



VISION

FORWARD



LEADER GUIDE

GROUP LEADER INTRODUCTION

Introduction:

These Bible studies are intended to support the weekly sermon series by Pastor Mark. Each study is intended to follow the weekly sermon, and be completed prior to the next week's sermon. The purpose of this study is to engage adults in Bible study and discussion that leads them to deeper interaction with the Scripture and discussion with other believers in order to foster spiritual transformation in their lives.

Overview:

The content of this 4-week sermon/study series is designed to introduce The Glade Church to the Vision of the church: *Through 2030, our priority is to equip and empower disciples with a deeper and wider transformation in greater Wilson county, multiplying the called and starting churches to reach the lost.*

The first few years of this strategy will be driven by four background strategies: Amplify Gospel Impact, Accelerate Intentional Discipleship, Activate Leadership Growth, and Advance Campus Development. These four strategies provide the framework for the sermon and Bible study series in January 2025 so that the Glade Church members begin to embrace and advance the vision of the church.

Basic Study Outline:

Each week's study is designed to engage groups of adults in a discussion rooted in Scripture, that grows out of the Sermon and leads to takeaways (application and commitment) to the central Bible truth of each session. Each week, the discussion is built around the following 4 sections**:

- **HOOK:** the introduction to the Bible study creates interest in the Main Focus of the study - the Central Bible Truth. It "sets the table" for a discussion that engages everyone, and reminds or introduces the group to Main Focus, the Central Bible Truth of the session.
- **BOOK:** The discussion moves purposefully into engagement with the Scripture passages that support the Main Focus, and helps adults [[and students]] understand the context and content of the Scripture passage.
- **LOOK:** The discussion shifts to focus on the Biblical principles that are evident in the Scripture and that support the Main Focus/Central Bible Truth. (The "Book" and "Look" questions may be intermixed so that Bible content naturally reveals a Biblical principle - and then the group returns to Scripture examination ("Book" -type questions) for the next segment of the Bible study.

- **TOOK**: Finally, the session begins to wrap up as the group discusses application (the “takeaways”) of the biblical principles.¹

Notes:

- These Bible studies are intended to encourage discussion-based learning that engages most or all of the group participants each week.
- The content included here is just a starting place - it includes suggestions about how to initiate and encourage discussion in your group.
- There are probably too many questions to use them all - **on purpose!** Choose the best questions that fit **your** group. The idea is to make the content and discussion relevant to the lives of your group members. Also, feel free to add your own questions, keeping in mind that the purpose of the study is to focus on the “Main Focus” of each week, and to encourage the “takeaways” from the Sunday sermon.

¹ Richards, Lawrence O., and Gary J. Bredfeldt. *Creative Bible Teaching*. Moody Publishers, 1998.

Week 1: The Power of Vision and Gospel Impact

Main Passage:

Habakkuk 2:2-3, Matthew 28:18-20

Main Focus:

See the Vision and Amplify Gospel Impact theme.

Hook: Engage group in thinking about "vision" and "Glade Church Vision"

Lead a discussion to start the group thinking about vision in general, and Glade Church Vision in particular. Ask the following questions:

- What is the difference between a microscope and a telescope? Between a telescope and binoculars?
- Transition: Microscopes focus on seeing deeply into details, very close objects; Telescopes help us see a focused area in the far distance; binoculars help us see a broader range, or area, at a distance. If you just see what we're doing at The Glade week by week, you're looking at our church through a microscope. Seeing our vision for The Glade Church is like looking at the future with binoculars - seeing a wide range of the future we believe the Lord is leading the church toward.
- The Glade Vision - (where we are headed for the next 5 years) is Multiplying the Word and our priority is to equip and empower disciples with a deeper and wider transformation in Greater Wilson County, multiplying the called, and starting churches to reach the lost.
- What does that vision statement mean to you? Which part do you resonate with the most? Restate some of it in your own words.

Book: Study the Bible together

Lead the group to consider the experience Habakkuk had while praying and seeking God's help for the future of Israel.

- Read aloud Habakkuk 2:2-3
- How does God give a vision for His people?

- Why was this vision important for Habakkuk? Why is a God-given vision important for the church?
- How can we make the vision something understood and shared by the congregation?

One of the strategies we will use to pursue the God-given vision for our church is to “Amplify Gospel Impact.” It is important to realize that this strategy comes directly from the command of Christ to the disciples after His resurrection just before His ascension. These Words from Christ are important, giving clear direction to the Church about what we should be doing.

Lead a discussion about the Great Commission, and how important it is in the life of our church.

- Read aloud Matthew 28:18-20 (“The Great Commission”)
- Remind the group of the context when Jesus spoke these words.
- State: let’s break this down. What are the parts of this Great Commission?
- Which parts of the Great Commission does our church do well? What could we do better?

