

# The 2:7 Series

A course in personal discipleship to strengthen your walk with God

## Book 1

# Leader's Guide

**AUGUST—2011 Edition**



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## **SOMETIMES THERE MAY BE AN ERROR IN THE PRINTED MATERIAL**

Imagine the complexity and the number of details in the content of a revised and updated edition of *The 2:7 Series*. Errors can occur in these early 2011 print runs—hopefully not many. As we find an error or you report one to us it will be posted on this second page of the Leader’s Guide. An error will be corrected as soon as possible. Even after the correction, the error information will remain on this page—for those who months later still have books from an older print run.

### **ERRORS FOUND**

1. Book 1, page 109

In the NIV John 16:24 verse: drop the fourth word “may.”

This has been corrected in the memory card download on the website and will be corrected on page 109 in a future print run.

## Introduction

### The Title

The title, *Growing Strong in God's Family*, suggests the goal of this course and the context in which it will be used.

1. The goal is individual spiritual growth. The course strengthens participants in the basics of Christian life and ministry.
2. This course is designed and prepared for local church use—whether the discussion group is held in the church building or in a home.
3. After each person in the group prepares the lesson, the group comes together to discuss the work that they have individually done.

### Important

#### 1. Leader's Guide

It is important for one person to act as the leader during each group meeting. This may be the same person each time or the responsibility may be shared by two or three group members (preferably those who previously have gone through the course themselves).

This leader's guide is based on extensive use of *Growing Strong in God's Family* and *The 2:7 Series*. It is imperative for the group leader to use this material every week as part of his or her careful preparation. The leader's guide is filled with proven principles, methods, and suggestions. Using it can significantly lighten the preparation load for a group leader.

#### 2. Leader Training

In late 2011 or early 2012 leader training segments will be coming available on *The 2:7 Series* website: [www.2-7series.org](http://www.2-7series.org). For future announcements please look under the tab "2:7 Group Leaders" where these leader's guides are posted.

### Group Size

The professionals in the field of small group discussions say that 4-8 people make for the best discussions. For this course, **plan for up to 10 participants in your group**—not including yourself. You may find it necessary to have more. Just remember that each person over 10 diminishes the impact of this training material. It is wiser to break a group of 12 or more into two groups whenever possible. Your only limitation may be the number of qualified group leaders available.

### Study Books

It is imperative that each person in your group has his or her own copy of *Growing Strong in God's Family*. People should write their name or put an address label on their book for easy identification (page 3).

Each person will be expected to do homework every week. It is motivational for individuals to complete their own work and fill in their own answers. By the end of the course, *Growing Strong in God's Family* will have become a valued possession and will be a personal reference book for many years to come. With this in mind, suggest that the members of your group make neat and legible entries as they go through the course.

## Getting Started

The following guidelines should be of great value in helping you start a group in *Growing Strong in God's Family*. You will want to refer to these guidelines often as you lead your group through the course.

### The Benefits of Being a Discipleship Group Leader

As the leader of a *Growing Strong in God's Family* group, you will see the cause of Christ advanced in these two ways:

1. Growth in the spiritual lives of others
2. Growth in your own spiritual life and discipling skills

This growth will come about not as a result of this leader's guide, but as you look to God for wisdom as you learn from your own experiences, as you apply the resources you have, and as you maintain high expectations.

This leader's guide is not the final authority on how to lead your group. Each leader and each group is unique. But the information included here can offer you significant help.

Remember that the *Growing Strong in God's Family* study is only a means to an end. These are excellent and proven materials. However, publications and programs do not make disciples. Only a disciple can make a disciple. It is imperative that you practice what you teach. Only as the Spirit of God works in a life can there be significant and lasting changes. These concepts should guide your thinking as you help each member of your group grow toward spiritual maturity in Christ.

### Goals as Group Leader

You have two long-range goals when helping people become functioning disciples:

1. To help each person become a more mature disciple of Jesus Christ
2. To equip each person with tools and know-how to help him or her develop others in discipleship

Your leadership gives each person in your group the opportunity to develop the qualities, habits, and disciplines that mark him or her as a man or woman of God. They will be growing in their relationships both with God and with other people.

Members of your group also need to be encouraged to share with others some of the things they are learning during the group sessions and what they are experiencing in their walk with God.

### Evaluating Your Leadership

The following questions for evaluating leadership are for your own personal reflection. In your group listen for answers to some of these questions, but you don't want to insert discussions about these topics on top of the assignments in the *Growing Strong in God's Family* workbook.

Who?	Who am I serving? Who are the people in my group? Do I really know them?
What?	What are my goals for <i>Growing Strong in God's Family</i> , and what are my goals for each session? What needs and expectations do my group members have?
Where?	Where am I in my own Christian life? Where am I taking this group?
Why?	Why am I leading this group? Why is each person in my group?
When?	When will we reach our goals? When will I spend time socially with members of my group?
How?	How do we achieve our goals?

### Getting Organized

1. **When** will your group meet? Since you need 1 ½ to 2 hours for each session in the *Growing Strong in God's Family* study, the Sunday school hour is usually not long enough to serve as a meeting time. So when should you meet? Your final decision may involve some sacrifice on your part—you may have to give up a night or an afternoon each week that you wanted to save for yourself. But, you've decided to serve this group, so find out what time is best for your group.

Consider such things as the types of jobs your group members have. For example, those with construction jobs or other outside work may prefer not to meet in the early evening. But people who commute to work early in the morning may not want to be out late at night. Couples with young children may have days or times that are easiest for them to find baby-sitters. Assess your group's needs and encourage each member to be willing to compromise some if necessary.

2. **Where** will you meet—at church, in your home, in the homes of other group members, or somewhere else? You may find that a rotating system is best, in which you take turns going to each other's homes. This allows everyone to share the responsibility for hosting the group, and it also divides the driving time.

Whatever you work out, try to find comfortable surroundings that encourage group involvement. You may have from eight to twelve people—needing room to interact in a relaxed way. You want to sit in a circle or oval so you can see each other and talk easily with one another. There are times when you may have the group divide briefly into twos or threes.

3. What about **refreshments**? Let the group decide how much effort, if any, they want to give to this. Preparing refreshments shouldn't become a burden to anyone. Be sure to keep them simple.

