

“Salt & Light” Discipleship Guide Table of Contents

“Salt & Light” Introduction	1
Getting Started	1
The Vision: It’s All About Him	1-2
Where Do I Begin?	6
The First Week	7
Conclusion	8
Words of Encouragement	8
The Big Four (An Overview of the Bible)	10
Reading Relationally	11
Agenda for “Salt & Light” Groups	14
Each Week in Your Small Group	15
What to Do Each Week Before You Come to Your Group	15
What Happens if You Miss Your Group?	15
You Can Memorize Scripture	17
How to Memorize Scripture	17
Life Issues Verses	18
Praying Through Scripture	19
Let’s Be Honest	20
My Sheep Hear My Voice	22
What Makes “Salt & Light” Different?	23
Example of What a “Share” Looks Like	24
Books of the Bible Reading Order	25

“Salt & Light” Discipleship Guide

“Salt & Light” Introduction

Welcome to “Salt & Light”! The Lord has made us to do so much more than just survive; He created us to thrive! The definition of “thrive” is *to grow or develop vigorously*. Synonyms include: *to prosper, flourish, blossom, succeed, or bloom*.

Growth cannot happen without change. Living your life in survival mode will not enable you to find your purpose and live out God’s plan for your life to its fullest extent. You will not thrive. People who are not thriving are merely existing.

Are you surviving or thriving? That’s a question we all need to ask ourselves...and answer honestly. If you are in survival mode, then God is just waiting with open arms for you to call on Him and meet Him in His Word. You were created to know Him, and as a result to make Him known to others.

Regardless of what comes our way, God is still good, and He can cause us to thrive. You can still thrive even in the tough times. When you are rooted in Christ, you will thrive. Do more than just survive! Thrive! Don’t miss out on anything God has in store for you!

- Proverbs 19:8 “He who cherishes understanding prospers.”

Getting Started

To help you get started we will spend some time looking through the “Salt & Light” Discipleship Guide. We are so honored that the Lord has brought you to join in with us, and we can’t wait to see how He will speak to all of us through what He speaks to you!! We are all excited to be on this journey with you.

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

We are better together!!!

Tools you will need for this study group:

- A Bible
- A journal or notebook to record any revelations received during your Quiet Times, different Scriptures that particularly strike you as you are reading, and prayer requests for you and your group.
- Small cards on which to record your weekly memory verse. (See example from your group leader.)

The Vision: It’s All About Him!

In “Salt & Light” we are reading relationally through the entire Bible at our own pace, fellowshiping with the Father, and encouraging each other! We are doing this together, as a team, cheering each other on!

We have never had so many books out on marriage, raising children, decision making, etc...and yet we have never had more divorces, relationship problems, problems with our children, etc.!

Why? We might be looking for answers in the wrong book! Often people run to self-help books instead of the Bible. Why rely on man’s opinion? The Bible says that He is the “Almighty Counselor.” (Isaiah 9:6) Only a moment of reflection would reveal that we have gotten very wrapped up in so many other materials, and we have been using the Bible as a resource book—

not *The Book*. By reading through the entire Bible, we are seeking the whole counsel of God. Psalm 119:160 tells us, "The sum of His Word is Truth." We desire no other answers but His!

Of course we can still access all those other wonderful resources, but the problem often is that instead of letting "His Word" dwell richly in our hearts, the "resources" have our hearts. Instead of seeking the whole counsel of God, we often copy or repeat what others have said. Others who are personally sitting at His feet, which means that we are missing out on the thrill of what happens when we ask God to open our minds to understand the Scriptures? (Luke 24:45) We are missing the intimate relationship with the Father.

"Self-Feeding" Christians

We understand that eating food is the life giving necessity our body needs to survive. Without healthy food on a regular basis our body would shrivel up and die. In the same way, reading and hearing the Word of God is our spiritual food. Without reading and hearing the Word of God on a regular basis, our spirits shrivel up and die as well. People are often living off the insights which the Holy Spirit has given to others, but never feel satisfied because they have not gotten a full meal from the Lord through reading His Word for themselves.

The reading of the Word of God is where our spiritual relationship is built with Him. Some have been "snacking" on the word, reading a few verses here and there, perhaps even just flipping open the Bible and just reading wherever it opens up! The problem is that "snacking" just leaves them feeling unfulfilled and wanting a real meal! Perhaps you can prayerfully consider putting all other reading material aside until you read through the Bible the first time. You will be glad you did! You will benefit by the reading of Christian Biographies too, but only if it doesn't interfere with your daily time in God's word.

Each time you read a Christian book, listen to television, radio, or a video speaker, hear your pastor give a message, or listen to a conference teacher, may each one of these brothers and sisters generate a hunger in you to go and hear from God directly! May that be our mindset as we listen to others who have spent time with God and who then share their treasures with us. God is interested in us spending time with Him ourselves!

In "Salt & Light" we are teaching people to be self-feeding Christians, feasting directly from His Word. The power of the Holy Spirit, speaking to us through the Bible alone, has been underestimated.

His Word alone has the ability to powerfully change lives as people are daily feeding their minds with the pure milk of the Word, the whole counsel of God.

*If you give a person a fish, it will feed him/her for a day.
If you teach them how to fish, it will feed them for a lifetime!*

Brain Washed

Someone once said they felt like all of this bible reading was just a form of brainwashing. Actually, that's exactly what it is! We all need our brains washed with the Truth of the Word of God because of all the lies we've believed!

Jesus is the only Truth, the only Way and the only Life, and He came to set us free...DAILY! God's Word will powerfully change your life each day, if you read it!

About Facilitators

Have you ever read the entire Bible? Most people respond, "Not yet, but I would like to." After all, is there any other book where you can literally converse and interact with the author while you are reading?

