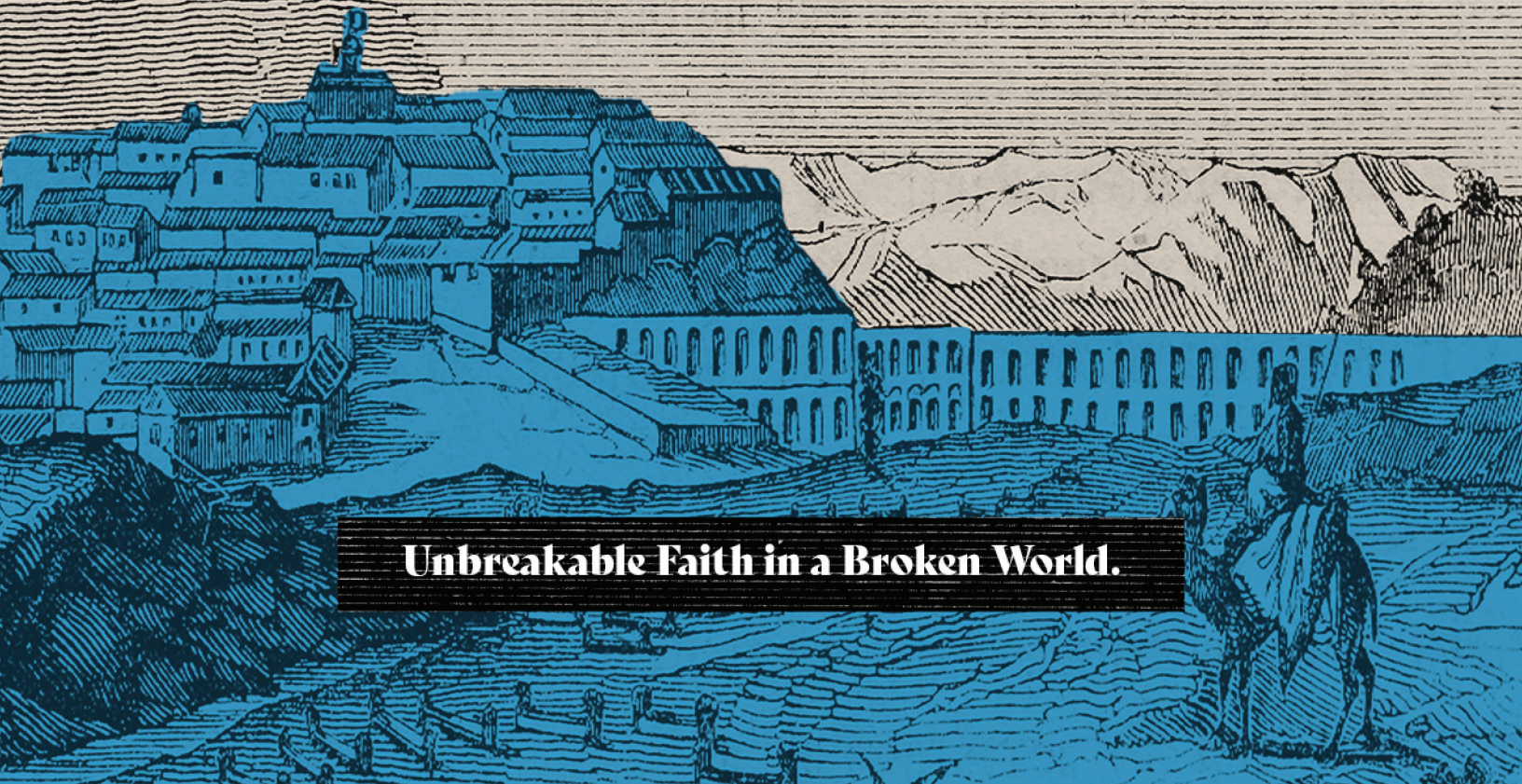


RESILIENT

STUDY GUIDE



Unbreakable Faith in a Broken World.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Resilient!

This study is all about becoming a resilient follower of Jesus. The word “resilient” is defined as being able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions.

What does this have to do with following Jesus? EVERYTHING.

Everyday, the list of distractions or challenges that oppose a life of following Jesus seems to get longer: from the busyness of life to anxiety/depression, from family dynamics to the state of politics, from sexual ethics to social media, and it goes on. Just like the definition states, the conditions have been and will continue to be difficult when it comes to following Jesus.

Being a resilient disciple means not losing hope or giving up in difficult conditions, but enduring and bouncing back. **Resilient disciples are not just defined by church attendance, but by our unwavering desire to follow Jesus through all circumstances.**

This study has been researched and designed to show what we believe are the five markers of a follower of Jesus who will be a resilient disciple...

1. **Knows Jesus, not just about Him.**
2. **Sees the world through a biblical lens.**
3. **Walks with those both older and younger than them.**
4. **Takes the Gospel to the world.**
5. **Goes and makes disciples.**

Through this study, our hope is that we all learn how to live out each of these markers daily, as we walk with the Lord. As we start this journey, remember that we follow a Savior who cannot be defeated. **No matter how difficult things seem, we can be resilient, because He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.** In our lives we may have trouble, but take heart because He has overcome the world!

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

For the next six weeks, this guide will serve as your map for the journey through the Resilient group study. Below you will find overviews of all the components for the adventure ahead.

- 1. Video Teaching:** Each week, there is a short video unpacking the big ideas for each session. We recommend groups watch this video during or in preparation for your group time. The videos for this study can be found at mynorthside.com/resilient.
- 2. Group Discussion Guide:** Each group session is broken down into four sections:
 - **GET STARTED:** Get to know each other and start discussing.
 - **TAKE IT IN:** Watch the teaching video and discuss what you are learning.
 - **TALK IT OVER:** Questions to help groups engage with the Bible and session teaching.
 - **LIVE IT OUT:** Practical ways to live out what you are learning.
- 3. Resilient Training:** Becoming a resilient disciple doesn't just happen, it takes training. 1 Timothy 4:8 says, *“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”*
 - **Group Training:** Each week, this study will encourage group members to rotate reading Scripture and closing in prayer. Don't skip this training. The goal is to get comfortable reading Scripture and praying with believers to build confidence in the ability to share these practices with those who don't know Jesus. Groups are one of the best environments to learn and practice the habits of a disciple.
 - **Individual Training:** In between group sessions, you will be encouraged to complete a spiritual exercise that is designed to help you practice different habits of a disciple. Follow the instructions, practice the spiritual exercise, and come ready to share what you are learning with your group.
- 4. Family Conversations:** These are weekly devotions and conversation starters to bring the biblical truths of the Resilient study into your home. For more guidance, see the Family Conversations Guide (pg. 10, 18, 30, 36, 42, 49).

SESSION 1

A RESILIENT DISCIPLE TRAINS

GET STARTED

- Have you ever spent time training for something (sport, hobby, activity, job, etc...)? How did that training help prepare you for your end goal?

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 1: A Resilient Disciple Trains at mynorthside.com/resilient. What encouraged and/or challenged you from the sermon and video this week?

TALK IT OVER

- During this study, we will be looking at 5 markers of a resilient disciple: knows Jesus, not just about Him, sees the world through a Biblical lens, walks with those both older and younger than them, takes the Gospel to the world, and goes and makes disciples. **As you embark on this study, what are you hoping to gain from it?**

Read 1 Timothy 4:8-10

- Resilient disciples train for godliness. This means developing the character, attitude, and actions of God in our lives. **How have you seen godliness developed in your faith journey?**
- Author AJ Sherrill sheds some light on spiritual training, “Spiritual Formation works like this. The habits we form end up forming us. The idea of ‘rising to the occasion’ is false. Few if any of us actually rise to the occasion when times are hard; instead, most of us default to our highest level of previous training...It is vital we take these practices seriously, then, because it is in our commitment to the little things that the presence of God is able to conform us to the image of Christ.” **What resonates with you from this quote? How do the habits of our lives form us? What kind of habits help us to train in godliness?**
- It’s no secret that training for anything comes with a cost. **What are some reasons or excuses people typically give for why the training for godliness (character, attitude, & actions) is too high? Are any of the reasons shared potential roadblocks for you?**
- God has given us this group to help each other train, develop, and live out godliness. How does accountability help when training? **In our group, what does it look like to help one another become a resilient disciple and train for godliness?**



Group Training Goal: Training, with the encouragement of believers, builds up your confidence to engage with people far away from God. For the rest of the *Resilient* study, your training goal is to rotate reading Scripture and closing in prayer between group members.

- Take a moment and read the following passages as a group: 1 Corinthians 9:24-25, Galatians 5:22-25, Ephesians 4:14-16, & 2 Peter 1:5-9. **What stands out to you from each of these passages? How do these verses motivate you to know that training for and pursuing godliness is well worth it?**

Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16

- Paul encourages Timothy to continue training and fighting for the blessings of God. **In what way has your faith journey with Christ felt like a fight?**
- Whether we realize it or not, we are in a spiritual battle against an enemy that wants to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). Training in godliness helps us become resilient against opposition. This process involves both unlearning bad habits and pursuing good habits (v. 11). **Think about your own faith story, what bad habits has God helped you unlearn? How has God helped you develop good spiritual habits?**
- Faith requires action. We are often pulled toward sin/temptation when we are passive. Paul writes for us to actively run towards righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness (v. 11). **What kinds of actions help you display and/or participate in these characteristics in your life? Share a story.**
- The call to, "fight the good fight of faith," contains a truth that following Jesus won't always be easy. **How have you had to fight in your faith journey? How does v. 13-16 give you confidence and reinforce your resilience? Where do you want to become more resilient as a follower of Jesus? As a group, how can we encourage and pray for you?**

LIVE IT OUT

- Spiritual training is not always easy, but it is always worth it. For this season, how will you intentionally pursue training to become a more resilient disciple? With the help of the Holy Spirit, what do you need to flee from or pursue (1 Timothy 6:11-12)? Prayerfully ponder these questions.

Individual Training: If we want to know God, not just about Him, then we have to cultivate a relationship with Him through prayer. This week's individual training is to complete The Prayer Wheel spiritual exercise (pg. 8-9). This exercise will guide you through a one hour prayer experience. Review this exercise as a group. Share your individual plans to complete the exercise. Encourage one another throughout the week, and come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." **1 Timothy 4:8.**

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

PRAYER

PRAYER WHEEL EXERCISE²

The Prayer Wheel is a simple tool for practicing connecting to God in prayer. In twelve steps, five minutes each, this cycle guides you through several ways the Bible teaches us to pray. At the end, you'll have prayed for an hour. Look at your schedule this week, and carve out one hour of uninterrupted time to cycle through the twelve steps of the Prayer Wheel. If needed, communicate with family, friends, or roommates about your plan and ask them to help you experience this time distraction-free. Once you have your day/time set, share this with your group so that they can keep you accountable.