4. The presence of **children** during the meeting can be a distraction. What arrangements do your group members need to make for baby-sitting?

5. Should you plan for informal **socializing** before the scheduled meeting time, with the group arriving early for this? Or would they prefer to begin the session when they arrive, and use the time afterward for refreshments and talking? Discuss this and set a policy that will help them plan when to arrive and how long to stay.

### Handling Potential Problems

Your group may face a few of the problems listed here. By considering them in advance, you will be better able to deal with them if they occur.

- Frequent absences
- Frequent tardiness
- Lack of preparation
- Lack of motivation
- Difficulties in relating to each other or to you
- Members who drop out
- Varying degrees of expectations and interest
- Members who seem to monopolize the group's time
- Considerations that require changing your regular meeting time
- Couples in which the husband and wife seem to be going different directions in their interests and expectations
- Members who are experiencing “dry” periods in their spiritual lives

Difficulties such as these will not simply go away. You can deal with them in an attitude of love and concern. Here are several suggestions:

1. Talk alone with the persons involved. Share with them your concern and your desire for their success.
2. Establish a satisfactory agreement with the persons involved or with the group as a whole. This will make them accountable to each other.
3. Share some concerns with the entire group. Point out your goals of this discipleship training and your wanting them to pursue these goals. You can do this in a positive, encouraging way.
4. Give occasional “locker room chats”—as a coach would with his or her team—you remind, challenge, encourage, and sometimes correct—briefly and in a positive way.
5. Feel free to talk seriously about relevant biblical principles that deal with problems you face with your group.
6. Seek outside help from your pastor or from other mature Christians when necessary.

### Getting Together

1. **Start and end on time.** Most people appreciate punctuality. Don't allow the time to get away from you at the end. You want the group to be eager to return next week.
2. Try to **involve each group member** in the discussions.

3. **Avoid embarrassing anyone.** Some may feel uncomfortable at first in such activities as reading aloud, praying aloud or group discussions.
4. As the leader, **participate** in all the activities. A new group especially needs to see your example.
5. Be sure any **instructions** you give are clearly understood.
6. Be yourself. Use the outlines given in the leader's guide for each session, but **don't be mechanical** about it.
7. **Come prepared.** Those in your group can become discouraged if you do not seem to know what you are doing, especially after they have taken time themselves to prepare. Know the material thoroughly enough to be at ease in leading your group.
8. Have your **goals clearly in mind** for each session.

### Between Meetings

Your commitment to the group includes more than just the giving of your time during the group session itself. Accomplishing your goal of developing disciples requires additional activities on your part.

1. Try to establish a **genuine friendship** with those in your group. If possible get to know them outside of your time in the group. Strong friendships make your group sessions more productive. During *Growing Strong in God's Family* have one or two social activities as a group—like having a simple potluck before one of your sessions. Have fun together.
2. **Pray regularly** for each person in your group. Ask them to pray for one another.
3. **Keep growing** as a Christian. Effective spiritual leaders are continuing to grow in their own lives.
4. Follow your **priorities**. Keep your personal relationship with God and your responsibilities to your family in order as you have a discipleship ministry to others.

### Reading and Marking Assignments

In many of the assignments we ask 2:7 participants to **read and mark certain sections** of the material. An example is the article *Tyranny of the Urgent* on pages 34-38. The benefit for them and for the group is that when those pages are discussed, each student can see what he or she has marked and **can quickly come up with things to share in the group**—not having to nervously search through those several pages.

From time to time remind your students of the value of marking as they read. It makes it easier for them to prepare to participate.

### Read Around the Circle

In many of the 2:7 sessions individuals are asked to read aloud from their books. In Session 1 you say something like, "Starting on page 13, let's read through some of this important information. Let's start with Nancy and go to the left. Nancy, would you read the verse and the

first paragraph?” After Nancy reads, you say “thank you.” Then: “Bill, would you read number 1? Then let’s keep going around the circle.” After each one reads, just say “thank you” and make eye contact with the next reader—often eye contact is enough and you don’t have to say anything.

Experience has shown that “reading around the circle” is a simple, efficient way to get things read aloud. It takes a load off of you, the facilitator, and the group grows in its ability to self-manage these reading sections. There are sections of the 2:7 materials that are not mentioned in the assignments. This is planned because it allows a change of pace in your group meeting and the 2:7 participants grow in their verbal skills. These are tiny steps that move them toward their being able to lead a 2:7 group or Bible study group in the future.

### **Group-Participant-centered, Not Leader-centered**

In *The 2:7 Series* you lead as a facilitator, not a teacher. Let the material carry the load. You don’t have to manage and direct—you facilitate. You want to hear their voices most of the time, not your voice. Consider the 80/20 rule: you speak 20% of the time and you encourage those in your group to speak 80% of the time. You can lead discussion with questions rather than statements. You sit as part of the circle and participate as one of the group. When the group is reading aloud around the circle, take your turn. But as leader you may want to underscore things that are important or clarify things that are not understood. Many questions you are asked can be directed back to the group. Other questions you may choose to answer outright—and move on.

Prepare your lesson as a participant in the group. Then prepare your lesson as the leader of the group. Have in mind the sections where you discuss material they have read and marked—you want to discuss one segment at a time. Have in mind the sections where you will have them read around the circle. In some of the Bible studies you might have a follow-up question or two that you ask after someone gives an answer to each of those questions.

## **Perspective on Growing Strong in God’s Family**

For many members of your group, this course will probably mean the beginning of consistent and meaningful quiet times, starting successful Scripture memory—and for some, participating in their first group Bible study. These disciplines can develop into habits that strengthen a person’s walk with God and effectiveness in having a spiritual influence on others.

### **Goals for Growing Strong in God’s Family**

1. To enjoy reading the Bible.
2. To memorize the five *Beginning with Christ* verses
3. To experience consistent and meaningful quiet times
4. To understand *The Wheel Illustration*
5. To study and discuss *Tyranny of the Urgent*
6. To understand *The Hand Illustration*
7. To prepare and use an Evangelism Prayer List



**Flowchart for *Growing Strong in God's Family***

This flowchart shows how various aspects of the Christian life are emphasized in this course.

*Bible Study*

You have Bible studies in Session 2-5, 7, 9, 10 and 11.

*Prayer*

Prayer is a regular ingredient in all eleven sessions.