As you are reading through His entire Word, God continues to equip His saints (*that's you!*) through His Word and through the leading of His Spirit to do the work of the ministry that you have been called to do (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Believers that are facilitating these groups don't need to feel like they have to be leaders; they just know THE Leader! They don't have to be experts; they just know THE Expert. The only preparation for these facilitators is the fact that they spend quality time connecting with God in His Word each day! We minister out of the abundance of our relationship with the Father. (John 15:5)

In "Salt & Light" we also treasure God's Word in our hearts by **memorizing Scripture** weekly. **Why?** So that we can tell people what God says and not what we think.

- "Those who present their own ideas are looking for praise for themselves, but those who seek to honor the One who sent them are genuine and there is nothing false about them." (John 7:18)
- "Let the Word of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use His Word to teach and counsel each other... and whatever you do or say, may it be as a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ." (Colossians 3:16-17)

The goal of a Salt & Light group leader is to help you accomplish your goal of reading through the entire Bible and memorizing Scripture. It is very exciting to join God in His work and to watch all God is doing!

Working at the Relationship

It seems many people are working at the wrong thing...they are working at doing things for God but not working at the relationship with Him. John 15:5 expresses God's heartfelt priority here. "I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." So the fruit comes from abiding! Let me say that again...the fruit comes from abiding! Abiding is unbroken fellowship, keeping short accounts with God, and being quick to confess.

God did not create us to work for Him, but to have a relationship with Him... joining Him in His work as He invites us to be a part of what He is doing. Being together with Him is the focus.

Oswald Chambers said it well, "God has not called us to anything but Himself, and everything else flows from that call." Jesus ministered to other people out of the abundance of His relationship with the Father. "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33) Whenever we put other things first there is confusion and lack of peace.

The Battle is the Lord's

As we focus on our relationship with Him, the struggle will be there to make time to be with God every day. Jesus died to restore our relationship with God, so time with Him is worth fighting for! We are in a battle! Being with Him is the root of the fruit...when we abide, we bear much fruit. Since the fruit comes from our relationship with God, doesn't it make sense that personal, relational time with God is where Satan is going to attack? It's our relationship with the Lord that makes Satan shake in his boots. And he will try to do everything to keep us away from our daily time with the Lord, to prevent us from reaping a harvest of fruit...lasting fruit! If Satan can get us to just work hard at doing things for God and keep us away from having a relationship with God, then he knows he has us right where he wants us to be. He knows we will get burned out and exhausted working in our own strength.

Let's face it: We are in a war and the enemy does not want us to have this kind of a relationship with a Holy God. But, Hallelujah! God is jealous for us, and He wants us to feel the same about Him. The Holy Spirit will empower us to fight for our time with Him. He is worth every moment! You will see!

Empowered by the Holy Spirit to fight this battle, we meet with the Lord each day. During this time God does not want us to merely rush through the drive through (like at McDonald's!), but to get out of our car and go inside the restaurant and sit down with Him and have a feast in His Word.

Each day, when we first come to the Lord, our minds are often already in 4th gear... we have to downshift to 1st gear, put it in park, turn off the engine, and get out of our car and go in. You may be thinking, "Yeah, but to be honest there are just some mornings I don't feel like reading the Word." The greatest thing about God is He understands us completely! Just have a talk with Him and say, "Lord, You know how I am feeling this morning. Would you please give me the desire and strength to spend time with You?" You see, we always win with God. He doesn't let our weaknesses bother Him. He is bigger than our frailties! Remember, He's just waiting for you to ask. And He is more than ready to answer, you will see!

- John 17:3 says, "This is eternal life: that (you) might know Him... and Jesus Christ whom He has sent."
- Philippians 1:6 says, "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus," and Philippians 2:13 says, "It is God who is at work within you both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

He just wants us to cooperate with Him when He comes and invites us to join Him in His work. The reason He invites us to join Him is because He wants to be with us! He doesn't need us, but He does want us!

It has never been clearer that God is not interested in our ability, but our availability. Even though there is an abundance of fruit, we have never done so little and seen so much: it's more of Him and less of us. (John 3:30) Isn't that what we are all after? He has just asked us to work at our relationship with Him, to show up when He invites us, and join Him in His work. Obediently we come to Him, and He takes over. It is glorious! We never want to go back the other way. We meet with Him daily in His Word and through prayer! It will cost you a lot to follow Jesus like this, but it will cost you a whole lot more not to!

This is the beginning of a personal relationship with God— not a course in Bible knowledge alone.

Where Do I Begin?

Here's some food for thought. Most people's view of God is not completely accurate because they have only listened to other people's opinions about God. What people hear about Him may come from family and friends, philosophy, books, TV, radio, movies, etc., and often they conclude things about God based on information that is not accurate and based on the traditions of men instead of the Word of God.

The problem is they have not given God a chance to speak for Himself. People may have read bits and pieces from the Bible, but to accurately hear God speak they must have the whole counsel of God. For example, in Matthew 4:6 when Satan misquotes Scripture, Jesus responds with Scripture and says, "The Scriptures also say...." (that's the whole counsel of God!)

Remember, this is no ordinary book! This Book is the Word of God written to you, up close and personal, penned through over 40 men over a 1,500 year period, by the inspiration of God's Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Many of the writers never knew each other, yet all the books of the Bible fit together perfectly... check it out for yourself! Did you know this book has sold more copies than any other book in the world? Did you know that more people have died for this book than any other book? It has also been burned more than any other book in the world! Just what is it about this Book that people would be willing to die for it, and that others would be threatened by it enough to want to burn it? You're on a journey to find out!

Common sense tells us that none of us would want to spend time with someone if we have heard things that would make that person seem less than desirable. Unfortunately, many people have an incorrect view of God based on what others have told them, and this prevents them from spending time with Him in His Word. When they finally go to the Word, the God they meet there may not be the same God they expected at all! Take a moment and allow yourself to be introduced to the True God and His awesome character. Go to His Word and let Him speak for Himself!

