

L E A D E R ' S G U I D E

The *Holy Life* Bible Study Series

THE JOURNEY WITHIN:

Learning to Live the Holy Life

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BOOK 2

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Introduction

If you have not already completed reading the introductory material for book 1 of *The Holy Life Bible Study Series*, it is suggested that you go back and read that now as it will not be repeated for each book.

Preparing to Teach

Class leader, keep the following guidelines in mind as you prepare to teach this Bible study series:

- Read each book in its entirety before you begin the group study.
- Read this leader's guide in its entirety to get a feel for the general direction of the book study.
- Think of any teaching resources you will need for each individual session, such as a whiteboard, chart paper, markers, overhead projector, 3" x 5" cards, Post-it notes, and so forth.
- Think of students in your class you need to contact ahead of time to secure their permission to use personal stories or to get them to share their personal testimonies.
- Outline each lesson plan in your own words or map it on your own paper so you will feel a sense of direction for each session.
- Pray for the direction of the Holy Spirit: (1) in the way you prepare; (2) in what you say in class; (3) in the way you respond to comments or questions by class members; (4) in the way you give time for the Spirit to speak to class members' hearts as the session progresses.

Using This Guide

This leader's guide is simply that—a guide. It suggests key points, lines of thought, discussion questions, personal reflection times, and a variety of other exercises to enhance your class time. Use the suggestions from this guide however you find them helpful, and devise your own plan if you wish. Expand the amount of time devoted to activities you think will work well in your group, and feel free to delete activities you think may not work so well.

The key is to engage class members in material from the book and to help them find ways to apply it to their own lives. This study can change lives—not because the ideas from the book are so unique or rich, but because as the students read God's Word it will give the Holy Spirit the opportunity to direct them.

I designed this study guide to call attention to additional ideas and to enhance the thoughts expressed in the textbook and to encourage you to address certain concepts or discussion questions. I have not created an entire time-usage plan for each session. Rather, I have endeavored to furnish more than enough material to work with in the Bible, the textbook, and this leader's guide so that you can design a lesson plan based on what works best for your group. Have fun with it!

I start many of the leader's guides with a "Background Check" where I place cross-referenced material from *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*, *Coffee Shop Theology*, *More Coffee Shop Theology*, and *Dis-*

mantling the Myths. This material, along with the material in the Bible study books, furnishes plenty of information to lead a lively group discussion.

Each study is filled with references to Scripture. It may not be possible, given your time limitations, to read all of the passages aloud during each week's study session. However, provide opportunity during each group session to read some of the scriptures aloud. God enlivens His Word to the hearts of hearers better when it is read aloud than when we simply refer to it by chapter and verse. Assuming everyone will have studied the weekly focus scripture thoroughly before coming to the study session, this should be a time of review for everyone.

Each study has several sections of "Group Discussion." Encourage class members to write their thoughts as they read the material prior to coming to the Bible study session. If the space provided is not adequate for members to record their thoughts, encourage them to write their responses in a notebook. A three-ring binder works well and allows class members to add new material as desired. Remind the participants to bring their notebooks with them when they come to class and to be prepared to share their answers with the entire group.

Each study also has space devoted to "Personal Reflection." These questions and exercises are more private. Never call on a class member to publicly give his or her response to one of these exercises. You may ask if a volunteer wishes to share with the group or you may share your own answers to these questions. Take care to not embarrass class members by asking for more information than their comfort levels allow.

Each study has at least one "Group Activity." These are important to encourage your group members to interact with one another in different ways and should be fun and lively. You can make the activities competitive or a group project. Either way, encourage everyone to participate. Participants will remember more of what they have studied if they go over the material in class in unique ways and take an active part.

