



BOOK

2

SPIRITUAL  
DISCIPLINES

---

GLC 1  
▲ ESSENTIALS

**BOOK 2: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES  
(Skypleship Edition)**

Copyright © 2017 by Global Leadership Center

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other, without the prior permission of GLC.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>  | page 4   |
| <b>How to Use This Workbook</b>                                      | page 5   |
| Session 1: <b>One Connection</b><br><i>Prayer</i>                    | page 7   |
| Session 2: <b>One Basis</b><br><i>The Bible</i>                      | page 17  |
| Session 3: <b>One Family</b><br><i>The Church</i>                    | page 27  |
| Session 4: <b>One Step</b><br><i>Baptism</i>                         | page 37  |
| Session 5: <b>One Focus</b><br><i>Worship</i>                        | page 45  |
| Session 6: <b>One Task</b><br><i>Witnessing</i>                      | page 55  |
| <b>What's Next?</b>  | page 61  |
| <b>Suggested Answers</b>   | page 63  |
| <b>Appendix A:</b> How to Facilitate a Skypleship Group Discussion   | page 71  |
| <b>Appendix B:</b> Evaluation Tool for Skypleship Group Facilitation | page 87  |
| <b>Appendix C:</b> Leading Discussions                               | page 91  |
| <b>Appendix D:</b> Tips for Facilitating                             | page 95  |
| <b>Appendix E:</b> Answer Key to EXPLORE Session 5                   | page 101 |

# INTRODUCTION

We would like to let you know that we are excited for what's in store for you as you step into the greatest adventure of your life—following Jesus Christ! What you will find in this study is a simple guide for advancing in your journey with Jesus.

You will learn about spiritual habits that, when practiced diligently through God's enablement, will help you know Jesus more. You will also discover opportunities to obey his will for your life. We are confident that the more you know Jesus, the more you will love God. The more you love God, the more you would want to live your life for Him. A life lived for God is the greatest adventure of all! So welcome to the next step of your journey with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

# HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is for the GLC Essentials Book 2: Spiritual Disciplines study. It can be used as a stand-alone Bible study guide for Skypleship groups.

If you are a Skypleship group servant/facilitator, all you have to do is make sure that you do a personal Bible study using this workbook and watch the video ahead of your Skypleship group meeting for preparation. Encourage your group members to have their own workbooks and watch the videos at their own convenient time. Do not divert the teaching topic – stick to what is in the workbook.

The workbook includes the Bible lesson, and individual and Skypleship learning activities to help you get the most out of your Skypleship meetings. There are five parts in every session: Explore, Examine, Express, Experience, and Equip.

- **Explore** — contains individual and Skypleship group activities that help prepare you for the Bible study.
- **Examine** — this is where you go through the Bible lesson with your Skypleship group.
- **Express** — this is where the members of the Skypleship group get a chance to express more of their insights, questions and thoughts about the Bible lesson. They can do it in different forms of activities provided in the workbook, and sharing to the rest of the Skypleship group.
- **Experience** — this section is accomplished outside the Skypleship group meeting time. There are suggested individual or group Life Apps that will hopefully help you experience life transformation as you apply God’s truth in practical ways.
- **Equip** – this section is to be accomplished by your Skypleship group or Skypleship member with your coaching and mentoring. This is the “on-the-job” training for every member of a Skypleship group to become a discipler (someone who is a Christ-committed follower and helps others become Christ-committed followers also).

This workbook is just a tool. We need to depend on the Holy Spirit to teach us God’s truth and transform our hearts as we study the lessons in this module.

We pray that as you go through and apply principles from Book 2: Spiritual Disciplines, you will have meaningful encounters with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



SESSION 1

# ONE CONNECTION

## *Prayer*

If you had the opportunity to meet personally with the President or the highest official of your country, what would you say to him? We probably have all dreamed of what to say or how to act if we ever had the chance. But how many people really get the opportunity to spend an extended time of conversing with someone in such a high position? Very few.

Amazingly, we all have the opportunity to speak to someone in an even more important position -- none other than the Lord and Creator of the whole universe. Wherever we are, we have a hotline to Him through prayer. Yet many of us never benefit from this great opportunity because we neglect to pray.

# EXPLORE

Share your prayer concerns using your Skypleship group chat box. Please limit the prayer items to that which directly affects you, the sharer. (We do not practice sharing confidential concerns of other people).

The third item could be a concern of another person, perhaps a family member or an officemate that is non-confidential in nature. The partners take turns praying for each other from the heart and using their own words.

## LEARNING NUGGET

---

Perhaps we feel that we do not know the right way to pray for our concerns, or for other people's concerns. It should encourage us to know that Jesus demonstrated how we should pray during His earthly ministry.

Prayer is an integral part of the Christian life and an important component of discipleship in our Skypleship groups. A simple guideline that we have for praying with others is to practice prudence when we share concerns of other people as prayer items. Confidential matters about other people are not shared as prayer items unless we have direct permission to do so from the people concerned.



## Biblical Truths About Prayer

### A. Prayer is personal communication with God.

Read Matthew 6:9

God made us and has redeemed us for fellowship with Himself and prayer is our means of communicating to Him. Prayer is our way of personally relating and connecting to Him. The phrase “Our Father in heaven” indicates that God is not only majestic and holy, but also personal and loving. As our heavenly Father, He longs to communicate with us and to make Himself known to us. We can address Him as Father, indicating our closeness and relation to Him.

Read Psalm 81:13

This Psalm speaks of God’s desire for his people to listen to Him. Most often we think of prayer as always asking for something from God. But there is more to prayer than asking from God. It is very important as well, that we have to listen to God and allow Him to speak to us. God speaks to us in and through the Bible, which the Holy Spirit opens up and applies to us and enables us to understand. He can also speak to us through other means as well. We then respond accordingly to what He has said.

### B. Prayer develops our intimate personal relationship with God.

Read Psalm 27:8; Psalm 84:2

While God is pleased as a loving Father to give us many of the things we ask Him for, His real purpose in granting us the privilege of prayer is to build the Father/child relationship with Him. More than just giving and receiving; it is building an intimate relationship with Him. Prayer is a necessary means to developing our relationship with God. The more we talk and listen to God, our intimacy will deepen.

---

**C. Prayer shows our dependence upon God.**

Read Psalm 62:8

In prayer we recognize who we are and who God is. We see our helplessness, limitations and failures in the light of who God is and what He can do in our lives and in the lives of others. When we pray to God, it shows our dependence upon Him for everything we need as His children. Believers pray and humbly acknowledge their need and express themselves as trustfully depending on God to meet it.

**D. Pray in faith.**

Read James 1:6-8; Matthew 21:22

Faith is essential to our Christian walk and especially in prayers. Faith is being sure of what we hope for, especially in terms of what we ask for in prayer. Faith is belief in the abilities, wisdom, goodness of God and that He is more than able and willing to answer our requests. God can do amazing things in response to prayer offered in faith to Him. Our “prayer of faith” fundamentally expresses trust in the God who is all-loving and generous, but who is also all-wise and sovereign.

**E. Pray according to God’s will.**

Read 1 John 5:14

God’s will is always for our best. He will always work out for the accomplishment of His will and purposes. As believers, our main goal is to seek His will and purposes in our lives, and those that concern His work and kingdom. We must remember that God, who knows what is best in a way that we do not, may deny our specific requests as to how the needs should be met. When we say that God’s will be done, we are surrendering our own expressed preference to the Father’s wisdom as Jesus did in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39-44).

---

## **F. Jesus modeled a lifestyle of prayer.**

Read Luke 5:16

Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father in unbroken communion. He began his public ministry in prayer. He prayed in solitude before dawn and marked the turning points of his ministry with periods of prayer. Before he went to the cross he agonized in prayer submitting to His Father's will. Such is the prayer life of Jesus. As followers of Jesus, we too must follow his example. If Jesus prayed while he was on earth, how much more we should be living a lifestyle of prayer.

## **Jesus Teaches His Disciples How to Pray**

If you are not yet very comfortable with prayer, you are in good company. Even the disciples needed some instruction on how to pray. Turn your Bible to Matthew 6 and see what Jesus taught them when they asked Him how to pray.

*Read Matthew 6:5-8*

1. How are we not to pray? What attitude should we have about God when we come to the Lord in prayer? Why?

*Read Matthew 6:9-10*

2. Who is the central focus of the first part of the Lord's prayer? What does this teach us about how we should talk to God in prayer?

---

Read Matthew 6:11-13

3. What elements are seen in the second half of the prayer? What does that tell us about how to talk to God in prayer?

Read Matthew 6:14

4. Why do you think Jesus included verse 14 in His instruction concerning prayer? If there is sin in your life, or if your heart is not right with the Lord, what should you do? What role does our heart attitude play in prayer?

### Aspects of the Lord's Prayer

From this passage we can see that there are at least five aspects of prayer implied:

1. **Praise and worship:** acknowledging God as both Lord and Father (*verse 9*)
2. **Intercession:** praying for God's will and work to be accomplished not only in our own lives but for others' as well (*verse 10*)
3. **Supplication:** praying for our own needs (*verse 11*)
4. **Confession:** acknowledging our need for His forgiveness and grace to purify our hearts (*verse 12*)
5. **Seeking guidance:** asking God to keep us following His will and walking in His way. (*verse 13*)

Prayer is much more than asking for things. While God is pleased as a loving Father to give us many of the things we ask, His real purpose in granting us the privilege of prayer is to build the Father/child relationship with Him. More than just giving and receiving, it is building an intimate relationship with Him.