Look: Guide adults to consider how the Great Commission should become personal, not just something our church does corporately. Each believer has the responsibility to be a disciple who makes disciples.

- How does our Vision Statement reflect our commitment to fulfill the Great Commission?
- What part of the Great Commission (and vision statement) are you personally most drawn to?
- What parts stretch you out of your comfort zone as you seek to be obedient to the Commission of Jesus?

Took: Wrap up the group Study by challenging group members to take action based on the Scriptures studied, the sermon they heard, and the discussion in the group. Lead in a prayer of commitment as you dismiss the group.

- Review/restate the takeaways from the Sermon.

- What part of your life needs to be more closely aligned with the words and actions of Jesus?
- What are some actions any of us could take to reach someone with the gospel.
- What is one action you can/will take to reach a person with the gospel this week?

Takeaways:

- **Vision as Fuel for Mission:** Understand how a shared vision clarifies purpose and drives impact; let the church's mission inspire you to live with intention.
- **Amplify Gospel Influence:** Begin amplifying the gospel's influence in your life by aligning words and actions with Christ's teachings.
- **Commit to Reaching Beyond Comfort Zones:** Consider one tangible way to extend the gospel's reach to those outside your immediate circle this week.

Call to Action: Reflect on how the vision of "Multiplying the Word" resonates personally and aligns with the Great Commission. Commit to praying for boldness to live out the gospel in daily life.

Week 2: Accelerating Intentional Discipleship

Main Passage:

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Main Points:

- **Intentional Discipleship:** How discipling others leads to growth in maturity and multiplies the impact of the gospel.
- **Building Relationships for Growth:** Encouraging people to take ownership of their role in discipling others.
- **Disciples Who Make Disciples:** The goal of multiplication is to see every disciple become a discipler.

Hook: An excellent metaphor for being led in discipleship, or in leading someone else in their discipleship journey, is the relationship of a mentor to the person he or she is mentoring. Begin the Bible study by focusing attention on what it means to have a mentor and to be a mentor.

- How would you define "mentor"? What is the role of a mentor?
- Did you/do you have a mentor for the work you do? Who?
- What makes someone a good mentor?
- *Transition:* State: A common process for a mentor/mentee relationship includes four stages:
 - I do; you watch
 - I do; you help
 - You do; I help
 - You do; I watch
- Learning how to be a disciple happens best in a relationship in which a mentor invests the time, energy, and resources into another person who wants to learn to follow Christ. In today's study we will see that reflected in the relationship between Timothy and his mentor, Paul.

Book: Spend personal time as the group leader, in advance of the group study, to review the relationship between Paul and Timothy. Spend time in

God's Word so the group sees how Paul mentored Timothy and how he then expected Timothy to mentor others in their discipleship walk.

- Introduce Timothy and his mentor, Paul. Ask your group to state what they know about the relationship between Timothy and Paul. As needed, support the discussion with information from Acts 16:1-5; 17:10-15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; Rom. 16:21; I Cor. 16:10, etc . . . (Read a brief bio of Timothy in a Bible dictionary as needed).
- Mention especially: 1 Timothy 1:3,18 and 2 Timothy 1:5-7
- Summarize: Paul thought of Timothy as his Spiritual Son and he was committed to guiding Timothy to become a committed follower of Christ and a future leader in the churches that Paul was establishing.
- **Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2**
 - How do these verses reflect the mentoring stages mentioned above?
 - What does Paul expect Timothy to do with what he has heard from Paul?
 - What will be the ongoing effect of Paul and Timothy's relationship?

An important emphasis is to help group members see that Paul expected Timothy to mentor others the same way that Paul mentored him.

Look: Guide group members to begin to think about the relationships they have with other believers - specifically, how they have observed and/or experienced discipleship. ***Note: many believers may say that no one has ever "discipled" or mentored them in their faith. This is common. This provides an opportunity for discipleship relationships to be formed right out of your group. Mature believers should be challenged to begin a mentoring relationship with those who are less mature in their faith.*

- What does it take to be a spiritual mentor to another believer?
- Who is a spiritual mentor/discipler you have known or observed leading others to be better disciples?
- What are some specific things they did to mentor other believers?

Took: Lead group members to begin thinking specifically about their willingness to invest in someone else's discipleship. And, whether they are willing to be in a discipling/mentoring relationship with someone. (Remind

them, as a mentor their faith will be growing as much or more than the person they are mentoring - it just happens that way!)

- Who is someone you can be intentional toward in building a discipling/mentoring relationship?
- What are the first steps you can take to develop that relationship?
- Pray for opportunities to develop a discipling relationship with that person.