Each study closes with a section called "For Further Study." Here's your opportunity to cross-reference the Scripture lesson for the week with other passages in the Bible. Please remind folks that the themes we study are not simply found in one location in the Bible. They are themes that thread their way throughout Scripture. Martin Luther taught the important Bible study method of letting Scripture interpret Scripture. That is, one of the best ways to learn the meaning of a passage of Scripture is to read other scriptures that discuss the same topic. Many study Bibles use this approach. Teach your class members to use this method of study and apply it to this Bible study series.

Remember to take time at the end of each study for students to write additional questions or discussion ideas on 3" x 5" cards and place them in the Odds and Ends box. You'll discuss these questions at the end of each book in this series of studies.

Presentation Ideas

One of the keys to good discussion is variety. Don't always present material from the book in lecture form, and don't always conduct a discussion by asking a question for the group to answer. There are a variety of presentation ideas throughout the study series that can usually be found in the Group Activity section. If you find that your group responds well to certain activities, make a note of these and use them again from time to time. Just don't wear out a good activity through overuse!

The following is a list of suggestions of group activities.

1. If you wish to use an alternate method to simply having an open-group discussion, you might give each class member two or more (depending on the number of questions being answered) large Post-it notes. Ask group members to write their answers to your questions on their Post-it notes. Then, let them stick their answers on a large piece of poster board with the main idea of the question written on it. You may also simply write the main idea of the question on a chalk or white board and post their responses below it. The leader can then read all of the answers and lead a discussion.
2. Divide your students into small groups—one group for each question you will ask. Assign each group one of the questions. Allow discussion time, then let each small group present its answer to the larger body.
3. Give each class member two 3" x 5" cards. Ask them to write their answers to the questions in a particular section on each of these cards and drop their cards in a basket or box. Read each answer out loud and lead a discussion from students' answers.
4. Take two sheets of paper and type a sentence starter on each of them. An example of a sentence starter is "The most important idea I learned from this passage of Scripture is . . ." Have your class members sit in two rows. Pass one sheet down each row and have students write their personal answers to the question coming down their row. Collect the two sheets and read the responses.
5. Put the four key words of your Bible study for the week in large letters across the top of a whiteboard at the front of the classroom. Give each class member four Post-it notes. Ask them to write the way each of these concepts applies to their hearts or lives on their Post-it notes. When everyone has finished writing, have class members place their Post-it notes under the words on the board to which they apply. Read all responses.
6. One week before this class session, ask four class members to serve on a panel to present their answers to a particular section of questions. Give them the questions in advance so they can prepare their responses. During class time, you read the questions and let panel members answer them.
7. An alternate method to having a whole-group discussion on a particular subject such as "consecration" is to place the words "Reasons I should consecrate" in a circle in the middle of a large piece of poster board. Then draw six lines out from the circle like spokes on a bicycle wheel. On another sheet of poster board place the words "Difficulties to consecration" in a circle in the middle. Draw six lines out from the circle as you did before. Divide your class into two groups and have them write responses to these questions on the lines coming from the circle. You, as the group leader, can then read all of the responses at the conclusion of the exercise.
 - a. The most important reason I should consecrate myself to God is . . .
 - b. The most difficult thing about consecrating to God is . . .
8. A good visual aid for the material in a particular lesson can assist in your presentation of it. For example, place each of the five key words describing the Holy Spirit on five large sheets of poster paper. Place one word at the top of each sheet. List the concepts that explain

each word under the key words. Use a different color marker for each key word. Tape these to a chalkboard or on the wall for presentation. You may also do the same thing with a PowerPoint presentation using a computer and projector.

9. Rather than lecturing on the week's material, present the information in the form of the *Jeopardy* television game show. Begin reading characteristics of one of the key concepts. Have students raise their hands when they think they know which one you are talking about. They answer in the form of a question, such as, "What is a bush?" [the thing that caught Moses' attention in the desert].
10. This takes a little extra work, but it brings variety to your presentation. Write 10 questions and answers from your presentation material. Type a question on a note card; type the answer on another note card. Do this 10 times for each question and answer. You may also position the questions and answers in sections on your computer screen, print as many sets as you need onto card stock paper, and cut them out. Shuffle the cards and let the Bible study group match the questions with the correct answers. It's more fun to make two sets, divide the class into two groups, and see which group can complete the activity first.