- There are many amazing promises in the Bible about what God will do when we pray. To see how God will answer if we meet the proper conditions of prayer, read the following verses and fill in the chart:

| VERSE             | CONDITION | PROMISE |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| John 14:13        |           |         |
| 1 John 5:14-15    |           |         |
| Philippians 4:6-7 |           |         |
| John 15:7         |           |         |
| Luke 11:5-10      |           |         |
| James 5:16        |           |         |

- 
6. According to 1 Timothy 2:5, how many mediators are there between God and man?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  7. Based on what the Bible teaches, who can be the only mediator between you and God? (1 Timothy 2:5)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  8. In your experience, have there been other mediators that you prayed to before?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  9. Now that you know what the Bible says about who our only mediator is, how will you apply this in your prayer life?

# EXPERIENCE

1. When you pray, what do you spend most of your time talking about? How does your normal prayer compare to the pattern Jesus gave us?
2. Take some time to plan your prayer time. Try applying the pattern used by Jesus when He prayed.
3. Begin a “Prayer Notebook”. Write down your specific requests then note how and when God answers that prayer. The Prayer Notebook can be organized as follows:

| DATE | REQUEST | DATE ANSWERED | ANSWER |
|------|---------|---------------|--------|
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |
|      |         |               |        |

# EQUIP

## **On-the-Job Training:** *30 minutes*

Your discipler will discuss with you general principles on how to facilitate a Skypleship group discussion. (See Appendix A)

For more practical tips on how to facilitate, see Appendix C and Appendix D.

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others around you, starting with those you have been praying for in the past weeks.



SESSION 2

# ONE BASIS

## *The Bible*

When we receive Christ into our lives, we are brought into a personal relationship with Him. In any growing relationship, there must be good two-way communication. Last session was about prayer – how we are able to build a relationship with Him through prayer. In this session, we will learn about how God also speaks to us through His Word, the Bible.

Mark 7: 7-8, 13 says, “They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down.”

This Bible passage shows us that our highest and final authority in all things should be God’s Word and not religious traditions or human authority.

As followers of Christ, we need to obey what the Bible teaches, otherwise, God will consider our worship of Him useless.

# EXPLORE

Go through this activity individually. You have 5 minutes to complete this EXPLORE section. Upload your work in the GLC Online Community ([www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/)) using the following hashtags: #TrustTheInstructor #GLCInSkypleshipBook2. Indicate a short description of your personal learning nugget.

Please read all instructions given below before you do anything:

1. Find a pen and paper.
2. Write your name at the top of the paper.
3. Write the numbers 1 to 5, one per line.
4. Draw five small circles beside #1.
5. Put an "X" in the second and fourth circles next to #1.
6. Write the word 'encyclopedia' beside #3.
7. On the back of the paper multiply  $7 \times 9$ .
8. Put an X in the lower right-hand corner of the paper.
9. Draw a circle around the X you just made.
10. Underline your name.
11. Say your name out loud.
12. Draw a circle around #4.
13. Count the number of words in this sentence and write the answer beside #2 on your paper.
14. Put a square around #1 and #5.
15. Punch 3 small holes anywhere in the paper.
16. Write your first name beside #4.
17. Write today's date beside #5 on your paper.
18. Circle every letter 'E' you have written.
19. Stand up and say 'I HAVE FINISHED FIRST' if you were first, else say 'I HAVE FINISHED' out loud, then sit down.
20. Now that you read all of the instructions, do only the first two and skip the rest.

If you have followed the instructions correctly, you should only have your name on the paper!

## LEARNING NUGGET

---

To follow instructions faithfully, we need a trusting heart. We need to trust that whoever gave the instructions is trustworthy and knows what he or she wants us to accomplish in the end. If we do not trust the Instructor, we probably will not follow the instructions faithfully either. God gave us instructions for the way He designed life to be lived. If we fully trust God, we will fully obey His will for our lives as well.

## Is the Bible Really God's Word?

For Christians, the Bible is our primary source for knowing God and His ways. It is a living book through which God Himself speaks to us for our instruction, inspiration and direction.

But are we certain that it is really God's Word? Can it be relied upon? Consider the following facts:

The Bible is unique in human literature. It was written by over 40 authors, in three languages, on three continents, over a period of 1500 years, yet is without contradiction or error. Imagine reading three newspapers today that describe the same event yesterday – they almost certainly would not agree, even on important details. So the unity of the Bible is amazing!

The Bible chronicles hundreds of prophecies that have already come to pass, many of them in ways that are beyond human control. For instance, Psalm 22 predicts the manner of Jesus' death on a cross with horrible precision. Yet it was written by King David hundreds of years before the Romans invented the use of a cross for capital punishment! Such a prediction would be impossible apart from the knowledge of God Himself.

The ancient manuscripts attest to the Bible's accuracy. The more numerous the copies and the closer they are to the original writing, the greater certainty we have of the accuracy of a material. There are thousands of ancient manuscripts and fragments of the Bible, some from within a hundred years of its writing. By contrast, the earliest manuscripts of ancient classics like Aristotle or Caesar date from more than a thousand years after their writing, and are attested to by only a handful of manuscripts. No ancient document comes close to the Bible in manuscript evidence.

The Bible has survived repeated attempts to stamp it out of existence. In AD 303, the Roman emperor Diocletian decreed that all Bibles should be burned. Less than a generation later, however, Christianity was accepted as the true religion of Rome! Voltaire was quoted as having predicted that the Bible would be relegated to the junk heap of history within 100 years of his death. Ironically, Bibles were being printed on a printing press in his own home 50 years later. More than 200 hundred years after his death, demand for the Bible shows no evidence of waning. These facts show us that, yes, the Bible is the reliable and infallible (without error) Word of God.

---

## Why Follow God's Word?

*Read Psalm 119:105*

1. How does the Word of God help us?

*Read II Timothy 3:16-17*

2. How does Paul describe the benefits of the Bible? In what ways do these relate to our lives?

---

## How Do I Learn About God's Word?

### I. Through Bible Reading

*Read Deuteronomy 17:18, 19*

3. What was the instruction given for kings to do when they begin their reign? Why do you think they had to write the whole Law (the Bible) down by hand? Why is regular reading of the Bible important to our lives?

### II. Through Personal Bible Study

*Read Ezra 7:9, 10*

4. Why was the hand of God with Ezra? What did Ezra commit himself to do? What were the three elements of his commitment?

---

## The Obedience-Based Bible Study (OBBS)

The Obedience-Based Bible Study is a simple, easily reproducible process of not just studying but applying God’s Word. Here is how it works:

Take a blank piece of notebook paper and fold it into thirds (like a three-fold brochure). At the top of the left section write, “God’s Word”. At the top of the middle section write, “My Words”. At the top of the right section write, “I will”.

| GOD’S WORD | MY WORDS | I WILL |
|------------|----------|--------|
|            |          |        |

1. Begin by writing out word for word the verses you or your Skypeship group will study in the “God’s Words” (left) section of your paper. It takes time but it will help you look carefully at the passage.
2. Write down a paraphrase of the passage in the “My Words” (middle) section. Pretend you are retelling the passage to a friend. Use your own words, and make sure you cover everything in the passage. Retelling it helps you make sure you really understand what it means.
3. Write down what you will do as a result of what you have learned in the “I Will” (right) section. This is the most important part of OBBS! This should always be written in the form, “I will \_\_\_\_\_.” That makes it a commitment between you and God to obey what you have learned. Then commit to the Lord that you will indeed do it, and ask Him for the power and strength through the Holy Spirit to do so.

---

## OBBS in a Skypleship group

When doing OBBS in a Skypleship Group or D12, follow the same process. After each person in the Skypleship group has completed the “My Word” section, ask several people to share their “My Words” paraphrase.

After several Skypleship group members retell the Scripture, you can study the passage together. Your discussion must be question-driven to facilitate the discovery process. No one in the Skypleship group should dominate the discussion or “teach” about the passage.

Below are some questions to encourage interaction with Scripture:

- ✓ *Did anything in this passage capture your attention?*
- ✓ *What did you like about this passage?*
- ✓ *Did anything bother you? Why?*
- ✓ *What does this passage tell us about God?*
- ✓ *What does this passage tell us about Man?*
- ✓ *What does this passage tell us about living to please God?*

In a Skypleship group setting, each person should share their “I Will” statement for accountability. Make sure that action plans follow the SMART Goals Principles and that each Skypleship member commits to confidentiality.

## SMART Goals Principles

**S** imple  
**M** easurable  
**A** ppropriate  
**R** ealistic  
**T** ime-bound

*Examples:*

| COMMON STATEMENT   | SMART GOAL   |
|--|--|
| I will be more loving toward my wife and tell her that I love her. | I will buy my wife roses this week.  |
| I will control my temper.  | I will count to ten before reacting when a car cuts me off in traffic on EDSA this week.                                     |
| I shouldn't gossip.  | I will politely change the subject when Bing calls me up tonight to tell me about the terrible things her sister did to her. |

Finally, each member of the Skypleship group should determine who they will share this with. The best way to internalize a lesson is to share it with someone else. And when you do, you will also begin the habit of helping others know and follow Christ too! Share and post this in the GLC Online Community ([www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/)).



## EXPERIENCE

1. Practice OBBS on Matthew 7:24-29. What does the passage show about the importance of obedience?
  
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. According to this verse, how much of the Bible (Scripture) is inspired by God? If that is the case, how should we respond to what the Bible instructs us to do or not to do?
  
3. Begin an annual reading program with the goal of reading the entire Bible in the next 12 months. Check out the Bible reading plans at [www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/](http://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/)

## EQUIP

### **On-the-Job Training:** *30 minutes*

Your discipler will demonstrate to you how to facilitate a Skypleship group discussion using Book 1: One by One, Lesson 1.

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others around you, starting with those you have been praying for in the past weeks.

Teach new believers the Book 1: One by One lessons; have the first meeting within 48 hours of their decision to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.



