

FIRSTSTEP

HEALTHY HABITS ESSENTIAL TO YOUR FAITH



GOSPEL • COMMUNITY • MISSION • WORD • PRAYER • SPIRIT

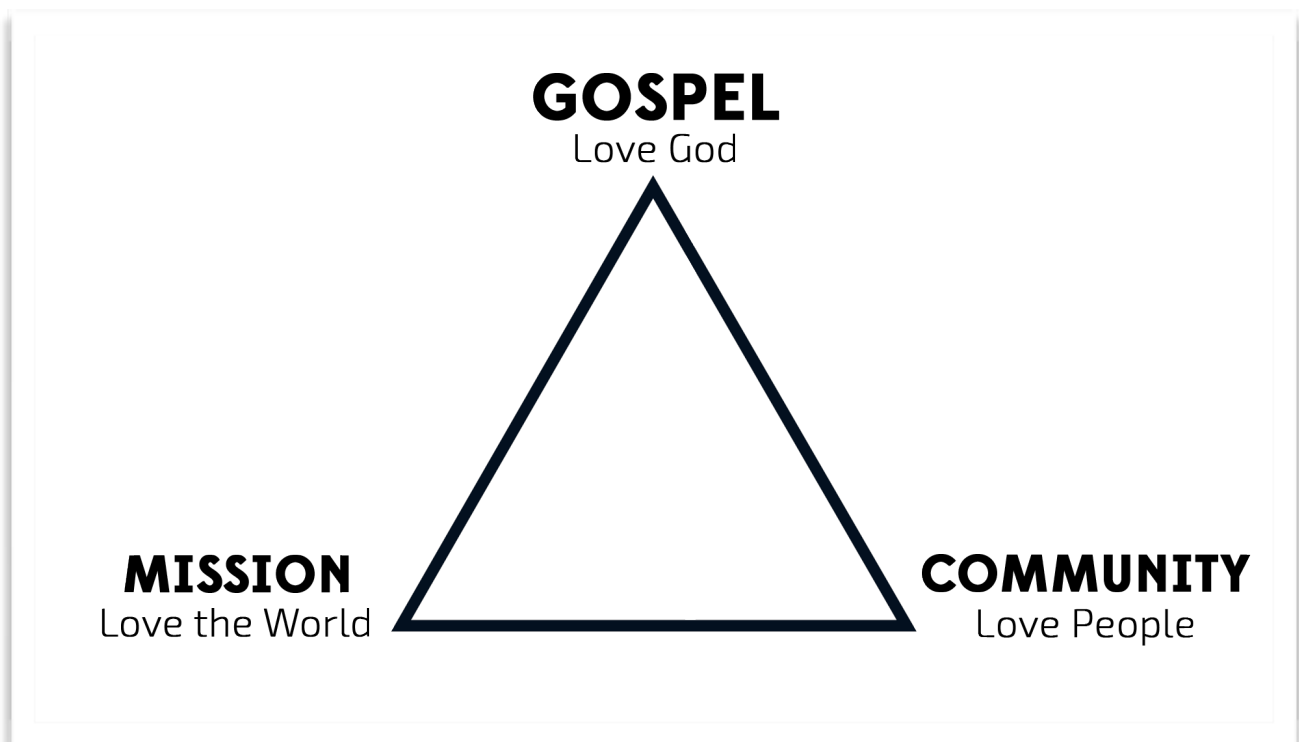
WELCOME TO FIRST**STEP!**

FIRST STEP OVERVIEW

- SESSION 1: MY NEW LIFE (page 3)
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SESSION 1: MY NEW LIFE

Our goal for the next four sessions is to discover what a healthy life of a disciple of Jesus looks like, specifically within the context of The Bridge Church.



3 VALUES | 6 APPLICATIONS | 9 HEALTHY HABITS

THREE VALUES

1. GOSPEL (LOVE GOD)
2. COMMUNITY (LOVE PEOPLE)
3. MISSION (LOVE THE WORLD)

SIX APPLICATIONS

LOVE GOD: GATHERINGS

1. ATTEND ONE
2. SERVE AT ONE

LOVE PEOPLE: MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

3. ATTEND ONE
4. LEAD ONE

LOVE THE WORLD

5. BRING OTHERS IN
6. GO OUT

NINE HEALTHY HABITS

LOVE GOD: A LIFE OF DEVOTION

1. BIBLE READING
2. PRAYER
3. WORSHIP

LOVE PEOPLE: IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

4. FELLOWSHIP
5. ACCOUNTABILITY
6. FORGIVENESS

LOVE THE WORLD: CATCHING GOD'S HEART OF THE LOST

7. EVANGELISM
8. SERVING THE NEEDY
9. GENEROSITY

BAPTISM: WHAT'S THE BIG D.E.A.L?