Before you begin the Prayer Wheel, grab a Bible, a notebook/journal, and a pen. Make sure your environment is set up to minimize distractions. Find a quiet place in/outside your home. Turn off devices or put them away. It could be helpful to use a 5 minute timer for each step.

PRAISE

- Start your time by praising God. Praise Him for things that are on your mind right now and for one thing He's done in your life in the past week. Praise Him for His goodness to your family and friends. For help getting started, read Psalms 145 and 146.

WAIT

- This is a time to be quiet in God's presence and "be still before the Lord" (Psalm 37:7). Think of nothing but God the Father, His Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. You don't need to express your thoughts in words. Just focus on Jesus and your love for Him.

CONFESS

- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you anything in your life that might be displeasing to Him. Ask Him to point out wrong attitudes or actions that you haven't confessed yet. Now confess them so that you might be cleansed. See Psalm 139:23-24 and/or 1 John 1:9.

READ THE WORD

- Spend time reading passages of Scripture on prayer. Options include Psalm 103; Psalm 145:17-18; Matthew 6:5-8; Matthews 6:9-13; Mark 11:20-25; Luke 11:5-13; Philippians 4:6-8; and/or 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

PETITION

- Make requests on behalf of yourself. See Matthews 6:11 and 7:7-8; and/or Hebrews 4:16.

² The Prayer Wheel was adapted from Traders Point Christian Church's Micro Group Guide.

INTERCEDE

- Make requests on behalf of others. See Ephesians 1:16; Romans 10:1; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Luke 6:28; and/or Matthew 9:37-38.

PRAY THE WORD

- Pray specific passages. Some Scriptures, as well as many psalms, lend themselves well to this purpose. Here are some examples: Matthew 6:9-15, Colossians 1:9-12, Philippians 1:9-11, Psalm 119:38-46, and/or Psalm 86.

GIVE THANKS

- Give thanks for things in your life, on behalf of your family, and on behalf of your church. See Psalm 103:1-4; Psalm 107:8-9; and/or Isaiah 12:4-5.

SING

- Sing a song of praise and worship. See Psalm 59:16-17; Psalm 95:1-5; Colossians 3:15-17.

MEDITATE

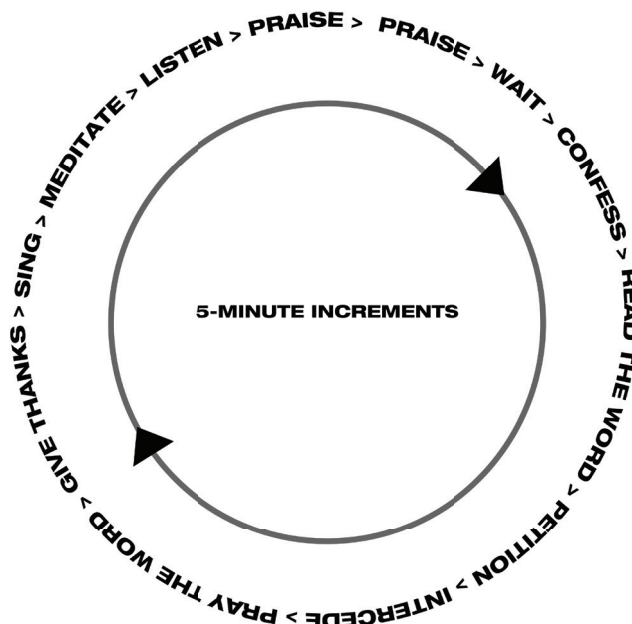
- Reflect on a specific Scripture, a theme from Scripture, or on God's works and character. Good options include Exodus 34:6-7; John 1:1-5; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 3:14-21; Colossians 1:15-20; and/or Hebrews 13:18.

LISTEN

- Ask God to speak to you. You can ask Him specific questions. Deliberately ask Him to reveal His will and strategies or plans.

PRAISE

- Praise God for the time you've spent with Him. Praise Him for all of His attributes. See Revelation 4:8-11 and Psalm 111.



FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

These Family Conversations are designed to help you create moments to talk about God and faith in your family. We want to encourage you to carve out a moment each week to read and discuss each Family Conversation. This could be over the dinner table, before bedtime, or whenever works best for your family. In each Family Conversation, you will find 4 parts.

1. **Scripture:** Read the passage out loud, or encourage a family member to read.
2. **Devotion:** Read this to your family.
3. **Conversation:** Pick and choose what questions are best for your family to discuss.
4. **Prayer:** Pray for your family, or encourage a family member to pray.

Just as a heads-up, things probably won't go as planned with your Family Conversations. Your family may interrupt, someone probably won't pay attention, and there may not be any grand spiritual moments. What matters most is that you are seeking God as a family. Faith in your family is more often caught than taught. Your family will most likely forget these devotions, but they will remember the intentionality and time together. That will set the stage for you to model faith and continue building a spiritual legacy in your family.

FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 1 A RESILIENT DISCIPLE TRAINS

Scripture:

1 Timothy 4:8

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”

Devotion:

Have you ever wanted to be the best at something? Maybe you have dreams of playing in the NBA or to be accepted into the Juilliard School of Music. The first advice you may get from coaches or mentors may be about your commitment. To be great at something, it is going to involve lots of hard work and maybe overcoming a few obstacles to reach your goal.

Paul challenged Timothy to be as devoted to godliness as an athlete is to a sport. Spiritual training involves habits like prayer, reading/meditating on Scripture, worship, and service. Training for godliness builds our spiritual resilience and prepares us to face life's challenges with faith and perseverance. When we engage with God's word we gain wisdom. Through prayer, we align our hearts with God's will. In worship, we remind ourselves of God's greatness and our need for Him. Through service, we reflect His love to those around us.

Godliness doesn't happen overnight. It requires dedication, just like any other form of training. There will be days when it's hard, when we'd rather skip our spiritual exercises. But, the end goal that Paul highlights is significant, because godliness holds promises not only for this life but also for the life to come.

Conversation:

- What makes it difficult sometimes to practice spiritual habits? (prayer, reading your Bible, worship, and service)
- Can you remember a time when engaging in one of those spiritual habits helped you through a difficult situation? (Parents, this would be a great opportunity to share a story from your own experience!)
- How can we support one another to stay devoted to our spiritual training? How can we develop spiritual habits within our family?
- Take some time this week to pray together as a family. Encourage everyone to come prepared with at least one thing they would like to thank God for and at least one thing they need to ask God for help.

Prayer:

Together as a family, thank God for the ability we have to interact with Him through prayer, Scripture, worship, and service. Ask for His help as you devote your time and energy in pursuing godliness and to encourage one another when it becomes difficult.



SESSION 2

RESILIENT KNOWING

GET STARTED

- In its most simple form and meaning, a disciple is one who learns. The origins of the word disciple comes from the Latin word “discipulus” which means student, learner, or follower. **In what way do you learn best (visual, reading/writing, auditory, hands on, solo, groups, etc...)? Discuss what your learning style is?**
- We’ll talk a lot about learning from Jesus and Scripture during this study, but we learn from others as well. While we can always count on what we learn from God to be good for us, what we learn from others can be good or bad. **Is there a life lesson you’ve learned from someone that has served you well? Is there a lesson or habit you’ve learned from someone that has not served you well?**

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 2: Resilient Knowing at mynorthside.com/resilient. **What encouraged or challenged you from the sermon or video this week?**
- **What did you learn and/or how was your experience with the prayer spiritual exercise?**

TALK IT OVER

- This session is all about the concept of knowing Jesus, not just about Jesus. **If someone asked you what the difference is between knowing Jesus and knowing about Him, how would you answer?**

Read 1 Timothy 1:3-6

- Paul instructs his disciple Timothy to stay in Ephesus and tell people not to teach any doctrine other than Christ. The problem seems to be that some believers were adding tradition and myths to the Bible, causing people to look away from Jesus. Also, there was a focus on using heritage (genealogies) as the basis of importance rather than seeing everyone as fully and equally loved by God. **Why do you think it’s so easy to become swayed by ideas and teachings that aren’t found in Scripture?**
- The words Paul uses in verse 3 strongly tell Timothy to “charge” (ESV), “command” (NIV), or “stop” (NLT) people from teaching false doctrine. We can interpret this as a charge for us to do the same when we hear believers giving worldly advice that can lead people down a wrong path. **Do you feel as Christians in the 21st century that we are speaking up when we hear false doctrine being taught?**



- What we hear or read informs what we believe, and what we believe ultimately affects how we behave. In other words, the more you know Jesus, the more you will begin to live like Him. **In what ways have ideas not centered in the gospel affected your faith? In what ways has knowing Jesus changed how you live and interact with others?**
- Following his instructions to Timothy, Paul explains that the reason for doing this is to love others from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. He reminds him that some have turned away from these things to only meaningless talk. **Do you think we sometimes reduce our conversations to “meaningless talk”? Why or Why not? What could it look like to redirect meaningless conversations to discussions rooted in godly love? What are some creative ways we can enter into important conversations of faith without turning people away from God?**

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17

- Here we see Paul describing himself as a blasphemer, persecutor, violent man, and the worst of all sinners. Paul’s ministry was incredibly effective, not because of what He did, but because of how knowing Jesus changed him. **What do you find most encouraging about Paul’s story? What makes his past important for Timothy, and for us, to see? How does sharing our own stories communicate the life change of knowing Jesus?**
- Paul declares his life as an example of the patience and love of God (v. 16). **What has God’s patience looked like in your life? Similar to Paul, since knowing Jesus, how has He been working to bring about change in your life? Where do you want to know Him more?**

LIVE IT OUT

In Philippians 3:8, Paul says that everything is worthless compared to the infinite value of knowing Jesus Christ. Do the priorities of your life reflect this truth? How are you pursuing knowing Jesus? How are you leading others to know the infinite value of Jesus? This week, pursue individual training with the fasting spiritual exercise. Along the way, prayerfully ponder these next steps to helping others know Jesus.

- Who do you know that doesn’t know Jesus? Invite them to church.
- Who do you know that needs godly friends? Invite them to a meal or your group.
- Who do you know that struggles with a hurt, habit, or hangup? Invite them to Care Night or to join a Care Group.

Individual Training: Shifting our priorities to focus on building a relationship with Jesus is essential to knowing Him. This week’s individual training is to practice the spiritual exercise of fasting (pg 14). This exercise will help you learn about fasting and guide you through a 24 hour fast. Review this exercise as a group, share your plans to complete it, encourage one another throughout the week, and come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: *“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ”*

Philippians 3:8 (NLT)



SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

FASTING

THIS WEEK'S TRAINING GOAL: 24-Hour (Two Meal) Fast

WHAT IS FASTING?³

Fasting is a Christian's voluntary abstinence from something for spiritual purposes. In the New Testament, this "something" is primarily refraining from food/drink, but not water for a short, lengthy, or intermittent period of time. Fasting can be expanded to other things. When you seek solitude you are fasting from crowds and people. When you seek silence, you are fasting from noise, busyness, and technology. When you attend church to worship, you are fasting from other activities. In each case, it is choosing to refocus our hearts and lives on the things of God.