New Testament Snapshots of Holiness

Preparing for This Study

It is my sincere hope that you enjoyed book 1 of this series. You will probably want to use the same process for book 2 that you used to develop the studies in the previous series of Bible studies.

This week's study simply gives a thumbnail sketch of the concept of holiness in the New Testament. Various Scripture passages are referenced throughout the Gospels and two of Paul's Epistles. This study sets the stage for more detailed studies in the weeks to come.

Pay close attention to the material regarding timing for our holiness on page 6. Zechariah says the time is now. Even though the questions on page 8 come from a Personal Reflection activity, you may want to spend time with your entire group discussing questions 3 and 4. A proper understanding of this material is essential to grasping the key elements of holiness doctrine.

Place strong emphasis on the last paragraph found at the bottom of page 8 and top of page 9. We must do our part to make ourselves available for God to sanctify us. Spend ample time with all of the Group Discussion questions on page 9. All are important to an understanding of holiness. During the discussion of questions 1 and 2, you may want to mention that this is the reason Christians frequently oppose such things as smoking, recreational drug usage, and pornography.

Answers to question 1 on page 10 might be such things as examples of bad habits, attitudes, and sinful actions. Answers to question 2 might be such things as reading the Bible, praying, attending church, listening to Christian music, reading Christian literature, and witnessing.

Book 2 does not include the reminder at the end of each chapter to place additional questions in the Odds and Ends box. We will give consideration to them in the last session of this series just as we did in book 1. Be sure to include this exercise at the end of each session.

Close your session with prayer.

Another Counselor

Background Check

Read chapter 7 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. It will give you additional information on the Holy Spirit. Give attention to the discussion questions at the end of the chapter. Material in chapters 2 through 4 of *Dismantling the Myths* will help with the discussion of our culture.

Preparing for This Study

Even though the activity on page 11 is a Personal Reflection, all three questions are worth consideration by the entire group. Encourage classmates to share general answers if they do not wish to give their personal views.

Conclude the Group Discussion on page 13 with the observation that the Holy Spirit brings us the presence of the living Christ. He comes to stand beside us and help us every day.

Be sure and call attention to question 1 on page 14. Christianity is unique among religions of the world. This Bible study series is sprinkled with the observation that being a Christian can be like participating in an extreme sport. Extreme sport enthusiasts say they get an adrenaline rush from participating in activities that are unique or out of the ordinary. We're living in vital union with the Creator of the universe. What could be more unique than that? You have the opportunity to get advice and help from the One who knows everything there is to know about everything! That's extreme!

Question 2 won't take a lot of time. However, it is an interesting concept to consider. How does God speak to our minds without an audible voice? Point out in question 4 that the Holy Spirit's ministry brings peace to the Christian's heart that the world cannot give. Take time to explore what that peace is and how it helps us on a regular basis.

The thrust of the questions on page 15 calls attention to the reminder that the Holy Spirit works through us. We accomplish nothing by our own efforts.

Use the material at the bottom of page 15 to emphasize the prevenient grace of God going before us in bringing us to conversion. Remind the class participants that He does this for every person who comes into the world.

The discussion of culture, beginning at the bottom of page 16, is extremely important. Spend ample time considering the concepts. My analysis of culture in chapters 2 through 4 of *Dismantling the Myths* may be helpful in preparing for this discussion. It is important to understand these ideas if we are to live holy lives in our current postmodern society. Be sure to emphasize God's objective truth—something the world tries hard to forget. Whether society likes it or not, God's perspective on all subjects is correct and true.

There are two ideas discussed on page 17 regarding “things yet to come.” The passage can be taken one of two ways. I think most of us receive God’s help more in preparing for each new day than in revealing the future to us.

