

Hampton Roads Church Campus Ministry
Spiritual Disciplines
Quiet Time Packet
Winter 2012

Bible Study I

"Building Your House"

We all build our lives around certain principles, values, thoughts, and goals whether we know it or not. Sometimes it's clear, the often stated "family first" value for example. And sometimes we have no idea we actually hold to those principles, like American individualism. How should we build according to Jesus?

Matthew 7:24-27

- What is the major difference between the wise and foolish builders?

- What was the building plan of these two builders?

- How does Jesus say we can be the wise builder? (v.24)

- So how do we figure out what we've made our foundation? Well, write down your three most important things in your life. Now right down your three biggest life goals. Then three biggest convictions.

<u>Priorities</u>	<u>Goals</u>	<u>Convictions</u>
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

- How much scripture has guided those priorities? This is your foundation.

- If there weren't very many, or any scriptures, your foundation is more sand than rock. Go find scriptures! Call someone today and talk about your foundation and get some help making them come from the bible. Rather than the other way around.

- Write down some of your new foundation scriptures below:

What happens when trouble comes on someone who has a foundation on the rock of Jesus' words?

- **Challenge:** Talk to someone today about your foundation. Make sure to use scripture, and live out your foundation this week.

We have so much of the world trying to tell us how to live everyday. Worldly wisdom acts like termites in a foundation of a disciple's life. Stop building with worldly wisdom. BUILD WITH GODLY WISDOM. When that's how we build, by obeying his word, no matter what comes our way, we will stand firm.

Bible Study II

"Commands and Promises"

What am I supposed to do with what I read? The Bible isn't a textbook, it isn't a novel, it isn't your Facebook news feed. The Bible is the engine that helps you live the radical spiritual life you were meant to live! How? Through God's **commands** and his **promises**!

Joshua 1:7-9

- What does God *command* Joshua to be? Then what does he *command* him to do? (v.7)
- How might those two *commands* be linked?
- What would it mean to turn from the word " to the right or to the left"?
- What does God *promise* will happen when you obey the word? (v.8/9)
- So how does reading and obeying the word help you be courageous?
- Write down THREE *commands* that scare you when it comes to being a Disciple.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Find a scripture with a *promise* that helps with each of those commands. Write it next to the fear. Ask for help if you don't know!
- **Challenge:** Do all of those things this week. When you do it, "Meditate" on those scriptures you wrote next to them to help you be strong and courageous!
- When you read, look for **Commands** and **Promises**. Always right down commands and promises.

There are many commands in the Bible, but there are also so many promises! God never just says to do something without promising to take care of us as well. Look for his commands and his promises when you read. Take his commands seriously and take his promises the same way!

Bible Study III

"Guarding your life"

Reading the Bible is so basic, but after a while it can be more like homework than time with God. How do we get out of our funk when reading becomes a bore?

Psalm 119:9-11

- How can someone who is young keep their way pure?
- Check out the ESV..."How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word." What does the word do for our life? How does the word guard our life?
- What kind of attitude do we need to have toward the word of God? (v.10)
- What kind of situations have you been in that you needed the word to guard your life? Think about temptation, or sin, think of how God's word could have protected you.
- Practically, how can we keep ourselves from sinning against God? (v.11)
- What Bible verses have you "hidden in your heart"/memorized? Write them down.
- Make a decision to MEMORIZE scripture. Start today. Memorize v.11. Make sure to memorize a verse a week.

The Bible is so much more than instructions or stories, it is our guard for our life. It isn't homework, it's our Spiritual Bodyguard. Memorize scripture. Love it and it will protect you. Why? Because it is the spirit of God!

Prayer I

"Shameless Audacity of Purposeful Prayer"

Prayer is not natural, it must be taught. And practiced. Sometimes it can seem like we are rambling. Sometimes we are confused on what to pray for. Well, here's how Jesus teaches it

Luke 11:1-12

- How does Jesus say to pray? What do these things mean?
 - Father, hallowed be your name...
 - Your *kingdom* come...
 - Give us our daily bread...
 - Forgive us our sins...
 - And lead us not into temptation...
- Here's a way to think about it. **Praise, Confess, Thanks, Request.** It even almost kinda rhymes. This isn't the only way to pray, but it does bring focus to our prayers, especially when we start to ramble, or can't think of what to pray.
- What is "shameless audacity"? (v.8)
- What is the promise God makes in v.9?
- What are some impossible hopes you have in your life? Write down three
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- What would it mean to have shameless audacity in praying these prayers?
- What might stop you from being shamelessly audacious in your prayers?

Challenge:

1. Start dreaming, and praying for things that are impossible.
2. Use the method above to pray every day this week.

Have you become conditioned to think small in your prayers? Have you confined God to the realm of what is possible in your mind? Have some shameless audacity. And pray impossible prayers!

Prayer II

"Humility in Prayer"

God is not a genie and prayer is not wishing. Sometimes that is how it seems. But really how does all this work? What should my attitude be towards God and praying to him?