SESSION 3

# ONE FAMILY

## *The Church*

Many people have been raised attending a church regularly. Whether you were raised in a religious family, or had few experiences with church life, you probably have some idea of what a “church” should be. Most of our beliefs and expectations regarding the church have been based on what we were familiar with through our upbringing as children.

Yet the church, which the Bible describes, is very different from that which many of us are familiar with. How is the church described in the Bible, and how should we, as believers in Christ, relate to the church?

# EXPLORE

Do this activity individually. Type Matthew 28:19-20 in the chat box using your right hand only (Part 1). Then both hands (Part 2). Set a timer to simply take note of how fast you can accomplish the activity. Compare which is faster.

The timer determines the time difference between your performance in Part 1 and Part 2. Chances are, you accomplished the task much quicker in Part 2, when both hands were used to do so.

## LEARNING NUGGET

---

The Church is called the Body of Christ in the Bible, and like the human body, it is made up of many parts with different functions. As our EXPLORE activity demonstrated, we function much better when parts of our body work together in harmony to accomplish the same purpose.

## The First Church

*Read Acts 2:40-47*

1. What are four elements which characterized the life of the New Testament Church? What were some evidences that God was at work among them?

### **Biblical Definition of Church**

“Called-out” assembly of genuine believers; not a building.

Wouldn't it be exciting to be a part of something so dynamic? The kind of church this passage describes is probably very different from most churches we have known. But this is the way God intended the church to be! Let's continue to look in the Bible to see what the church is supposed to be.

---

## Paul and the New Testament Churches

*Read Acts 14:21-23*

2. What did Paul do on this trip to plant churches? Who were the people who remained behind to lead the churches?

*Read Acts 14: 26-27*

3. What do you think it means that they “gathered the church?” What does this passage tell you about the nature of the church?

*Read Acts 20:20*

4. Where did Paul meet with and teach the new believers? Why do you think it was more effective for Paul to teach in this context (home)?

### Dgroups and the Early Church

Although the Bible doesn't use the term “Dgroup” or “Discipleship Group,” or “Online Dgroup” much of what took place during the birth and growth of the early church during the New Testament times is very similar to the groups that we meet in today. In the Skypleship group, there is fellowship, teaching, worship, evangelism, all of the basic components of a church. Yet it is an intimate group where there can be open communication, personal care and accountability. This is the heart of what the Bible describes as the “church” in the first century...it should also be the central focus of our church involvement today.

---

## Paul Teaches About the Church

### I. The Church as a “body”

*Read I Corinthians 12:12-16*

5. How does the idea of a body help us to understand how the church works?

*Read Ephesians 1:22-23*

6. Describe the composition of the church. What are the implications of having Christ as “head” and us as the “body”?

### II. Different members, different gifts

*Read Ephesians 4:11-13*

7. In verse 11, what did God give to the church? Why did God give these gifts to the leaders of the church? Who is supposed to do the work of the ministry?

### III. The Church Leader

*Read Titus 1:5-9*

8. According to verses 6-8, what are some of the qualifications for the leaders?

---

## The Church in Summary...

- ✓ The Church is Christ's Body
- ✓ Jesus is the Head of the Body
- ✓ We are all parts of the Body
- ✓ We each have an important role to play in the Body
- ✓ We need leaders to train us for those roles
- ✓ Leaders are elders, deacons and overseers
- ✓ Elders are chosen because of their maturity
- ✓ Sound doctrine is critical for the life of the Church



---

## The New Testament Church

As we have seen, the church as it is described in the Bible is not a place, but a community of people with a new relationship with Jesus Christ. It is a source of teaching from the Bible by those who are more mature in their walk with Christ; an opportunity to meet and grow together with other brothers and sisters in Christ; a new web of relationships where love and support can be given and received; and it is where we worship the Lord together. It is also a place where every person has a valuable part to play to keep the church healthy and growing. You are part of Christ's church, and you should make it a high priority in your life.

9. Before going through this lesson, how was your understanding of the church different from or similar to what the Bible teaches?

10. How will you make the church a priority this week?

# EXPERIENCE

1. Do you belong to a local church fellowship? If not, would you prayerfully consider being part of a church fellowship and Skypleship group? What benefits do you think this can bring?
2. If you are part of a church fellowship or a Skypleship group, recall a time when the church body has extended help and support to you during a time of need. What impact did it make on your walk with Christ?
3. In view of the church being a “body”, what part would you say you are? Given your gifts, what are you able to contribute to the body?

**On-the-Job Training:** *30 minutes*

Your discipler will evaluate your level of preparedness to facilitate a Book 1: One by One Skypleship group discussion. See Appendix B for the evaluation criteria.

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others around you. Teach new believers the Book 1: One by One lessons; have the first meeting within 48 hours of their decision to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.



SESSION 4

# ONE STEP

## *Baptism*

There are many changes that happen in our lives when we come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord. Many of those changes take place on the inside – in our hearts. But the Bible shows us one step of obedience that all true followers of Christ are expected to take – water baptism. As we will see, water baptism is an outward symbol of those inward changes. In this lesson, we will be looking at what the Bible teaches about taking that step of obedience to Jesus.

# EXPLORE

## Throwback

Recall one particular act, practice or discipline that your parent or teacher instructed you to do but which you found difficult to obey when you were a child or a teen, e.g., finishing off your dinner or sleeping early. Why was it so difficult for you then? What, if any, were your “delaying tactics” to avoid doing what you were told to do? Share your answer in the GLC Online Community ([www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/)). Use the hashtag #GLCThrowback.

## LEARNING NUGGET

---

Our human authorities are not perfect. Yet when we look back at most of what they wanted us to do when we were children, they were after our own good. God is our perfect Heavenly Father, and we can trust that whatever He commands us to do will be for our ultimate good. We also need to understand that delayed obedience is actually disobedience.

## Following Christ

First, we must look at what it really means to follow Jesus. What does obedience look like according to the Bible? What does it mean to really follow Christ?

*Read John 14:15*

1. What is a clear sign that a person really loves Jesus? Why is that a sign of being a real follower of Christ?

*Read Luke 14:26-28; 33*

2. In verse 28, what does Jesus say we need to do before we decide to build something? When it comes to following Christ, what does it mean to “calculate the cost?”
3. In verses 26 and 33, what are some of the things we must count as less important than following Christ?

Not everyone that follows Christ literally gives up family and possessions. But Jesus’ point is that we must be willing to give up everything to truly be Christ’s followers. We must be willing to obey everything that He commands us to do.

---

## Jesus' Step of Obedience

Although Jesus was the Son of God, He submitted Himself to the Father by being baptized by John. Jesus did not need to be baptized to take His sins away. He was baptized as an act of obedience to the Father's will. The Father expressed His pleasure by declaring that Jesus was His beloved Son. It was only after Jesus publicly submitted to the will of the Father by being baptized that He began His public ministry.

*Luke 3:21-22*

## Step of Obedience for Early Believers

The following passages describe people responding to the gospel in the early days of Christianity. Look up each passage, and describe in your own words what happened to the early Christians as soon as they believed in Jesus.

*Acts 2:41*

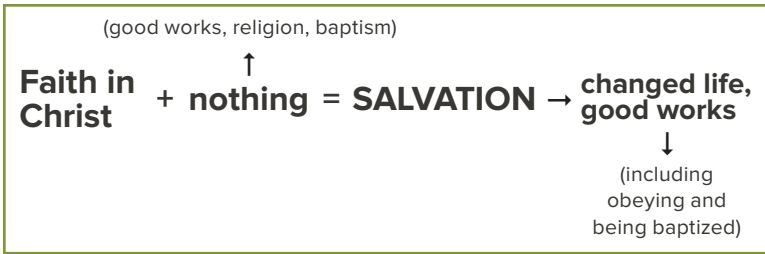
*Acts 8:12*

*Acts 8:35-37*

Notice the sequence in these passages. First, they believed, then after believing they were baptized. Baptism is not the way people become saved. It is an outward expression of the faith they have in Christ.



Remember the formula for salvation we learned earlier:



## Why Should We Be Baptized?

### I. Because it is part of obedience to Christ as His disciples.

*Read Matthew 28:18-20*

4. What were the disciples to do as they made disciples?

### II. Because it is a picture of what happened to us when we were saved.

*Read Romans 6:3, 4*

5. What happened to us when we were spiritually baptized into Christ?  
What does physical baptism (being immersed into water) represent?

---

## What is Baptism?

The baptism the early disciples practiced was different than what many people today go through as babies. In the New Testament, baptism was practiced by people who had chosen to place their faith in Christ and become His followers. It was a choice that believers themselves made to publicly identify themselves as followers of Jesus Christ by obeying Him in baptism.

Baptism in the Bible comes from the Greek word, *baptizo*. According to the Thayer Smith Greek Lexicon, it means “to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge (of vessels sunk), to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one’s self.”

One of the earliest uses of the word described the process of making pickles in the second century BC. First, a cucumber was washed (from another Greek word, *bapto*), then, it was immersed in vinegar (*baptizo*) until it had absorbed the flavor of the vinegar and spices and became a pickle. The cucumber became completely identified with the new aroma and flavor of what it was immersed in.

That is what happens to us when we are baptized into Christ – we become completely identified with Him. When we place our faith in Christ, we are spiritually baptized (immersed in and united with Him) in His death, burial and resurrection. When we obey Him by being baptized physically, we declare publicly what happened to us when we believed in Christ for salvation.

6. Before going through this study, how was your idea of baptism different from or similar to what the Bible teaches about it?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How will you now apply what the Bible teaches about baptism?