WHY SHOULD I FAST?

Most scholars believe that the spiritual habit of fasting was widely practiced by people in the Old & New Testaments. As a result, most people needed little instruction on the practice of fasting. This would explain why Jesus' teaching on fasting is brief compared to some other topics. Regardless, we know that Jesus fasted (Matthew 4:1-11), and He assumed His followers would weave this practice into their lives (Matthews 6:16, 9:15). The simple answer to why we pursue fasting is because Jesus did it and we are His followers.

To go a little deeper than playing the "Jesus did it" card, fasting helps get to the root of what we crave. The word crave means to have a powerful desire for something. We are designed to crave God, because He is the only thing that can fully sustain us. If we crave anything other than God, it has the potential danger of becoming an idol in our lives. When we set aside something that is important to us through fasting, it reminds us that we are sustained by God and that He holds all things together.

Throughout the Bible, people didn't just fast for the sake of fasting. Fasting is fueled by spiritual purpose. Below are some examples of why people fasted in the Bible.

- 1. To Fortify Prayers.** Fasting and prayer always go together. Combining these two practices brings more focus and increases our intensity of seeking God and revealing our requests in prayer. Daniel did this on his behalf and for the nation of Israel (Daniel 9:3).
- 2. To Repent Of Sin.** Fasting can accompany our heartfelt repentance from sin. Both David (Psalm 69:10) and Jonah (Johah 3:19) revealed their deep remorse over sin while fasting.

³ This guide has been adapted from Prayer & Fasting by David Roadcup & Michael Eagle

3. To Discover The Lord's Will. It is always a good idea to seek God concerning the specific areas and decisions of our lives. Fasting has a way of bringing our request directly before God as we ask for His specific direction. With fasting, the Israelites sought guidance in battle (Judges 20:18-48), Saul looked for answers after being blinded (Acts 9:9-11), and the apostles' asked for direction when selecting elders in the early church (Acts 13:1-4; 14:23).

4. To Accompany Grief And/Or Mourn Loss. When handling grief, loss, or worry, going before God in fasting can bring comfort. When things feel out of control, fasting can realign us to the One that is in control. David mourned and fasted when heard about Saul's death (2 Samuel 1:11-12), and for the life of the son he had with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:15-22). Nehemiah fasted after hearing of the destruction of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-4).

5. To Seek Protection From Approaching Danger. When we sense a danger in our or the lives of others, there is wisdom in going to God in fasting. It shifts us to cling to his strength. David pleaded with God to save him from his enemies (Psalm 109:24). Ezra called for a fast over a group of released captives traveling (Ezra 8:21-23). Esther called for a fast to save her people (Esther 4:9-14).

6. To Offer Worship And Praise. Similar to prayer, there is something about fasting that intensifies our worship experience. It reformats our hearts to draw closer to God in individual or corporate worship. The Church in Antioch gathered with the intent to fast and worship, and the Holy Spirit decided to move, showing them a next step (Acts 13:1-3).

7. To Set Aside People For Leadership. The early church prayed and fasted when setting aside specific people for leadership (Acts 14:23).

8. To Spiritually Prepare For Leadership/Ministry. When believers are called into leadership or ministry, a great way to begin is by fasting to seek God for His blessing, direction, and presence. Immediately after He was baptized, Jesus went into the wilderness for a time of fasting, prayer, and preparation (Matthew. 4:1-11). It is important to note, that this was the moment Satan tempted Jesus assuming he was at his weakest. Fasting and prayer prepared Jesus with strength to rebuke Satan.

HOW DO I FAST?

For the Resilient study, we are encouraging you to complete a traditional fast of abstaining from food/drink, but not water for a 24-hour period of time (two meals). The thought of this challenge can feel a little intimidating. That's why we want to offer some steps to help you practice and build the spiritual habit of fasting for this study and beyond.

Step 1: Select A Spiritual Purpose. What purpose are you planning this fast for (worship, prayer, repentance, intercession, direction, etc...)? It may help to review the above reasons people fasted in the Bible. Once you have identified the reason(s), focus on this purpose during your time of fasting.

Step 2: Determine The Length Of Your Fast. A fast should always have a time frame. In this case, we are encouraging you to try a 24-hour or two meal fast. We recommend beginning after dinner and breaking the fast at dinner the next day. You can easily alter this time frame and go from breakfast to breakfast or lunch to lunch. **IF THIS IS A NEW HABIT OR A LITTLE OVERWHELMING**, you have the freedom to start slower. You could do a shorter fast time frame and just refrain from one meal. Remember this is about spiritual training in seeking God, sometimes you have to start slow and then build up.

Step 3: Decide On The Type Of Fast. For this study, we are encouraging you to complete a traditional fast of abstaining from food/drink, but not water for a 24-hour period of time. **IF THIS SEEMS TOO MUCH**, you could do a partial fast and drink juices instead of water. Due to health issues, you may not be able to fast from food. As an alternative, you may want to consider fasting from technology or social media for 24-hours instead.

Step 4: Communicate To Those Who NEED To Know. Jesus' teaching on fasting emphasizes limiting the people who know about your fast to keep the focus on God (Matthew 6:16-18). Communicate to any family or friends who need to know you are fasting in terms of meal planning, schedule, etc. Since this is a group study, communicate with your group members so that they can encourage and provide accountability.

Step 5: Make A Specific Commit To Complete The Fast. Once you have the details figured out, make a commitment with God to complete the fast. Just as a heads up, you will be tempted to break your fast early or diminish it in some way. Resist the temptation, hold on to your commitment, and see it through to completion.

Step 6: Begin Your Fast With Prayer And Repentance. It is good for the healing and maintaining of our heart, mind, and soul to begin here. To help, prayerfully read through Psalm 139:23-24 or Colossians 3:1-17.

Step 7: Fill Your Heart With Scripture. When Jesus faced temptation from Satan, He refuted him with Scripture. In fact, one of His responses in Matthew 4:4 was, "...It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" During your fast, take in meaningful sections of Scripture. This practice will nurture your soul, and will deepen your experience. You could spend the time you would normally be eating reading Scripture, or take Bible snack breaks throughout the day. Here are some Scripture suggestions: Genesis 1-3; Psalm 42, 43, 119, 145; Matthew 4-7; Galatians; Ephesians; Phillipians; Colossians; James; or 1-3 John.

Step 8: Pray Passionately And Often. Beyond Scripture, plan time for prayer. During a fast, you are seeking God and spending time with Him. Communicate, listen, and soak in His presence. Plan to spend moments in prayer during the time you would normally be eating. As you pray, focus on the spiritual purpose of your fast. Also, you may want to review and practice some of the types of prayer from the Prayer Wheel exercise (Session 1).



Step 9: Seek Solitude And Silence. The people and noise of our lives can prevent us from listening and focusing on God during a fast. If you can plan it or if opportunities arise, seek out moments of solitude and silence with the intent of fellowship with God. Again, this could be during the time you would normally spend eating.

Step 10: Breaking The Fast. When breaking a fast, avoid high fatty or greasy foods. Ease back in with lighter foods (vegetables, salads, soups, juices, etc...). Your stomach will thank you.

Step 11: Know That God Is Pleased. When we voluntarily give up something that is important to us for a spiritual purpose to focus on God, there is a reward. Jesus speaks of this in Matthew 6 (v.4, 6, 18, 20-21). This reward is relationship, intimacy, and pleasure from our Heavenly Father. It is a reward that directs us toward eternity with Him. God is proud of His children, and He praises, celebrates, and recognizes their commitment to pursuing Him. Paul summed it up this way in Romans 12:1, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

A Few Final Fasting Thoughts

- If you would like to learn more about fasting, check out the books *Prayer And Fasting* by David Roadcup and Michael Eagle or *The Celebration Of Discipline* by Richard Foster. If you are more of a visual learner, check out the videos for *The Fasting Practice* by John Mark Comer on RightNow Media (www.rightnowmedia.org).
- If you have a health issue that could be impacted by fasting, please consult your doctor on how to proceed, or consider fasting from something else beside food.
- If you find yourself extremely hungry during the 24-hour time frame, let the hunger pains remind you of your purpose behind the fast. Also, drinking a large glass of water can help temporarily ease hunger pains.
- There may be some physical factors to take note of during a fast. Be aware you could experience fatigue, headache, sleepiness, and mild dizziness. These are temporary, and will subside when the fast is over. Also, remember to stay hydrated.
- If you are involved in a high energy or high physically demanding job, take this into consideration on when and how you fast. If you regularly work out, you may want to adjust your workout during your fast.



FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

These Family Conversations are designed to help you create moments to talk about God and faith in your family. We want to encourage you to carve out a moment each week to read and discuss each Family Conversation. This could be over the dinner table, before bedtime, or whenever works best for your family. In each Family Conversation, you will find 4 parts.

1. **Scripture:** Read the passage out loud, or encourage a family member to read.
2. **Devotion:** Read this to your family.
3. **Conversation:** Pick and choose what questions are best for your family to discuss.
4. **Prayer:** Pray for your family, or encourage a family member to pray.

Just as a heads-up, things probably won't go as planned with your Family Conversations. Your family may interrupt, someone probably won't pay attention, and there may not be any grand spiritual moments. What matters most is that you are seeking God as a family. Faith in your family is more often caught than taught. Your family will most likely forget these devotions, but they will remember the intentionality and time together. That will set the stage for you to model faith and continue building a spiritual legacy in your family.

FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 2 RESILIENT KNOWING

Scripture:

“Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.” **1 Timothy 1:13-16**



Devotion:

Who is someone that you look up to? Perhaps it is someone you admire from afar, like an athlete, a musician, or an influencer. Maybe you can recall their stats, have memorized all their songs, or commented on all their posts (you know everything there is to know about them). But, you don't really know them. You've never encountered each other (although that might be a dream of yours), had any shared experiences, or have any real relationship at all. Now, think about someone you admire who you truly know. Maybe it is a family member, a best friend, perhaps a teacher or a coach. There is a big difference here, because you know a lot about them and you also have a relationship with them. You've had shared experience (good and bad), learned from them, and grown from their interactions in your life.

Knowing Jesus is similar. You can read about him in the Bible, know the stories of His miracles, and be familiar with his teachings. But, truly knowing Jesus goes beyond just information. It involves a personal relationship, spending time in prayer, and experiencing His presence in your daily life. As Paul recounts his own personal transformation moment, he is encouraging, Timothy and us, that truly knowing Jesus is what changes us. Mere information about Him is not enough.