2 Kings 20:1-11

- What was Hezekiah's attitude and state of his heart while he prayed?
- What did he actually ask for? What did God actually give Hezekiah?
- Why do you think God answered so quickly (before Isaiah left the courtyard) and in this particular way?
- In what ways has God shown you his power in answering your prayer?
- When prayer goes "unanswered," what prevents you from having a heart like Hezekiah?
- Why does God wait for your heart to be like Hezekiah's?
- How can you be humble to God's will like Hezekiah?
- Being humble to God's will means accepting what he decides to give you. Sometimes we forget that we pray for something and then we miss his answer, whether it's yes or no.

Start a prayer journal that helps you remember what you've prayed for and how God answers.

Go now, and find a notebook and start one.

- What happens when we, like Hezekiah, are humble toward God in prayer?

God is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. But that also means he knows better than us. We may ask and he will answer, but we must have the humility to ask and accept whatever he gives. Go be like Hezekiah, humble and faithful.

Prayer III

"Persistent Prayer"

How long do you pray for something? How long does it take you to get discouraged? Do you ever get the feeling that prayer doesn't work? Let's take a look at Jesus' thoughts.

Luke 18:1-8

- What does Jesus say is the point of this parable?
- The woman had no one else in her life to speak for her, why do you think she persisted?
- Why does judge finally give her justice?
- How is God like the judge? How is God not like the judge? What does that mean for our prayer life?
- What would it look like to be persistent like the widow? What's the longest you've gone praying for one thing?
- What stops you from persisting in prayer like the widow?
- Go back to your prayer journal, Decide to have a "*daily bread*" and "*persistent widow*" prayer request that you pray for everyday. Choose three things for yourself and three things for others. Write them below, as God answers them, change it up.
- Examples: self--faith, humility, boldness; others--my brother to be a disciple, that person I'm studying with, and my leaders.

Yourself

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Others

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Keep track of how often you pray these things until they become an everyday habit.

- If Jesus asked you the same question in v.8, what would your answer be based on your prayer life?

Jesus connects how often you pray with faith. If you want to grow in your faith, you must pray. But his amazing promise is that God is just and he does answer faithful prayers. Have faith and persist in prayer!

Fellowship I

"True Encouragement"

We all need encouragement, we all need help from each other. We are beat down by sin from the second we wake up to the second we go to bed. But how are we to go about encouragement?

Hebrews 3:12-14

- How does God say we can fight against "sinful, unbelieving hearts"? (v.12-13)
- How does encouragement fight against sin? (v.13)
- So what is encouragement?
- The Greek word is "parakaleo" which means, "to call alongside." The idea is to strengthen someone. In this context, we must encourage by fighting against deceit of sin. Fighting against deceit of sin means encouragement by truth. Not a stream of fluffy words, but truth.
 - What is truth?
 - Scripture
 - The presence of sin in someone's life
 - The presence of godliness in someone's life.
- How do *you* encourage people? How much truth is in your encouragement?
- There are times we are afraid to call out sin, and instead choose to encourage by comforting words only. We must be ready to encourage by truth, otherwise we actually increase sin's deceitfulness...Yikes!
- How can you encourage your brothers and sisters today as long as it is called today?
- Make a plan to encourage someone everyday this week.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat.	Sun
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- How do we know we truly share in Christ? (v.14)

There is no way in the world that any of us could possibly hold firmly to the very end without each other. We can't be hardened by sin's deceitful. But we must encourage with truth. And then we can truly encourage!

Fellowship II

"Growing spiritually through fellowship"

Why do we need to be connected to other disciples? So many things in our lives we can and must do by ourselves, what makes our spiritual life any different?

Ephesians 4:11-16

- How does God set up his kingdom to be built up? And what is the goal of building up his kingdom? (v.11-13)
- How do we know when we are "no longer infants" spiritually? (v.14-15)
- How is all parts of the body of Christ built up and supported? (v.16)
- So while Christ is the head, the ligaments support and hold us together as well. And we all must build each other up as we do our own work! So if we want to be connected, supported, and grow how must we be connected to the body?
- What is your attitude toward being connected to other disciples?
- What do you think your role is in building up the body right now? If you don't know, talk to someone in the church about today.
- Think about and write down right now who you are supporting and building up, and who is supporting and giving to you and how you/they are doing that.

I am supporting...

I am being supported by...

- If you're not really supporting anyone, repent! When everyone supports each other, we all will grow. How will you support another disciple today?

We can't be disciples alone. We can't grow alone. We need other people and we need support.. We can't only be supported, we must support as well. But what a gift it is to have the body of Christ as family and support forever. Be connected and supported!

Fellowship III

"Open your hearts"

We have all been given a great capacity for fellowship in the human heart. We have the ability to give and receive great connection to so many incredibly things people. But where should such a precious gift be devoted?