As you dismiss, distribute post it notes to the group - ask each person to take one post-it note and to write the name of someone they are praying for on that post it note. Guide them to put the note inside their Bible or somewhere else they will be reminded to pray for the chance to mentor that person.

Takeaways:

- **The Ripple Effect of Discipleship:** Recognize that discipling others has a multiplying impact, leading to broader gospel influence.
- **Strengthen Relationships for Lasting Growth:** Be intentional in building spiritual relationships; discipleship thrives in relational commitment.
- **Pass it On:** Aim to not only grow personally but to help others on their spiritual journey—discipleship is about equipping others to disciple as well.

Call to Action: Commit to deeper discipleship by identifying one person to invest in spiritually. Initiate a conversation/meet to encourage their spiritual growth.

Week 3: Activating Leadership Growth

Main Passage:

Ephesians 4:11-13

Main Points:

- **Leaders Who Equip:** God's design for leaders to equip the church for ministry and spiritual maturity.
- **Developing Future Leaders:** How The Glade can foster a leadership pipeline to prepare for the future.
- **Every Member a Leader:** Activating the leadership potential in every believer, no matter their role or gifting.

Hook: Create interest in this study by inviting group members to think about different leaders they have known and how there are ways that every person is a leader, from those leading dozens of people (or more) to the person whose leadership may be in their family, or even just of themselves.

Guide a discussion using the following:

- As group members arrive, direct them into small groups of two or three people and ask them to share with each other the best leader they know and to tell why that person is a good leader. After a few moments, ask people to share what someone in their group said about a leader.
- What are characteristics of a good leader?
- What other leadership roles are there besides the ones already mentioned?
- Ask: What leaders (and what kind of leaders) do we need at the church?

Book: Invite group members to open their Bibles to Ephesians 4. Explain the context of Ephesians 4:11-13 by pointing out that in Eph. 4:1-10 Paul is writing about unity and diversity in the church. Mention that believers should strive to maintain unity in the church by remembering those things that unite the church (see v. 4-6) but that Christ has gifted individuals differently in the church in order to promote the growth of the "body" - Christ's Church (see. Eph 4:16)

- **Read Ephesians 4:11-13**

- Write on the board, or guide group members to jot down on a piece of paper the five types of leaders mentioned in v. 11. (Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.)
- Define what each of these leaders do in the church. For example:
 - **Apostles:** those gifted as apostles are often church planters, or people who start ministries in a church. Some people would describe them as “God’s Entrepreneurs.” Ask: Can you name someone who fits this description?
 - **Prophets:** those gifted as prophets are able to speak truth even in difficult, challenging situations. They can speak “truth to power” and do it in a way that proclaims the gospel and honors Christ as they do it. They may also be able to express how God’s truth and power may become evident in the future. They may not predict specific events, but future trends that impact the Church in the World.
 - **Evangelists:** those gifted as evangelists may be recognized by their desire to share the gospel, with the ease and capability with which they proclaim the gospel, and even with an ability to sense when people are open to hearing the gospel or are under conviction of the Holy Spirit.
 - **Pastors:** those gifted with the care and feeding of God’s people - His flock. Pastors guide God’s people, provide protection and security for them, provide for their spiritual needs discipline as necessary. (Not to be confused with the *role* of Pastor, however, many who are called to be Pastors, i.e. Pastor of a church, are gifted as pastors.)
 - **Teachers:** those who are teachers love to both explain God’s Word and study God’s Word. They are gifted to understand the meaning of God’s Word and to be able to apply God’s Word, making it relevant and meaningful to other people.
- Ask group members to name individuals they know who are gifted with each of the gifts above. How are their gifts evident?
- Say: According to verse 12, all these gifts have a purpose in common. What is that purpose?
- What does “equip the saints for the work of ministry” mean?
- How do leaders who have one of the gifts in v. 11 use that gift to equip the saints for the work of ministry? (For example, how does someone gifted as an

apostle equip other believers for ministry? Possible answer: provides visionary leadership and is able to call forth excitement and commitment from others to do the work to achieve the vision.)

- How does equipping the saints “build up the body of Christ?”
- What are the goals, stated in verse 13, of saints who are doing the work of ministry? (unity in the faith, knowledge of God’s Son, maturing to become like Christ.)

Look: Guide adults to consider who they are following and to evaluate how they are doing at accomplishing the work of ministry in the Church. Encourage them to consider how they are leading others in their lives.

- What ministry(ies) are you involved in through the church?
- Who leads that ministry? Who equips you to accomplish the work of that ministry?
- How does the ministry you’re involved in build up the body of Christ?

Took: Review the takeaways listed below.