Notes:

The First Week

Day One

Read Psalm 103 –

Underline each word or phrase that speaks of God's character. What is He like?

Day Two

Read Isaiah 40: 25-31, Romans 8: 31-39 and Psalm 145 –

Underline each word or phrase that speaks of God's character.

Day Three

Read Psalm 139 –

Underline each word or phrase that describes the following:

- What does God know about me?
- What does God do for me?
- What have I discovered about God?

Day Four

Read Daniel 3 –

Meet three men who believed what God said in Psalm 103 and Psalm 139. What words come to your mind to describe the three men in Daniel 3 and to describe the king?

Day Five

So, what's next? Have you ever read a novel or known anyone who has? Would you say that the Bible is similar in size to some novels? Well then, couldn't we agree that it is a possibility to read through the entire Bible? O.K., now that we have that settled, let's get started!

We recommend you read "The Big Four" (Refer to "The Big Four-- An Overview of the Bible.") first, which will give you an overview of the entire Bible, as well as equip you with a tool so that you can confidently ask someone, "Would you like to get together and read some of the Bible?" Most people will never ask this question to a non-believer because they don't know what to do. Now you have a tool!

Day Six

Today, and from now on: Pick up where you left off the day before. Perhaps some days read a chapter or more, while on other days you may delight in meditating and studying simply a verse or two. ASK God, He WILL show you! It's best, if you can, to spend time with God first thing in the morning. Then, in the evening, read one Psalm and one chapter of Proverbs. We all need our minds washed at the beginning and end of the day with the Truth!

"For you will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Who doesn't want to be free?

Conclusion--Moving Ahead

We all like to accomplish a goal. Note your progress. For example, when you finish reading Chapter 1 of Genesis, put a check mark beside that chapter. Do the same for the rest of the chapters in Genesis. Then, when you complete the entire book of Genesis, turn to the Table of Contents in the front of your Bible. There are 66 books listed there. Put a check mark beside Genesis. Now, how many books do you have left to go? That's right: 65! Remember that we suggest you first read Genesis through Exodus 20, followed by Matthew, John, and Romans, in that order. Then proceed on to the rest of the Bible remembering to read a Psalm and a Proverb each night (repeat the Psalms and Proverbs each time you finish these books). When you are finished reading the entire Bible, share what you have done with someone you know and celebrate your victory by doing something special, like going out to lunch or dinner!

What in the world are you going to do now that you have finished reading the entire Bible? That's right: start over! It is most assuredly the Book without bottom! You will never tire of hearing His voice! For your second time through you could try reading the Bible in a different translation.

Words of Encouragement

Start by praying Luke 24:45, Lord, please open my mind to understand the Scriptures. (Do this instead of you trying to open your own mind to understand.) Also ask Him to "teach and explain His Word to you so that your heart may burn within you while He is speaking." (Luke 24:32) Remember, do not just read the Bible, but read relationally. After all, is there any other book that while you are reading, you can literally converse and interact with the author?

Pray for a desire to listen to God speak to you as you read His Word. Ask Him to do just that! He's just waiting for you to ask and He loves that you want to. How will you know God is speaking to you? Will a thundering voice roar through the heavens? No, it's not that mysterious. It can simply be a verse that seems to jump out at you while you are reading, or a verse that seems to speak right to an issue or situation in your life. It's truly that easy!

This is the beginning of a personal relationship with God, not a course in Bible knowledge alone. Before you begin reading each day, do as the Scriptures say in Psalm 100:4, "Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise.

Be sure to underline anything you sense the Lord is speaking to you about as you are reading. Remember, this is no ordinary book!

This Book is the Word of God written to you, up close and personal.

Let me also encourage you during your first time reading through the Bible, to make it a point to find out what God is like and to discover His character for yourself. If you daily read the Bible and search for God's character, you will come to know Him intimately, in a deeper way. That is a promise, and an exciting one at that! You will see. This will give you a balanced view of what He is really like, and you will find Him irresistible, kind, patient, loyal, a Man of His Word, forgiving, long-suffering, and serious about what He says to you!

This is the most important step, and critical in developing your relationship with God. Why? Because most likely, you are not going to trust someone you do not know. Walking with God is all about trusting Him. Again, you are encouraged to work your way through the Bible daily. Take notes and think about what He is really like from whichever passages or chapters you are reading each day.

A Word about Commitment

We have been given such an unbelievable opportunity to allow God to glorify Himself by uniting us together by the power of the Holy Spirit in our group setting. 1 Corinthians 13:9 describes that for now we “know” only in part. With that in mind we all have our “part” in the body of Christ. When you join a group you are actually bringing a part of the very understanding of God and His Character, taught to you through the Word and experienced by you through your personal relationship with Jesus. That part is greatly needed by the whole body!! And guess what? The others in your group will be bringing their part too. A part that you need desperately also. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God will reveal a greater revelation to all of us. Isn't that just amazing? It is of utmost importance that you are faithful to your commitment to the others in your group by coming every week. We understand there could be an occasion when you could not make a particular meeting. We ask that you would contact your leader and let her know. Leave any prayer requests for her to pass on to the others so that your prayer needs continue to be presented during your absence.