BAPTISM IS A BEAUTIFUL DEMONSTRATION OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV)

having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Colossians 2:12 ESV)

BAPTISM IS AN OBVIOUS EXPECTATION JESUS HAS FOR HIS FOLLOWERS

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19 ESV)

So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:41 ESV)

But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12 ESV)

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. (Acts 18:8 ESV)

And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.' (Acts 22:16 ESV)

BAPTISM IS A RADICAL AMPLIFICATION OF A CHRISTIAN'S COMMITMENT TO JESUS

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3:27 ESV)

BAPTISM IS A POWERFUL SIGN OF LIBERATION IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN.

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:3-4 ESV)

GROUP DISCUSSION:

Did anything in the video encourage you? If so, what?

Did anything in the video challenge you?

Which one of our three values sticks out to you the most?

Have you been baptized? Tell your story. If you have not, what questions do you still have?

How are you hoping to grow in the rest of First Step?

SESSION 2: A LIFE OF DEVOTION

VALUE #1: GOSPEL (LOVE GOD)

And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27 ESV)

APPLICATIONS 1-2

1. REGULARLY ATTEND A GATHERING TO KNOW THE GOSPEL
2. SERVE AT A GATHERING TO HELP NEIGHBORS HEAR THE GOSPEL

What is the GOSPEL?

God, through the perfect life, atoning death, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, rescues all his people from the wrath of God into peace with God, with a promise of the full restoration of his created order forever—all to the praise of the glory of His grace.

HEALTHY HABITS 1-3

HABIT #1 | BIBLE READING: ENGAGING GOD’S WORD

But he answered, “It is written, “‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” (Matthew 4:4 ESV)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105 ESV)

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (James 1:22 ESV)

- LEARN FROM THE BIBLE (GATHERINGS, MISSIONAL COMMUNITY)
- LISTEN TO THE BIBLE (ONLINE, PHONE, AUDIO)
- READ THE BIBLE ON YOUR OWN (YOUVERSION READING PLANS)
- MEDITATE ON VERSES OF THE BIBLE
- MEMORIZE VERSES OF THE BIBLE. (START WITH JOHN 3:16)
- OBEY THE BIBLE

READING THE BIBLE ON YOUR OWN USING FOUR QUESTIONS

1. **WHO IS GOD?** THE FIRST STEP IS ALWAYS TO SEE WHAT THE TEXT IS TELLING US ABOUT GOD. WE TEND TO SEE OURSELVES FIRST IN THE TEXT, AND TO ASK WHAT THE TEXT IS TELLING US TO DO. BUT THE BIBLE IS NOT ABOUT YOU! THE BIBLE IS NOT PRIMARILY AN INSTRUCTION MANUAL SO THAT YOU AND I CAN LIVE A MORE VIRTUOUS LIFE; RATHER, THE BIBLE IS THE TRUE STORY OF GOD'S WORK IN HISTORY TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE FROM SLAVERY TO SIN AND THE PENALTY OF DEATH, RESTORE THEM TO FRIENDSHIP WITH HIMSELF, AND SECURE FOR THEM AN ETERNITY OF MUTUAL ENJOYMENT IN A RESTORED UNIVERSE. THAT'S THE STORY THE BIBLE IS TELLING, AND WE NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO IT. SO START WHERE THE BIBLE STARTS, WITH GOD.
2. **WHAT HAS GOD DONE?** IN ADDITION TO SEEING WHAT THE TEXT TELLS US ABOUT GOD, WE ALSO WANT TO READ TO SEE WHAT THE TEXT TELLS US ABOUT THE ACTION OF GOD. GOD REVEALS HIMSELF IN HIS SPEAKING AND IN HIS ACTING, AND WE DO WELL TO PAY ATTENTION TO BOTH WHAT HE SAYS AND WHAT HE DOES. IN PARTICULAR, WE WANT TO SEE WHAT THE TEXT TELLS US ABOUT GOD'S SAVING WORK, MOST IMPORTANTLY IN AND THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. IN LUKE 24, JESUS SAYS THAT THE WHOLE BIBLE IS ABOUT HIMSELF, AND IN PARTICULAR ABOUT THE NEED FOR HIM TO SUFFER AND DIE FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD. EVERY STORY IN THE BIBLE IS POINTING TO JESUS: HIS PERFECT LIFE, SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH, AND GLORIOUS RESURRECTION. JESUS FULFILLS EVERY COMMAND, INTERPRETS EVERY INSTRUCTION, EMBODIES ALL TRUTH, BRINGS TO SINNERS THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACIOUS PROMISES, AND EMPOWERS A LIFE OF RESPONSIVE OBEDIENCE. SO AGAIN, BEFORE YOU GET TO QUESTIONS OF PERSONAL ACTION, LOOK FOR THE REAL ACTION OF THE STORY: JESUS!
3. **WHO ARE WE?** THE WORK OF GOD IN HISTORY IN JESUS CHRIST HAS CREATED A NEW HUMANITY, A NEW COMMUNITY, A NEW KIND OF PEOPLE. THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO LIVE BY FAITH, TRUSTING IN THE FINISHED WORK OF JESUS IN THEIR PLACE, AND WALKING LIFE IN FREEDOM OF GRACE, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE BIBLE IS FILLED WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT THE IDENTITY AND PRIVILEGES OF THESE "SAVED BY GRACE" PEOPLE. AS YOU READ, PAY ATTENTION TO THESE INDICATIVES AND WHAT IS SAID TO BE TRUE OF THOSE WHO LIVE BY FAITH.

