

Initial Laborer Training Group (LTG)

Leaders Guide

Who to Invite?

Someone who is...

1. following Jesus; fervently seeking to obey him
2. consistently doing outreach on his own
3. leading or helping to lead a small group or “mini-church” and following-up on people in his group

What is the group for?

For young laborers to...

- dialogue and receive instruction about personal ministry
- be introduced to the goals and principles of Jesus' life and be equipped to begin applying these principles to their own lives
- learn the basics of inductive Bible study in a simple and reproducible way and be challenged to develop a thorough understanding of Jesus life and the Bible
- develop intentional community--spurring each other on toward greater motivation, endurance, and obedience to Jesus and greater love for others
- develop a greater sense of mission and world-vision and an understanding of the promises that God has made to disciples

Group Standards

A Laborers Group must agree on group standards and traditions and must have a sense of excellence about everything they do. Below is a common list of group standards.

Every week members should...

- cultivate a discipleship relationship with a younger disciple or peer
- reach out to and share the message with someone outside our fellowship
- spend at least 3-5 hours studying the Bible (in addition to casual reading)
- memorize scripture regularly
- new members should memorize the JLT (Jesus' Life & Teachings) series

Leading Group Meetings

- **SAMPLE GROUP MEETING**

3 min	opening prayer
10 min	scripture memory review
30-40min	OPTION 1: personal ministry reports, issues, questions OPTION 2: teaching/training on a personal ministry topic
30-40min	Bible study discussion
3min	closing prayer
optional	team dinner and Lord's supper before or after
- Keep everything discussion oriented, not like a one-way teaching or sermon
- Set expectations for regular time each week in scripture memory and Bible study

- Choose Bible study topics from the Bible study curriculum provided as fits the needs and interests of the group. There is no particular order to follow.
- Keep the focus of the Bible study on laboring and helping others. At the end of each Bible study topic have everyone create a way of communicating what they learned from the study to someone else.
- Dedicate time each week to preparing something practical and thoughtful to share or discuss during the teaching/discussion time

Bible Study Curriculum

Scripture Memory

Jesus Life & Teachings Series (JLT)

Jesus' Life

Matthew 5-7	The character and attitude of a disciple
Matthew 10	Jesus' instructions on sending out the disciples (also Luke 10)
Matthew 13	What is the Kingdom of God and how does it grow?
John 1.1-34	Who is Jesus?
John 3	Why God send Jesus
John 4.1-42	Jesus' passion for outreach and how-to lessons
John 15.1-17	Maturing and bearing fruit as a disciple
John 17	How Jesus invested his life and what he prayed for

Letters

Philippians	A mature letter to a healthy church. What a disciple's life should be like.
1Thessalonians	Paul's example of caring for and teaching young disciples
1John	What it really means to follow Jesus, know God, & love God

Old Testament

Jonah	Academic knowledge of God vs. adopting God's attitude & character. God's heart for the nations.
-------	---

Topic & Character

Church	Demystifying traditions and understanding healthy community
Disciple	What is a disciple? What does a disciple do?
Giving	God's command to give. Principles and precedents for giving.
Holy Spirit	God's Spirit in us and in the world
Jesus' Return	A hope we all cherish (<i>focus on content from the gospels</i>)
John the Baptizer	Character of a zealous, selfless man. Transition from the Kingdom of Israel to the Kingdom of God.
Maturity	Understanding the goal of discipleship and how to get there
One Another	Jesus' instructions for community among disciples

OTHER

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman. An introduction to the goals and principles of Jesus' ministry.

Studying a Topic in the Bible

Define Your Purpose and Start Finding Scripture

- **DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE** for studying. What topic will you study? What do you want to discover? What questions do you have about this topic?
- **FIND RELEVANT SCRIPTURE.** Use Bible study software (E-Sword), websites (Bible Gateway), topical bibles (Nave’s or Torrey’s), a printed concordance (Strong’s), and your own knowledge of the Bible to make a list of scriptures relevant to your topic.

Examine and Record Observations

- **EXAMINE.** Bombard the text with questions (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?). What is the text actually saying in its context to the audience it was originally written to. Remember that observations cannot be argued with—they are observable facts.
- **RECORD.** Record a brief summary of your observations on each scripture as it relates to your topic. See the example below. Record any unanswered questions that you want to research later or ask others. You may think of possible life application as you examine the scriptures. Record these as well.