Conversation:

- Who came to mind when you thought about who you look up to? Name some of those people. How has your relationship with them made an impact on your life?
- Think about your relationship with Jesus. Would you say that you know about Him? Or do you know Him personally? Parents, share your own personal transformation story like Paul did. (This may be an optimal time to explain and talk through how your children can enter into a personal relationship with Jesus).
- Part of the beauty of God's grace transforming our lives is that those around us get to see those changes in us take place! Is there anyone in your life that may not know who Jesus is? How could you tell them about Him?
- If you feel it is an appropriate exercise for your children, consider having them participate in a fast with you this week. Get creative with them and let them speak into the experience. Maybe fasting from phones, video games, or tv could make more of an impact than fasting from food. Read through the fasting spiritual exercise together.

Prayer:

Together as a family, thank God for His incredible grace and mercy, and that through Jesus we can be in an intimate relationship with Him. Ask Him to continue to transform you as you seek to live in a way that reflects His love and grace to others.



SESSION 3

RESILIENT SEEING

GET STARTED

- For those of you who wear glasses or contact lenses, what do you remember about your eyesight before seeing an optometrist? What was it like seeing clearly after you received your glasses or contact lenses?

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 3: Resilient Seeing at mynorthside.com/resilient. What encouraged or challenged you from the video this week?
- What did you learn and/or how was your experience with the fasting spiritual exercise?

TALK IT OVER

- A worldview is how a person views the world and creates the framework for how to live. With that in mind how would you define a biblical worldview? What implications does a biblical worldview have on ways we live, view, and interact with others?

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17

- In verse 12, Paul reveals a powerful and uncomfortable truth that if you want to live a godly life, then you will experience persecution. What is your reaction when you hear this? To what degree have you experienced persecution for your faith? How have you viewed this persecution: something to avoid, not what you signed up for, opportunity to live out your faith, or opportunity to show Christ to others?
- Verse 16 says that all Scripture is God-breathed, and this is a powerful statement. It means that these words are true, good, and life giving, because that's who God is. In what ways does it encourage you to know that Scripture has been breathed out by God himself? How does the inspiration of Scripture change the way you view it and affect the level of trust you have in the Bible?
- Take a few minutes and think of 2-3 of your favorite verses of Scripture. Write them down here, on a piece of paper, or on your phone.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



- Paul writes that Scripture is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness (right living). **Review your favorite verses and make notes on which ones teach, rebuke, correct, or train you? What did you discover about your favorite Scriptures? Did your Scriptures lean towards teaching, rebuking, correcting, training, or a mixture.** Share your findings with your group.
- God’s Word shapes the foundation of our beliefs (v. 16) and actions (v. 17). There is a current to the world we live in that wants to draw us away from God. **How does a biblical worldview help us to stand firm and thoroughly equip us for every good work?**
- There are several questions that all worldviews attempt to answer, here are a few examples: where do we come from, who are we, what is our purpose, what is our core problem, how is this problem solved, how should we live, and what happens when we die? **How have you found answers to these questions in Scripture? Is there a question you would like to spend more time seeking Scripture on? Why is it so important to have answers to these questions from a biblical perspective?**
- We began this discussion by asking your definition of what a Biblical worldview is. **How has this discussion impacted your definition? What questions, thoughts, actions, or opinions do you need to filter through the Bible? What does it take for our group to help each other see the world through a biblical lens?**

LIVE IT OUT

Our worldview is the basic set of beliefs that shapes our view OF and FOR the world. A biblical worldview is not something we are adding in, it becomes the foundation for everything. This transformation process is the work of the Holy Spirit rooting our lives in the Bible. Where do you have trouble filtering a thought, action or opinion through the Bible? Write these things down, and with prayer and humility seek answers in the Bible. If you get stuck along the way, reach out to a Christian friend or minister for encouragement.

Individual Training: How you look at the world matters, because it impacts both what you believe and do. This week’s individual training focuses on reading and Scripture (pg 22). This exercise will guide you through some of the foundations for developing a biblical worldview. Review this exercise as a group, share your plans to complete it, encourage one another throughout the week, and come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

⁴ McCoy, Daniel, Harrington, Bobby, *What Is a Biblical Worldview? Definitions, Dilemmas, and Dangers.* Renew. <https://renew.org/what-is-a-biblical-worldview/>.



SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

THIS WEEK'S TRAINING GOAL: Reading & Personal Study

INTRODUCTION

This week's training focuses on developing a biblical worldview. As we go on this journey, we have to start with the question, "can we trust the Bible?" There is no reason to build a worldview around it, if the Bible isn't true and the authority in our lives. The road ahead includes reading and Scriptures to study. All of these things can be completed in one setting or spread out across the week. Highlight, take notes, study, and come ready to your group to discuss what you are learning.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

The Bible is unique. It is 66 different books written over a 1500 year span by more than 40 authors from every walk of life including kings, military leaders, political leaders, prophets, fishermen, tax collectors, poets, musicians, doctors, and shepherds. It was written on three different continents (Asia, Africa, & Europe) in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek), and in multiple environments including the wilderness, palaces, prisons, in exile, and while traveling. Combined, it tells one story of God's love for us through His creation, our fall, and His passionate pursuit to redeem us.

CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE?

This is one of the most important questions about following Jesus. If the answer is yes, then we have to seriously consider the implications of the Bible's authority on our lives. If the answer is no, then there is no real reason to follow Jesus, because almost everything we know about Him comes from the Bible.

To look more at this question, let's begin with what the Bible says about itself. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" The phrase "God-breathed" is a powerful statement. In the very first book of the Bible (Genesis), you see God-breathing physical life into humanity. Scripture says that God-breathed the Bible and this brings spiritual life. These are not just words written down, they are words divinely inspired by God. If you believe this, then it changes the way you view Scripture. If this book is God-breathed then it has to be true and good, because God is true and good. God is the creator and sustainer of life and is gracious, kind, compassionate, and loving. Therefore, the Word He breathes out is gracious, kind, compassionate, and loving. Even when the Bible confronts and challenges us, as this passage points out, it still points us towards a life of purpose that we are designed for.

Back to questions you might have pondered. The Bible may claim to be God-breathed, but what about other books that may claim the same thing. Why would you believe one is God-breathed and not the other. As with many aspects of following Jesus, faith is needed. For you to believe Scripture is God-breathed will take faith. This faith isn't blind, but reasonable. To help make this step of faith, here are 4 reasons why you can trust the Bible is God-breathed.

RELIABILITY OF THE MANUSCRIPTS: When historians study ancient writings, they try to decide the reliability of each ancient text. One of the biggest factors in measuring reliability is the number of manuscripts available. The more manuscripts that are available to scholars, the more they can compare content across copies. Another important factor in determining reliability is the amount of time between the original document and the copy. A closer date to the original manuscript usually represents a more reliable copy of a document.

With these reliability factors in mind, let's take a look at some ancient writings. For Plato's writing, 210 manuscripts exist dating back to about 1,300 years after the original writing. There are 251 manuscripts of Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars dating to 950 years after the original. Homer's The Iliad has 1,757 manuscripts dating back to 500 years after the original. Now, let's take a look at the New Testament, because there is nothing else like it. There are 5,700 manuscripts dating back less than a 100 years from the original documents. If you include ancient copies of the New Testament written in other languages you can add 18,300 more copies for a total of 24,000 manuscripts. This has led historians and scholars to declare the New Testament to be 99.5% accurate. This reliability of the manuscripts points towards the truth that the Bible can be trusted.⁵

TOO MANY EYEWITNESSES: From the manuscripts, historians have dated the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John) as being written at the very most 40-60 years after Jesus's death. Paul's letters, which make up most of the New Testament, were written 15-25 years after the death of Jesus. This means that these documents on the life of Jesus were in circulation within the lifetimes of thousands of people who had been present at the various events of Jesus' ministry. Luke claims he got his account of Jesus from eyewitnesses still alive (Luke 1:1-4). Mark specifically cites Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus as the man who helped Jesus carry the cross (Mark 15:21). The implication being, you can go talk to Simon and ask him if this is true. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-6, Paul refers to 500 eyewitnesses who saw a post resurrection risen Jesus. Timothy Keller writes, "For a highly altered, fictionalized account of an event to take hold in the public imagination it is necessary that the eyewitnesses (and their children and grandchildren) all be long dead. They must be off the scene so they cannot contradict or debunk the embellishments and falsehoods of the story. The gospels were written far too soon for this to occur."⁶

5 Geiger, Eric, Stetzer, Ed, Lee, Steve, *On The Table: Questions Confronting The Christian Faith* (Rooted Network, 2023), 13-16.

6 Keller, Timothy, *The Reason For God: Belief In An Age Of Skepticism* (Penguin Group, 2008), 105.

TOO COUNTERPRODUCTIVE: One opinion about the New Testament is that it was written by early church leaders to promote their policies and power. This idea doesn't fit with what we find in the New Testament, because it is too counterproductive. Why would the early church writers make up a story about Jesus being crucified? Any reader or listener would have immediately suspected he was a criminal. Why would they make up an account of Jesus asking God to take the cross away (Matthew 26:36-46) or crying out to God that He has abandoned Him (Matthew 27:46)? This would have created confusion on Jesus' leadership and strength of faith. Why would they write that the first witnesses of the resurrection were women (Mark 16:1-8)? It would have made far more sense to have some male pillars of the community be the witnesses. At the time, women held such a low status that their testimony was not admissible in court. Why would the writers constantly depict the Apostles, the eventual leaders of the church, as petty, jealous, at times dim-witted, and cowards that abandoned/denied Jesus (too many biblical references to include)? The only plausible reason is that all of these incidents and events were included because that is how it actually happened.⁷

TOO DETAILED: In Mark 4, we read that Jesus was asleep on a cushion at the back of the boat. In John 21, we are told Peter was 100 yards out when he jumped out of the boat and that they caught 153 fish. In John 8, it says that Jesus drew with his finger in the dust. In modern novels, details like these are added to create more realism, but this kind of writing was unknown in the first century. The only reason for a writer to mention details like this is because they had been retained in eyewitness memory.⁸ Similarly, the writers of the New Testament regularly share details about cities, towns, and places. Archaeologists continually visit, explore, and discover the evidence from historical details that points towards the truthfulness of Scripture.