Notes:

The Big Four (An Overview of the Bible)

By Mark Bogart, missionary with The Navigators

1. The Old Testament is the foundation for the New Testament. (Luke 24: 27, 32)

A. Genesis 1 – 11: 4

Major Events (Creation, the Fall, the Flood, Tower of Babel)

Themes:

- Attributes of God
- Where sin came from
- Judgment of God

B. Genesis 12 – 50:

4 Major People (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph)

Themes:

- Promises of God
- Faithfulness of God

C. Exodus 1 – 20

Themes:

- God remembers His covenant to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ex. 2:23, 24)
- Passover (Ex.12)
- Ten Commandments (Ex. 20)

2. Matthew: The link book to the Old Testament (Ch. 1)

Themes:

- Jesus as King (Matt. 2:2)
- Jesus as the new Lawgiver (Matthew 5 ties into Exodus 20)

3. John: Goes back to the beginning (John1:1-3)

Themes:

- Emphasis on belief (John 20:31)
- 7 Signs
- 7 "I Ams" demonstrate who Jesus is

4. Romans: Paul's clear and logical explanation about the Gospel (Rom.1:16-17)

Themes:

- God's righteousness
- Man's sinfulness
- God's solution

Reading Relationally

Revelations from the Holy Spirit often come from "Reading Relationally." This simply means talking to God about what you are reading while you are reading His Word.

For example: Interact with Him as you read, as you would in a conversation with a friend. Ask questions, ask Him to explain and clarify for you, give Him encouraging words of thanks, praise, amazement and exclamation.

Remember: "My sheep (*that's you!*) hear My voice, I know them and they follow Me." John 10:27

Pray this from Luke 24:45: Lord, open my mind to understand the Scriptures.

Ask Him.... Lord, what do You want to say? and then when He speaks, respond to Him right then. Enjoy!

Imagine you have just invited a friend over for coffee. She has come to hear about the wonderful trip you just took. Your friend kindly lets you know that she has an hour to visit, then she has to pick up her son. At your friend's invitation, you begin sharing in great detail about your trip, the amazing things you saw and did, and the awesome things God taught you. It is obvious that your friend is listening with great interest, but she never comments on anything that you are sharing. Yes, there is eye contact, she is paying attention, but she never asks any questions, expresses "wows", or interacts with you over your story. When the hour is done, she politely lets you know that she must go pick up her son. You express how glad you are that she stopped by, and you say good-bye. Hmm.... You think, I am so glad my friend was here, but I feel empty. My friend never commented or asked questions... I know she was here for an hour, but the lack of interaction leaves me feeling disconnected and wondering if she really cares. Was she really listening?

Perhaps this is how we can make God feel when we are reading His Word. When we don't interact and dialogue with Him, perhaps he misses the interaction too.

What if a mutual friend pulls into the driveway and out your kitchen window you hear your friend that just left express in great detail how wonderful it was to hear about your amazing trip, the incredible things you did and saw, and God's amazing handiwork in all your travels. At that moment you might wonder, "Wow, why didn't she share that with me while she was here with me?"

Let me suggest this: I believe that this is often what we do to God. Like the friend that was visiting & talking later to your mutual friend, we go talk about God after being with Him, but we don't talk to God in response to what we are reading in His Word as we are reading. We spend an hour with Him, we listen and maybe even take notes, but we never really engage with the Author of the Bible that we are reading. I spent too many years reading as an observer rather than meeting with our Savior personally for the relationship for which I was created. Miraculously, He desires to have an interactive conversation with us, literally, talking with us out of the pages of His Word (Hebrews 4:12).

We must remember to engage with Him at that moment while we are in His Word:

1. Ask questions as we go.
2. Respond in amazement to a particular character's actions.
3. Say "Thank You."
4. Express "Wow!" in response to what we just read.

5. Confess right then that you aren't doing what you are reading about but would love God to give you a "want to."

**These are just a few suggested examples of how we interact and surely there are many more! The goal is not to "just read" through the Bible, but to interact with the Author while you are reading. He doesn't want us to "just read" and gather information and go perform it. He wants us to realize that He wants to be involved in the process with you as you are reading. He wants us to talk with Him while He is talking to us through His Word. We know how to do this because we naturally do it all the time with friends. He wants us to do that with Him, our Companion and Friend. God doesn't complicate something so important to Him.

He wants us to realize that we cannot do a single thing written in His Word by ourselves, because "apart from Him, we can do nothing." (John 15:5) He also wants us to realize that "we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." (Philippians 4:13) He is just waiting for us to ask -- and ask while we are reading, not just when we are finished reading. Interact with Him as you would with a friend over coffee. He doesn't want to be treated like a business interaction or a mere acquaintance. Think about it. There is no other book in the whole world in which you can interact with the author while you are reading.

This is called Reading Relationally. You can do that with the Bible because it is the Living Word! We know God is merciful, but I believe He might "feel" just like the person in the story who poured her heart out to her friend, then received no response or interaction during the course of their hour together. Let's delight and bring abundant pleasure to the Lover of our souls and talk with Him throughout the pages of His Word as we journey with Him each morning in His love letter to us! Let's not just talk about God, but let's talk to Him as we are reading! Get ready for the best time of your life because He has treasures He wants to share from His heart to yours when you interact with Him! Try it... you will see!

As you experience your own intimate relationship with God, nobody will have to tell you to talk about God and His Word... You will be looking for an audience automatically out of the overflow of your relationship with God. Not only will you be blessed, but many others will be as well! Your genuine enthusiasm is contagious and makes people hungry to go and hear from God in a similar way for themselves! It doesn't get any better than this!

Below is an example of Reading Relationally from Psalm 84. Keep in mind that when you are in a conversation with someone, as you are listening, you don't comment on every sentence they utter. In the same way, as you are reading God's Word relationally, you don't comment on every line you read, but when you have a question, comment, etc., that's when you engage.

This dialogue you are having with God can be silent as you are talking to him in your thoughts, or it can be aloud. That's up to you. After each verse below, look within the parentheses to find an example of what a dialogue with God might look like.

*Please note that God speaks in different ways to each of his children. He may whisper something into your spirit or direct you to another verse. Remember that when God speaks, He will never contradict His written word.

Psalm 84:1 "How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty."

(Lord, what is Your dwelling place like anyway?)