## EXPERIENCE

1. What are some areas in your life that you need to ‘count the cost’ in following Jesus?
2. Are you willing to be baptized as an outward step of declaring that you want to follow Jesus? If so, how and when will you take that step of obedience? GLC organizes a baptism ceremony at the end of every GLC Essentials cycle at CCF Center and CCF satellite churches. If you are out of the Philippines, please send us an email to [glc@ccf.org.ph](mailto:glc@ccf.org.ph). Our team would like to assist you as you take a step of faith and sign up for this wonderful opportunity to declare your commitment to Jesus Christ!
3. Who can you share this decision with, so they will understand your commitment to follow Jesus?

## EQUIP

### **On-the-Job Training:** *30 minutes*

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others. Invite those who respond positively to the gospel to join your Skypleship group. Your discipler will continue to coach you as you facilitate Book 1: One by One sessions in your Skypleship group.



SESSION 5

# ONE FOCUS

## *Worship*

One of the most important elements of our new life in Christ is worship within the church. What is worship, and how should we worship the Lord?

# EXPLORE

Below is a list of God’s names as revealed in the Bible. Match the names with their meaning (see list further down). Write the letter corresponding to the meaning opposite the name on the space provided. Your Skypship Leader will do the facilitation of this activity.

| Names of God              | Meaning of God’s Names          |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ 1. El Shaddai       | A. “The Lord Is Peace”          |
| _____ 2. Adonai           | B. “The Lord will Provide”      |
| _____ 3. Jehovah Nissi    | C. “The Everlasting God”        |
| _____ 4. Jehovah-Raah     | D. “The Lord Our Righteousness” |
| _____ 5. Jehovah Rapha    | E. “The Lord Is There”          |
| _____ 6. Jehovah Shammah  | F. “The Lord That Heals”        |
| _____ 7. Jehovah Tsidkenu | G. “The Lord My Shepherd”       |
| _____ 8. El Olam          | H. “The Lord My Banner”         |
| _____ 9. Jehovah Jireh    | I. Lord, Master                 |
| _____ 10. Jehovah Shalom  | J. Lord God Almighty            |

Source: [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)  
See Appendix E for the Answer Key.

## LEARNING NUGGET

God’s names are perfectly representative of His character or attributes.

## What is Biblical Worship?

Worship is our proper response to God for who He is, what He has done, and what He continues to do.

In John 4:20-24, the Samaritan woman asked Jesus about worship. This was their discussion:

*“Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

Jesus tells her several important things about worship:

- a. The object of their worship is the Father. Both of them agreed that God was the only true object of worship. Their only point of discussion was how that worship would be done.
- b. Before, the temple in Jerusalem was the only place where sacrifice for sin could take place. But when Jesus died on the cross, the requirement for sacrifices was done away. Today, we don't have to be in a special building for worship. Through the blood of Christ, we can enter into direct fellowship with God wherever we are!
- c. True worshipers are characterized by two things: they worship...
  - ✓ In spirit and
  - ✓ In truth

---

For the rest of this lesson, we will discover what these two characteristics are about and how they apply to our worship today.

## **I. Worshipping in Spirit**

In the Bible, 'spirit' often means the innermost part of our lives. Worshipping in spirit relates to the way that we regard the Lord in the inner recesses of our lives.

*Read Matthew 22: 36-37*

1. According to Jesus, what is the greatest commandment? What does that tell us about our worship of God?

*Read Hebrews 10:19-22*

2. How should our heart be as we draw near to God?



The Old Testament contrasts two people who were the first two kings of Israel: David and Saul. Both of them worshipped God, but the results were very different in each case.

|                | <b>DAVID: WHOLE HEART</b><br>II Samuel 6:5,12-14 | <b>SAUL: HALF HEART</b><br>I Samuel 13:8-14  |
|----------------|--|--|
| Action         | Sacrifices, dancing, singing                     | Sacrifices                                   |
| Attitude       | Out of gratitude – to please God                 | Out of obligation – wanted blessing, victory |
| Focus          | God  | Enemies                                      |
| Manner         | With all his might                               | In his own way                               |
| God's response | Established his kingdom                          | Removed his kingdom                          |

What was in David's worship that was not in Saul's that pleased God? Why do you think Saul was unable to show this?

Is it possible to do religious ceremonies while our hearts are far from God? How can we avoid this?

---

## What about idols and images?

---

Worshipping God in spirit means recognizing that God is spirit. This means we cannot see Him. We cannot imagine what spirit is like, so often we are tempted to make visible objects which will allow us to think about God in our terms. The Bible has a number of very clear passages regarding this:

*Read Exodus 32:4-10*

3. What caused the Lord's anger to burn? What did God intend to do with them because of this great sin?



Note

*Notice that the word "gods" is actually the same word as ascribed to God Himself, and they were making an image to sacrifice to so they could worship the god that brought them out of Egypt. Actually, they thought they were worshipping God through the use of the idol that they made, which is very similar to the type of idols that are common today. But the Lord was not pleased.*

*Read Exodus 20:4-5, Psalm 135:15-18*

4. What do these passages say about idols and images? Why do you think are they very displeasing to the Lord?

---

## Images and Idols

---

One of the least known of the original Ten Commandments is the second commandment (Exodus 20:4-5). In fact, many people are not aware it is a commandment. Yet the Bible is clear that God is not pleased when we bow down or worship anything but Him. When we make an image or an idol, it does not do justice to the greatness of who God is. We are tempted to think that something made by human hands has spiritual power in itself. God is not pleased when we dishonor Him in this way.

The good news is that, in Christ, we do not need extra spiritual power. We have the Holy Spirit living inside us, and He is God Himself!

### II. Worshipping in Truth

Not only are we to worship God in spirit, but we are also to worship Him in truth. This means that our minds are very much a part of the worship that God wants from His people. It is not enough just to be devoted. We must worship God as He truly is.

*Read Acts 2:42 and John 16:13-16*

5. In these two passages, how are we led to the truth?

In order to worship in truth, it is important for us to worship in the way prescribed by the Bible.

---

*Read 1 Corinthians 6:19*

6. In the past, Israel had a physical temple where worship was to be carried out. Where is the temple of God today? What does that tell us about where we can worship God?

*Read Hebrews 10:24-25*

7. While it is possible to worship the Lord alone, this verse indicates that worshipping with others is vital. Why is it important to fellowship regularly together with other believers?

True worship should be “in the assembly of the upright” (Psalm 111:1). We are admonished by the Lord to meet together regularly to worship so that we can encourage one another. There are no “lone ranger” Christians – we need each other so that together we may worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth.

## EXPERIENCE

1. Pause for a moment and examine how you worship. Is it more like David's or Saul's?
2. What changes in your action, attitude, focus or manner can you make in your worship for it to be more pleasing to God?
3. Is there someone else other than Jesus Christ that you worship? If there are idols in your life, what changes will you have to make so that you become a true worshiper of God alone?

## EQUIP

### **On-the-Job Training:** *45 minutes*

Your discipler will evaluate your level of preparedness to facilitate a Book 1: One by One lesson. (See Appendix B for the evaluation criteria.)

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others. Invite those who respond positively to the Book 1: One by One discussion group. Have the first meeting within 48 hours of their decision to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.

In the process, be sure to do the EQUIP portion of your lessons with your Skypleship group members, just as your discipler has done with you.



SESSION 6

# ONE TASK

## *Witnessing*

How did you come to know Jesus? For most of us, it was because another follower of Christ loved us enough to want us to know Him too.

Maybe you saw something in that person that made you wonder why they were different. Maybe they prayed for you, or showed you special concern. Perhaps at some point they brought you to where you could meet Christ or shared the message of the gospel to you personally. However it happened, now you are a follower of Christ, too!

Now it is your turn! Just like God used someone else in your life to bring you to Jesus, He wants to use you to do the same. He has put you exactly where He wants you so you can bring your family, relatives, friends, classmates, officemates, and neighbors to Him. Jesus wants you to connect others to Him!

# EXPLORE

## Bless it Forward

Think of the greatest blessing(s) you have received this week from a follower of Jesus that has brought you closer to Him. Share this blessing in the GLC Online Community ([www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/GLCOnline/)). Specify the blessing(s) received and how it has brought you closer to Jesus.

## LEARNING NUGGET

---

We receive so many blessings each day that we tend to take these for granted. The greatest blessing any man, woman and child can receive is the gift of eternal life in Christ. A Christ-committed follower has the greatest privilege of blessing others with the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we share Christ with someone else, we give them the opportunity to also receive the greatest blessing of eternal life that is found only in Jesus.



**I. God's Heart**

*Read II Peter 3:9*

1. What is God's desire for those who don't know Him?

*Read Luke 19:10*

2. Why did Jesus come to earth? What does that tell us about His priorities? How would you compare your priorities to His?

**II. Our Part**

*Read Acts 1:8*

3. What did Jesus promise would happen when the Holy Spirit came upon them? What would be the result?

---

## What is a “Witness”?

A witness is someone who recounts what they have personally seen and heard. Some people fear that if they tell people about Christ, they will not know enough about the Bible to answer all the questions they may get. So they choose to stay silent. They say they will just be “silent witnesses.” But God wants us to tell something about Him.

It is not the job of the witness to know everything. In court, a witness does not have to be a lawyer or work in a crime lab to be credible. A witness just needs to accurately recount what they saw and heard. It is up to the judge or jury to come to a conclusion based on the eyewitness testimony.

That means anyone is a perfect candidate to be a witness—and that includes you! Your role is to tell people what you have experienced – how you met Christ, and what He has done in your life. People can debate theology or opinions about the meaning of a Bible passage but they cannot contest your personal experience. You are an expert when it comes to sharing about your own life. To be a witness, you just need to share what God has done in your life – no one can debate with that!