- Challenge group members to understand that our church will be more mature and more spiritually healthy as more people join the “work of ministry” and are equipped by leaders in the church.
- Ask members to think of one thing they could do this week to shoulder some of the leadership responsibility in the ministry they’re serving in. Call for volunteers to share some responses.
- Remind group members that they are all leaders in some way - at work, at home, at church. Encourage them to consider taking on leadership tasks and developing leadership skills for those ministries.

Takeaways:

- **Leaders as Equippers:** See leadership as a way to empower and equip others for ministry, contributing to a spiritually healthy/mature church.
- **Future-Ready Church:** Understand that a pipeline of leaders ensures the church remains strong and adaptable for future challenges.

- **Activate Your Potential:** Every believer has a leadership role to play; consider how you can serve to encourage others and contribute to the church's growth.

Call to Action: Discover and engage with a leadership role within the church that aligns with your gifts and passions, whether big or small.

Week 4: Building for the Future & Multiplying the Word

Main Passage:

Nehemiah 2:17-20

Main Points:

- **Developing the Spiritual and Physical Campus:** Just as Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem, the church must build its structures—both spiritual and physical—to serve its mission.
- **Strategic Campus Development:** How a well-developed campus helps the church fulfill its mission to multiply the Word.
- **Looking Forward:** Calling the congregation to commit to the vision of multiplying the Word and living out the mission together.

Hook: Guide the group to think about how the church is changing.

- Ask: How has the church changed since you started attending? (Encourage the group to tell some stories.)
- Is the church changing/growing faster now than it was 5 years ago? What challenges have you noticed because we're growing?
- *Transition:* During the last few weeks we've discussed some of the vision strategies that will help us prepare spiritually for the growth of the church. Guide the group to consider and discuss how each strategy (Gospel Impact, Intentional Discipleship, Leadership Growth) are necessary for the future health and growth of the church.
- Today we turn our attention to a fourth strategy to help us prepare for the future, and at first it may seem less important than the other strategies, but that the Bible speaks even to the physical needs of building for the future. This strategy is all about Campus Development.

Book: Introduce today's Scripture study by reminding the group of the story and purpose of Nehemiah. Mention that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah tell the story of the return of the Jewish exiles to Jerusalem and Judah, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the rebuilding and repopulation of Jerusalem. The rebuilding of Jerusalem, recorded in Nehemiah, occurred beginning in

444 BC, and provided the restoration of the Jewish community into which Jesus Christ was born. (As needed, refer to a Study Bible, a Commentary, or a Bible dictionary for more details.)

- Read aloud Nehemiah 2:17-20.
- Point out that Nehemiah quickly identified the need to rebuild Jerusalem's walls and restore the gates in the walls.
- Ask: What purpose did the walls around ancient cities serve?
- Why were the Jews disgraced by the ruined walls? (The rebelliousness and idol worship of their ancestors led to God's judgment on Jerusalem and its destruction.)
- Explain that Sanballat and Tobiah were governors or politically important leaders (of Samaria and Ammon) who opposed the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls because they believed it posed a threat to them.
- How did Nehemiah respond to the opposition posed by Sanballat and Tobiah?

Look: Lead adults to consider the biblical principles in Nehemiah.

- Why was the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls important to Nehemiah and the returning exiles?
- How does the church campus (its buildings and grounds) contribute to the experience that children, students, families, and adults have when they come to the church? How could the campus facilities detract from the experience?
- What relationship is there between the church facilities and the ministry that happens there? How does the church contribute to (or detract from) the spiritual development of individuals?
- What opposition or problems does our church face in building, maintaining, and expanding our facilities? How should we respond to the opposition or problems?

Took: Guide the group to review the takeaways from this study.

- How can we support both the spiritual development of individuals and the church's physical facilities?

- How do you benefit today from the investment and planning of previous generations of Glade Church members? What do you enjoy most about our campus? Where do you see a need for improvement, expansion, or change?
- Guide the group members in a time of prayer to consider their commitment to the spiritual and physical needs of the church as we seek to Multiply the Word in the future. Point out that commitment includes prayer, service, and giving. Pray for God's blessings for the work and ministry of The Glade Church.

Takeaways:

- **Physical and Spiritual Foundations:** Recognize that both spiritual and physical spaces are essential in facilitating the church's mission.
- **Plan and Build with Vision:** Strategic campus development is not just about facilities; it's about creating a sustainable base for mission and outreach.
- **Long-term Commitment to Multiplying the Word:** Embrace a role in the long-term vision to see the church flourish as a place of growth and multiplication for future generations.

Call to Action: Commit to supporting the church's physical and spiritual development, praying over specific needs, and considering ways to serve or contribute to the campus vision.