("My child, you are My dwelling place. Ask for and receive my forgiveness in order to keep it clean and lovely".)

Psalm 84:2 "I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the LORD. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout joyfully to the living God."

(Lord, I so want to worship You constantly this way. I notice that when I am in a crisis that I am much quicker to cling to You and pour out to You with my whole being, body and soul. And as much as I don't want to admit it, I really do thank You for allowing difficulties in my life and caring enough to train me by allowing challenging things. Please help me to remember there is purpose to my pain as a part of the work of Your kingdom.)

("My child, as I teach this truth to others through you, listen, for it is a reminder to you too.")

Psalm 84:3-6 "Even the sparrow finds a home there, and the swallow builds her nest and raises her young— at a place near Your altar, O Lord Almighty, my King and my God! How happy are those who can live in Your house, always singing Your praises. Happy are those who are strong in the LORD, who set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs, where pools of blessing collect after the rains!"

(Oh Lord, only You can turn weeping into refreshing springs! And if that weren't enough, You bless us, not with "puddles", but with "pools" of blessings! Wow Lord, thanks for that amazing insight You just gave me, what a wonderful picture! You are awesome! How is it that You can love me like this? I thank you for the privilege of knowing You and being trained by You.)

("My child, may you sense My pleasure over your love for Me. It's important to Me that you know that.")

Psalm 84:7-10a "They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem. O LORD God Almighty, hear my prayer. Listen, O God of Israel. O God, look with favor upon the king, our protector! Have mercy on the one You have anointed. A single day in Your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else!"

(Oh Lord, may I learn to become more and more intimate with You; that this is the continual cry of my heart. Lord, what are Your courts really like?)

("My child, I love that you are asking. Keep reading the Psalms, and I will reveal the answer to your question.")

Psalm 84:10b-12 I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked. For the LORD God is our light and protector. He gives us grace and glory. No good thing will the LORD withhold from those who do what is right. O LORD Almighty, happy are those who trust in You,"

(Father, I know that I am not trusting in You right now over the decisions that I have to make which is why I am not content and happy. But right now I am asking You to give me a desire to trust You in every aspect of this decision. I am choosing right now to trust You and to stop trying to figure things out myself. I so desire to keep Your dwelling place clean, surrendered and lovely! I love You and thank You for being so real and speaking to me today!)

("And My child, I love that you are genuine with Me.")

Notes:

Agenda for Salt & Light Discipleship Groups

(This is an example. Times for each group may differ.)

10:00 – 10:15- Informal Fellowship with all “Salt & Light” Discipleship groups

10:15 – 10:25 - Worship (all groups)

10:25 – 10:35 - Teaching Time to all groups (from facilitator in front) (This can include testimonies, announcements, etc.)

10:35 – 11:55 - Individual Discipleship Groups meet

- 10:35 - 10:45 - Scripture Memory Review with a partner.
(Review 5 different verses each week, so that all the verses you have already memorized eventually get reviewed, then start all over again. *New verse for the week will be shared during the time you share your Quiet Time.)
- 10:45 - 10:55 - Reading Relationally as a group, using the passage selected by the group leader
- 10:55 - 11:55 - New Scripture Memory Verse & Quiet Time Sharing

How does our group begin?

1. First person volunteers to share: She says her new memory verse, then tells the group what Bible passage (chapter/verses) she will share from. The entire group turns to that passage. The first person shares her Quiet Time, her “take away” & words describing God’s character from the chapter she is sharing from.
2. Second person volunteers to pray: Prays for the first person. Then, after praying, the second person shares her new verse and her Quiet Time. This continues giving each group member an opportunity to pray and share until the final person shares. The last person to share is prayed for by the person who went first.

Reminder: Your “take away” is what you apply to your own life from what the Lord is saying to you. You are sharing your personal response to God’s Word. What are you “taking away” as a result? Please be specific. This helps the next person pray more specifically for you.

The “Golden Thread”: When everyone is done sharing, take time to discover what the “Golden Thread” was for the time together. Was there a common theme in what everyone shared? (Exodus 28)

11:50 - **Prayer Requests** - Each person comes prepared with their prayer requests on a card or small piece of paper and gives her card to the Discipleship group. The Leader shuffles all of the cards, then each person picks a card. The card you select is the person you will pray for during the week.

11:55 - 12:00 **Closing Song – All groups**

Each Week in Your Small Group

Each small group is led by an assigned "Salt & Light" group leader

- The leader will facilitate; guiding and directing through the schedule
 - All communication and follow up is done through the leader
 - Occasionally the regular schedule will be altered
1. Pray together for the Lord's presence and insight and for our hearts and minds to be open.
 2. Everyone has an opportunity to share their Scripture memory verse.
 3. During our time together we will share such things as:
 - How did God's Word speak to you?
 - How did you see God at work?
 - How did God answer prayer?
 4. Come prepared with the answers to these questions:
 - What is your personal, practical application? What is your "take-away"?
 5. At the end of each evening, after everyone has shared, you will discover together the "golden thread" (from Exodus 28) that ties together all that your group has shared.

What to Do Before You Come to Your Group

Take a few moments before you come to prayerfully go through all of the things you wrote in your journal that week, and ask God which things He would like you to share with the group.

- You will be sharing where you are reading and what insights God impressed on you in the book you are reading.
- You do not need to share everything.
- Be mindful of the time and size of your group so that everyone has a chance to share.
- Write down any specific prayer requests you may ask your group to pray for you.

Be Prepared! Now you're ready!!

What Happens if You Miss Your Group?

On occasion you may need to miss joining your group because of illness, conflicting scheduling issues, vacations, etc. Needless to say, anytime you are not present, you will be greatly missed. Please use the following guidelines to email or WA your leader and the others in your group when you miss. *This is used as a way to keep us connected and accountable to do what we say we desire to do.*

1. Contact your leader and let her know you won't be able to come that week.
 - This may be a phone call, text, WA or email just letting her know not to expect you.