*Read Romans 10:13-15*

4. What do people need to do to be saved? What is our role in that process?

---

### III. How Can You Be an Effective Witness for Christ?

#### A. Through your life

*Read Matthew 5:16*

5. How should your life affect those around you?

#### B. Through your story

*Read John 4:39*

6. What did the Samaritan woman do after she met Jesus? What was the result?

### Sharing Your Story

Paul gives us a good example of how to tell your story. In Acts 26, while Paul was still in prison, he was invited to speak before King Agrippa. He used the opportunity to tell the story of his life.

He began by telling about who he was before meeting Christ – his zealous commitment to Judaism, and his hatred for Christians. Then he told the story of his conversion – how Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus, and how he surrendered his life to Christ. Then he told of the changes in his life after meeting Jesus – how his life was now dedicated to bringing the gospel of Christ to the whole world.

At the end, King Agrippa was so impacted he said he was afraid Paul might convert him too!

---

### C. Through the gospel

*Read Romans 1:16*

7. How did Paul feel about sharing the gospel to others? How do you feel about sharing about Christ with others?

*Read II Corinthians 5:20*

8. What does Paul call us? As ambassadors of Christ, what are we supposed to do?

## EQUIP

**On-the-Job Training:** 30-45 minutes

Continue to practice “Pray-Care-Share” with others, sharing the gospel either in person or online using the GWTH booklet. Invite those who respond positively to join your Skypleship group.

Continue using Book 1: One by One in your own Skypleship group.

Your discipler will keep coaching you as you disciple your group. In the process, be sure to do the EQUIP portion of your lessons with your Skypleship members, just as your discipler has done with you.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

## BOOK 3: GALATIANS

Great job in completing your Book 2: Spiritual Disciplines lessons! We trust that your relationship with Jesus has been growing as you have applied what you learned from Book 2.

To guide and equip you for your journey with Jesus, continue on with BOOK 3: GALATIANS where you will learn how to discern between authentic or real faith that saves, and counterfeit faith that does not save. Keep on following Jesus as you move on to your Book 3: Galatians lessons!



# SUGGESTED ANSWERS

## SESSION 1

---

1. He is not impressed with repeated or fancy words, nor does He like meaningless repetition. We should come to God as our loving Father because we want to meet with Him to talk to Him from our heart, not to impress the people around us.
2. It focuses on who God is. It talks about how God is our Heavenly Father, how God is someone to revere, and that we want His will to be done. We should talk to God as our Heavenly Father.
3. It focuses on what we should pray for. We should pray for our daily needs, for forgiveness if we have sinned against God, and guidance to stay away from sin.
4. He wants us to forgive others. If we sin against God, we should ask forgiveness. But if we do not forgive others, we will not experience His forgiveness. If our attitude is not right, it will affect our prayers.
- 5.

| VERSE             | CONDITION                                    | PROMISE   |
|-------------------|--|---|
| John 14:13        | Ask in Jesus' name – for His glory, not ours | He will do whatever we ask                          |
| I John 5:14-15    | Ask according to His will                    | He will hear us and give us whatever we ask         |
| Philippians 4:6-7 | Don't be anxious but pray about everything   | We will experience supernatural peace in our hearts |
| John 15:7         | Abide in Christ, be always connected to Him  | Ask anything, and He will answer your prayers       |



| VERSE        | CONDITION  | PROMISE   |
|--------------|--|---|
| Luke 11:5-10 | Persist in asking, seeking, “knocking”           | Everyone who asks receives; everyone who seeks, finds; everyone who knocks, the door will be opened for him/her |
| James 5:16   | Confess sins to one another; pray for each other | You will be healed  |

6. There is only one Mediator between God and man.
7. Jesus is the only one who can be the Mediator between you and God.
8. (Give own answer.)
9. (Give own answer.)

## SESSION 2

---

1. God’s Word gives us guidance and direction for our lives
2. The Bible teaches us, tells us what to do, tells us what we are doing wrong, and trains us to honor God in the way we live our lives. These are all important to help us be more like Christ, and to be ready to serve the Lord.
3. The instruction was for the king to write down a copy of the Law. Writing it down by hand would help them learn what it says and remember more accurately. Regularly reading the Bible will help us fear the Lord, stay humble, follow the path that God wants us to follow, and be blessed by the Lord when we obey.

- 
4. Because he had set his mind to study the Law, to obey it, and to teach it.

## SESSION 3

---

1. Learning from the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. Sense of awe because of signs and wonders God was doing; selling their things to help others in need; worship and thankful hearts; good reputation with the community; many more people came to know Christ.
2. He preached the gospel, made many disciples and helped people grow by visiting and encouraging them. Paul appointed some of the people from those places who had become disciples to become elders (leaders), and he prayed for them and committed them to the Lord.
3. He gathered all the believers to meet together. The church was the people, not an organization, a place or a building.
4. Both in public and from house to house. Because in a smaller group there could be more personal involvement and care. They could enjoy greater intimacy and really encourage each other to follow the Lord.
5. It helps us understand God has given everyone a gift and all are essential to the proper functioning of the body. Each one is important.
6. Jesus is the Head of the Church. That means He is in control, and the parts of the Body should do what He directs them to do.
7. Prophets, teachers, evangelists, pastors and teachers. They were given so they could equip the members of the church to serve the Lord. The "saints" (the believers) are supposed to do the work of the ministry.
8. Good reputation, faithful to one's spouse, children follow the Lord, not proud, doesn't have a bad temper, doesn't abuse alcohol, hospitable,

---

self-controlled, obeys the Lord, and is disciplined. He follows sound doctrine and can teach people the truth in a persuasive way.

9. (Give own answer.)

10. (Give own answer.)

## SESSION 4

---

1. They will obey Him. If people don't actually do what He says, it seems they really aren't His followers at all.

2. V. 28 We must count the cost of following Him to see if we really are going to follow through on our commitment.

3. V. 26 Things that must be less important than following Christ: our families and loved ones, and even our own lives.

V. 28 Everything.

4. To baptize and to teach them to obey everything that He commanded them.

5. We were baptized into His death and resurrection. It represents being with Him when He died, when He was buried and then when He was raised again from the dead. It means our old life is dead and gone, and we now have a brand new life.

6. (Give own answer.)

7. (Give own answer.)

---

## SESSION 5

---

1. The greatest commandment is to love the Lord completely with everything we are. That tells us that worshipping God is not only important but it should be a central part of our lives.
2. We should enter God's presence with confidence; we should have full assurance of faith that we can meet with God because of Christ's sacrifice for us.

### **David vs. Saul**

*David's worship was from a whole heart, with gratitude, with all he had.*

*Saul's worship was half-hearted. He was more concerned with what he would get out of worship than what he would give to God in his worship.*

It is possible to do religious ceremonies even though our hearts are far from God. We need to examine our hearts or motives in everything that we do. Our motivation for what we do should be love for Jesus.

3. The people of Israel made an idol in the shape of a calf, and worshipped it as if it was a god. Because of that, God wanted to destroy them all and start building a new nation through Moses.
4. We should not make any kind of idol, and we should not bow down to or serve any idol or image. God is not pleased because He wants us to worship Him, not idols. When we do, we are attributing deity to the one we pray to.

Idols are not alive and can't do anything. Those who make idols will become like them – unable to hear, see, speak or even live. God is not pleased because idols are not even alive, and He is. Why waste our effort to worship something dead and without power when we can worship the living God?

- 
5. We are led to the truth by being taught about the Word of God, and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
  6. Our bodies are now the temple of the Holy Spirit – He lives in us. That means we can worship God anywhere, because He is always with us and in us.
  7. We encourage each other to love one another and to do good to others when we gather together.

## SESSION 6

---

1. He wants them not to perish, but to repent so they can know Him.
2. He came to seek those who are lost. That was His highest priority. We should have the same priorities as Jesus has.
3. He promised that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit. The result would be that they would be witnesses, telling people everywhere about Christ.
4. They need to hear the Word of God and call upon the name of the Lord. We can be the person that God uses to tell people about Christ.
5. People will glorify the Father when they see the way we live our lives.
6. She went and told others in her village about what Christ had done. The result was that many people believed in Christ because of her testimony.
7. Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel because it has power to bring salvation.
8. Paul calls us ambassadors. As Christ's ambassadors, we are to urge people to be reconciled to God.



APPENDIX A

# HOW TO FACILITATE A SKYPLESHIP GROUP DISCUSSION

---

## INTRODUCTION

In this session, you will learn how to facilitate a Skypleship group meeting using several simple principles and skills.

### I. PREPARING FOR A SKYPLESHIP GROUP MEETING

#### Hebrews 10:25

not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching...