Sample Topical Study on *God’s Spirit*

PASSAGE	OBSERVATIONS
Gen 1.2	God’s Spirit hovering over the surface of the waters when earth still formless
Ex 28.3	God gave craftsmen “spirit of wisdom” to perform the work of the tabernacle (Q) <i>Is the “spirit of wisdom” different or more specific than the Holy Spirit?</i>
Num 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● God took the “Spirit which was upon Moses” and put it on 70 others so they could begin sharing in leadership with him● Moses wishes that the Lord would put His Spirit on all His people

Review & Summarize Observations

- **REVIEW AND CATEGORIZE** your observations. Categorize or outline your observations like in the example below

Sample Topical Study on *The Kingdom of God*

CATEGORY	KEY OBSERVATIONS
Entering the Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Requires repentance and obedience (Mat 3.2; 4.17; 5.20; 7.21-23; 1Cor 6.9)● Must become like a child, poor in spirit, humbled (Mat 3.2; 18.3; Mark 10.14-15; John 3.5)● Must forgive others (Mat 18.31; 6.14-15)● Many appear to be in the kingdom but are not. You can recognize them by the fruit of their life over time (Mat 13.24-30; Mat 7)● Not based on cultural or biological heritage (Mat 8.11; Luke 13.38-39)● Is not easy for anyone, especially the wealthy (Mat 19.15)● Only a few will enter (Luke 13.25-30)● Only God can cause someone to enter, not man (Mat 19.23); it is inherited not earned (Mat 25.34)
Advancing the Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reasoning about the kingdom. Persuading believers to repent and obey (Mat 4.17; 5.19; Acts 17.17; 19.8; 24.25)● Prayer (Mat 6.10)● Not simply “academic” knowledge but life change (1Cor 4.20)● Starts small and grows big over time (Mat 13 leaven/mustard seed)

- **SUMMARIZE** the major findings of your study in a short paragraph

Apply & Teach

- **APPLY.** Decide how the things you discovered in your study apply to your life. What would God have you do, change, or believe differently?
- **CREATE A WAY OF TEACHING** or discussing some of the things you learned from your study with someone else

Charting a Chapter (or section) of the Bible

One of the easiest ways to teach someone to study the Bible is to use the charting method. Charting is an easy way to grasp the flow and message of a passage and visually record observations. Many students prefer to use the charting method by hand at first, but it can also be done on a computer.

- 1) **Find the beginning and end of the passage**
- 2) **Initial observations.** Spend time reading the text and making observations on a scrap piece of paper or in your Bible. Once you feel you have a solid overview of the passage then begin charting the text.
- 3) **Identify the paragraphs**
- 4) **Recreate the text using phrasing and formatting.** The only thing that goes inside the chart is the text of the Bible itself. Most of your time should be spent in this step.

PHRASING. Breaking the text into phrases helps the student grasp the flow and overall message of the passage. To phrase the passage **(1)** break the text into phrases, **(2)** identify the main phrases or main points and place them all the way to the left of the chart, and **(3)** indent each secondary phrase to the right underneath the main phrase that it follows. See the example below from John 3.16-17

<p>For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• shall not perish• but have eternal life. <p>For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.</p>
--

FORMATTING. Use common ways of formatting text (underline, bold, all caps, colors, highlighting, etc.) to trace major themes through the passage. Once you identify a theme, choose a type of formatting to use. Then, use the same formatting each time the same theme appears in the passage. Some students also like to use bullets, numbers, and arrows to help make sense of the passage.

The goal of phrasing and formatting a passage is to make sense of the text in a simple and visual way. A new reader should be able to understand the passage more easily by reading the passage in your chart, than by simply reading it out of the Bible.