- If you have time, share your prayer requests for your group to pray through in your absence.
2. Send a message to your leader with the following information:
- This is my new memory verse (write it out from memory).
 - These are the chapters/verses that I am sharing from.
 - This is my share. (This is what the passage says...this is what it means...this is what it means to me...)
 - This is my "take away"/application for myself.
 - This is what I learned about God's character. (A few descriptive words- example: faithful, hates sin, never fails)
 - These are my two prayer requests for this week.

*As a reference, you may use the **Share Handout** as a guide. See the end of the booklet.

Notes:

You Can Memorize Scripture!

If you have had trouble memorizing Scripture, don't be discouraged. Read on for insights and ideas on how to memorize God's Word. You Can Memorize Scripture! Your memory is good! Do you think you have a poor memory? Wait a minute. What's your address and phone number? How about all the information you know by heart about your job? How about all the people you call by name? Or the facts and figures you can recite about your favorite sport or hobby? You see, your memory is really pretty good after all. Anything is easy to memorize when you are really interested in it, or use it often.

A good memory is not something you either have or don't have. It is a skill, and like other skills, it can be improved. Attitude is what makes the difference. Adopt an attitude of confidence in Scripture memory and you will develop skill in memorizing.

Here's some additional encouragement:

- You can count on God to help you memorize Scripture. He wants His Word to be in your heart.
- "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts."
Deuteronomy 6:6
- "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." Colossians 3:16

How to Memorize Scripture

by The Navigators

As you start to memorize a verse:

- Read in your Bible the context of each verse you memorize.
- Try to gain a clear understanding of what each verse actually means. You may want to read the verse in other Bible translations or paraphrases or perhaps consult a commentary-after you've done your personal study!
- Read the verse through several times thoughtfully, aloud or in a whisper. This will help you grasp the verse as a whole. Each time you read it, say the topic, reference, verse, and then the reference again.
- Discuss the verse with God in prayer, and continue to seek His help for success in Scripture memory.

While you are memorizing the verse:

- Work on saying the verse aloud as much as possible.
- Learn the topic and reference first.
- After learning the topic and reference, learn the first phrase of the verse. Once you have learned the topic, reference, and the first phrase and have repeated them several times, continue adding more phrases after you can quote correctly what you have already learned.
- Think about how the verse applies to you and your daily circumstances.
- Always include the topic and reference as part of the verse as you learn and review it.

After you can quote correctly the topic, reference, verse, and reference again.

- Writing the verse out can be helpful. This deepens the impression in your mind.
- Find a friend to check you on the verse. Better yet, memorize together!

- Review the verse immediately after learning it, and repeat it frequently in the next few days. This is crucial for fixing the verse firmly in your mind because of the tendency to forget something recently learned.
- Review! Review! Review! Repetition is the best way to engrave the verses on your memory.

Life Issues Verses

<p>Knowing God's Will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proverbs 16:9 • Proverbs 3:5-7 • Jeremiah 29:11-13 • Romans 12:2 • Isaiah 30:21 • 1 John 5:14-15 	<p>Perfectionism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galatians 3:3 • Psalm 127:1-2 • Ephesians 2:8-9 • Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 • 2 Corinthians 12:9 • Luke 10:40-42 	<p>Money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew 6:19-20 • Deuteronomy 8:17-18a • 1 Timothy 6:9-10 • Philippians 4:11b-13 • 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 • Matthew 6:24
<p>God's View of You</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm 139:13-14a • 1 Samuel 16:7b • Jeremiah 9:23-24a • Philippians 2:3-5 • 1 Peter 3:3-4 • Matthew 10:29-31 	<p>Anger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James 1:19-20 • Proverbs 29:11 • Proverbs 15:1 • Romans 12:19 • Ephesians 4:26-27 • Colossians 3:8-10 	<p>Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm 118:5-6 • Matthew 11:28-30 • Psalm 73:26 • Philippians 4:6-7 • 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 • 1 Peter 5:6-7
<p>Dealing with Sin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 John 1:8-9 • 1 Corinthians 10:13 • Romans 6:11-13 • Galatians 6:1-2 • James 4:7-8 • Ephesians 6:10-12 	<p>Depression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm 42:5 • Lamentations 3:19-23 • 2 Corinthians 1:8b-9 • Isaiah 43:1b-2 • Psalm 34:17-18 • 2 Corinthians 4:8-10 	<p>Suffering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 5:2b-5 • 1 Peter 4:12-13 • 1 Peter 1:6b-7 • 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 • James 1:2-4 • James 1:12
<p>Guilt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 8:1-2 • Psalm 51:9-10 • Proverbs 28:13 • Psalm 32:1-2 • 2 Corinthians 7:10 • James 5:16 	<p>Sex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 • Matthew 5:27-28 • 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 • Ephesians 5:3 • Romans 13:13-14 • Hebrews 13:4 	<p>Love</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a • John 13:34-35 • 1 John 4:20 • Romans 8:38-39 • Matthew 22:37-40 • 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Praying Through Scripture

Jesus prayed Scripture and He is our example.

Why Pray Scripture?

Jesus is our model. With the Scriptures, He opposed temptation and answered His critics. He even prayed the Words of the Psalms from the Cross. Praying the Scriptures is talking to God in His own language. How does a baby learn to talk? By listening to His Father.

God's Word gives the Spirit His two-edged weapon. **Ephesians 6:17** says, "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Fill your prayers with the powerful weapon of God's Word. No soldier dares report to duty without a weapon. His life depends on it. So does yours! Bring the power of the Word into your praise & prayer. Amy Carmichael wrote, "The only thing that matters in our warfare is the faithful use of His precious blade, the Word."