*(Teacher's Explanation: The Bible commanded us to continually meet together in our Skypleship groups or discipleship groups for mutual edification. Our Skypleship group meetings should help the members become disciples (Christ-committed followers). Therefore, the first thing that a Skypleship group leader will do is to prepare for each meeting. This is the key to the success of every meeting. There are several things that a leader needs to prepare.)*

#### A. Planning

##### Proverbs 21:5

The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty

*(The Bible speaks of a person who diligently and carefully plans his work and works his plans which results in profit. Careful planning is essential to the success of any endeavor, especially with regards to leading Skypleship groups. Each Skypleship group meeting needs careful planning, especially if you are just starting out. As a leader you should plan among other things, for the food (advise each Skypleship member to prepare for their own), the date, the time zone, who will be attending and the lesson.)*



---

## **B. Preparation**

*(Preparing in advance for every meeting is crucial to the success of every Skypleship group meeting. In any given Skypleship group meeting, you need to prepare for some important things.)*

### **1. Know your material.**

*(Here in CCF, we made leading a Skypleship group very easy for the leaders. We have prepared an easy-to-use material (Books 1–8, etc.) for your convenience. If you have gone through these materials in your Skypleship group or in our GLC Level 1 Essentials classes, then you will not have any problem as to what material you will use. The materials are complete with the objective and what you want them to learn and apply in their lives.)*

### **2. Know your people.**

*(For first-time Skypleship group leaders, you may have no prior knowledge as to who will be the people God will bring into your Skypleship group. Who are in your group and their backgrounds? What are their needs? Where are they spiritually? You need to know where they are coming from and how you should be able to approach and relate to them. As a Skypleship group leader you need to be intentional in knowing your Skypleship members. You can get to know them better by having outside one-on-one informal chats, meetings and encounters over meals or coffee, or any other activities that you will do together as a group.)*

### **3. Know your schedule.**

*(Prepare 15 mins. before your Skypleship meeting. Make sure that all your members are added into your Skype account. Be familiar with your members time zone as some of them may be located in different countries.)*

---

**4. Know your venue and tools.**

*(Select a quiet place to do the call. Get familiarized with the Online App you will use and make a test call. Ensure that you have a high internet connection to avoid technical difficulties during your Skypleship meeting.)*

**5. Know your Lord.**

*(As a Skypleship group leader, your personal spiritual preparation is paramount to being a faithful and effective leader. Our growing personal walk with God is very important in leading your members towards spiritual growth and maturity. You must first develop your intimacy with God by communing with Him through prayer. Also be sure to cover and saturate each meeting with prayer. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you understand and apply the lessons to your own life and your members. Pray also for your Skypleship group members and that you will have a fruitful and enjoyable time together in discovering God's truth.)*

## **II. FACILITATING SKYPLESHIP GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

### **1 Corinthians 14:26**

What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.

*(The Skypleship group and the discussion that will take place during meetings are intended for the strengthening of the Skypleship group members. Everyone that comes during the meeting must be able to contribute and participate in the discussions. They can share their word of instruction, hymns and other things that will help them grow into maturity. The Skypleship leader facilitates the whole equipping and learning process. Among other things, your task as a Skypleship group leader is to facilitate your Skypleship group discussions. Facilitation is a skill that every leader needs to learn. Learning this skill is very important to the success of your meetings.)*

## What Then is Facilitation?

Answer: It is the skill of drawing every member to actively discuss a particular topic, leading to a group consensus and an actionable response from each participant.

### A. Facilitating and Teaching

*(You may have many hesitations and fears that hinder you from leading a Skypleship group. You might think that you are not qualified to lead a Skypleship group because you are not a good teacher. But leading a Skypleship group is more of facilitating rather than teaching. For us to be able to know this more we should differentiate between teaching and facilitating.)*

| TEACHING   | FACILITATING   |
|--|--|
| Teacher-centered   | Participant-centered   |
| Teacher provides most of the ideas                                   | Facilitator draws ideas from participants  |
| Teacher does most of the talking, while participants take down notes | Participants do most of the talking, facilitator keeps discussions focused and alive |
| Teacher is the subject-matter expert                                 | Facilitator is the process (facilitation) expert                                     |
| Teacher is more concerned with effectiveness of delivery and content | Facilitator is more concerned about the management of group discussions and learning |

## III. THE ROLE OF THE SKYPLESHIP GROUP LEADER AS FACILITATOR

### Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...

---

*(The believers are exhorted to let the word of God reside permanently in them by their study and knowledge of God's word. Therefore, each Skypleship group member has the opportunity and responsibility to teach and admonish one another with Biblical truths. The facilitator will make sure or see to it that this is happening in the Skypleship group discussions. During Skypleship group discussions, the Skypleship leader must remember his responsibilities of helping the members learn God's word from each other and in general, making the discussions fruitful, meaningful and transformative for everyone in the Skypleship group. Here are a few of the roles that the facilitator takes.)*

**A. A facilitator is simply another member of the group who is helping to make the discussion happen.**

*(Aside from the other responsibilities of a Skypleship group leader, when it comes to facilitating the group's discussions, he takes the position of being simply another member of the Skypleship group who is helping to make the discussion happen. He does not feel and act as if he is in any way superior in status, authority and worth from his Skypleship group members. He does not "lord over" his Skypleship group members but rather shows love, acceptance and humility towards them. He is a servant leader whose purpose is to disciple his Skypleship group members to become like Christ. And he shows it in the way he leads the group and facilitates the discussions.)*

**B. He looks for opinions not answers. He asks what the person thinks or feels.**

*(The facilitator seeks for the opinions of others not just ready canned answers. He should be sensitive to what his Skypleship group members think or feel. As much as possible, he solicits their ideas, insights and reflections. Because in this way he will be able to find out where his members are coming from, what their reactions are and what is really going on in their lives. You will not become an effective facilitator if you already have pre-judgments, biases and stereotypes.)*

---

**C. He aims to bring everyone into the discussion.**

*(Everyone must be involved in the discussion and no single person should dominate it either. The facilitator plays a key role in encouraging all Skypleship members to participate. He should be aware of who is participating and who is not. He is also responsible for creating opportunities for everyone to contribute. He also sees to it that the discussion will not go off-track or drift away.)*

**D. He is a learner. He doesn't force his own ideas.**

*(When the Skypleship group gathers together, it is always for mutual edification. The Skypleship group leader acts as a facilitator but he is not the only source of learning. The leader learns together with his fellow brothers and sisters in the group. He may have his own ideas and insights about a particular topic or issue, but he need not impose it to the group. The leader listens and learns from the others. The Bible will be the ultimate source of their learning experience as they are empowered and led by the Spirit. As the Skypleship group members share their lives together, they will surely grow towards Christ-likeness.)*

**E. He summarizes and asks for applications.**

*(The facilitator from time to time summarizes and synthesizes what the group has said. He draws together all the various insights and ideas mentioned by the members. Summarizing after a series of questions allows the leader to acknowledge group members' contributions.*

*Also, the goal of the Skypleship group discussion and Bible study is not just information but transformation. He should conclude each discussion by asking each one for a practical application. The practical application must be personal, specific, measurable,*

achievable, realistic and time bound. Our GLC Level 1 Essentials materials were designed with life applications questions and activities. It is best to use our GLC materials for your Skypleship groups so that it will be easier on the leader's part.)

#### IV. RULES FOR FACILITATING A PRODUCTIVE DISCUSSION

##### Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

*(Much of what happens in a Skypleship group is a discussion about the truths of the Bible as it is applied in the lives of the members. So that our discussions will be productive, not unwholesome, we need to employ several principles and skills. In order for our Skypleship group discussions to be beneficial and helpful in building up the members, there are some rules that the facilitator have to utilize. It is therefore essential for the Skypleship group leader to know these rules of facilitating a productive discussion.)*

##### A. Explain the guidelines.

*(First thing is to explain to the members that the Skypleship group have values and principles that the Skypleship members will adhere to. It is strongly encouraged that each member will abide by the CCF discipleship covenant.)*

|                        |  |   |
|------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Confidentiality</b> | I will not gossip about fellow members, and will ensure that what is shared in the Skypleship group stays in the group | A gossip goes around spreading rumors, while a trustworthy man tries to quiet them. (Prov. 11:13) |
| <b>Honesty</b>         | I will be open and honest with my Skypleship group leader and fellow members.  | The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. (Proverbs 12:22)            |

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Respect</b>          | I will respect those in my Discussion group by attending the Skypleship meetings regularly and punctually and by honoring the authority of my leader.   | Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Heb. 13:17)                                  |
| <b>Intercession</b>     | I will pray regularly for my Discussion group leader and fellow Skypleship members.   | And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.(Eph. 6:18)  |
| <b>Spiritual Growth</b> | Because I am joining this Skypleship group to grow spiritually and to help others do the same, I will refrain from conducting business, borrowing money or using this group for purposes other than spiritual growth. | And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Heb. 10:24-25) |
| <b>Timothies</b>        | I will have it as my goal to eventually build my own Skypleship group...  | 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 Tim. 2:2)   |

---

## **B. Encourage others to talk.**

*(In a Skypleship group, everybody is encouraged to serve and minister to one another. As a facilitator, make sure everybody contributes to the whole discussion. Encourage timid members to speak up and do not allow one person to dominate the whole discussion either. The facilitator can go around the group asking each person to respond. For example: “Lemuel, how would you answer the question?” It is also very important then to ask follow-up questions (or make comments) that will draw others into the discussion, and keep the discussion going. “Anybody else has insights or ideas?” If you notice that someone is already monopolizing the discussion, you can say something like “Let us hear what the others will say.”)*

## **C. Be an active listener.**

*James 1:19*

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry

*(In this verse, we are encouraged to be quick to listen, meaning it is an active listening. Active listening involves not only what you hear verbally, but also what you can observe non-verbally. As a facilitator, this means that you are actively engaging with the person who is speaking, setting aside your personal agenda, and keeping yourself from distracting thoughts (particularly thinking about what you are going to say next!). Here are some tips for active listening.<sup>1</sup>)*

---

<sup>1</sup> Leading Life-Changing Small Groups Bill Donahue and the Willow Creek Small groups team Copyright © 1996, 2002 by the Willow Creek Association



---

### 1. What you hear verbally<sup>2</sup>

*(It refers to the content of what is said. As a facilitator we must avoid being so interested in what we are about to say that we fail to hear the simple facts in a discussion. As you listen, focus on what your Skypleship group member has shared or talked about such as events, dates, and other specific information that is being revealed to the group.)*

### 2. What you hear non-verbally<sup>3</sup>

*(In active listening, it is important to observe how your Skypleship group members expressed the content. In other words, you must watch out for the consistency of what they said and the accompanying actions. Do the nonverbal messages match the verbal messages? Listen for this in three areas: • Facial expressions. When your Skypleship group member says “I’m okay,” does his/her facial expression actually communicate “I’m a little sad”? • Tone of voice. Listen for tones of sarcasm, anger, sadness, enthusiasm, hesitancy, fear, etc. • Body movements and posture. Are arms and legs crossed and closed? Are people nervous or relaxed? Does their posture indicate interest or boredom? Remember, you can “hear” a lot just by watching your Skypleship group member’s actions.)*

## D. Ask the right questions.

The success of each Skypleship group discussion depends on asking the right questions wisely and diligently. Your main task as a facilitator is to ask the group to respond to certain questions during the discussion. Facilitating dynamic discussions requires generating the right kinds of questions and offering appropriate responses. Here are some guidelines for the kinds of questions and responses that would help your group engage in meaningful and life-changing discussions.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

---

## Types of Questions to Ask:

### 1. Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no,” nor can they be answered by supplying a fact. Open-ended questions encourage participants to supply ideas, opinions, reactions, or information. Use open-ended questions when you want people to think and participate, especially to generate a lot of ideas or insights. An open-ended question can be very effective to explore a subject more deeply or to help group members be more honest with one another.<sup>4</sup>

- Why:           Why did Jesus say that?  
What:          What does the verse say? What does it mean?  
How:          How does it apply?