“Practical Suggestions on Prayer”—Session 5

“Guide to Conversational Prayer”—Session 8

*Scripture Memory*

“Proven Ways to Memorize a Verse Effectively”—Session 1

“Beginning with Christ Explanation”—Session 2

“Beginning with Christ Bible Study”—Session 2

Memorize the five Beginning with Christ verses—Sessions 2-8

“An Effective Way to Review Memory Verses Together”—Session 3

“Why Memorize Scripture?”—Session 11

*Quiet Time*

“Ways to Mark Your Bible as You Read”—Session 1

“Choosing Where to Read in Your Bible”—Session 1

“Reading and Marking Exercise”—Session 1

Every week sharing quiet time highlights—Sessions 2-11

“How to Use My Reading Highlights”—Session 5

“Why Use My Reading Highlights”—Session 5

“The Quiet Time”—Session 6

“Quiet Time, Reading Plans, and Bible Study”—Session 6

*The Obedient Christian Life*

“Tyranny of the Urgent”—Session 3

“The Wheel Illustration”—Session 4

“The Hand Illustration”—Session 6

“A Personal Evaluation of The Wheel and The Hand in Your Life”—Session 8

*Evangelism and Witness*

“Why Have an Evangelism Prayer List”—Session 8

“Setting Up Your Evangelism Prayer List”—Session 8

“Getting to Know Non-Christians”—Session 8

“Witness” Bible study—Session 11

**Preparing to Lead *Growing Strong in God's Family***

Don't neglect your own planning, even though the outlines in this guide for each group session are fairly detailed. Become familiar now with the overall thrust of the course, the goals toward which you are working, and the schedule for completing the specifics of the course.

Here are general reminders to pass on to your group.

1. Before they see *My Completion Record* in Session 4, encourage their success in the assignments. Then by Session 4 they will have things to be signed off.
2. Use a **modern translation or paraphrase** of the Scriptures for reading. Point out that this requirement is not for Bible study. It is for their daily reading and marking, and will help make these times more fun and refreshing.
3. Use *My Reading Progress* (Session 3) and *My Reading Highlights* (Session 5). These are new tools for most in the group.
4. **Pray** for each other and for the group as a whole.
5. **Review your memory verses at least once a day** and even several times a day whenever possible.
6. Plan to **be on time** for the meetings. If we start on time, we can stop on time.
7. At Session 4 start getting things signed off on *My Completion Record*. It is encouraging to **stay ahead** of the power curve.

As the group leader, be an example of a positive Christ-centered lifestyle with consistent disciplines. Be regular in your studying, memorizing, and meditating on the Scriptures. Spend consistent time in prayer. Evaluate the balance in your Christian life by relating it to *The Wheel Illustration* in Session 4 and *The Hand Illustration* in Session 6.

## How to Make the Bible Study Discussions Effective

### Group Leader Resource Material

It is important for you to carefully prepare, so you can do a good job of leading each of the Bible study discussions. The following material has been compiled to assist you in handling the eight Bible study group discussions.

Usually each of the 11 sessions in *Growing Strong in God's Family* is led by the same group leader. Because of a group leader's being sick, traveling, or some other contingency, it may become necessary for someone else from the group to take a turn leading one of the 11 sessions. The group leader for sessions 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11—will lead a Bible study discussion as well as facilitating the other course activities. Each time you prepare to lead, you will find it helpful to review the suggestion in this section.

### Student Preparation

A key ingredient to stimulating and beneficial Bible study discussions is for each member in the group to have his or her Bible study completed before coming to class.

From time to time remind the members of the group how important it is (for you and for them) to have the Bible study done prior to the group meeting. If people come without the study completed or partially finished, don't ignore or punish them with non-verbal looks of disapproval. Make them feel accepted and as much a part of the group as the others. It is important for those people to enjoy and benefit from the group discussion and not be made to

feel rejected and unaccepted. At the beginning of the discussion you might assign such a person one or two questions that can be quickly prepared and ready for discussion when you get to that part of the lesson.

### **Group Leader Preparation**

First, prepare the Bible study for your own enlightenment and application. Ask God to speak to you and to strengthen you from the study as you begin to work on it. You want correct and good answers without being academic and theoretical. If you get excited about the topic of the study and its content, you are well on your way to being an exciting and animated group leader.

Second, look over your questions and answers. Think of the needs and interests in your group. To which parts of the study should you give more attention? Thinking through and planning in advance can make for a more effective Bible study discussion. During the actual Bible discussion you may find it wise to deviate from your original plan. Thoughtful preplanning gives you a general direction in which to move, but you must remain flexible and willing to adjust your original plan.

### **The Bible Says . . .**

In your group you want people sharing what the Bible teaches, not opinions and conjectures. On one hand we don't want people to be afraid of making theological mistakes. On the other hand we don't want people sharing opinions and hearsay without a passage of Scripture. Mostly, this problem can be alleviated by sticking with the verses, questions, and answers in the Bible study. Don't let the discussion drift into tangents where you and the group members have not done your homework. Each week stick with the subject at hand.

### **Several Helpful Discussion Guidelines**

1. *Sit in a circle.* This is the best seating arrangement. Each person has eye contact with most of the people in the group. It creates an informal and warm atmosphere. The group leader is considered more of a peer because he or she is not placed in a prominent physical location.
2. *Don't dominate.* As the leader, you are both a facilitator and a participant in the group. You should not talk more than others in the group. As the facilitator you give direction and ask questions. As a participant you share your insights and study answers along with the others. Share humbly, not expertly.
3. *Not the authority.* Avoid becoming the authority figure in the group. You don't want all the questions directed to you with the others thinking that you should be able to answer them. Direct questions back to the group. Say something like, "That is an interesting question. What thoughts might some of you have that would help us answer that question?" Sometimes you might recruit a volunteer who will take a difficult question to the pastor or an associate pastor. The volunteer can come back to the group with an answer the following week.

