
3. Paul was honest about his greatest struggles. How have you seen God’s faithfulness through your greatest struggles? *Verses 8–9*
4. How does the truth of the cross provide a different perspective on your circumstances? How does it offer you a different perspective on yourself? *Verses 10–12*

LIVING ON PURPOSE

EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, FELLOWSHIP, MINISTRY, & WORSHIP

This week we focus on the purpose of worship.

As your group wraps up this week, read the account of Jesus’ death for us on the cross from Matthew 27:27–56. You might go around the group and each read four or five verses.

If possible, take Communion together. (For guidance, see **Celebrating the Lord’s Supper with Your Small Group** in the Small Group Resources section on page 47.)

PRAYER DIRECTION

Praise Jesus together for his death for each of you on the cross.

SESSION 3:
YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD
2 CORINTHIANS 4:3–6, 13–15

CHECKING IN

1. Did the picture of a “treasure in a jar of clay” help you in any way this last week?
2. What are some of the questions you find yourself asking God in those times that you lose heart?

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:3-6, 13-15

KEY VERSE

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

VERSES 5-6

VIDEO LESSON OUTLINE

Watch the video lesson now, and take notes in your study guide. Refer back to your notes during group discussion.



YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD

1. Trust _____
_____.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

VERSES 3-6

SESSION 3: Your Attitude Toward God

2 Corinthians 4:3-6, 13-15

- This world is _____ .
- Jesus is _____ .
- You have _____ .

Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

1 JOHN 4:4 (NASB)

2. Know _____ .

KNOW:

God gives you _____ .

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. VERSES 13-14

THREE TYPES OF ASSURANCE:

_____ Assurance
_____ Assurance
_____ Assurance

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:3-6, 13-15

3. Overflow _____ _____ .

All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. VERSE 15

To start looking for God to do something _____ , thank him for what he's _____ .

Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:

*"Give thanks to the LORD,
for his love endures forever."*

As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. 2 CHRONICLES 20:20-22

"The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." 1 SAMUEL 17:37

SESSION 3: Your Attitude Toward God

2 Corinthians 4:3-6, 13-15

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. Why do you feel it is important that we, as believers, are honest about the darkness that is in the world? *Verse 3*
2. Let one or two in the group share their testimony of how the light of Jesus came into their lives—when they were saved and began their walk with Jesus. *Verse 6*
3. What type of assurance do you feel you have of God's love: false, conditional, or eternal? How could this group help you in strengthening or affirming your assurance? *Verses 13-14*
4. Is there a specific decision, circumstance, or perspective in your life in which you need to let thanksgiving lead the way? *Verse 15*

LIVING ON PURPOSE

EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, FELLOWSHIP, MINISTRY, & WORSHIP

This week we focus on the purpose of discipleship.

During this next week, do a personal thanksgiving journal. On one page, simply list some of what you are thankful for. Add two or three items each day. On a second page, make two columns. In the first column, write down some prayer requests you have. In the second column, write down your thanks for God's goodness as he answers those requests. Remember that God's answer can sometimes be "no" or "wait."

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:3-6, 13-15

PRAYER DIRECTION

Pray that Jesus will strengthen the assurance of his love for each person in your group.

Pray for each other's requests.

If your group has more than eight members, consider breaking into subgroups of three or four for your prayer time. This will give each of you more opportunity to share and pray together.

SESSION 4:
THE SECRET OF ENDURANCE
2 CORINTHIANS 4:16–18

CHECKING IN

1. Talk about the experiences you had with keeping a thanksgiving journal this last week.
2. Talk together about people in your lives you have seen to be examples of endurance.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

KEY VERSE

Therefore we do not lose heart. VERSE 16

VIDEO LESSON OUTLINE

Watch the video lesson now, and take notes in your study guide. Refer back to your notes during group discussion.



THE SECRET OF ENDURANCE

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. VERSES 16-18

1. Stop looking to _____ .
Start living by _____ .

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. VERSE 16

SESSION 4: The Secret of Endurance

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

THE SELF-POWERED LIFE:

THE SPIRIT-POWERED LIFE:

“... renewed day by day.” VERSE 16

When our energy gives _____ we either give
_____ or give _____ .

2. Stop looking for a _____ life.

Start living a _____ life.

*For our light and momentary troubles are achieving
for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

VERSE 17

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

THE TROUBLE-FREE LIFE:

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” JOHN 16:33

THE GLORIOUS LIFE:

3. Stop looking at the _____ .

Start living for the _____ .