### 2. Greater Response Questions

There are also other types of questions that draw out greater responses from the members. You can use these questions to extract from your members different kinds of responses that would make the discussions engaging, participatory and life-changing. The list below provides the kinds of greater response questions and their respective examples.

- A. Describe: (Ex. Describe man’s unregenerate condition in Ephesians 2:1–3)
- B. Summarize: (Ex. Summarize the relationship of the vine to the branches in John 15)
- C. Explain: (Ex. Who can explain the relationship of the

---

<sup>4</sup> The Facilitator Excellence Handbook Fran Rees Copyright © 2005 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Published by Pfeiffer An Imprint of Wiley 989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA

---

branches to the vine (John 15)? Can you now explain the relationship of a Christian to Jesus?

- D. Exploratory: (Ex. What else?)
- E. Redirection Questions: (Ex. What do you think, Lemuel? What do you feel, Paulo?)
- F. Feedback and Clarification Questions: (Ex. Who can paraphrase our position? Will someone summarize what we have discussed so far? If I heard you right, you are saying?)

**The key to effective questioning in a Skypleship group is knowing how to ask the right kind of questions.**

## V. RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

### Colossians 4:6

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

*(The Bible encourages the believers to be wise in how they spoke. Their speech should be kind and courteous (gracious), is interesting, invites interaction (as opposed to refusing to listen and discuss), adds “spice” to a discussion (by penetrating to deeper levels), and is pure and wholesome.<sup>5</sup> Believers should always be ready to answer questions about their faith and be ready to share words of personal testimony.*

*Therefore, our Skypleship group discussions must also demonstrate these characteristics. The Skypleship group discussion must also be gracious, interesting, invites interaction, in-depth, pure and wholesome. In order for this to happen, the leader/facilitator must learn how to respond to questions and comments. How you and other members*

---

<sup>5</sup> LIFE APPLICATION BIBLE COMMENTARY PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS, & PHILEMON By BRUCE B. BARTON, D.MIN. MARK FACKLER, PH.D. LINDA K. TAYLOR DAVE VEERMAN, M.DIV.

---

of the group respond to questions or statements will either foster or disrupt the discussion. Facilitators need to develop responding skills. Here are some tips on how to respond appropriately to questions or comments made by group members.)

### **A. Paraphrasing**

*(Paraphrasing is the act of restating, in your own words, what your Skypleship group members has said. Paraphrasing allows you to repeat the thoughts of others and enables them to share more deeply. It summarizes what has been heard and allows the group to explore personal feelings, thoughts, and actions. Paraphrase when a group member is having difficulty expressing ideas more clearly and when you think other members did not understand well the points you're making.)*

### **B. Summarizing**

*(Summarizing keeps everyone alert and the whole group focused. A summary is needed when a lot of points have been made and information were gathered. It should be concise and direct to the point. A way of summarizing is to ask someone in the group to summarize what has been said so far. It is a good way to build this skill in the group and to keep everyone alert to what is going on. The best way is to ask, "Would someone like to summarize what has been said so far?" After asking if someone will summarize, give people time to think. If no one volunteers, go ahead, saying something like, "Well, let me try to summarize this time." Occasionally ask group members to summarize, as this increases group ownership for the whole process and empowers them to participate and contribute.<sup>6</sup>)*

---

<sup>6</sup> The Facilitator Excellence Handbook Fran Rees Copyright © 2005 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Published by Pfeiffer An Imprint of Wiley 989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA

---

### C. KKK: Kiss, Kick, Kiss

*(It is also known as the sandwich approach. You can start off with a positive praise in order to encourage the person first for asking the question. Then after correcting him gently or giving the right answer, you can seal it with another positive remark. You can simply reiterate the initial positive compliment you had given him. Or you can speak in general terms about how much you appreciate their questions and comments or you can complement them on their receptiveness to receiving constructive criticism.)*

## VI. HANDLING DIFFICULT SKYPLESHIP GROUP MEMBERS

### **Ephesians 4:2**

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

*(One of the great challenges in leading a Skypleship group is how to handle difficult persons in your group. Remember that you and your Skypleship group members are not perfect. We are all sinners saved by God's grace and we have weaknesses. That is why we have to be humble, gentle and patiently bearing with one another in love. Especially with the ones that are difficult to deal with. God choose and will use you to disciple them towards Christ-likeness.)*

### **Proverbs 27:17**

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

*(God will bring different kinds of people into your Skypleship group so that you will all grow spiritually. Difficult persons are there to help you grow in your own personal walk with the Lord, especially in terms of character development. It takes a while before you know the personalities of your members. Do not despair, there are proven ways and techniques in handling different types of difficult persons. Here are a few suggestions.)*

| Type of Difficult Persons       | Response   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Heckler<br>(Magulo/Makulit)     | Recognize the contribution, then refocus the discussion. Ask the group to respond to his idea or statement.                                  |
| Rambler<br>(Ma-istorya)         | When there is a pause or break, thank him and refocus. Set rules on discussion time and quorum.  |
| Know-it-All<br>(Feeling Genius) | Use him as a resource, but suggest that we generate ideas from the others first. Give him a listening role and capitalize on his enthusiasm. |
| Conversationalist<br>(Ma-chika) | Ask him for ideas and share it to the group.   |

*(When it is necessary, you can talk to the person gently and with love, privately. You can ask him/her to help you make the discussions more beneficial to everybody by pointing out what needs to be done without making it appear that you are attacking him/her personally. It is also very important to always pray for them. Usually these difficult persons have struggles and challenges on their own. They will test your patience and commitment to God's work. But they will also help you grow in character and ministry skills. As you patiently and faithfully minister to them, you will also grow spiritually.)*

APPENDIX B

**EVALUATION  
TOOL FOR  
SKYPLESHIP  
GROUP  
FACILITATION**





Use the following points to evaluate the facilitator. Be sure to turn in this evaluation sheet to him/her at the end of the workshop. Encircle the number found in the right column which corresponds to your evaluation of the specific tasks of a Skypeship group facilitator on the left column. Use the scale below as your guide:

5                      4                      3                      2                      1  
 Strongly Agree      Agree                  Slightly Agree      Disagree              Strongly Disagree

Facilitator: ..... Date: .....

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator kept the discussion focused on the topic | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator kept the discussion lively | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator encouraged the group to share their opinions, not just give the right answers | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator made sure every member had an opportunity to share his/her ideas on the topic | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator mostly listened; he/she let the members do most of the talking | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator did not force his/her own ideas in the discussion | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator summarized the ideas shared by the group | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator asked for personal application from the group members | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator managed the time well—the meeting started and ended within the time limit | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The facilitator incorporated prayer in the meeting | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

Other comments:

.....

.....

.....



APPENDIX C

# LEADING DISCUSSIONS

*Excerpt from*  
*“The Basics of Facilitating:  
What Every Small-Group  
Leader Needs to Know”*  
*by Amy Jackson*

---

Here are 10 important reminders for facilitating well.

1. You are a Skypleship leader, not a teacher. Empower others to discover the truth of Scripture for themselves by asking great questions. Don't turn your discussion time into a lecture.
2. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to Skypleship group members through the study materials, helping them to understand and apply the text. While it's great for you to share your own experiences, stories, and opinions, let the text be the main focus.
3. Skypleship groups are about online community and spiritual growth. As you discuss the Bible, you may be drawn into theological debates. Remember this isn't the purpose. You'll need to discuss the text in order to apply the principles faithfully, but remember the goal is life change, not simply gaining knowledge.
4. Create a safe environment for Skypleship group members to share. Don't put down Skypleship group members' comments or questions. Affirm people when they share.
5. Ask open-ended questions that can't be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." If you must ask a "yes or no" question, be sure to follow it with "Why?"
6. To encourage non-talkers to participate in your discussion, call on them by name. At the same time, never force participation, which would create an unsafe environment. This tactic also works to facilitate discussion when there are overly-talkative Skypleship group members by making it clear who should be speaking.
7. Stimulate further discussion by responding to members' contributions. You can simply acknowledge their response ("Thanks for sharing, Helen"), or you can ask guiding questions to clarify general or vague responses ("What do you mean that you feel selfish? Can you flesh that out for us?"). Be sure to respond to nonverbal communication (a groan, deep sigh, or laughter) as well—some say up to 90 percent of communication is non-verbal.