GOD WANTS YOU TO SEE AND REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE THROUGH JESUS MUCH MORE THAN HE WANTS YOU BUSY DOING GOOD THINGS. THERE ARE LOTS OF GOOD THINGS TO DO, BUT DON'T MISS OUT ON ALL THE RICHES OF YOUR NEW IDENTITY AND RESOURCES IN CHRIST!4.

4. **WHAT SHOULD WE DO?** FINALLY, AS YOU READ AND STUDY THE BIBLE, YOU'LL FIND PLENTY OF INSTRUCTIONS, DIRECTIONS, AND COMMANDS. ULTIMATELY, THEY FALL IN TWO CATEGORIES: LOVE GOD AND LOVE OTHERS. JESUS SAID THAT THESE TWO COMMANDS SUM UP ALL THE COMMANDS, AND WHOEVER LOVES GOD AND LOVES OTHERS FULFILLS ALL THE COMMANDS. BUT TRUE LOVE FOR GOD AND TRUE LOVE FOR NEIGHBOR IS ALWAYS THE OUTFLOW OF A LIFE FIXATED ON THE GRACE OF GOD GIVEN IN JESUS. THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE GOOD, RIGHT, AND TRUE, BUT ONLY THE GOSPEL EMPOWERS FAITH-FILLED, SACRIFICIAL, RESPONSIVE OBEDIENCE. AS YOU READ, LISTEN FOR HOW THE SPIRIT SPEAKS TO YOU, DIRECTS YOUR THOUGHTS, AND LEADS YOU TO ACTION. SURRENDER TO WHAT THE SPIRIT SHOWS YOU, AND IN REPENTANCE AND REJOICING, ACT ON HIS DIRECTIVES.

HABIT #2 | PRAYING: COMMUNICATING WITH GOD

And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. (Mark 1:35 ESV)

Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. (Jeremiah 33:3 ESV)

do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6 ESV)

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6:9-13 ESV)

WHEN YOU PRAY:

A- ADORATION - FATHER, I PRAISE YOU FOR _____

C- CONFESSION - FATHER, MY SIN IS _____

T- THANKSGIVING - FATHER, I THANK YOU FOR _____

S- SUPPLICATION - FATHER, I NEED _____

HABIT #3 | WORSHIP: ENJOYING GOD

"Worship is our response, both personal and corporate, to God for who He is, and what He has done; expressed in and by the things we say and the way we live." (Louie Giglio)

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150:6 ESV)

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1 ESV)

Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. (Malachi 3:8 ESV)

WORSHIP IS ALL OF LIFE.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. What in the video teaching encouraged you? What in the video teaching challenged you?
2. Which of the first three healthy habits do you struggle with the most? Why? Which one do you feel like you do the best at?
3. Practice. Read 1 Peter 2:4-12 and work through the four questions for Bible study together.
4. Practice. After working through the four questions, pray together using the ACTS acrostic. You can write out your prayer on a piece of paper.