Remember to end this session with an opportunity for class members to write their remaining questions on cards for the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

A Big Event for Your Big Adventure

Background Check

Read chapter 5 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Give attention to the discussion questions at the end of the chapter.

Preparing for This Study

Explore in more detail the interesting concept mentioned on page 20 regarding the emotional roller coaster Jesus' disciples rode during the last days of His ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and parting words. With your class, think through each of these events and the ways the disciples would have felt and might have reacted.

Questions 1 and 2 at the bottom of page 20 are more for the sake of curiosity than doctrinal importance. We will never know a definitive answer to either question until we get to heaven. It's fun, however, to think about these things. Questions 3 and 4, on the other hand, offer important ideas for theological discussion. It's interesting that the God of the universe chooses to do much of His work and accomplish many of His purposes through individual believers and the church. Why?

Even though question 3 on page 22 is a Personal Reflection activity, it's important for a general group discussion. I think we are sometimes too hard on those first disciples. Remember that we have the tremendous advantage of seeing a much broader picture from a fuller perspective than they had. They experienced the events firsthand and had very little time or distance from those events to put them in perspective.

Take time to explore both questions on page 23. Each one gives insight into the connection between the Old Testament and the new covenant.

Close the presentation portion of this study by discussing the lasting results of Pentecost for the Church.

Remember to end this session with an opportunity for class members to write their remaining questions on cards for the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

A Call to Holiness

Background Check

Read chapter 6 in *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Give attention to the discussion questions at the end of the chapter.

Preparing for This Study

I've studied this passage of Scripture since my seminary days, but I haven't written much on it before now. This is an extremely interesting study. I attended a course at seminary to study the Book of Romans. The class met four days a week for one hour. At the end of the semester, we had reached the end of chapter 8! That's how rich this book is.

Bear in mind, the entire Book of Romans is one, long analysis of God's plan of salvation for us. Today's study breaks into the middle of the analysis. Even though this material is heavy at times, I urge you to stick with it. It's worth the extra effort to understand Paul's line of logic. Make sure the class participants are grasping the main ideas. Take it slow and repeat the main ideas if necessary.

Take time to discuss each of the questions on page 27. They are all important to an overall understanding of holiness.

The questions on page 29 are part of the Personal Reflection activity. However, find a way to discuss them with the entire class. Especially important are questions 2 through 4.

Get your class involved in considering questions 2 and 3 on page 30. If folks grasp the concept that they are serving a master whether they realize it or not, it may help them choose to make Christ their master.

Find ways to illustrate our being "slaves to God" from question 6 on page 31. Concrete examples will help the participants see how this is accomplished on a daily basis.

End your session with an opportunity for additional questions to be placed in the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

Needed: Heart Cleansing

Background Check

Prior to coming to the class session, read up on the Old Testament references at the bottom of page 32 and top of page 33. This will help you see how the Holy Spirit worked with Old Testament disciples of God. David has an incredible understanding of his need for God's cleansing work in his life. He offers important insights for us in the New Testament era.

Preparing for This Study

Carefully explore questions 1 and 2 on page 35 with your group. Once people understand when and how actions become sinful, they are in a better position to avoid them. Questions 3 and 4 consider the sinfulness of human nature and how external measures do not solve the problem.

Notice on page 36 David's awareness of a double problem with sin. The three questions at the bottom of the page will help your group see the need for a heart cleansing.

How was David ahead of his time in understanding the need for heart cleansing? Point out the greater insight we who live in the New Testament era have regarding this need and God's provision for it. Ask class members to share in their own words the biblical concepts of (1) a clean heart, (2) a right spirit, (3) a sense of God's Holy Spirit living within them.

As with each of the previous sessions, end with an opportunity for additional questions to be placed in the Odds and Ends box for consideration in the last session.

Close your session with prayer.

My Consecration

Background Check

Read pages 37 through 40 and 79 and 80 in *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*.