4. *Work together.* Your role as group leader is not a teaching responsibility, just as the students' role is not to sit, listen, and take notes. You and the group members are working together to find answers and clarify issues.
5. *Too talkative.* You may soon find that one or two people in your group will have something to say about everything. Chat with them on the side. Say something like, "You have some great ideas. You are excellent in the discussion times. I need your help. There are others in the group who need to talk more so they can grow in confidence. Could you help me in getting some of these people to talk more? Before you talk in the group, let one or two others go first. Don't be afraid of silence. It sometimes takes some silence before (name) and (name) will talk. Maybe you could share only your best thoughts in the group. Thank you for your help in this!"
6. *Too quiet.* When you direct a question to the group, give the quiet people more eye contact. Sometimes ask one of your less vocal people to read a quotation or to answer a specific question. They will become secure as they talk more. A number of things in the general structure of *Growing Strong in God's Family* are designed to build confidence and help people participate more comfortably. Reading around the circle helps bring people out of their shells. Quoting verses and working on the *Completion Record* in groups of two or three each week also nurture a growing confidence and security.
7. *Acknowledge answers.* Thank people when they participate. Thank them for reading a paragraph or answering a question. This is particularly important with those who tend to be quiet. An acknowledgment doesn't always have to be verbal. Many times it can be a nod of the head or eye contact that communicates approval. As you apply this, others in the group will follow your example and begin doing it, too.
8. *Ask the group.* Usually you will address your questions to the group, not to an individual. (An exception to this would be to ask a quiet person a specific question.) As you ask a question, let your eye contact sweep around the group. Don't let your eyes lock on to one person.
9. *Get several answers.* After one person has given an answer to a Bible study question, you will usually ask for one or two other people to give their answers to the same question. This allows several people to participate on each question. It also helps insure that the answers reflect a correct handling of that particular Scripture passage.

A simple question should be answered by only one or two people. A more difficult question could be answered by three or four people. Thought and application questions could be answered by half of the group or more if you wish. Have people read their answers exactly the way they have written them down. This keeps things moving. After they have read their written answer they may wish to express an additional ad lib sentence or two for clarification.

10. *Application questions.* In the *Growing Strong in God's Family* Bible studies you will find a sprinkling of application questions. Application questions need to be given a high priority. Some application questions may be so important that you will ask all the people in your group to share their answers.

Here are some examples of application questions:

- Page 47, question 8c
- Page 48, questions 9c and 9d
- Page 66, 2<sup>nd</sup> part of question 10
- Page 79, questions 8a and 8b
- Page 103, question 9

### **The “Think About” Questions**

You may have observed that there is a “Think About” question at the beginning of each of the last six Bible studies. Remind the group members to give two or three minutes of thought to the “Think About” question before starting to prepare their Bible study. Its purpose is to get the mind moving in the direction that the Bible study topic will be going. In your group meeting you can have several give their answer to the “Think About” question just before you move into discussing the actual Bible study content. This moves people’s minds away from their busy day into the subject you are about to discuss.

You will notice that there are no correct or “school” answers to “Think About” questions. They are designed to stimulate thinking and to precipitate a wide range of answers.

### **How to Lead the Bible Study Discussion**

In the eight Bible studies, your goal will be to have every question answered by at least one person. When an answer is simple and straightforward, you can usually move right on to the next question. More complex answers generate a variety of comments from others. You may see an area of special interest surface. That may lead to your having to invest more time discussing that topic. During this course, as the group leader will probably use both of the following methods for leading discussion.

**1. Question-by-question—sharing in sequence.** Go around the circle and in turn have each person answer one question or sub-question. You are going through the questions in order.

(You may want to review items 8 and 9 on page 10.) It is wise to use this first method at least through Session 5. You will find that often people new to Bible study discussion prefer this approach because of its predictability.

As you go around the circle, also ask people read aloud the quotations and paragraphs between questions.

When you start the discussion, tell the group where you want them to begin in the circle and whether you want them to go to the left or to the right. Don’t always start in the same place or always go in the same direction. Share your answer or read a quotation when it is your turn.

**2. Question-by-question—sharing at random.** In this method do not go around the circle in sequence, but still answer the Bible study questions in order. Work on a volunteer basis. You might ask, “Would someone please read the opening paragraph?” Someone says, “I will,” and reads it. After it has been read, ask, “Who will answer question 1 for us please?”

Continue on with question 2, then, question 3. Have the quotations and paragraphs read in between questions as you did in the previous method.

Occasionally quieter students in the group may need to be asked something like, “John, would you answer question 6 for us please?” Then go back to the volunteer approach again. Still apply “Ask the group” and “Get several answers” (page 10 above).

It is not recommended that you use this method before Session 6. In the leader’s guide for Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11 you are given some additional Bible study discussion questions. Use them sparingly. You should not ask one of these questions until after someone in the group has given an answer to the question for which you have an additional discussion question. If your group responds to them, you may wish to use them more in future sessions.

You can effectively lead the discussions by only using these two methods—even without using the additional discussion questions. Here is a brief explanation if you wish to try out a few of the additional questions.

One of these additional questions should only be asked after the 2:7 book question has been answered. For example: Please look at question 3a on page 62. Perhaps two people give an answer to the Mark7:6-9 question. Then we can ask the 3a additional question provided for you on page 30: “What are some examples of ‘tradition’ to which people give undue authority?” There is not a correct answer to this type of question, but it stimulates and promotes a deeper discussion on the issue at hand. After a brief discussion of “tradition,” continue where you left off in the lesson.

You will find the NavPress book, *How to Lead Small Groups* to be a valuable resource. Check out [www.navpress.com](http://www.navpress.com). It is also helpful to attend a 2:7 Series leader training seminar when one is available in your area.

## Session 1

Book 1

### 1. Open the session in prayer.

Lead in prayer or ask someone in the group to pray for the meeting.

### 2. Get acquainted.

Have each member of the group answer these questions:

- a. What is your name?
- b. What is your job?
- c. Where did you grow up?

It is important that you as the leader be first to answer these questions. This gives the students an idea of how much time to take. You might say something like: “We are going to spend a few minutes getting acquainted. Some of you know each other quite well, but this will give me the opportunity to get acquainted with you. I think that what we’re going to do now will be interesting and fun. I would like each of you (as we go around the circle) to tell us your name, your job, and where you grew up. Why don’t I start and then we can go around the circle to the left (or right).”

Our goal is to help our group members to begin to know each other. It also gets them talking about themselves—a subject they know quite well. Some people have never shared Scripture truths, or prayed, or read aloud in a group. This gets them off to a good start. You will find that they very soon feel more and more comfortable talking in the group.