TAKING THE STEP OF FAITH: Many of us, land on the truth that we trust the Bible. Then we start to read it and come across a passage or teaching that is hard to digest. Sometimes this choking point causes us to run away from the Bible. When we hit these moments, this is when we lean into faith. Faith continues to trust even when we do not fully understand. It continues to seek and read the Bible while we process the implications. Faith leans into trusting that Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior, and our Lord. This faith is essential, because if Jesus is not who He says He is, then why should we care about what the Bible has to say about anything? The fact the Bible challenges us, creates conversation, and points us to God is actually one final reason why we know that it is God-breathed. Timothy Keller writes, "Now, what happens if you eliminate anything from the Bible that offends your sensibility and crosses your will? If you pick and choose what you want to believe and reject the rest, how will you ever have a God who can contradict you? You won't! You'll have a Stepford God! A God, essentially, of your own making, and not a God with whom you can have a relationship and genuine interaction. Only if your God can say things that outrage you and make you struggle (as in a real friendship or marriage!) will you know that you have gotten hold of a real God and not a figment of your imagination."⁹

7 Keller, Timothy, *The Reason For God: Belief In An Age Of Skepticism* (Penguin Group, 2008), 107-109.

8 Ibid, 110-111.

9 Ibid, 118.

We began with 2 Timothy 3:16-17, and this is the best place to end, “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*” God gave us His written Word to transform us. If we trust the Bible, and allow it to become the authority in our lives, we will be equipped. It doesn’t end there, because it will change the way we live our lives and how we interact with people. It will give us a guide and lens to view the world.

WHAT IS A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW?

It sounds simple, but a worldview is a person’s view of the world. It’s your framework for understanding reality and answering the big questions about it. Your worldview is like the box top to a puzzle; it gives you the big picture so that you can make sense of the individual pieces and arrange them in place.

So, what is a Biblical Worldview? In short, it is how we answer life’s biggest questions through the Truth of the Bible. It’s important to note that we are not limiting faith to primarily a set of answers to questions. The gospel of Jesus (His incarnation, death, resurrection, authority, return, etc.) is far more foundational than “the biblical worldview.” It is because of the saving grace of Jesus that we strive to be like Him, and live using the Bible to interpret and act in the world around us.

HERE ARE SOME ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS THAT ALL WORLDVIEWS STRIVE TO ANSWER.¹⁰

1. Where do we come from?
2. Who are we?
3. What is our purpose?
4. What is our core problem?
5. How is this problem solved?
6. How should we live?
7. What happens when we die?

Now you might be thinking, “why is this important?” The answer is that everyone has a worldview. Even the view that says, “Everybody’s truth is equally valid” is a worldview (relativism). Everyone will have answers to big-picture questions which will shape how they perceive the world. To become a better and more resilient disciple, we need to spend some time developing a biblical worldview. If we are not basing our views on Scripture, then we are getting them somewhere else.

¹⁰ McCoy, Daniel, Harrington, Bobby, *What Is a Biblical Worldview? Definitions, Dilemmas, and Dangers. Renew.* <https://renew.org/what-is-a-biblical-worldview/>.

Let's start developing a biblical worldview with 7 questions above. Below you will find each question and some passages of Scripture. Read through each Scripture and then write out the answer to the question in 1-2 sentences.

WHERE DO WE COME FROM?

- Genesis 1:1-3; 2:7
- Deuteronomy 32:3-4
- Psalms 139:7-12
- Isaiah 45:18
- Hebrews 11:3
- Revelation 4:11

WHO ARE WE?

- Genesis 1:26-28; 5:1-2
- Psalm 139:13-14
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Ephesians 2:1-10
- 1 Peter 2:9-10

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

- Genesis 1:28
- Matthew 5:13-16
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
- Ephesians 3:14-21
- Philippians 2:12-13
- 2 Timothy 1:9-10

WHAT IS OUR CORE PROBLEM?

- Genesis 3
- Romans 3:9-12; 22-24
- Romans 5:6-8; 12-15
- Romans 7:18-20
- Galatians 5:19-21

HOW IS THIS PROBLEM SOLVED?

- John 3:16-18
- Acts 2:38
- Romans 10:9-10
- Galatians 2:19-21
- Ephesians 2:4-9
- Phillipians 2:6-11
- Colossians 1:15-20



HOW SHOULD WE LIVE?

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Mark 12:28-34
- John 15:5-17
- Romans 12:1-2
- Galatians 5:22-25
- Colossians 3:1-17

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

- Matthew 25:31-46
- Luke 23:39-43
- John 14:1-3
- 1 Corinthians 15:50-55
- 2 Corinthians 5:6-10
- Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-8

CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE HOLDING A DIFFERENT WORLDVIEW

Part of a biblical worldview is believing that Christianity is true. The same idea applies to all other worldviews, because they all believe their view is true as well. This means that asking someone to follow Christ is asking them to shift their worldview. With a biblical worldview in mind, there are some fundamental truths about humanity. First, all humans are made in the image of God and are more valuable than anything else in creation. Second, all humans have sinned and fall short of the glory we were created for. This means that all people are worth our care and attention, and we all have a sin problem needing Jesus. Holding a biblical worldview calls us to treat others with a different worldview with gentleness and respect. In *Rhythms: How To Live As A Disciple*¹¹, four important questions are asked to help us better connect with people holding a different worldview.

DO I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DISAGREEING WITH SOMEONE AND HATING THEM?: Disagreement doesn't mean hate. But, it is possible to be a jerk or hateful when you disagree. You will encounter people with a different worldview about God, the afterlife, the bible, sin, and so on. It's important to disagree while being kind and honoring the relationship/friendship. Here is a good question to ponder, "is my will to be right more important than God's call to love people?"

DO I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOVING SOMEONE AND AFFIRMING THEIR DECISIONS?: Loving someone does NOT mean you agree with everything they say and do. To do so is simply a nice form of indifference. God has shown us over and over how He loves us even when we don't follow Him. Ephesians 4:15 and James 5:19-20 call us to speak the truth in love when people give us the permission to do so into their lives. This call assumes that you have a deeper relationship to speak truth. Which means you are loving others even if you don't agree with their decisions (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

11 McCoy, Daniel, Jit, Andrew, *Rhythms: How To Live As A Disciple* (Renew, 2024), 116-117.

CAN I RECOGNIZE THE GOOD IN PEOPLE WITH WHOM I DISAGREE?: We have a spiritual enemy and it's not the person you disagree with (Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8). Followers of Jesus should have a deep compassion for those who don't know God, because that is the example He set for us (Mark 6:4, Romans 5:8). In Acts 17, Paul is traveling through Athens, and what he encountered created a large amount of distress. The city was full of idols devoted to every single type of god you could think of. In fact, they had an idol for an unknown god just in case they left one out. When Paul had a chance to speak to some of the Athenians, he didn't start with his distressed over the idols. Instead, he complimented them on being so religious (Acts 17:22). Afterwards, using the idol to the unknown god as a springboard, he begins telling them about Jesus. In response, some sneered and others wanted to hear more (Acts 17:32). We can connect with people holding a different worldview if we can recognize the good in them, even though we disagree.

CAN I ASK QUESTIONS AND CARE ABOUT THE ANSWERS?: If you genuinely care about people, you will be surprised at the bridges and friendships that can be built across worldviews. Author Bob Goff says it best, "Find a way to love difficult people more, and you will be living the life that Jesus talked about. Go find someone you have been avoiding and give away extravagant love to them. You'll learn more about God, your neighbor, your enemies, and your faith. Find someone you think is wrong, someone you disagree with, someone who isn't like you at all, and decide to love that person the way you want Jesus to love you. We need to love everybody, always. Jesus never said doing these things would be easy. He just said it would work."¹²

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

A biblical worldview isn't confined to just the big questions of life. While these serve at the foundation for the way you view the world, there are still more questions to answer. What are the other big or small questions impacting the way you view the world and the people around you? Write these questions down, and filter your answers through the Bible. Along the way, if you come across a tough, troubling, or confusing passage, slow down the process. The Bible is consistent and God-breathed, meaning that it doesn't contradict itself. Sometimes, we need to filter a passage through the foundations of the essential worldview questions, look at more Scripture on the topic, reference a commentary for historical context, or discuss it with a friend or minister.

As you continue to develop your biblical worldview, remember to walk in humility. You will be challenged, because God will have views that are different from yours. You will encounter Truths that are countercultural to the views of the world. Be encouraged because this is a life long transformative process of the Holy Spirit helping you develop a biblical worldview. Paul in his letter to the Phillippians 4:8-9 (NLT) sums up where we go from here, "*And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.*"

¹² Goff, Bob, *Everybody Always* (Thomas Nelson, 2018), 8-9.

FURTHER STUDY

- Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives by Steve Wilkens and Mark L. Sanford
- The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog by James Sire
- What Is a Biblical Worldview? Definitions, Dilemmas, and Dangers by Daniel McCoy & Bobby Harrington - <https://renew.org/what-is-a-biblical-worldview/>
- Worldview Changes Everything by John Stonestreet, www.rightnowmedia.org



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These Family Conversations are designed to help you create moments to talk about God and faith in your family. We want to encourage you to carve out a moment each week to read and discuss each Family Conversation. This could be over the dinner table, before bedtime, or whenever works best for your family. In each Family Conversation, you will find 4 parts.

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2. **Devotion:** Read this to your family.
3. **Conversation:** Pick and choose what questions are best for your family to discuss.
4. **Prayer:** Pray for your family, or encourage a family member to pray.

Just as a heads-up, things probably won't go as planned with your Family Conversations. Your family may interrupt, someone probably won't pay attention, and there may not be any grand spiritual moments. What matters most is that you are seeking God as a family. Faith in your family is more often caught than taught. Your family will most likely forget these devotions, but they will remember the intentionality and time together. That will set the stage for you to model faith and continue building a spiritual legacy in your family.

FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 3 RESILIENT SEEING

Scripture:

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." **2 Timothy 3:16-17**



Devotion:

You have a lot of decisions to make every single day, some are easy but some can be pretty difficult to navigate. How can you know if you are making the right decisions? This is a question that every single person asks every day of their lives. A person's worldview is how they see, understand, and interact with the world. It is what your beliefs, values, and perspective are based on, and what drives your behaviors, relationships, and decision making. As followers of Jesus, we are called to hold a biblical worldview, which means seeing and understanding life through the lens of the Bible.

Paul, in his letter to Timothy, reminds us that "all scripture is God-breathed." This means that the Bible is not just another book; it is inspired by God Himself. It provides us with everything we need to navigate life faithfully. Paul outlines 4 ways that the Bible helps to shape us:

Teaching: It helps us learn about God's character, His promises, and His will for our life.

Rebuking: It challenges us when our thoughts and actions are different from God's.

Correcting: It guides us back to the right path when we make mistakes.

Training in Righteousness: It shapes our character and actions to reflect Jesus.

When we see the world through a biblical lens, we align our perspectives and decisions with God's truth.

Conversation:

- Think of a recent situation where you were unsure about a decision you had to make? How did you decide what was the right or best option? Who did you turn to or ask for help?
- Can you think of a time where the Bible helped you make a difficult decision or understand a situation better? How have you seen the Bible Teach, Rebuke, Correct, or Train you?
- How can we make time as a family to read and study the Bible together?
- This week, commit as a family to choose one or more Bible verses and memorize them. Print them out and place them somewhere everyone can see (fridge, kitchen table, bathroom mirror, etc...). Take some time every night to recite it outloud, discuss its meaning, and how it can be applied.