Preparing for This Study

This is an important passage of scripture and an important spiritual concept for Christians to grasp. God does His part in giving us the gift of entire sanctification, but He expects us to do our part as well. That's the subject of this study.

You may wish to spend a great deal of time with the discussion questions on pages 40 and 41. Each is important in its own way.

Take time to emphasize the importance of the Personal Reflection exercise on page 42. Of course, it's a very individual matter but an essential one for the spiritual journey of growth in holiness. You may wish to have a time of silence in class for members to think about their own personal responses to this question.

Questions 1 and 2 on page 42 are especially significant. I talk with many believers who do not understand the difference between repentance and consecration. You will do your class members a favor by making sure they can clarify this distinction. When we think of our consecration as a thank offering, the emphasis shifts from what we are giving up to what we are giving to God. That's an important distinction.

As you discuss the material on pages 43 and 44, you might wish to give illustrations such as the one found at the bottom of page 37 in *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Question 2 on page 44 is a central question for this week's study. Take all the time you need for your class to process answers.

Explore what Paul means by having the mind of Christ. I mentioned this concept on page 44, but it could be developed more fully in discussion. Think of all the ways the mind of Christ can manifest itself in our lives on a daily basis.

The Personal Reflection exercise on page 45 is another example of a series of questions that may be too personal to share individual answers. However, your group will benefit from considering the topics.

Close your session with prayer.

God's Gift of Sanctification

Background Check

Read chapter 13 in *More Coffee Shop Theology* and chapters 2, 7, 8, and 9 of *Dismantling the Myths*.

Preparing for This Study

This is one of the most important studies of this book. Make sure your students fully understand the concepts presented.

The idea of the single purpose referenced in question 1 on page 47 is central to the definition of holiness. Our lives are to will one thing—God's will. Question 2 points out the difference between the rules and regulations of humanity and those of God. We must never fall into the trap of thinking we can disregard the regulations of God in the same manner we may choose not to follow human ideas.

Spend adequate time on question 4 on page 47. If people understand why God desires our sanctification, they are more likely to seek it.

The Group Discussion section on page 49 brings us back to an analysis of popular culture. This is the point for the material in chapter 2 of *Dismantling the Myths*. You may also find helpful strategies for addressing question 5 in chapters 7 through 9 of the same book.

The biblical concept of sanctification is addressed in the middle of page 50. Give examples of things we set apart for special usage in the church (i.e., the offering plates, the Communion table, etc.). We do not use these for serving at a potluck dinner. In the same way, God calls us to set ourselves apart for Him and His service. Give attention to questions 1 through 3 on page 51.

The concept of blamelessness takes us back to book 1, chapter 8. You might review some of the highlights of that chapter with your group at this point. Give attention to question 4 on page 51.

Discuss all of the group discussion questions on page 52. A question was omitted from the section. Here it is: What is the significance of God making this gift good until the second coming of Christ?

Here is an additional group activity.

Group Activity

Close this session with a testimony time in which all class members are encouraged to share personal experiences of receiving God's gift of sanctification. Invite those who have not received this gift from God to talk with the group leader or another class member to get answers to questions. Offer to pray with any who wish to receive God's gift of sanctification.

Allow time for students to contribute to the Odds and Ends box at the close of the session.

Close your session with prayer.

The Forerunner

Preparing for This Study

When you reach the discussion questions on page 55, take plenty of time to consider each of them. They are all important.

Question 3 gives us a lot to think about. Sometimes people confuse hindrances with sinful practices. Some things may be morally neutral in and of themselves but hinder spiritual progress. For example, people can get so caught up in following the win/loss record of a variety of sports teams that they neglect Bible reading and church attendance. Or they can be consumed by a hobby that takes all of their extra time and money, allowing the hobby to take God's place in their hearts.

Question 4 in this section places emphasis on the way sin weighs us down and slowly destroys. Give examples of how this happens and why.