### **3a. Read “Based on Colossians 2:7.” (pages 13-14).**

Ask the group to read around the circle—each taking a segment of this section. (Tell them whether they are going around the circle to the right or to the left.) Start with someone who will be comfortable doing this. (Some want to read too fast. Ask people to read slowly enough so there is time to think about what is being read). You can say that anyone who would not care to read, just say “pass” when it is their turn. Often, one or two people will say pass in this first meeting but will feel comfortable reading in the next session or two.

After this section has been read, you may wish to give a brief testimony about the significance of Growing Strong in God’s Family in your own life or in the lives of others you know. Keep it very brief and vital—just a few sentences. You can tell more in later sessions.

### **3b. Read “General Comments” (pages 14-15).**

In this session we do **not** discuss *My Completion Record* (page 7). Prematurely telling too much about the course can discourage some in the group. For now, pages 13-15 provide enough information for most people in your group.

You will fully explain *My Completion Record* in Session 4. By then they will have already completed many of the course requirements and gain motivation by seeing the entries on *My Completion Record*. Don’t be secretive; tell them what they want to know. But don’t tell them more than they need to know at this point. If someone asks specifically about the *Completion Record* on page 7, just tell them that that page will be covered in one of the upcoming sessions. (Most people never notice page 7 because you start them on page 13.)

### **4. Discuss how to make Bible reading exciting (pages 15-18)**

Work through each of these sections by having your people take turns reading aloud around the circle. Summarize some of the ideas and answer questions as they come up.



**4a. “Why Read and Mark a Bible?” (page 15)**

After the group has read this section it is appropriate for you to insert a **brief explanation**. It might go something like this: “As other lay people, pastors, and Christian workers have gone through this course they have found that **two things make Bible reading exciting**. The **first** is to *use a contemporary translation or paraphrase* for Bible reading.

We use a translation for Bible study and Scripture memory, but for Bible reading we want to read a contemporary translation or a paraphrase. This creates a freshness and excitement in our Bible reading that will not lose its sparkle over the months and years. For our next class session, you will want to have an inexpensive contemporary translation or paraphrase to use during this course.”

(You may need to explain some of the translations and paraphrases available and their distinctive characteristics. You might even bring samples to class for them to see during this Session 1).

Then continue with something like: “The **second** thing that makes Bible reading exciting for us is to mark our contemporary version as we read it. This enables us to sort out what the Holy Spirit “says to us” from The Scriptures on any given day. Marking words and phrases keeps our reading from “slipping through our fingers.”

This has been a natural transition into discussing pages 15-18.

**4b. “Ways to Mark Your Bible as You Read” (pages 15-17)**

Continue to read around the circle—with each person reading a few lines aloud down to the next natural break in the text. Then, the next person picks up the reading. Continue to clarify, as needed, and briefly answer questions when they come up.

Ask each person who reads one of the six “pen markings” to point out where that marking is used in the examples on pages 16 and 17.

Some people, because of their backgrounds, hesitate to mark a Bible. Some individuals dislike putting any marks in a book. Empathize with students who feel this way, but encourage them to mark in their Bible in the same way other students do. That is why a person may want to buy an inexpensive version of the Bible. The reading and marking aspect of the course is necessary for graduating, as is the memorizing of the five verses. Be understanding.

**4c. “Choosing Where to Read in Your Bible” (page 17).**

The reason for **not** reading the Gospels consecutively is that the content is so similar (with the possible exception of John). It is more helpful to read one gospel now and read another one in a month or two. This also provides variety, keeping Bible reading fresh and interesting.

People should avoid the “grasshopper method” of Bible reading—that is, the practice of jumping from place to place in the Bible. Encourage them to read one Bible book in sequence and complete it before starting another Bible book. (And we want to set the example in this.)



Some like to read an Old Testament book and a New Testament book concurrently. One method is to read a chapter out of both books every day. The other approach is to read out of one book one day and the other book on the next day. It is ineffective to be reading more than two books at one time—it becomes too difficult to maintain continuity. It is better to focus on one or two books.

Verses in Psalms and Proverbs are almost always interesting and practical. It is wise to keep those two books “in reserve.” While reading an Old Testament book you may read chapters that are dry or heavy reading. At these points you read the “dry” chapter, but then read a chapter out of Psalms or Proverbs—it can “give you a lift.” So you do not read all the way through Psalms and Proverbs like you do other Bible books. You hold them “in reserve” and use them as needed. This approach is an important exception to our rule about completing one book before going on to another.

#### **4d. “What to Mark” (page 18).**

Book 1, page 18 explains this quite clearly.

In Session 2 the individuals in your group start sharing what they have marked. The whole marking concept becomes increasingly clear to your group as they experience *reading*, *marking*, and *sharing*.

#### **5. Complete the “Reading and Marking Exercise” (pages 18-19).**

Explain that they are going to read and mark Romans 12, using what they have just learned on pages 15-17. Explain that they will have 5-7 minutes to read and mark Romans 12 on pages 18-19. They will be sharing what they have marked in a few minutes. Give them time to do the exercise and then share the results together. Use this exercise both as an instructional tool and as an opportunity for interaction.

After they have completed their reading and marking, you should share first share what you marked. Don’t “steal the best stuff.” Share one or two small things. You have done much of the talking so far in this class. Now encourage each group member to share one thing he or she marked in Romans 12. Expect each person to say something. (You don’t need to go around the circle. Let them volunteer). Thank each one as he or she finishes sharing observations from the passage. Some may share more than once—after everyone has taken a first turn.

#### **6. Discuss “Scripture Memory Overview” (pages 19-20).**

Before showing the students how to effectively memorize Scripture, show them what memory work they will be completing during this course. You might say something like: “During this course one of the most exciting things that you will be doing is memorizing five key Bible passages. If you never memorized another verse, these five may be the most helpful verses you could memorize. In the next few days decide in what version you will do your memory work.” Turn with them to pages 109-113. These are the most common translations that 2:7 participants are currently memorizing.

Online at [www.2-7series.org](http://www.2-7series.org) the memory verses for each of the three 2:7 courses can be downloaded, ready to print on business cards. At this time, two additional translations are available for download: *New Living Translation* and *English Standard Version*.