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. VERSE 18

SESSION 4: The Secret of Endurance

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

LOOKING AT THE SEEN:

LIVING FOR THE UNSEEN:

*Here's the
Secret . . .
always look for the
unseen
in the **seen**.*

*By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger;
he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.*

HEBREWS 11:27

*"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust
also in me."* JOHN 14:1 (NIV84)

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. How does the truth that we are being inwardly renewed day by day give you hope? *Verse 16*
2. How do you personally experience the difference between the self-powered life and the Spirit-powered life? *Verse 16*
3. How have you already seen some of the troubles you have faced begin to work “a weight of glory”? *Verse 17*
4. Is there a specific “unseen” truth that has helped you during those times when you were tempted to lose heart? *Verse 18*

LIVING ON PURPOSE

EVANGELISM , DISCIPLESHIP, FELLOWSHIP, MINISTRY, & WORSHIP

This week we focus on the purpose of evangelism.

We all have people around us who have lost heart. Think about someone you know who does not yet have a relationship with Jesus and has lost heart. Take a moment this week to call or write to encourage them, possibly with one of the truths we’ve talked about in this study. Remember, a personal testimony is always the most powerful witness. Share what God has been doing in your heart, praying that he will use it to encourage their heart.

PRAYER DIRECTION

Pray together for those friends and family who have lost heart, and ask God to give you a chance to share hope with them this week.

Pray for each other’s requests.

SMALLGROUPRESOURCES

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

HELPS FOR HOSTS TOP TEN IDEAS FOR NEW HOSTS

Congratulations! As the host of your small group, you have responded to the call to help shepherd Jesus' flock. Few other tasks in the family of God surpass the contribution you will be making. As you prepare to facilitate your group, whether it is for one session or for the entire series, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind.

Remember, you are not alone. God knows everything about you, and he knew you would be asked to facilitate your group. You may not feel ready; this is a common feeling all good hosts have! God promises, *"I will never leave you; I will never abandon you"* (Hebrews 13:5 NCV). Whether you are facilitating for one evening, several weeks, or a lifetime, you will be blessed as you serve.

1. **DON'T TRY TO DO IT ALONE.** Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy team. If you can enlist a co-host to help you shepherd the group, you will find your experience much richer. This is your chance to involve as many people as you can in building a healthy group. All you have to do is to ask people to help. You'll be surprised at the response.
2. **BE FRIENDLY AND BE YOURSELF.** God wants to use your unique gifts and temperament. Be sure to greet people at the door with a big smile—this can set the mood for the whole gathering. Remember, they are taking as big of a step by showing up for this study as you are hosting a small group! Don't try to do things exactly like another host; do them in a way that fits you. Admit when you don't have an answer and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it, and you'll sleep better at night.

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

3. **PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING AHEAD OF TIME.** Review the session and write down your responses to each question. Pay special attention to the **Living on Purpose** section that focuses on applying what you have learned in each lesson. This section will also help your group live what the Bible teaches, not just talk about it.
4. **PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP MEMBERS BY NAME.** Before your group arrives, take a few moments and pray for each member by name. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of each person in your group. Expect God to lead you to whomever he wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead.
5. **WHEN YOU ASK A QUESTION, BE PATIENT.** Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question. If silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple, "Thanks," or, "Great answer." Then ask, "How about somebody else?" or, "Would someone who hasn't shared like to add anything?" Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who aren't ready to say, pray, or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time. If someone in your group is a wallflower who sits silently through every session, consider talking to that person privately and encouraging them to participate. Let them know how important they are to you—that they are loved and appreciated, and that the group would value their input. Remember, still water often runs deep.

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

6. **PROVIDE TRANSITIONS BETWEEN QUESTIONS.** Ask if anyone would like to read the paragraph or Bible passage. Don't call on anyone, but ask for a volunteer, and then be patient until someone begins. Be sure to thank the person who reads aloud.
7. **BREAK INTO SMALLER GROUPS OCCASIONALLY.** With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they're learning, and ultimately get more out of their small group experience. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member.
8. **SMALL CIRCLES ARE ALSO HELPFUL DURING PRAYER TIME.** People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more time to actually pray. When you gather back with the whole group, you can have one person from each circle briefly update everyone on the prayer requests from their subgroups. The other great aspect of subgrouping is that it fosters leadership development. As you ask people in the group to facilitate discussion or to lead a prayer circle, it gives them a small leadership step that can build their confidence.
9. **ROTATE FACILITATORS OCCASIONALLY.** You may be perfectly capable of hosting each time, but you will help others grow in their faith and gifts if you give them opportunities to host the group.