Some of your best time will be spent on question 5 as you consider techniques for resisting temptation. Take time to write all of the techniques down. Type them up and give them to the class next week. We don't often think about such techniques, but when we do we realize that God provides us all we need to resist Satan's suggestions. Remember, that's all they are—suggestions.

When I wrote question 6 at the top of page 56, I was thinking of the Bible, good Christian literature, and other believers. You may think of other examples.

When you get to question 2 on page 57, realize that there's been a debate among believers for many years about whether Jesus was actually tempted when He lived on this earth. Those who say He was not really tempted hang their argument on the fact that Jesus was God and God cannot be tempted to do wrong. Those who say He was tempted believe He had to feel the full effect of what we experience in order to identify with us. So have some fun with this question, but don't spend too much time on it. You probably won't reach a definitive conclusion.

Read verses 11 through 14 of this passage of Scripture and work the material in as background for the next section of the Scripture study.

I've included the rich imagery of the Bible in the material on pages 58 and 59. Spend time with each image and explore what it teaches us about ourselves, our need, and how God helps us.

Group Discussion questions 1 through 3 on page 59 may be an opportunity for a member of your Bible study group to give his or her testimony of a time in his or her spiritual journey that giving up seemed the best way out of a stressful situation. Have this person share how he or she got on the other side of the problem and what lessons were learned.

Question 4 at the bottom of page 59 gives you an opportunity to remind the class of the many ways righteous living leads to peace and how the opposite is also true. That is, sinful living brings discomfort and dissatisfaction. A righteous life is the best way to live, for many important reasons.

Expound on this thought with examples from the experiences of people you have known across the years.

Remind class members as you consider question 7 on page 60 that others are watching our spiritual journey. We never live unto ourselves.

Allow time at the end of the session for questions to be placed in the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

Our Coach

Preparing for This Study

Begin your study session by asking the group to respond to the three questions on page 61. They offer insights that will get us started into today's passage of Scripture.

Question 2 on page 62 will give you an opportunity to explain why God is imaged as living in complete light. Discuss how this illustrates holiness, righteousness, and always doing the just thing. Contrast that with why people commit sinful deeds in darkness.

The material on page 63 is important. We live in a day when some believers want to make excuses for continually making sinful choices. This passage does not allow for the habitual practice of sinful acts or attitudes. However, we cannot fall into the trap of going too far in the other direction. That is, set the bar so high that we refuse to admit we have sinned even when we have. John allows for such failures on an unplanned and infrequent basis. Note this distinction with your class, and discuss ways to keep the lines clean between them.

You might want to do a role-playing session with question 2 on page 63. Ask a class member to play the part of a believer who claims to be following Christ while at the same time living a sinful lifestyle. Show how John speaks against such faulty logic.

Also make sure all of your class members understand the connection in question 3 on page 63 between the blood of Jesus and our fellowship with God. Jesus paid a high price for this fellowship. We must never forget it.

You might want to explore the idea presented in question 6 on page 65. Some believers get a superior or "holier-than-thou" attitude toward nonbelievers. Discuss why this is wrong and how to avoid it.

You should have a good discussion with the questions on page 66. Again, many people question the notion of living without sinning regularly. It's too much of a stretch for some people's thinking. Yet John certainly makes a case for it in the passage. Make sure everyone sees the difference in the two views presented in question 4.

Question 1 at the bottom of page 67 offers you a door to discuss the notion of daily direction from the Lord. Show how this can be a normal lifestyle for New Testament believers. People in the world have a hard time grasping the concept of vital fellowship with the Creator of the universe. But then, that's why I'm relating Christian living to an extreme sport. It's an amazing concept once you experience it in your own life. Never take this privilege for granted.

Take time at the end of the session to allow class members to place additional questions in the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

Life in the Spirit

Background Check

Read chapter 11 in *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Pay special attention to the questions at the end of the chapter. This material will give you an added perspective for this week's study.