Explain that they will be using either business cards or 3 by 5 index cards for their memory work. Blank cards are available at office supply stores and at printing businesses. If they choose to use blank cards, on the front side (from top to bottom) they should write the topic, reference, verse, and reference. On the other side they only write the topic and reference.

7. **Glance through “Beginning with Christ Explanation”** (pages 20-24) which they will be studying for Session 2. They will fill out pages 28-32 by turning back to find the answers on pages 20-24 in *Beginning with Christ Explanation*.

**8. Read “Proven Ways to Memorize a Verse Effectively”** (pages 24-25).

Once again have the students do the reading. This continues to help them become comfortable speaking in the group. As the leader, it is important that you have experienced everything taught in these pages and have proven the principles to be effective through your own experience. You can even do some of the things just a few days ahead of the group meeting. You may also want to have extra blank cards on hand: business card size and 3x5 index cards.

As they go through pages 24 and 25, it is important that the students understand each of the eight guidelines. The objective is not so much to convince the student to do these things as it is for them to understand the guidelines. If a student has trouble with Scripture memory work, it will be because one or more of these guidelines is being neglected.

Students may memorize any way they wish. You are not forcing them to do it a certain way. They just need to understand that in order to graduate from this course they need to quote the five passages of Scripture with no mistakes.

Reinforce the idea that these guidelines will be a tremendous help to the people in your group as they memorize the verses for Growing Strong in God’s Family. Remember, thousands of people have proven the value of these guidelines over the last several decades.

**9. Read “Assignment for Session 2” (page 25)**

**10. Close the session in prayer.**

**More Input on the Eight “Proven Ways” (pages 24-25)**

**Guideline 1. Preliminary work.**

It is important for your 2:7 training group members to do some minimal preliminary work before actually starting to memorize the verse(s) on a memory card. The verse(s) on the card should be read aloud a few times. The meaning needs to be understood. You or someone else in the group may need to explain a verse or part of a verse.

**Guideline 2. *Topic, reference, and first phrase.***

The student should not just skim over the topic and reference to get into the actual content of the verse. The topic and reference are also important to memorize. If people have the topics clearly in mind, they are able to use the verses they memorize with greater skill. If students know a reference, they are able to turn to the passage and use it.

It is very important to immediately connect the last part of the reference with the first part of the verse. There should be no pause between stating the reference and starting the verse. If the student must pause to recall how the verse begins, he or she should then start over and say the topic, reference, and immediately start into the verse itself. This insures that the topic and reference are inseparably tied to the verse.

**Guideline 3. *Add phrases.***

If the student continues to add phrases to what has been memorized, he or she should never have a problem with transposing phrases within the verse. The shorter amount of time a student spends memorizing a given verse, the more important it is to keep reviewing that verse to keep from losing one's ability to quote it exactly.

**Guideline 4. *Audibly.***

If the student quotes a verse audibly, it will aid his or her success in memory work. This may be no more than whispering when working on a verse. Saying the verse aloud as it is being memorized makes us use more of our senses and causes a deeper impression on our mind.

**Guideline 5. *Apply the verse to your life.***

The more a verse ties into a person's everyday life, the easier it is to memorize and retain. When memorizing a verse continue to think "what does this verse mean to me?"

**Guideline 6. *Sequence.***

Students who ignore the sequence in which the topic, reference, and verse are quoted, often will find themselves in trouble later in recalling all three important parts of the memorized verses. When using a verse with someone else, we may not audibly say the topic and reference, but the topic and reference should go through our mind before we quote the verse audibly. All three parts should be reviewed every time if we are going to have the maximum benefit from Scripture memory.

Always say the reference after quoting the verse. After committing a number of verses to memory and perhaps neglecting the review of a few verses, the student may only recall the last part of the verse and not be able to say the first part. If the reference is an integral part of the end of the verse as well as the beginning, one can then pick up the location of that verse from only knowing the last part of the verse.

**Guideline 7. Review, Review, Review!**

**Repetition is the key** to memorizing and retaining verses of Scripture in our mind and heart!! Repetition makes it all happen, as God helps us give time to focus on Scripture memory review.

**Guideline 8. Over-learning.**

The principle of over-learning is an essential concept. Many people make the mistake of thinking they know a memory verse when they are able to say the verse without any help. We know that this is not really true. It takes about two months of review to over-learn a verse.

Psychologists use the term “over-learning” for the process of learning something so well that we can recall it with little or no hesitation. We have over-learned our name, our telephone number, our address, the names of friends, and routes we travel in our car. It is not until we have gone through the process of over-learning that we really know a verse. Then the Spirit of God can bring it to mind whenever He chooses to use it. Repeated review is the key to over-learning.

**9. Read the “Assignment for Session 2” (page 25).**

Ask one person to read the assignment.

**10. Pray.**

Lead in a closing prayer.

**Session 2****Book 1****1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray for God’s blessing on this time together.

**2. Get further acquainted.**

This is the last session in which a new student may join the group. Therefore, it is important to have some type of activity for getting further acquainted.

Even though the group went through a get-acquainted exercise in Session 1, it is still helpful to break the ice again so the students feel increasingly comfortable in the group. Go around the circle and have each student answer these questions:

- a. What is your name?
- b. What is your favorite breakfast?
- c. What is your favorite hobby, sport or entertainment?

**3. Review Session 1.**

Comment on some of the highlights covered on pages 13-16. For example, on page 14, “General Comments,” simply say there are 11 sessions in this course; there will be requirements to meet in order to graduate; most weeks they will spend about an hour in preparation. Review the rest of the material in a similar manner. It will be important, however, for you or a member of the group to meet with anyone who missed Session 1 and review the material in greater detail.

**4. Share with the rest of the group what you have read and marked in your Bible this week.**

The major portion of Session 2 will be sharing. It is important that the students learn to share what they have been reading in The Scriptures. In fact, the sharing time becomes a highlight for most and a breakthrough for many who have never shared in a group before.

It is important for you as the leader to remember the following: (1) nothing is too simple to be shared, (2) the students should feel free to share more than once, (3) it should be an unhurried time, (4) those who haven't read will find the group pressure strong during the sharing time, and they will be motivated to read the following week, and (5) it may be necessary to remind the students that they are not competing with each other—they want to help each other do well in this discipleship training course.

It is important for you as the leader to share first, so the rest of the students know what you expect from them. Every time you share from your reading share something (1) **simple** and (2) **encouraging!** Then ask group members to share spontaneously, rather than going around the circle.