2 Corinthians 6:11-7:1

- What does Paul say is the problem with his relationship with the Corinthians? (v.11-12)
- Where did they have their hearts yoked? (v.14)
- What is the problem with this situation? (v.14-16)
- What is God's command to these Corinthians who had yoked their hearts in inappropriate places? (v.17-7:1)
- What does it mean to "purify yourself"?
- Who are the most important people and the closest friends in your life? Are they disciples?
- As hard as it is to accept this, the closest people to you that are not disciples now have very little in common with you because of Jesus. The most important thing in your life is not in theirs. And not even close.
- How can you practically begin to purify relationships with people that are not true disciples? This may mean starting to help them become Christians, or it may mean cutting out friendships.
- How can you practically open your heart wide to disciples?
- Today there is a two-fold challenge:
 1. Begin purifying yourself from two close non-believer friendship.
 2. Open your heart wide to a disciple today.
- Why does God want us to open our hearts wide to believers?

Whoever we open our hearts to has an incredibly powerful influence on us. We used to base it off our comfort, but now we must open our hearts wide to those who help us please God. But the amazing thing is, when we open our hearts to Godly fellowship, we experience true fellowship.

Confessing Sin I

"Purified in the light....or deceived in the dark"

One of the most difficult spiritual habits to start is confessing sin. Sometimes confession feels more like a chore and more embarrassing than anything, so why does God want us to confess?

Why is this important at all?

Read 1 John 1:5-10

- What does it mean that God is light? What does that tell us about God? (v.5)
- What does it mean to walk in darkness? What happens when we do? (v.6)
- What **two** amazing things happens when we walk in the light? (v.7) How does it feel to be purified?
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Is there any sin in your life you have kept in the darkness? What happens when we claim to be without sin but really have sin? (v.8) How does it feel to be deceived?
- In the past, what do you think you has convinced you to keep sin in the darkness?
- What **practical decision** can you make right now to make sure you are walking in the light?
- What might stop you from making that decision a reality?
- Why does God want us to walk in the light? (as he is in the light)

Everything in our minds tells us that when we sin, we need to cover it up, but God says "Confess it, and be purified!" What an amazing promise! Think about what you would rather have, guilt from the burden and weight of your sin, or being purified from it when you confess. Today, and forever, walk in the light and walk free and purified from sin.

Confessing Sin II

"Confess or Conceal"

We've all been afraid to confess our sin. And many of us contemplate concealing sin or just go ahead and conceal it. What's the problem, and what can we do when that's how we feel?

Read Proverbs 28:13

- What does God promise will happen to those who conceal their sin?
- What does God promise will happen to those who confess and renounce their sin?
- What does it mean to renounce something? (Go look up renounce)
- Have you ever thought you would prosper, or that it would be better for you to conceal your sin rather than confess it? What was the result?
- This passage tells us that mercy comes when we confess and **renounce** our sin. Is there any sin you have been concealing, or sin you haven't renounced? If so what would it take for that to happen?
- What might convince you to try to find prosperity in concealment rather than mercy in confession and renunciation?
- What will you do today to find God's mercy by confessing and/or renouncing sin?

Satan and our sinful nature tries to tell us that we are better off concealing sin. So often we say or think "that's my business" or, "I'm not confessing that, people will judge me" or even, "I'll get in trouble if I confess that." The truth is you will get judged by God if you don't confess, and then you really will be in trouble. God promises his mercy in confession and renunciation of sin. Be open and get mercy!

Confessing Sin III

"Sin Affecting Others"

Let's face it, sometimes we don't feel like confessing and dealing with our sin because it only involves us. We don't see anyone getting hurt or affected by it, so what's the big deal? Today let's read a story about a guy who thought exactly that. There's a little bit more reading today, but it's a powerful story.

Background: Israel is conquering the promised land, and so far they are undefeated in any way. They were fired up that God was fighting their battles, and then, Achan...

Read Joshua 7 (yes, all of it, you can do this)

- When Achan takes the devoted things, how does his sin affect God? (v.1) What was the result of the next battle? (v.5)
- How did Achan's sin impact other people? (go back through the story and see how many people were impacted by his sin)
- Specifically, in v.10-13, how did this one man's affect his entire country?
- What did it take for Achan to come clean about his sin? What was the result of him taking so long?
- Sin clearly affects people around us even if they are not directly involved. Think about then write down people that are affected by your sin even when it's not against them.
- Achan saw what his sin was doing, had many chances to come clean and still did nothing! He had to be cornered about his sin before admitting it. Have you ever concealed something for a long time and had to be prodded to confess it? If so, why do you think you waited so long?
- How can you avoid ending up in Achan's position? Write down **THREE** ways you can be open about your sin and avoid hurting people around you and being cornered by the consequences of sin.
- Conversely, when we deal with sin God can stand with us, therefore what is the great result of dealing with sin (8:1, 7:13)

Sin Affects people in our lives! There's no way around it. Just like righteousness affects those around us so does wickedness. When we don't get our sin out in the light, we subject those around us to the consequences of our sin, and ultimately we ourselves are cornered by the consequences we've built up for ourselves. Don't be fooled, be open! Walk in the light, confess your sin and God will be with you!