10. **ONE FINAL CHALLENGE (FOR NEW OR FIRST-TIME HOSTS).** Before your first opportunity to lead, look up each of the six passages listed below. Read each one as a devotional exercise to help prepare you with a shepherd's heart. Trust us on this one. If you do this, you will be more than ready for your first meeting.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field." MATTHEW 9:36–38

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."
JOHN 10:14–15

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.
1 PETER 5:2–4

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER FOUR

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ. PHILIPPIANS 2:1–5

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. HEBREWS 10:23–25

But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us . . . For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7–8, 11–12

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW LONG WILL THIS GROUP MEET?

This study is four sessions long. We encourage your group to add an extra session for a celebration. In your final session, each group member may decide if he or she desires to continue on for another study. At that time, you may also want to do some informal evaluation, discuss your group guidelines, and decide which study you want to do next. We recommend you visit saddleback.com/watch for more video-based small group studies.

WHO IS THE HOST?

The host is the person who coordinates and facilitates your group meetings. In addition to a host, we encourage you to select one or more group members to lead your group discussions. Several other responsibilities can be rotated, including refreshments, prayer requests, worship, or keeping up with those who miss a meeting. Shared ownership in the group helps everyone grow.

WHERE DO WE FIND NEW GROUP MEMBERS?

Recruiting new members can be a challenge for groups, especially new groups with just a few people, or existing groups that lose a few people along the way. We encourage you to use the **Circles of Life** diagram on page 41 of this study guide to brainstorm a list of people from your workplace, church, school, neighborhood, family, and so on. Then pray for the people on each member's list. Allow each member to invite several people from their list. Some groups fear that newcomers will interrupt the intimacy that members have built over time. However, groups that welcome newcomers generally gain strength with the infusion of "new

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blood.” Remember, the next person you add just might become a friend for eternity. Logistically, groups find different ways to add members. Some groups remain permanently open, while others choose to open periodically, such as at the beginning or end of a study. If your group becomes too large for easy, face-to-face conversations, you can subgroup, forming a second discussion group in another room.

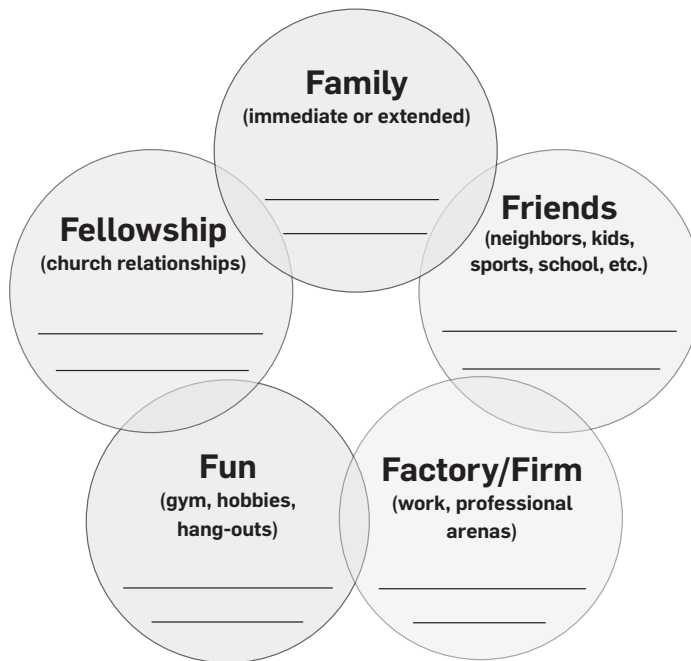
HOW DO WE HANDLE THE CHILDCARE NEEDS IN OUR GROUP?

Childcare needs must be handled very carefully. This is a sensitive issue. We suggest you seek creative solutions as a group. One common solution is to have the adults meet in the living room and share the cost of a babysitter (or two) who can be with the kids in another part of the house. Another popular option is to have one supervised home for the kids and a second home (close by) for the adults. If desired, the adults could rotate the responsibility of providing a lesson for the kids. This last option is great with school-age kids and can be a huge blessing to families.

CIRCLES OF LIFE SMALL GROUP CONNECTIONS

DISCOVER WHO YOU CAN CONNECT IN COMMUNITY

Use this chart to help carry out one of the values in the **Small Group Guidelines**, to “Welcome Newcomers.”



Follow this simple three-step process:

1. List one to two people in each circle.
2. Prayerfully select one person or couple from your list and tell your group about them.
3. Give them a call and invite them to your next meeting. Over fifty percent of those invited to a small group say, “Yes!”