You want to communicate to them that normally everyone is expected to share something every week.

**5. Break into small groups of two or three to review 1 John 5:11-12.**

At this point have the group break up into small groups of two or three, made up of persons who are memorizing from the same version. It is best for husbands and wives not to review together. (Spouses often tend to be either too easy or too hard on each another.) Tell the students that as they quote the verse assigned for this week they want to be sure to say the topic, reference, verse, and reference. Allow 5-10 minutes for review together each week.

Group members may want to scatter throughout the room where you meet, or even into other rooms where there are fewer distractions. As the leader, you do not divide up the groups. Let them take the initiative. They can easily figure out what to do after you give them a few simple directions.

**6. Build on last session's “Proven Ways to Memorize a Verse Effectively” (pages 24-25).**

Have them turn back to pages 24 and 25 just to note that last week the group discussed eight Scripture memory principles. You then share a brief lecture, underscoring three important items:

**a. Practice aloud.** This allows another one of the senses—hearing—to be involved in the memory process. This greatly helps the memorization process. The students will want to practice aloud whenever possible. You may wish to ask if any of the students found this helpful during the last week. Do not reprimand those who have not done it, but commend those who have tried it. (See points 1 and 4 on page 24.)

**b. Spot and correct repeated errors.**

(This is not covered on pages 24 and 25, but is important to Scripture memory.) An example of a repeated error would be leaving out an “and” or adding the word “and” in 1 John 5: 11-12—depending on the translation. Another example would be using the wrong beginning word. Explain that this is a natural part of the process of learning a verse. It does not mean that they have failed in their memory work. When they get to the point where they have one or two repeated errors within a verse, they can easily correct these errors after identifying them. It’s part of the learning process.

**c. Review is the key.**

You must be setting the example for your students in this! Sharing personal benefits and brief testimonials from time to time will continue to motivate them. The three principles in any kind of memorization are: Repetition, Impression, and Association.

*Repetition* is the primary memory principle that applies to Scripture memory. The slogan is “Review, review, review!” Constant review can insure long and meaningful retention. (See point 7 and 8 on page 25.)

*Impression* is concentrating intently so that something makes a deeper imprint on your mind. Concentrating intently as a person tells you his or her name is an example of “impression.” Focusing your mental effort produces a more lasting impression of what you hear or see.

*Association* is a technique where you use some gimmick to aid your recall. You may remember that the Old Testament contains 39 books, that 3x9 is 27, and that there are 27 books in the New Testament. The 3x9 association aids recall.

**7. Discuss the value of The Bridge Illustration (pages 115-121)**

This is a new segment in Book 1. There are three reasons for including this presentation of the Gospel.

- There are people who sign up for this discipleship training who don’t understand God’s plan of salvation and have not come to a faith in Christ. Churches that have presented the gospel early in Book 1 have seen people make a commitment to Christ.

- Many copies of Book 1 are sold in bookstores. This allows us to make a Gospel presentation to people who purchase the book off of the shelf and are in a church where they don't hear about salvation through Jesus Christ.
- It sets you up to review the gospel and to have a “make sure” prayer with your group. It also provides a tool that people in your group can show and explain to others.

If you know you have all Christians in your group, you can observe together how simple and powerful a presentation of the Gospel can be for clearly explaining how a person can receive eternal life through Jesus Christ's death on the cross. It is a valuable tool!

Remind them that in Book 3 they learn a great way to draw out the illustration and engage a person in discussing the Gospel.

**8. Read “Introduction to Bible Study” (pages 27-28) and glance over *Prayer—Part 1* (pages 40-42).**

Ask your group to read this aloud around the circle. Encourage their responses to what the material says and make your own comments as well. Answer relevant questions that surface.

**9. Discuss the “Beginning with Christ Bible Study” (pages 28-32).**

Ask for volunteers to answer each of the questions, or simply go around the circle and have them take turns answering the sequence of questions. The sub-points under question 1 can be handled as individual questions if you like.

The goal of this section is to ensure that each student has read and understands the written material in “Beginning with Christ Explanation” on pages 20-24.

On question 5, have two or three people in your group give their answer. You should also have more than one person answer questions 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15. These questions lead to more individual analysis and the answers tend to stimulate good discussion.

**10. Read the “Assignment for Session 3” (page 32).**

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 3.

**11. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to close the session in prayer. Sometimes things come up in your discussion that more than one person should pray about as you close.

**Session 3**

**Book 1**

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray for God's blessing on this time together.



**2. Study “An Effective Way to Review Memory Verses Together” (pages 33-34).**

Ask your group to read this aloud around the circle. Ask someone to start and request that they go to the right, or go to the left—you decide. The suggestion of first reviewing the verses they know best is an extension of the philosophy of constantly building on successes rather than patching up failures. This approach motivates—you can sense it in the group atmosphere.

In this session you will work at developing a certain attitude, philosophy, or outlook among the students. The students should be trying to help each other succeed rather than competing with each other in order to excel. An excellent biblical illustration is found in Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NASB)—following item 2 on page 33.

Often a person will ask why it is so important to memorize verses exactly and to be so meticulous in memory work. Item 3 on pages 33-34 gives them four excellent reasons based on the experience of many people.

It is important for everyone in the group to apply points 4 and 5 (page 34). If the person listening to a verse being quoted gives the person quoting the verse more hints than he or she needs, the listener is doing the quoter an injustice. If the one quoting the verse struggles and then comes up with the exact words of the verse, it is a victory and an encouragement to the quoter.

Whether or not the listener had to help the quoter, it is helpful if the one doing the quoting repeats the verse again word perfectly after he or she has needed help with the verse, but finally said it correctly. This ends the Scripture memory time on a note of victory and accomplishment.

**3. Break into groups of two or three and quote 1 John 5:11-12 and John 16:24.**

You will find that the previous discussion about Scripture memory will launch the students into their verse review with greater motivation. It gives them an immediate opportunity to apply the “listener” and “quoter” principles they have just learned.

Again, it is suggested that people review their memory verses with someone else who is memorizing in the same version. It is important that the listener always be looking at the verse card as the quoter goes through the verse. This is true no matter how well the listener thinks he or she knows the verse being quoted.