Prayer:

Together as a family, thank God for the beautiful gift of the Bible that serves as a guide for our lives. Ask for God's help to see the world through His eyes and for wisdom and courage to stand firm in His truth.



SESSION 4

RESILIENT WALKING

GET STARTED

- What is something you have learned from someone younger than you? What is something you have learned from someone older than you?

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 4: Resilient Walking at mynorthside.com/resilient. **What encouraged or challenged you from the video this week?**
- **What did you learn and/or how was your experience with the biblical worldview spiritual exercise?**

TALK IT OVER

- Self-assessing spiritual maturity can be easier said than done, because it is not age dependent. It is possible for people both older and younger to be spiritually mature or immature. It is possible to be spiritually mature in one area and immature in another. Using stages of life can be helpful in determining where we are spiritually. **Take some time to ask yourself where you are when it comes to spiritual maturity? Would you describe yourself as a spiritual infant, toddler, adolescent, teenager, young adult, or adult? Why did you choose this stage of spiritual maturity?** If you are comfortable, share this with your group.

Read 1 Peter 5:5

- This verse teaches us the importance of humility when it comes to learning about godly things from others. It even goes as far as to say that, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” **How can pride get in the way of learning, and why do you think God would favor the humble?**

Read Job 8:8-10

- Asking is a very important aspect of spiritually learning. Verse 8 offers wisdom reminding us to ask the former generation and find out what their ancestors learned. **Have you ever asked anyone to build into you spiritually? If not, what might be stopping you from doing so?**

Read Acts 16:1-5 & 2 Timothy 1:2-5

- Timothy’s faith had a lot to do with what he learned from his mother and grandmother. Some of us have come from generations of faithful believers in our families, while others didn’t have the blessing of strong Christians in their family. **If you have a strong Christian lineage, how has that played out in your life? If you do not, how and where do you learn your Christian values from? Whether you are several generations in or are a first generation follower of Jesus, how do you want to continue passing on your faith to the next generation?**



- Beyond his family, Timothy was also mentored and disciplined by Paul who refers to him as a son. **Who has mentored you in your faith? How has being encouraged or disciplined by this person(s) developed and prepared you to flourish as a follower of Jesus?**

Read 2 Timothy 1:6-8; 13-18

- Can you hear the encouragement and identity Paul is trying to instill into Timothy: use your gifts, don't be timid, don't be ashamed, keep sound teaching, guard the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit is with you. **How does learning from and investing in those who are older and younger in faith help you develop a more resilient faith? How can we make our group an intentional place where we can encourage one another in faith?**
- In v. 15, Paul laments that so many in the province of Asia had deserted him. But he is encouraged when Onesiphorus seeks him out in prison to refresh him. **What can we learn from the example of Onesiphorus in these few verses? Think about the people God has placed in your life. Practically, how can you be an encourager to those both younger or older in faith?**

LIVE IT OUT

2 Timothy 2:2 says, *“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”* This verse calls us to leave a legacy of faith from one generation to the next. Everyone needs a mentor (someone further along in the faith), an associate (someone at a similar stage in faith), and an apprentice (someone to whom we can pass on faith). With that in mind, who are you allowing to mentor you? Who are you co-laboring with? Who are you pouring into spiritually? Prayerfully ponder how you can intentionally surround yourself with these people in your life.

Individual Training: Resilient disciples seek to learn and develop intergenerational relationships. This week, your training is to connect with someone by having an intentional faith conversation. (pg. 34). This exercise will guide you through how to invite someone into the conversation and what to ask when you connect. Review this exercise as a group, share your plans to complete it, encourage one another throughout the week, and come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord.”* **2 Timothy 1:7-8a (NLT)**



SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

INTENTIONAL FAITH CONVERSATION

THIS WEEK'S TRAINING GOAL: Meet With Someone To Have A Faith Conversation

INTRODUCTION

In Colossians 1:28 Paul writes, *“He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.”* In this passage, there is a call for followers of Jesus to mutually build one another up into spiritual maturity. Resilient disciples seek to learn and develop intergenerational relationships. They learn from those who have gone before and invest into the next generation of faith. Both create moments to grow as a disciple of Jesus. This week, your training is to connect with someone by having an intentional faith conversation. This person could be a more mature follower of Jesus or at a different place in their faith journey. Your goal is to learn from and encourage one another.

SET UP THE CONVERSATION

Prayerfully think through the people you know, and maybe some you don't. Whose faith encourages or inspires you? What is it about their relationship with God that is worth imitating? Pick someone from your list, and invite them to the conversation. It could be a phone call, Zoom meeting, coffee, or a meal. Through this invite, let them know why you are reaching out and how their faith has encouraged you. Ask them if they would be open to connecting and answering a few questions about their faith journey. Along the way, share how you want to learn from them with the hope to continue growing in your faith. Finally, set up the conversation and send them the questions ahead of time.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Below are several potential questions to ask during your conversation. You probably won't get through all the questions, and it may help to select only a few to focus the discussion on. Remember, the intent is to learn and grow alongside each other. Be ready to share your answers as well. If you run out of time, you can always continue the conversation at another meeting.

- **How did you first encounter Jesus and come to believe in Him? How has your faith journey changed and grown over the years?**

- What are some significant challenges you've faced in your faith journey, and how did you overcome them?
- What spiritual disciplines or habits have been the most meaningful and impactful to growing your relationship with God?
- What has God been teaching or revealing to you lately? What is one area you are wanting to deepen in your relationship with God?
- Are there any particular Bible passages or stories that have been especially meaningful or transformative for you?
- How do you discern God's will or direction in your life, especially during challenging times?
- How has your faith influenced the way you serve and love others?
- Who has been an influential mentor or role model in your spiritual life, and what did you learn from them?
- How do you maintain a healthy balance between faith, work, family, and other commitments?
- If you could offer a piece of advice to someone younger in their faith journey, what would it be?

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

God wants to use people both younger and older in faith to help us develop as disciples of Jesus. Hebrews 10:24 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." The truth of that passage is that sometimes we need to spur and other times we need to be spurred. Moving forward, do you need to seek out a group of people or a mentor that will help you mature in Christ? Or, do you need to seek out a group of people or a mentee that you can help mature in Christ? These types of intentional relationships will help us develop into resilient disciples.



FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

These Family Conversations are designed to help you create moments to talk about God and faith in your family. We want to encourage you to carve out a moment each week to read and discuss each Family Conversation. This could be over the dinner table, before bedtime, or whenever works best for your family. In each Family Conversation, you will find 4 parts.

1. **Scripture:** Read the passage out loud, or encourage a family member to read.
2. **Devotion:** Read this to your family.
3. **Conversation:** Pick and choose what questions are best for your family to discuss.
4. **Prayer:** Pray for your family, or encourage a family member to pray.

Just as a heads-up, things probably won't go as planned with your Family Conversations. Your family may interrupt, someone probably won't pay attention, and there may not be any grand spiritual moments. What matters most is that you are seeking God as a family. Faith in your family is more often caught than taught. Your family will most likely forget these devotions, but they will remember the intentionality and time together. That will set the stage for you to model faith and continue building a spiritual legacy in your family.

FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 4 RESILIENT WALKING

Scripture:

“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” **2 Timothy 2:2**



Devotion:

Have you ever learned a new skill from someone older than you? Maybe you had a grandparent who taught you a new hobby, an older sibling who taught you a new game, or a parent who taught you how to drive. It is natural in our relationships to pass down things we have learned to those younger than us. That's what Paul did with Timothy! Paul taught Timothy about Jesus and how to live for Him. Then he encouraged and empowered Timothy to teach others, too! This is called discipleship (learning from someone and then helping others learn too). A discipleship relationship includes the following:

Teaching and Mentoring: Just like how your grandparents might teach you how to bake cookies or tell you stories, older Christians can share their wisdom about God with you. They can help you understand the Bible and pray with you.

Encouragement and Strengthening: When Paul told Timothy to be strong, he was encouraging him. We all need people who cheer us on and help us stay strong in our faith, especially when things get tough.

Empowering and Releasing: Paul wanted Timothy to teach others, too. When we learn about Jesus. We can share what we know with our friends, and even teach them new things about God.

No matter where you are at in your journey of following Jesus, you will always have someone older to look to for guidance and someone younger who may be looking to you to help them follow God!

Conversation:

- Who is someone older than you who has helped you learn about Jesus? What did they teach you?
- How can we as a family be more intentional with how we teach, encourage, and empower one another in our relationship with Jesus?
- Think about your relationships. Is there someone younger than you that you can be intentional with in teaching them about Jesus? (don't forget, your teaching doesn't always have to be with words). There are younger eyes that can learn from you just by watching how you live!
- Think about setting aside an evening where you can invite family or friends over for dinner who have been following Jesus longer than you. Ask them about their relationship with Jesus, and what they've experienced following Him. Ask them to share some wisdom/advice that can serve as an encouragement to your family.

Prayer:

Together as a family, thank God for the example of Paul and Timothy and for the gift of discipleship. Ask for God's help as you look to build meaningful relationships with followers of Jesus older than you and are intentional in teaching those younger than you.

SESSION 5

RESILIENT TAKING

GET STARTED

- Have you ever had to give somebody news they didn't want to hear (bad report, critique, something stuck in their teeth, etc...)? How did you prepare to give someone this news? Did you pray first? Did you do some research to give that person alternatives? How was that news received? Share your story with your group.

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 5: Resilient Taking at mynorthside.com/resilient. What encouraged or challenged you from the video this week?
- What did you learn and/or how was your experience with the intentional faith conversation spiritual exercise?

TALK IT OVER

- Sharing the message of Christ isn't just the purpose of a church, it is the purpose of all believers. With that in mind, do you feel equipped to share the message of Christ (Gospel) with people who don't know Him? Explain?

Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5

- Verse 1 tells us that God will judge the living and the dead, meaning the eternities of people hang in the balance. But, it also reminds us that we are not alone and God is with us. How often do you think about the significance of the Gospel message we've received? Does the fact that God will judge us put any pressure on you or change the way you feel about sharing your faith with others?
- Paul writes in verse 2 with a challenge to be prepared to tell people about Jesus both "in season and out of season". What does "in season" and "out of season" mean in this context (if needed use other Bible translations for more insight)?
- Whether we feel like it or not, Paul encourages us to be ready. Have you ever been caught unprepared to speak about God and His Word? How did that interaction go? What do you need to do to be better prepared to share your faith?
- Verse 2 says that we are to correct, rebuke, and encourage with patience and careful instruction. How would you describe your comfort level with this verse? As a group, how can we help each other grow in the ability to correct, rebuke, and encourage others? Why do we need patience as we do these things?