God binds Himself to His promises, so learn to plead the promises of God.

D.L. Moody said, "Tarry at a promise and God will meet you there." Numbers 23:19 tells us, "Has God said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Every promise is like a check-- its value is nothing more than a piece of paper until it is cashed at the bank. Praying the Word of God "cashes" His promises. At the age of 90, George Mueller said that he never had an unanswered prayer. His secret? "I always pray with an open Bible, filling my praise and petition with God's Word. I pray God's promises, His declarations concerning Himself. I pray His names and titles by which He reveals His nature and character. I pray the rights He gave the believer to bold and confident access. When a need arose, I spread them all out before God who hears His children. My heavenly Father will not break His word to His own child."

Praying the Word of God builds faith. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Romans 10:17 Praying the Scriptures assures that you are praying the mind and will of God. Charles Spurgeon said that our prayers are according to the mind of God when they are according to the Word of God.

Praying God's Word seals the answer. Promises predict the answers. They point to what to expect. Isaiah 55:11 says that God's Word never returns to Him void without accomplishing what He desires. *Don't worry while on your knees and call it prayer.*

Praying God's Word brings God's power into our praying. In the Amplified Bible, **Luke 1:37** says, "For with God nothing is ever impossible, and no Word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment." Mary clearly understood it this way. She replied, "May it be to me as you have said." **Luke 1:38.**

Praying Scriptures orchestrates prayer agreement for multiplied power.

Leviticus 26:8 says, "Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you." **Deuteronomy 32:30** refers to one man chasing a thousand, or two putting ten thousand to flight.

How to Pray Scriptures

Read a verse or Scripture passage. Ask God what He sees. He will give you a praise, a confession,

or a petition based on the passage. Pray it back to God. Praying the Word of God is God-oriented praying (instead of to self-centered shopping list praying). In praying a promise, focus on the God of the promise, whose name and character guarantee the fulfillment of the promise. Seek His face, not His hand. Gaze at God, glance at the requests. Match His attributes and names to your needs.

Let's Be Honest

How can we use Scripture to deal with our feelings?

This is a reminder to all of us that we need to recognize feelings as just that – feelings. We need to offer our feelings to God, and not condemn or judge those among us who honestly share their emotions (feelings) with us. A feeling or emotion is not a sin. How we respond to a feeling determines whether we will sin or not. The Lord desires truth and honesty at the deepest level and wants us to experience His love, forgiveness, and power in all areas of our lives. Experiencing His love does not mean that all of our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors will be pleasant and pure. It means that we can be real, feeling pain and joy, love and anger, confidence and confusion.

The Psalms give us tremendous insight about what it means to be honest with the Lord. David and other psalmists wrote and spoke honestly about the full range of their responses to situations.

For example, David expressed his anger with the Lord because he felt **abandoned** by Him: I say to God my Rock, Why have You forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? (Psalm 42:9, NIV)

At times, David was very angry with others, and he expressed his **anger** to the Lord in terms that reveal the depth of his feelings: Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; LORD, tear out the fangs of those lions! Let them vanish like water that flows away; when they draw the bow, let their arrows fall short. May they be like a slug that melts away as it moves along, like a stillborn child that never sees the sun. Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns—whether they be green or dry—the wicked will be swept away. (Psalm 58:6-9, NIV)

David wrote of his **despair** about difficult situations: My heart is in anguish within me: the terrors of death have fallen on me. Fear and trembling have beset me; the horror has overwhelmed me. (Psalm 55: 4-5, NIV)

And he communicated his **despair** to the Lord: Why do You hide Your face and forget our misery and oppression? We are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to ground. (Psalm 44: 24-25, NIV)

Sometimes he was **confused**: How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? (Psalm 13: 1-2, NIV)

Sometimes David communicated his **love** for the Lord: As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? (Psalm 42: 1-2, NIV)

At times David **trusted** in the Lord: The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, It is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an

army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. (Psalm 27: 1-3, NIV)

At other times he was filled with **praise** for God: I will exalt You, my God the King: I will praise Your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise You and extol Your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom. (Psalm 145:1-3, NIV)

In Conclusion, think about this:

These passages demonstrate that God, who spoke of David as *a man after His own heart*, wants us to be open and honest with Him about all of our emotions, not just the pleasant ones.

It is clear after reading David's conversations with God; we have permission to be completely honest with our Heavenly Father. If we aren't dumping every last pain, hurt, discouragement, disappointment, and all of our other true feelings on God, it will leak out and get dumped on others. You can count on it! Whether this happens verbally or non-verbally...it will come out!

It is a lot of work to walk with God like this. But He wants to do the work in us. That is why pursuing a relationship with God is the critical priority over everything else in our life! God invites us to come to Him, (Hebrews 4:16, Psalm 27:8) to pour all this out.

What is the result? We will become closer to Him because we haven't left Him out of the process. He wants to be included! And, after He listens, He wants to tell us the Truth. He wants His children to be set free. After all, what Father wouldn't want that?

When we dump our anger or hurts on a close friend, what is the result? As they listen to us and pray with us, we connect with them and feel that someone understands us. Now, we have an Ultimate Someone who is the Lover of our soul....Jesus Himself! He is just waiting for you to come and "let it all out!" David's talks with God clearly let us know we have permission to be open and honest about our feelings, why else would God have allowed all of those talks to be in His Word? Once again....the Truth has set us free!

My Sheep Hear My Voice

"My sheep recognize My voice; I know them, and they follow Me." John 10:27

"After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they recognize his voice." They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't recognize his voice" John 10:4-5

What am I hearing?	What is God saying?

Now go back and confess those things that you heard from the enemy that you chose to engage with because it breaks your fellowship with God.

"...if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong."

1 John 1:9

What makes "Salt & Light" different?