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SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations, and commitments. Such guidelines will help you avoid unspoken agendas and unmet expectations. We recommend you discuss your guidelines during your meeting in order to lay the foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to modify anything that does not work for your group.

We agree to the following values:

CLEAR PURPOSE	To grow healthy spiritual lives by building a healthy small group community
GROUP ATTENDANCE	To give priority to the group meeting (call if I am absent or late)
SAFE ENVIRONMENT	To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)
BE CONFIDENTIAL	To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	To avoid gossip and to immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15–17
SPIRITUAL HEALTH	To give group members permission to speak into my life and help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

- LIMIT OUR FREEDOM** To limit our freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol during small group meetings or events so as to avoid causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble (1 Corinthians 8: 1–13; Romans 14:19–21)
- WELCOME NEWCOMERS** To invite friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers
- BUILD RELATIONSHIPS** To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly

OTHER _____

We have also discussed and agree on the following items:

CHILD CARE _____

STARTING TIME _____

ENDING TIME _____

If you haven't already done so, take a few minutes to fill out the **Small Group Calendar** on page 46.

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OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other’s requests for prayer. You can also make a note when God answers a prayer. Pray for each other’s requests. If you’re new to group prayer, it’s okay to pray silently or to pray by using just one sentence:

“God, please help _____ to _____.”

Date	Person	Prayer Request	Praise Report

SMALLGROUPRESOURCES

Date	Person	Prayer Request	Praise Report

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SMALL GROUP CALENDAR

Healthy groups share responsibilities and group ownership. It might take some time for this to develop. Shared ownership ensures that responsibility for the group doesn't fall to one person. Use the calendar to keep track of social events, mission projects, birthdays, or days off. Complete this calendar at your first or second meeting. Planning ahead will increase attendance and shared ownership.

Date	Lesson	Location	Facilitator	Snack/Meal
	SESSION 1			
	SESSION 2			
	SESSION 3			
	SESSION 4			

CELEBRATING **THE LORD'S SUPPER** WITH YOUR **SMALL GROUP**

Jesus never asked his disciples to remember his birth. But he did instruct them to remember his death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called ordinances) as reminders of his death. These two ordinances are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We call these ordinances, a term in Scripture. We don't call them sacraments. You may have heard baptism called a sacrament and the Lord's Supper called a sacrament. But the word "sacrament" can be misunderstood to mean "the ability to save." Baptism doesn't save you and the Lord's Supper doesn't save you. Only your faith in Christ saves you.

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 gives us the answer:

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1. It is a simple act.

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread. VERSE 23

The Bible says that for the very first Communion, Jesus, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread and broke it. He didn't

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have some big elaborate ceremony. He didn't wear special garments or burn incense. He didn't perform any fancy rituals. The Lord's Supper is a very simple act. He took bread and he took wine and he gave it to the people there. When we take the Lord's Supper at Saddleback, we don't turn it into a big ritual. We just observe the elements . . . the bread and the juice.

2. It is a symbol to remind us.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

VERSES 24-25

The bread symbolizes his body broken for us and the juice represents his blood that was shed for us on the cross. The whole purpose of the Lord's Supper is for us to remember what Jesus did on the cross.

3. It is a statement of faith.

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." VERSE 26

When you take the Lord's Supper, you are telling everyone, "I've put my trust in Christ." We look back at the work Jesus has already done at the cross and we look forward to Jesus' return to this earth. Jesus didn't stay dead after the crucifixion. He is risen and is coming back again!

WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1 Corinthians 11:27, 29 gives us the answer.

So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. VERSE 27

For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.
VERSE 29

Only those who have trusted Jesus. Only Christians should take Communion. If someone has not accepted what Jesus did for them on the cross, the symbols are meaningless to them and taking the Lord's Supper is a sin.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1 Corinthians 11:28 (NIV) tells us:

Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

Examine yourself by:

- Confessing your sin (1 John 1:9)
- Recommitting your life (Romans 12:1)
- Reconciling your broken relationships (Matthew 5:23–24)

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WHEN AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Bible does not say when or how often. There is no instruction for this. Jesus instituted it on a Thursday night. In Scripture, Christians observed Communion in homes with small groups of people. At Saddleback, we celebrate the Lord's Supper a few times a year at our weekend worship services, and we give our small groups permission to take it anytime they wish.

HOW DO I CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER IN MY SMALL GROUP?