- Verse 3 says that a time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine and they will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. **In what ways does this describe the current culture we are living in? Share some examples. Why are we prone to surround ourselves with people who tell us what we want to hear over those who speak truth in our lives?**
- Verse 4 says that a time is coming when people will turn away from truth and turn towards false beliefs. **What is the relationship between failing to listen to Truth and seeking out false beliefs?**
- Faith often involves believing in things we can't see, and many people struggle with believing in an unseen God. At the same time, with the rise of technology, just about anything can be created making it hard to believe what actually can be seen. **Has the rise of technology made it easier or harder to share the truth of the Gospel? How can you help yourself and others stay tied to what is true?**
- Verse 5 encourages us to endure and work at sharing the gospel with others. A recent article posted on air1.com entitled *How Do I Overcome the Fear of Witnessing?*¹³ lists five steps to help overcome the fear of sharing your faith: begin with prayer, before sharing the Gospel take an interest in the person, remind the person how much God loves them, talk about how sin has separated you from a holy God, and invite the person to repent of their sin. **What fears do you have when it comes to sharing your faith with others? Do any or all of these steps help you feel differently or give you more comfort? As a group, offer each other encouragement and ideas to help overcome any fear of sharing your faith.**

LIVE IT OUT

Anytime is a good time to share the love of Jesus. The big question is are you prepared to share the message of Jesus with others. This week's individual training will help you do just that. In the meantime, take a moment to think about who you can be intentional about sharing your faith with. Write down their names, and begin praying for them. If the opportunity arises, share Jesus with them!

Individual Training: Resilient disciples are prepared in season and out. This week, your training will focus on writing your faith story to help you be better prepared to share the hope you have in Jesus (pg 40). This exercise will guide you through reflecting over your story, and how it has been impacted by the Gospel. Review this exercise as a group, share your plans to complete it, encourage one another throughout the week, and come ready to discuss what you are learning at the next group session.

Memorize: *“For I am not ashamed of this Good news about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes...”* **Romans 1:16 (NLT)**

13 <https://www.air1.com/resources/faith/how-do-i-overcome-the-fear-of-witnessing-5490>

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

YOUR FAITH STORY

THIS WEEK'S TRAINING GOAL: Write Your Faith Story

INTRODUCTION

Sharing your personal story of how you meet Jesus, received the gift of salvation, and have been reconciled to God is a spiritual habit that Christians can always grow in. This exercise focuses on writing your faith story to help you be better prepared to share the hope you have in Jesus. This week, follow the writing prompts (life before meeting Jesus, meeting Jesus, and life after meeting Jesus) to create a draft of your faith story. These prompts will give you some direction and questions to help view your story through the Gospel. It's important to note, that this isn't writing a whole life story, rather the primary elements of your faith journey that would relate to others. After working through the prompts, you may want to refine or simplify your story. The goal is to become more confident in your story so that you can share it in around 3 minutes if an opportunity arises. As you work through this exercise, we recommend using a journal, tablet, or computer to compose your story.

LIFE BEFORE MEETING JESUS

THE GOSPEL: God created the world and everything in it and made people to be in a perfect relationship with Him. When Adam and Eve were deceived and disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, the perfect relationship between God and His people was broken. The result was sin and separation from God.

- **Your Turn:** Begin by talking about what your life was like before God got your attention and made your faith personal. See Paul's example in Acts 22:3-5.
 - **Guiding Questions:**
 - What were you invested in that continued to leave you feeling empty?
 - What were your emotions in your day-to-day life?
 - What did you feel was lacking in your life?
 - Where were you spiritually?
-

MEETING JESUS

THE GOSPEL: God loved us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die for our sins so that our relationship with God could be restored. Jesus came to earth, lived a sinless life, and died on a cross as punishment for our sins. This grace and forgiveness is offered to everyone as a free gift, and we can't do anything to earn it. When you repent of your sin, put your faith in Jesus, believing that He has done everything sufficient for your salvation, you will receive new life in Christ.

- **Your Turn:** Describe the moment when God got a hold of you and your relationship with Jesus became real and personal. See Paul's example in Acts 22:6-13.
 - **Guiding Questions:**
 - When/how did you finally understand you were separated from God?
 - What made you realize you needed God in your life?
 - How did you actually invite Jesus into your life?
 - Was anyone else prominently involved in you becoming a Christian?
-

LIFE AFTER MEETING JESUS

THE GOSPEL: After receiving salvation, Jesus calls us to obedience. You've been made new and live with the Holy Spirit's power guiding you toward growth in Christlikeness. One way the Bible teaches us to obey is by being baptized after making the decision to follow Jesus.

- **Your Turn:** Share how your life is different since you started your relationship with Jesus. See Paul's example in Acts 22:14-16.
 - **Guiding Questions:**
 - How has Jesus changed your character, the way you view the world, and how you relate to other people?
 - How has His forgiveness influenced you?
 - How have your thoughts, attitudes, and emotions changed?
 - What has changed in your relationships with others?
-

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

1 Peter 3:15 says, *"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."* As mentioned earlier, the goal is to be able to share your story in around 3 minutes. This short time frame helps you cover the life changing moments, and leaves the door open if someone would like to continue the conversation. If you haven't done so, refine your story and practice sharing it with a timer. Once you feel confident, pursue these next steps. Practice sharing your faith story with a friend, spouse, family member, or in your Life Group. Begin praying for an opportunity to share your faith story with someone that may not know Jesus. If the opportunity arises in your life, be bold in your obedience, trust the Holy Spirit, and share your story.



FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

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FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 3 RESILIENT TAKING

Scripture:

“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.” **2 Timothy 4:2**

Devotion:

Can you remember a time when you had to give someone some news they hadn't heard before? Maybe it was something you knew they would be excited to hear, like telling your best friend they were invited to your birthday party! Or, maybe you have had some moments sharing news where you weren't sure how the other person was going to respond, like having to tell your parents you did poorly on an assignment. We have been given a great task of telling other people about Jesus, when they are excited to hear it or even when they don't seem to care.

Paul's instruction to Timothy in this passage serves as a powerful reminder of our responsibility as believers. Jesus wants you, yes you, to tell other people about Him! Sometimes it will be easy and sometimes it will be difficult, but Paul encourages Timothy to be ready all times. Let's explore what that means for us as a family and how we can take the Gospel to the world.

Preach the Word: Preaching isn't just for pastors or missionaries. It's for all of us! Whether through our words or our actions, we have the opportunity to share the love and truth of Jesus with those around us.

Be Prepared In Season and Out of Season: We need to be ready to share God's message with the world, no matter what. This means knowing the Bible and being ready to talk about it anytime.

Correct, Rebuke and Encourage: Sometimes sharing God's message means helping others understand what is right and what is wrong, but always in a way that is loving and kind.

Great Patience and Careful Instruction: It is important to be patient and explain things clearly when we talk about God. People might not always understand right away, and that's ok. Our job is to share God's message and trust Him with the rest.

Conversation:

- Can you remember a time when someone helped you understand something about God? What did they help you understand?
- Have you ever told someone about Jesus and how much God loves them? Tell us about that moment. How did they respond? Did they respond in a way you expected?
- How can we as a family help prepare one another to be able to share Jesus at any time?
- If there are children in your family who have made the decision to follow Jesus, have them write out their faith story in their own words. Look back at the prompts from this week's exercise for some insights or even read them your faith story.

Prayer:

Together, as a family, thank God for entrusting us to tell others about the saving message of Jesus. Ask Him to help you be bold, prepared, and patient as we share Jesus' love with those around us.



SESSION 6

RESILIENT MAKING

GET STARTED

- A disciple is simply a learner of something. With that definition, we actually know more about disciple making than we realized. **When have you taught someone how to do something (sport, hobby, cooking, music, etc...)? Share a story.** In its simplest form, that is disciple making!
- There can and should be an element of multiplication in our faith. We also see this in the business world in statements like, “success without succession is failure.” It raises the question: can a business person really be considered successful if they don’t pass that success on to others? It becomes even more important and challenging when we ask the same question about our faith. **Is a Christian truly successful if he/she doesn’t pass their faith onto others? What do you think.**

TAKE IT IN

- Watch Session 6: Resilient Making at mynorthside.com/resilient. **What encouraged or challenged you from the video this week?**
- **What did you learn and/or how was your experience with the writing your faith story spiritual exercise?**
- **What has been your biggest takeaway for the Resilient study?**

TALK IT OVER

Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16

- In verse 11, Paul starts strong by saying that we should teach others the ways of Jesus. In the NLT it is translated as “insist that everyone learn them.” While we may “insist”, not everyone is receptive to hearing about Jesus. **How does that play out in your life? Are you able to insist people learn what you know about Jesus? What are some ways we can be persistent and “insist” people learn about Jesus without chasing people away?**
- Perhaps verse 12 answers, at least in part, the question above by being an example of what a Christ-follower looks like. We know that one way to learn is from the example of others. **Would you say you’ve been a good example of what a Christian should look like (home, work, community, etc...)?** We have all fallen short in one or more of these areas, but the good news of Jesus is that there is grace. Grace encourages us to keep pursuing and allowing God to change us. **What changes need to happen in order to be a better example of faith to others?**

- Verse 16 gives us a sober reminder that how we live matters; not only for our salvation and eternity, but for others as well. They say the best way **NOT** to win someone over to the cause of Christ is to be a hypocrite. **Without naming any specific people, whether they are famous or someone you know personally, have you encountered any hypocritical Christians? Have their actions made it more difficult for you or the Christian community to share your faith? What can we do to counteract the tendency of Christians being viewed as hypocrites?**

Read Matthew 28:16-20

- The portion of Scripture is called “The Great Commission”. The word commission can be both a verb and a noun. As a verb it means to “give an order”, which is how most of us interpret this word; as an action and something we must do. However, as a noun, a commission is defined as “a group of people charged with a particular function.” **Does thinking of this “Commission” as a noun change your perspective? Does the realization that there are millions of people “charged with this particular function” of making disciples give you more or less urgency? More or less belief for positive outcomes?**
- This Great Commission is perhaps very familiar to many. However, maybe you’ve never read it in the Amplified (AMP) version of the Bible. Verse 19 in the Amplified gives a broader definition of the phrase “go and make disciples.” It says to “*help the people learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words.*” Helping people learn may be the easiest of these three actions. **Take some time in your group to discuss how you can help people do all three: learn, believe, and obey.** As a group, review this week’s training exercise of taking a disciple making next step. **What is your one next step to live out the Great Commission?**

LIVE IT OUT

Living out our faith often involves helping lead others to discover a relationship with God or to grow closer to Him. There are many ways to make disciples. It all begins with who you know, and how you can help them take a next step towards Jesus. Continue to prayerfully ponder these steps to helping others know Jesus...

- Who do you know that doesn’t know Jesus? Invite them to church.
- Who do you know that needs godly friends? Invite them to join your group, or to a meal to build your friendship with them
- Who do you know that struggles with a hurt, habit, or hangup? Invite them to Care Night or to join Care Group. Better yet, come with them to Care Night.
- Who do you know that wants to learn more about the Bible and spiritual growth? Invite them to join a Northside U course.