- 5) **Record supplementary observations in the margin** including word studies, cross references, and other notes
- 6) **Choose an overall title and a title for each paragraph.** The paragraph titles should be related to your overall title.
- 7) **Apply.** Decide how the things you discovered in your study apply to your life. What would God have you do, change, or believe differently?
- 8) **Create a way of teaching** or discussing some of the things you learned from your study to someone else

**Below is an example of a blank charting template. An example of a completed charting template is on the following page.*

Title		
paragraph point	verse # Recreate the text of the passage using phrasing and formatting (can be done by hand or on a computer)	<i>notes & cross-references</i>
paragraph point	verse # <div style="text-align: center;">paragraph #2</div>	
paragraph point	verse # <div style="text-align: center;">paragraph #3</div>	

God's Presence & Authority

...is even in
Nineveh

1

The **WORD OF THE LORD** came TO JONAH the son of Amittai saying,

- **"ARISE, GO to NINEVEH** the great city
- and **CRY AGAINST IT,**
for their **WICKEDNESS** has **COME UP**
BEFORE ME."

SURPRISE. No hint of God's wanting to have mercy on Nineveh until ch. 4. Also, no description of Jonah's motives for fleeing until ch. 4. The surprise makes Jonah's lack of mercy more shocking.

...is even in
Tarshish & on
the sea

3

But Jonah **ROSE UP TO FLEE** to **TARSHISH**

from **the presence of the Lord**

THE LORD HURLED

- a great wind on the sea
- and there was a great storm on the sea
so that the ship was about to break up.

Then the sailors became **afraid** and every man cried to **HIS GOD**

and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them.

But Jonah had

GONE BELOW into the hold of the ship,
LAIN DOWN and
fallen sound **ASLEEP.**

So the captain approached him and said,

"How is it that you are sleeping?"

GET UP, call on **YOUR GOD.**

Perhaps **YOUR GOD** will be concerned about us so that we will not **perish."**

Each man said to his mate, "Come, let us cast lots

so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us."

So they cast lots and

the **LOT FELL ON JONAH.**

Then they said to him, "Tell us, now!

On whose account has this calamity struck us?

What is your occupation?

And where do you come from?

What is your country?

From what people are you?"

He said to them, "I am a **Hebrew**, and

I **fear** **THE LORD GOD**

- **of heaven**
- **who made the sea and**
- **who made the dry land"**

"**Lord hurled**" Personifies God as "throwing" not simply sending. More wrathful/serious connotation.

Mat 8.24 Jesus asleep in the boat. Readers of NT would have caught Jonah allusion, but in contrast to Jonah, Jesus was not in rebellion and also controlled the sea.

"**How are you sleeping?**" Jonah is sleeping and ignoring God's wrath while sailors are perishing and is also ignoring Nineveh while they are perishing

Jonah 3.9 "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

"**fear**" & "**afraid**" Same word used in vs. 5, 9, 10, 16 for both "fear God" and "afraid" H3372 (NASB 3372a)

"**heaven**" Same word as "heavens" from Gen 1. Used in OT for both the sky/stars and the place where God was.

...is even
recognized by
pagans

Then the men became **extremely frightened** and they said to him, "**How could you do this?**"

For the men knew that he was fleeing from

the presence of the Lord

because he had told them.

So they said to him, "What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?"

for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy.

He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea.

Then the sea will become calm for you,

for I know that **ON ACCOUNT OF ME**

this great storm has come upon you."

However, the men **ROWED DESPERATELY** to return to land **BUT THEY COULD NOT,**

for the sea was becoming even stormier against them.

Then they **CALLED ON THE LORD** and said, "We earnestly pray, **O LORD,**

do not let us **perish** on account of this man's life and do not put innocent blood on us;

for you, **O LORD,** have done as you have pleased."

...is even in
the deep

15

So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea and the sea stopped its raging

Then the men **feared THE LORD** greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to **THE LORD** and made vows.

And **THE LORD APPOINTED** a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS**

SAILORS & NINEVITES.

Recognizing God's authority drove both to take action to please him

SAILORS vs. JONAH. Men try to spare Jonah despite God's wrath (afraid to bring God's wrath on themselves) vs. Jonah wanted wrath on the Ninevites despite God's mercy (not afraid to bring God's wrath on self)

SAILORS vs. JONAH. Good pagans vs. bad prophet. Jonah had high knowledge but low obedience while sailors had low knowledge but were responsive & fearful.

"3 days/nights" Mat 12.40

Applications & Questions:

- Do I really "fear God" or only claim to like Jonah did? What would be different if I truly "feared God"?
- In what areas of my life do I fail to recognize God's authority? How would recognizing God's authority change my life?