8. When someone answers incorrectly, respond carefully. Instead of telling Skypleship group members they're incorrect, turn it over to the group. Ask, "What do others think?" or "Does everyone agree?" You can also ask, "Do you find that in Scripture?" Be gentle in your response. It may be better to confront the issue one-on-one outside of the meeting, especially if the group member is passionate about his or her answer.
9. When your discussion goes off on a tangent, acknowledge the new topic's importance, and suggest that you table to topic until later—either after the current discussion or after the meeting. Having people participate—even if their comments are off-topic—is a good thing. Just keep steering the conversation back to the main topic. On the other hand, sometimes tangents lead to excellent discussions. Use discernment to determine if this tangent is something that your Skypleship group members need.
10. Don't forget to apply what you've learned! Ask Skypleship group members how they will live life differently because of your discussion. You can also ask Skypleship group members to identify next steps they need to take.

## The 30 Second Rule

I'll leave you with one final tip that has proven incredibly helpful in leading Skypleship groups. Too often, leaders ask a question, wait three to five seconds, and then jump in to answer it themselves. This is not helpful—your group members aren't participating, and they won't be discovering God's Word for themselves. Additionally, they'll learn that you'll always give the answers, which will discourage future participation. Instead, always wait 30 seconds after asking a question.

In order to train yourself in this, ask a question and then glance at your watch. Wait the full 30 seconds. You might also practice at home by sitting in silence for 30 seconds. I will warn you that at first it will feel like an eternity! But here's what I've learned: someone will most likely speak up with an answer before 30 seconds are up. And if no one has an answer,

---

someone will speak up and ask, “What was the question?” This can be a clue to you that the question may not have been clear. You can reword your question to make it clear and concise. Why 30 seconds? It takes at least 20 seconds for many people to process questions, especially questions that synthesize information like reflection and application questions. Allow Skypleship group members the time they need so everyone can participate in the conversation.

Your role as Skypleship group leader is very important. You have the privilege of working alongside the Spirit to help people grow. Never underestimate this. As you spend time leading a Skypleship group, you’ll find that these facilitation skills will become more and more second-nature to you. In the meantime, be intentional about leading your Skypleship meetings and offer yourself grace when you make mistakes. The truth is that God will use this leadership role to further develop you, so enjoy the journey.

— Amy Jackson is the Managing Editor of SmallGroups.com; copyright 2012 by Christianity Today.

*Source: <http://www.smallgroups.com>*

*Accessed on 5/6/2015 @ 12:10 PM*

APPENDIX D

# TIPS FOR FACILITATING A SKYPLESHIP GROUP DISCUSSION

*Practical advice for  
working toward life-change,  
not spectacular meetings*

*by Carter Moss*

---

For many Skypleship group leaders, one of the more intimidating things we do is facilitating a Skypleship group discussion. Very few of us feel like we'll have all the right answers, or that we can handle whatever curve balls will be thrown our way (and there will be some!). To make matters worse, it's even challenging to gauge whether we're doing a good job or not.

But here's the good news: that's not what facilitating a Skypleship group discussion is really about. We don't have to have all of the right answers. We don't have to lead the perfect discussion every time. We don't even have to get through all of the material in each Skypleship meeting!

When we're facilitating in our small Skypleship group, our main goal is to create discussion. We want to challenge people to think about the topic at hand, and to create a safe environment for people to share their thoughts—to help everyone feel valued about the input they've offered.

That's all we've got to do. Thankfully, there are some established practices and principles that can help us accomplish those goals.

## Asking Good Questions

One of the most important skills in Skypleship group facilitation is not having all of the right answers, but asking the right questions. Here are a few secrets to good question-asking:

- 1. Ask open-ended questions.** Avoid the yes/no, true/false, multiple-choice questions—"Is Jesus the sheep or the shepherd in this parable?" Similarly, avoid questions that let people off the hook with a simple Sunday-school answer—"Why did Jesus die on the cross?" You want to ask questions that require people to share some actual thoughts and feelings.
- 2. Ask follow-up questions.** Many people default to staying pretty surface-level with their answers to your questions, so get in the habit of not letting them off the hook. Ask more questions that follow up on their response. Here are some examples of good follow-up questions for the short/simple answers that people often give:



- 
- What makes you say that?
  - How do you feel about that?
  - How do you think that would've affected you if you had been living in the time of Jesus?
  - How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?

The idea is to get at the core of what people are really trying to say.

- 3. Start an argument.** I like to tell my groups that if we always agree with each other, and with every word that every author we read says, then it makes for a pretty boring group and a somewhat pointless discussion. The point of actually discussing things is to get different perspectives and wrestle with the issues!

Here are some examples of questions that can help create discussion by playing a little “devil’s advocate”:

- Do you really agree with what the author is saying in that chapter? Why or why not?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can’t we just go (some other route) instead?

- 4. Make sure the rubber hits the road.** I often tell my Skypleship group that by the end of the night, we need to make sure we apply what we’re discussing to our current lives. Otherwise we just leave the Skypleship group a little smarter, rather than with changed lives. So whatever it is you’re discussing, make sure to end with some application questions.

Here are some examples:

- So what in the world does that have to do with our lives today?
- How can you change your perspective from today regarding that issue?
- What one thing can you do differently in this next week to start living that out? (Some Skypleship groups will add accountability

---

to this question—recording what members share and asking them to report back the next week.)

## **Creating a Safe Environment**

Trust is perhaps the most vital key to really making your Skypleship group a place where genuine online community can be formed. Skypleship group members need to be able to trust each other that the Skypleship group is a safe place—a place where they can get real and know that they will not be judged, gossiped about, and so on.

So how do you create this safe environment? There are some important steps you can take. First, make sure to cover the privacy and safety issue in your Skypleship group guidelines, or covenant. Put it on paper that “what is said here and happens here, stays here.” Feel free to review these same group guidelines every single time a new person shows up to Skypleship group. And as the Skypleship leader, be sure to model this safety and confidentiality yourself!

When someone shares in the Skypleship group—no matter how much you may disagree, or how theologically incorrect they may be—make sure they feel affirmed about their answer in the moment. Later, you can (and often should) talk to them about their comments outside of the Skypleship group, but it should be done one-on-one.

Also, avoid giving unrequested advice within the Skypleship group—“Well if I were you, I’d just do this ... “ That is one of the quickest ways to shut someone down from sharing. When you hear other group members start to do this, gently remind them that “this is a safe group, and we’re here to listen, not to give advice.”

## **Handling the Challenging People**

The hard part of Skypleship groups is that they involve people, and dealing with people is always messy. One of my favorite book titles has always been the one I find most true: *Everybody’s Normal Until You Get to Know Them*. That includes me!

---

Here are some of the common “challenging people” that you may encounter, and some tips on approaching them with grace:

- **The over-talker.** This person always has plenty to say, and loves to be the first person to say it. Remind everyone in the Skypleship group guidelines that this is an equal participation group. So if you have 10 people in the Skypleship group, you want each person to contribute their 10 percent to the discussion.

If the problem continues, talk to the person outside of the Skypleship group. Affirm them in what they do contribute, and tell them you need their help in getting some of the other people in the Skypleship group to open up and share. Sometimes you can go as far as to ask them to commit to not being the first person to answer a question, or to only answer when you call on them—or to even work out a subtle signal you can give them when they are talking to much.

- **The non-talker.** This is the quiet person in the Skypleship group who never wants to share. If you think that doing so won’t scare them off even more—that they just need a little prompting—try calling on them periodically to share an answer. Also, be sure to affirm them big-time when they do respond.

If that doesn’t work, talk to the person outside of the Skypleship group. Again, affirm them in what they do contribute, and let them know that you want more people to get to hear their perspective. Remind them how valuable all of the different perspectives are to the entire group.

- **The tangent-starter.** This person loves to get the group way off track by starting random tangents and rabbit trails. First of all, don’t get upset at the tangents, and feel free to go off on them once in awhile. When the time comes, firmly bring the Skypleship group back on track.

If the problem becomes excessive, again, talk to the person outside of the Skypleship group. Affirm them in what they do contribute, and let them know about the challenge you have in

---

trying to facilitate a good Skypleship group and bring across certain points each week, and how the tangents make your job harder. Ask them how they can help you.

- **The insensitive person.** This individual gives advice, makes fun of answers and people, cuts people off, or does a variety of other things to offend members within the Skypleship group. This person is dangerous to the health of your Skypleship group! They can keep it from being a safe group more quickly than anything else. So remind everyone of the Skypleship group guidelines again, and definitely have the one-on-one conversation outside of the Skypleship group to let the person know how important a safe group is, and what they can do to help make that happen.

Remember—the end goal of a Skypleship group discussion is life change, not perfect discussions or getting through all the material. So stay open to the Holy Spirit during each Skypleship group meeting and follow where he leads. Some of the most memorable Skypleship group meetings occur when the Skypleship leader is willing to scrap the plan for the night and address a specific need, or do something fun and spontaneous.

It's also important to spend some time in prayer before each Skypleship group meeting. Ask that God would lead the discussion where he wants it to go. And get an apprentice who can help you facilitate, so that you don't have to go it alone.

Remember that God is the one who does the work in people's hearts—we are not responsible for it! We are simply creating an environment for online community and life change to happen.

— Carter Moss is the Adult Ministry Catalyst for Community Christian Church and NewThing.

*Source: <http://www.smallgroups.com>*

*Accessed on 5/6/2015 @ 12:22 PM*

APPENDIX E

**ANSWER KEY  
TO EXPLORE  
SESSION 5**

- 
1. El Shaddai ----- J. Lord God Almighty
  2. Adonai ---- I. Lord, Master
  3. Jehovah Nissi ---- H. The Lord My Banner
  4. Jehovah-Raah ---- G. The Lord My Shepherd
  5. Jehovah Rapha ---- F. The Lord That Heals
  6. Jehovah Shammah ---- E. The Lord Is There
  7. Jehovah Tsidkenu ---- D. The Lord Our Righteousness
  8. El Olam ---- C. The Everlasting God
  9. Jehovah Jireh ---- B. The Lord Will Provide
  10. Jehovah Shalom ---- A. The Lord Is Peace