- Reading "Relationally" through the entire Bible (Reading "Relationally" = interacting with the Author as you read...)
- The only "time table" you are on for reading through the entire Bible is how much God directs you to read each day..."my sheep hear my voice..." (John 10:27)
- Treasuring God's Word in our heart (Ps. 119:9;11) Why Scripture Memory? We want to be able to tell people what GOD says, not what we think. We are not the expert-- we just know The Expert. Our job is to help people to get to God. He's the Almighty Counselor, not us.
- Leaders are cheer-leaders and coaches. The leader's job is to help the members of our group to accomplish "their goal" of reading relationally through the Bible and memorizing scripture.

Our goal is to encourage people to be "self-feeding" Christians. When we read a Christian book, hear a sermon, listen to a Christian speaker, etc., we pray for a mindset that leads us to become hungry to hear from God for ourselves! What gifted authors and speakers share is not the meal, but only the appetizer. God never intended us to live off of others, but to live off of Him. We learn how to ask Him questions and interact with Him as we read. Instead of trying to open up our own minds to understand the scriptures, we pray, "Lord, will YOU open my mind to understand the scriptures?" (Luke 24:45)

- Be transparent, open and honest as you share your hearts with each other.
- Be involved in each other's lives and have fun and enjoy each other. Pray and even fast for each other, serve each other, go the extra mile ...as the needs arise... become "a family."
- Keep short accounts with each other and God. (*This means to be quick to ask forgiveness.*)
- Pray fervently together that God would bless the "Salt & Light" group with the things on His heart, that He would enlarge our borders for the sake of His kingdom, and that He would keep His Hand upon us..." (1 Chron. 4:10)

A large group of college students were gathered to hear a brother in the Lord share the Word with them. At the end of the evening a number of students approached him and were awe-struck with how the Word just flowed from his heart as he spoke (he was not using any notes as he was sharing). They expressed to this brother that they too wanted to be God's vessel like that and wondered how he got to that point. Do you know what his answer was? He said, "I just read through the Bible and when I finish, I start over. And I keep starting over and will read through the Bible over and over again until I leave this earth. My mind is continually being washed with His Word, the whole counsel of God." I too have been challenged by this brother and may we challenge others as well!

Never again will you have to wonder where to read when you have your time with the Lord, because when you are reading through the Bible, you just pick up where you left off!

You know, when you hang around someone, when you're in their presence, you eventually start talking like them and thinking like them and even acting like them. In His presence is where we want to be. Jesus ministered out of the abundance of His relationship with the Father. God has

not called us to ANYTHING but Himself and everything else flows out from that call! (see John 15:5)

Share Example Handout

Each week as you meet together with your "Salt & Light" group, you will come prepared to share with others something that God has shown you during your Quiet Times with Him in His Word that previous week. To help you get started, below is an example of what a share might look like:

Step #1 New Memory Verse:

*(Shortly after you have met with your group for that week, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the verse He wants you to memorize for the week to come. The Holy Spirit knows what the future holds so if you ask him, He will lead you to a verse that will encourage you for whatever is going on in your life or something that is in the near future. Refer to the **Life Issues Verses Chart** in this guide for themes.*

- *This is the new verse I memorized this week:*
Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Step #2 Share Verses:

- *These are the chapters/verses that I am sharing from.*
Genesis 45:4-5,7-8 NIV
[4] Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! [5] And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. [7] But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. [8] "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.
- *This is my share.* (This is what the passage says...this is what it means...this is what it means to me...)
For example: In Genesis 45 Joseph revealed he was the governor of Egypt to his brothers who had sold him into slavery many years before. His brothers were probably terrified that Joseph might take revenge by putting them in prison or even having them killed! But Joseph soothed their fears by reminding them that it was God who had sent him to Egypt, not them. God had a bigger plan to save their family from the famine so in order to do that, he sent Joseph ahead of them. We can see that Joseph wasn't bitter but saw that God had a plan all along. He trusted that God was in control of everything that happened in his life for all of those years.

Step #3 Take Away:

- *This is my "take away."* (A "take away" is simply the personal revelation that you got from the passage you just shared. What did you learn that can be applied to your life?)
For example: I learned that God is in control of my circumstances even when I don't understand what is going on. I can trust God because he is in control, and he knows everything.

Step #4 God's Character:

(This is the most important step, and critical in developing your relationship with God. Why? Because most likely, you are not going to trust someone you do not know. Walking with God is all about trusting him. We identify what God is like in what we read so that we will know him more which leads us to trust him more!)

- This is what I learned about God's character...
(A few descriptive words- example: *in control, faithful, never fails, has a plan, trustworthy*)

Books of the Bible Reading Order

(Semi-chronological with groupings for OT prophets)

The Old Testament

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy
6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth
9. 1 Samuel
10. 2 Samuel
11. 1 Kings
12. 2 Kings

The Prophets Before the Exile

13. Isaiah
14. Hosea
15. Joel
16. Amos
17. Obadiah
18. Jonah
19. Micah
20. Nahum
21. Habakkuk
22. Zephaniah

The Wisdom of Israel

23. Job
24. Psalms
25. Proverbs
26. Ecclesiastes
27. Song of Solomon

The Prophets of the Exile

28. Jeremiah
29. Lamentations
30. Ezekiel

The Return from Exile

31. Ezra
32. Nehemiah
33. Esther

The Prophets After the Exile

34. Daniel
35. Haggai
36. Zechariah
37. Malachi

The Story so Far

38. 1 Chronicles
39. 2 Chronicles

The New Testament

Jesus and the Kingdom

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. John
4. Luke
5. Acts (of the Apostles)

The People of the Kingdom

6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians
14. 2 Thessalonians
15. 1 Timothy
16. 2 Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1 Peter
22. 2 Peter
23. 1 John
24. 2 John
25. 3 John

26. Jude

The Revelation

27. Revelation