Here are a few steps you can take:

1. Prepare the bread and juice beforehand. Break the bread into wafer sized portions on a plate. Pour a small amount of grape juice (not wine) into separate glasses.
2. Share Scripture or a story about God's love, forgiveness, mercy, grace, hope, etc.
3. Distribute the bread and juice to each person.
4. Explain about the Lord's Supper by reading this document.
5. Give everyone ample time to "examine themselves" (1 Corinthians 11:28).

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

6. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–24 (NIV) and then lead them by eating the bread.

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

7. Read 1 Corinthians 11:25 (NIV) and then lead them by drinking the juice.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

8. Close by singing or listening to a worship song and in prayer.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES ON THE LORD’S SUPPER

1 Corinthians 10:16–17

1 Corinthians 11:23–30

Matthew 26:26–29

Mark 14:22–25

Luke 22:14–20

If you have any questions, please contact your small groups pastor or community leader. If you do not know who they are, email us at smallgroups@saddleback.com and we will get you their info.

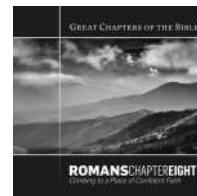
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MORE STUDIES

Thanks for being a part of this study of 2 Corinthians 4. Your group might want to consider doing one of our other Great Chapters of the Bible studies.

ROMANS 8: CLIMBING TO A PLACE OF CONFIDENT FAITH

Take a journey together with your small group to greater faith! If you've ever had feelings like, "I'm not good enough," "I'm never going to change," or "Life is too hard," Romans 8 is the chapter for you! Pastor Tom Holladay teaches this video series beginning at the bottom and moving to the top of Saddleback Mountain through each of the four sessions to help us see clearly the journey from doubt to faith—from discouragement to hope—that God has for us.



PHILIPPIANS 4: HOW GOD GIVES YOU JOY

Focus on how to experience God's joy in the midst of the realities of life. In this study, you'll have the opportunity to see how the very things that try to steal our joy are the very places that God wants to work to give us joy. In a world where there are too many fake smiles, your group will have the opportunity to encourage each other towards real joy.



SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

JOHN 15: THE LIFE YOU'RE MEANT TO LIVE

The compassionate clarity of Jesus' teaching in this chapter has the power to radically transform every person in your group. You'll have the opportunity to encourage one another in a new way of living, give strength for facing disappointments, gain refreshing comfort, and give hope for sharing the Good News. As you begin this study, imagine Jesus saying, "Come walk through the vineyard with me, let me show you how to really live!"



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ANSWER KEY

SESSION 1

YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS

*Two Words to Build
Your Life On*

1. Build your life on MINISTRY.
2. Build your ministry on God's MERCY.

MERCY:
God's UNDESERVED GIFTS

*Three Blessings of a
Life Well Built*

1. You find strength to KEEP GOING.
2. You don't have to PRETEND.
3. You keep the focus on JESUS.

SESSION 2

YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD YOURSELF

*Three Truths to Accept
about Yourself*

1. You are A JAR OF CLAY.
2. You contain A TREASURE.
3. You show GOD'S POWER.

ALL-SURPASSING:
BEYOND US AND
ABOVE ALL

Life As a Jar of Clay

THE JAR WILL BE:
Pressured — ANXIETY
Perplexed — DOUBT
Persecuted — REJECTION
Struck down — DEFEAT

THE TREASURE PROMISES:
You will be pressured,
you cannot be CRUSHED.
You will be perplexed,
you need not be IN DESPAIR.
You will be persecuted, you will
never be ABANDONED.
You will be struck down, you
cannot be DESTROYED.

The secret to living a “jar
of clay” life: THE CROSS
OF CHRIST

SESSION 3

YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD

1. Trust GOD'S TRUTH ABOUT THIS WORLD.
 - This world is A DARK PLACE.
 - Jesus is THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.
 - You have GOD'S LIGHT IN YOUR HEART.
2. Know THAT GOD LOVES YOU.

KNOW:
God gives you ASSURANCE.

THREE TYPES OF ASSURANCE:
FALSE Assurance
CONDITIONAL Assurance
ETERNAL Assurance

3. Overflow WITH THANKSGIVING TO GOD.

To start looking for God to do something NEW, thank him for what he's ALREADY DONE.

SESSION 4

THE SECRET OF ENDURANCE

1. Stop looking to YOUR ENERGY; start living by GOD'S SPIRIT.

When our energy gives OUT we either give UP or give IN.

2. Stop looking for a TROUBLE-FREE life; start living a GLORIOUS life.
3. Stop looking at the SEEN; start living for the UNSEEN.