Preparing for This Study

What a powerful passage of Scripture! This is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. You'll find enough freedom here for a lifetime of Christian living. The chapter begins with the word "therefore," which breaks the bondage discussed in Rom. 7. Chapter 8 is all about the contrasts between the old life without Christ and the new one with Him.

Begin the session with your group by discussing the ways our thinking and living change as we accept the fact that believers are now free from divine condemnation.

This entire study is a study in contrasts. The focus of each contrast is different, but the concepts are the same. One lifestyle pleases the flesh; the other pleases the Spirit. Spend ample time exploring each of the components of each way of life.

Each section of study ends with a personal reflection exercise that asks the reader to make a choice. You could list on a chalk or white board the reasons people choose the way of the flesh or the way of the Spirit in each of the categories. This will help set up the group activity on page 73.

Take time to discuss the six ideas found at the top of page 74 regarding the benefits of living our lives in the Spirit. Let me encourage you to structure your class time to consider the meaning of each of these. How do these manifest themselves in daily living? Then, discuss each of the discussion questions about these benefits at the bottom of page 74.

Allow time for students to place additional questions from this study in the Odds and Ends box. Close your session with prayer.

Growing in the Spirit

Background Check

Read chapter 19 in *More Coffee Shop Theology*. This material on the means of grace will give you additional background on ways God gives us to grow in His Spirit.

Preparing for This Study

This is another extremely important study regarding life in the Spirit. God certainly does His part in giving us the gift of salvation. He expects us to do our part in preparing or making ourselves available for Him to work in us.

Discuss each of the discussion questions on page 77 with your group. Give special attention to questions 3 and 6. All of the questions are important, but the responses to question 3 give class members tools for daily spiritual growth and the responses to question 6 indicate the result of those tools.

Don't go into detail looking at the various works of service in the passage. We'll consider that in book 3. The focus of this week's study of the passage is God's plan and provision for our spiritual growth and development. In other words, how does service fit into God's will for our lives and why does He want us to be involved in service? Each of the discussion questions on pages 78 and 79 will help you maintain this focus.

As you consider the material on page 79, think of examples of false teachings or false teachers who have tried to lead your church or you astray. Think of the persuasive arguments they use. Don't forget the influence of various radio and television spiritual teachers who fill the airwaves with false doctrine. The purpose of this study is not to trash these teachers as individuals but to expose their doctrines as error and guard against the destructive influence they may have on believers. Note the difference between false teachings that blow through the church by accident and those that are targeted for believers' failure.

Make time for all of the questions on page 80. Give special attention to question 4. Call attention to the importance of the authority of the Bible in all matters of doctrine. Also mention the understanding of other believers, Christian tradition, and the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

Question 7 may have a brief but important answer. The alternative to growth is not just stagnation; it's spiritual death. There's no place and no time for standing still in the Christian journey. We're either moving forward or sliding backward in our walk with God.

Allow time at the end of the session for class members to place additional questions in the Odds and Ends box.

Close your session with prayer.

Tying It All Together

Preparing for This Study

This is wrap-up time. If you have missed a week of study in the last three months, try and tie things together in one session. If you were able to meet each week, you then have the time to take two weeks with this material.

It's very possible that the material in this Bible study raised a lot of questions with plenty of discussion time. Check your Odds and Ends box. This is the time to address those lingering questions. As I said in this guide at the end of book 1, it's better to take a little extra time now than to move on to the next study with haunting questions still lingering in your students' minds.

This study gives you a chance to do a quick review of some of the most significant scripture passages encountered over the past 11 weeks. Review the material, discuss the questions presented in this week's material, and answer student questions from previous weeks. That should fill your time together easily.

After you have reviewed and clarified the material and all questions that students have raised, do the group activity starting at the bottom of page 87. This is an important wrap-up exercise.

Use the information in the "Moving On" section on page 88 to set your group up for the study of book 3 in this series. This next study concentrates on living lives of holiness together as a Christian community.

Close your session with prayer.