Individual Training: Jesus made disciples. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to do the same. This is what resilient disciples do. This week, your training will focus on taking a disciple making next step (pg. 46). This exercise will offer several options to choose from and pursue. Review this exercise as a group, share your plans for a next step, and encourage one another to make disciples.

Memorize: “*You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.*” **2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)**

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

GROWING AS A DISCIPLE MAKER

THIS WEEK'S TRAINING GOAL: Take A Disciple Making Next Step

INTRODUCTION

When Jesus came to earth, He did many things. He preached, healed, taught, worked miracles, went to the cross, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and ascended back to heaven. But, the daily thing that Jesus did was call twelve ordinary men into a personal relationship with Him. For three years Jesus trained His disciples to change the world. Everything Jesus did before and after his death and resurrection was centered on this task. Jesus made disciples. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to do the same. This is what resilient disciples do.

Just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples to make disciples. This commission appears in some form in all four Gospels (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:46-48, John 20:21) and the book of Acts (1:8). In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus says to “go and make disciples...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”. **Jesus told His disciples to make disciples and to teach their disciples to make disciples until the whole world knows about the Gospel.** Pastor Steve Murrell, leader of a disciple making movement in the Philippines, writes, “It is the central underlying idea that every disciple should make disciples. Not many, not most, but every disciple should make disciples. Not just church staff, not just mature Christians, not just evangelistic types. Regardless of travel or work schedule, status, gender, or age. Every disciple should make disciples.”

Why is this mission so important? The Christian movement faced extreme hostility during the first three centuries following the death and resurrection of Jesus. These resilient disciples lived in unbelievably difficult conditions and persecution. Rather than keep quiet or retreat, they endured with a disciple making mission. They knew that they could only change the world if they made disciples of the people of the world. This still holds true today as we pursue becoming resilient disciples¹⁴.

That leaves us with the question of, “How?” If the mission is to make disciples, then how do we do it? There are many ways to answer this question. The best most practical answer is to simply invite others into our lives through meals, coffee, hospitality, friendships, and sharing the hope that we have in Jesus at intentional moments. Peter sheds some light on this, *“But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted. Friends, this world is not your home, so don’t make yourselves cozy in it. Don’t indulge your ego at the expense of your soul. Live an exemplary life in your neighborhood so that your actions will refute their prejudices. Then they’ll be won over to God’s side and be there to join in the celebration when he arrives”* (1 Peter 2:9-12, MSG).

¹⁴ Murrell, Steve, WikiChurch: Making Discipleship Engaging, Empowering, and Viral (Charisma House, 2011), 141-142.



Below are several ideas for some disciple maker next steps. Each is another way to answer the question of how to make disciples. Prayerfully consider each, and choose one of the options or come up with your own. Share your next step with your group. Ask them to pray for you and offer accountability. Finally, go and make disciples.

PRAYER

Disciple making happens when we ask for the Holy Spirit to work. Prayer is the best place to start developing as a disciple maker. Choose 2-3 people and commit to consistently praying for them. Begin praying for these people daily. Program it into your phone to serve as a reminder. Pray for them to know Jesus or to develop a deeper relationship with Him. You may never formally disciple them in any way, but you might be the only person specifically praying for them and their relationship with God.

SPIRITUAL HABITS

Throughout Resilient, you have practiced several spiritual habits (prayer, fasting, bible reading, etc...). If you missed or bypassed one, go back and complete it. Moving forward, what does it look like to continue one or more of these habits on a regular basis? How we prioritize our time says a lot about what we value in our lives. Are you prioritizing developing your relationship with God through spiritual habits? **If you are looking for a place to begin**, start with committing to 1% of your day (15min). Spend this time in prayer or Bible study. There are some great Bible reading plans that can be accessed for free through the YouVersion Bible app. As you develop this habit, begin increasing your time to 2-4% (30-60 min). The habits of Bible study and prayer are the foundation of every disciple of Jesus. No other habit will do more to transform your life than praying over, studying, and living out God's Word. **If you have already established a rhythm of these habits**, begin branching out into other spiritual disciplines (solitude, celebration, confession, sabbath, etc...). Below are some resources to get you started...

- *The Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster
- *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg
- *Practicing The Way* by John Mark Comer
- *Prayer & Fasting* by David Roadcup and Michael Eagle

We all have a tv show, movie, or restaurant that we regularly recommend to others. That same idea applies to discipleship. If we are regularly experiencing God and growing in our faith, then we will naturally want to share that experience with others. As you develop spiritual habits, it is a wise idea to invite someone to come along with you. Learning and growing alongside someone else provides accountability and encouragement. Plus, that is what disciple makers do!



SHARE YOUR STORY

Since you already have your faith story written down, now is a great time to take steps towards sharing it. Practice sharing your faith story in 3 minutes with a friend, spouse, family member, or your group. This will not only help build your confidence, it will also give you feedback to help refine your faith story. Begin praying for an opportunity to share your faith story. If the opportunity arises in your life, be bold in your obedience, trust the Holy Spirit, and share your story.

LEAD A MICRO OR LIFE GROUP

One of the best next steps as both a disciple and disciplemaker is investing into others. This creates the space for the Holy Spirit to work in and through you. Groups create an environment for discipleship to happen, and there are 2 group options to potentially pursue. First, you could start a Micro Group. These groups are usually 3-6 people (recommended to be gender specific) meeting weekly to study a set 6 month discipleship curriculum. Micro groups are a great option to gather some friends to develop discipleship relationships with. Second, you could start a Life Group. These groups are usually 8-12 people meeting weekly to study the Bible, support each other, and serve others. There are all different types of groups (mens, womens, couples, any season, etc...), and together they dive into studies based on the sermon or Group Ministry recommendations. With each group, you can start them with people you know, or group members can be added through the GroupFinder. To learn more about groups and how to start one, head to www.mynorthside.com/groups.

SERVE OTHERS

Every follower of Jesus is called to use their gifts, given to us by God, to serve others. If you are not regularly serving somewhere, there are tons of opportunities surrounding Northside. You could serve with one of the various ministries (Kids, Students, Worship, Groups, etc...), in our community through one of our local outreach partners, or globally on a short-term outreach trip. You can learn more about all of these opportunities at www.mynorthside.com/serve. Also, throughout the year, there are one-time service projects taking place in and outside of Northside. These projects are a great place to start and you can learn more through our ProjectFinder at www.mynorthside.com/projectfinder.

NORTHSIDE U

Northside U offers short-term courses in studying the Bible, spiritual growth, leadership, marriage, and family. Your next step as a disciple maker may be to develop your knowledge and confidence. The call of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is to make, baptize, and teach disciples. Northside U is a great place to be better equipped to live in obedience to this commission to make disciples. Courses are offered at specific times throughout the year, and you can learn more through our CourseFinder at www.mynorthside.com/coursefinder.

FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

FAMILY CONVERSATION: SESSION 6 RESILIENT MAKING

Scripture:

“Command and teach these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:11-12

Devotion:

The word disciple, or *mathitís* in Greek, simply means “learner” or “pupil.” To be a disciple of Jesus means that, just as you listen, learn, and apply the lessons from your teachers/coaches, you are called to listen, learn, and put God’s teachings into practice.

Jesus presents us with an incredible command in Matthew 28:19-20, *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* Jesus gives us the responsibility of becoming someone else’s teacher. Other people can watch, listen and learn from us what it means to follow Jesus! Paul, who has been discipling Timothy, instructs him to continue to teach and uphold the truths of the Gospel, regardless of his age. He encourages him to be an example in every aspect of his life, demonstrating that discipleship is not about how old you are, but about your character and faithfulness in following Jesus.

Conversation:

- Is there anyone in your life that you look to as an example of following Jesus? Who are they? What makes you want to follow them as they follow Jesus?
- In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul encourages Timothy to not let anyone look down on him because he is young, but to set an example for other believers. Have you ever felt that you were too young to be an example of what it means to follow Jesus? How did that make you feel?
- Do you have any friends who don’t know Jesus? As a family, discuss how you can begin to invite others into your faith journey.
- A perfect place to start discipleship is in your family! God has designed the family with incredible intentionality, where the parents would be the first and loudest example in their children’s lives. Together, create a simple family discipleship plan. Discuss how you can teach and learn from one another, set goals for regular family devotions, and brainstorm how your family could begin serving together.

Prayer:

Together as a family, thank God for the incredible privilege we have to share the good news of Jesus with those that don’t know Him. Ask for the Holy Spirit’s help and guidance as you pursue discipleship relationships both inside your family and out. Ask him for courage and boldness to be an example for others regardless of your age.

NEW LIFE GROUP NEXT STEPS

During session 5 or 6 of *Resilient* is a great moment to talk about where your group goes next! Our hope is that your group decides to continue on in community. To help guide this conversation, read through and discuss the following as a group.

Life groups matter because God designed us to grow in relationships. The heart of every group is to create an environment where spiritual growth happens. Read through the best practices of a successful group environment below. Based on your personality or past group experiences, which stand out to you as being particularly important? Why?

STUDY God's Word (1 Timothy 3:16)

- **Relevant Studies:** Groups choose engaging studies based on spiritual needs and God's leading to grow together.
- **Join the Discussion:** Group members come ready to join the discussion to share what God is teaching them. As a group, it's not about having all the answers but a willingness to seek them together.

SHARE Your Lives (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

- **Be Real:** The atmosphere should encourage openness and transparency among members. This is an environment where people should feel free to be themselves.
- **Connection & Consistency:** We can't grow spiritually without connecting relationally. Consistency is essential for cultivating relationships with God and one another. Group members attend regularly and connect beyond normal group time.

SUPPORT Each Other (John 13:34-35)

- **Provide Care:** Group members choose to be present, celebrate, pray for, and support one another.
- **Provide Confidentiality:** To build authenticity, members must be able to trust that issues discussed within the group will not be shared outside the group.



Take Next **STEPS** (Colossians 1:28)

- **Share Ownership:** Group members encourage one another to participate in ownership of the group (snacks, hosting, leading, discussing, praying, etc.).
- **Celebrate Steps:** Group members encourage and challenge each other to take next steps of faith (big or small). As this happens, the group will celebrate every step toward Jesus.

TALK IT OVER:

- How would it look if we continued intentionally creating an environment of Study, Share, Support, & Steps?
- Do we want to continue as a group for another season?
 - IF SO:
 - What logistics do we need to discuss (when/where, kidcare, etc.)?
 - What topics would you like to study next as a group?
 - Add your continuing group meetings to your calendar.
 - IF NOT:
 - How can we celebrate the end of this season of grouping (i.e., cookout, desserts, restaurant, etc.)?
 - What is your next step to reconnect with a different life group or ongoing community?