SESSION 3: IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

VALUE #2: COMMUNITY (LOVE PEOPLE)

And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:39 ESV)

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35 ESV)

APPLICATIONS 3-4

3. ATTEND A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY TO KNOW AND BE KNOWN BY OTHERS
4. LEAD A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

HEALTHY HABITS 4-6

HABIT #4 | FELLOWSHIP: QUALITY TIME WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47 ESV)

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV)

Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” (1 Corinthians 15:33 ESV)

HABIT #5 | ACCOUNTABILITY: BEING REAL WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another. (Proverbs 27:17 ESV)

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16 ESV)

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 ESV)

HABIT #6 | FORGIVENESS: TRUSTING GOD WITH OUR PAIN

When we refuse to forgive someone, it's like drinking POISON and expecting the other person to die. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:31-32 ESV)

"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; (Luke 6:37 ESV)

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. (Matthew 18:21-22 ESV)

FORGIVING SOMEONE DOESN'T MEAN WE WILL WANT TO SPEND OUR VACATION WITH THEM, BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT WE RELEASE THE BITTERNESS IN OUR HEARTS CONCERNING WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.

A REFUSAL TO FORGIVE MEANS THAT WE WANT TO COPE WITH OUR PROBLEMS IN OUR OWN STRENGTH INSTEAD OF RELYING ON GOD'S STRENGTH.

- ASK: WHO DO I NEED TO FORGIVE?
- ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO RELEASE THE BITTERNESS.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- What in the video teaching encouraged you? What in the video teaching challenged you?
- Which of the healthy habits do you struggle with the most? Why? Which one do you feel like you do the best at?
- Discuss. Who are you currently in fellowship with? Why is it important?
- Discuss. Who are you currently accountable to? Why is this important?
- Discuss. Are you involved in a Missional Community? Would you like to be?
- Discuss. Where do you struggle with forgiveness?
- If you have time, which verse from the teaching impacted you the most? Work through it using the four questions from session 2 and pray together.

SESSION 4: CATCHING GOD'S HEART FOR THE LOST

VALUE #3: MISSION (LOVE THE WORLD)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17 ESV)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20 ESV)

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:35-40 ESV)

APPLICATIONS 5-6

- 5. BRINGING OTHERS IN
- 6. GOING OUT HEALTHY

HABIT #7 EVANGELISM: BEING A WITNESS BY TELLING OTHERS ABOUT JESUS

And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. (Mark 16:15 ESV)

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, (1 Peter 3:15 ESV)

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" (Romans 10:13-15 ESV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8 ESV)

TELLING OTHERS ABOUT JESUS IN FOUR STEPS

1. I ONCE WAS
2. I NOW AM
3. I STILL NEED JESUS BECAUSE...
4. WOULD LIKE FOR YOU TO FOLLOW JESUS WITH ME.

HABIT #8 | SERVE THE NEEDY: BEING A WITNESS BY SHOWING OTHERS GOD'S LOVE

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16 ESV)

learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. (Isaiah 1:17 ESV)

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27 ESV)

SERVE THE NEEDY AT THE BRIDGE: MISSIONAL COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES, OUTREACH INITIATIVES, GET INVOLVED IN A NON-PROFIT, HAITI, BANGKOK, LIBERIA.

HABIT #9 | GENEROSITY: THE WAY TO GET OUT IS TO GIVE

THE POINT IS THIS:

whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. (2 Corinthians 9:6-11 ESV)

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Timothy 6:10 ESV)

GIVING OF YOUR FINANCES IS **RETURNING** TO GOD WHAT IS ALREADY HIS. GIVING TITHES DISPLAYS OUR GENEROSITY AND COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH. GIVING **OFFERINGS** DISPLAYS OUR GENEROSITY AND COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH MISSIONS AND MEETING OF NEEDS.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- What in the video teaching encouraged you? What in the video teaching challenged you?
- Which of the healthy habits do you struggle with the most? Why? Which one do you feel like you do the best at?
- Which verse from the teaching speaks to you the most today? Discuss why.
- Practice: Use “Telling Others about Jesus” as a guide to write out your story to tell others about Jesus.
- Discuss. What are ways that you can serve the needy?
- Discuss: Is your attitude on getting or giving?
- Hand out GOSPEL GIVING article for review
- Thank you for finishing First Step. Take a moment to review and discuss what has impacted you most in the four sessions together.
- What is next for you?
- Pray together.