After returning to the circle, you may ask: “How many of you were able to say at least one of the two verses without any mistakes at all?” Then you might commend them by saying: “That’s really terrific; you are doing a fine job and that’s great.” You may then ask if any of them were able to say both verses without a mistake. Commend those people, too.

**4. Share with the rest of the group something you have read and marked in your Bible this week.**

Prior to beginning the sharing of thoughts from their Bible reading, ask them to spend a minute or two deciding at least one thing they wish to share with the group.



It is not important for you to always share first. However, you may wish to share something first if no one else shares right away. Your example will encourage the others to share.

This period of time should not be rushed. There is enough time for each person to share at least once. While you don't want those who share to go off into a long discourse, they can briefly develop what a particular verse or passage meant to them. Once again the students should be praised and thanked each time they share in the group. This can be something simple like: "That's a great thought!" "That's an interesting insight" "Thank you for sharing that with us!" or "You certainly enjoyed reading that particular passage, didn't you?"

**5. Discuss the article *Tyranny of the Urgent* (pages 34-38).**

As you know, your group has read and marked *Tyranny of the Urgent*. Remind them that during the discussion they may wish to jot a few notes under item 4 on page 39.

Have them open to pages 34-35. Ask what some of the highlights they marked on those pages. Perhaps go section by section. Thank each one for his or her comment. Do the same with pages 36-37 and then with page 38. This is an outstanding article, but you will find that it does not take long to hit the highlights. Then move on to "Summarizing Tyranny of the Urgent."

**6. Discuss "Summarizing Tyranny of the Urgent" (page 39).**

Have someone read the title and two quotations at the top of page 39. Don't go around the circle. Just have people share at random as they are ready to say something. Ask two or three to share their answers to 1. Then have two or three share their answers to 2. Probably everyone will share something on 3. Some may share more than once. The article is clearly written and its message is simple to understand—though challenging to apply.

Ask several in the group to briefly share how they answered "a"—then "b," and—then "c" on pages 39 and 40. Do this briefly.

**7. Discuss the Bible study, "Prayer—Part 1" (pages 40-42).**

As the group leader, you will be leading a Bible study during 8 of the 11 weeks. (So there is no Bible study scheduled for 3 of the 11 weeks.) You will prepare your own Bible study just like every other member of the group. Then, in addition to your personal preparation you will need to prepare to lead. In this leader's guide you have been given helps to make preparation and leading easier for you. Be sure to carefully review "How to Make Bible Study Discussion Effective," pages 9-13 in this leader's guide. Apply the principles in preparing and leading this Bible study. The principles on pages 9-13 are designed to assist you whether you are a nervous beginner or a confident and experienced leader of small groups. **Pray. Prepare. Participate.**

Start the “Prayer—Part 1” Bible study discussion by having one person read the opening statement and the Romans passage from their Bible. Have two more people each read one of the two quotations. There are sometimes a few comments from the group.

Then, ask the group what some of their ideas and insights are from the “Think About” question. Allow time for several to respond.

Go around the circle, having each person read a question and give their answer. Sometimes someone’s answer doesn’t seem to fit. But most of the time answers make sense. If an answer seems off, let one or two others also give their answer. Be tactful so the one with the poor answer doesn’t feel put down.

Additional discussion questions are provided for you in Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11.

Answers you might expect people in your group to give are in blue. There is no one right answer to these “understanding questions.” They stimulate a little more discussion, pushing the group’s understanding deeper.

Ask an additional question **to the group, not to one person**, and only after one or more have answered the question being discussed. You don’t want the “understanding questions” to become a whole new expanded study. You might use one or two of the additional questions during a Bible study discussion. Ask these “understanding questions” sparingly—like you would add a little salt and pepper to your food.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Prayer—Part 1”:

- Question 1    What does “grace” mean to you?  
 Unmerited favor. God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense. Getting underserved blessings from God.
- Question 1    What does “mercy” mean to you?  
 “Compassion.” “Forgiveness.” “Grace is getting what you don’t deserve; mercy is not getting what you do deserve.”
- Question 2    What do you think it means to “pour out our hearts” to God?  
 “Being totally honest.” “Expressing exactly how I feel.” “Totally transparent.”
- Question 3    What is the difference between thanksgiving and praise?  
 “Thanksgiving is expressing gratitude for things God has done.” “Praise is expressing appreciation for who God is.” “Praise is adoration.”
- Question 4    Psalm 66:18—What is the difference between a recurring sin and a sin we cling to or cherish?  
 “A cherished sin is one we continue to practice on a regular basis.” “A recurring sin is a sin that we fall into from time to time, but we confess, forsake and keep going.”

Question 4 1 John 5:14-15—What things can help us pray within God’s will?  
 “Knowing the Scriptures.” “Getting to know ‘how God thinks’ as we read and study the Bible over time.” “We sometimes can sense what God wants if we are walking close to Him.”

**8. Go over “How to Use My Reading Progress” (pages 42-43).**

Have two people each read a paragraph under “How to Use My Reading Progress.” Ask them to turn to page 153 but keep their fingers at page 43. When they find that page, have them turn over to page 154. They can see that it is like the top of page 43. After they compare, they can go back to page 43.

Ask someone to read the paragraph that starts out “If today you read...” Point out the two ways of crossing off chapters: / or X. The same person can read the next sentence and the group sees how a book might be dated after it has been finished.

If you are going around the circle, have the next person read the closing paragraph.

**9. Read the “Assignment for Session 4” (page 43).**

Ask someone in the group to read the assignment for Session 4.

**10. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or have someone in the group prayer to close the session.

**Session 4**

**Book 1**

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray for God’s blessing on this time together.

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review 1 John 5:11-12, John 16:24, and 1 Corinthians 10:13.**

By now the students need very little guidance for their doing verse review. In this session simply say something like: “At this point, let’s break into our verse review groups and go over the first three verses we’ve memorized.”

**3. Share with the rest of the group something you have read and marked in your Bible this week.**

Share your excitement about your Bible reading. If you are not excited, you can’t expect your students to be excited. Often leaders cannot share the things that were most outstanding in their

reading because they may be too advanced for the students. It is, therefore, important to look over your reading and select one or two items which are **simple** and **encouraging** and have them ready to share.

As the leader, you may occasionally go first in the sharing just to get the ball rolling. Often, however, those in the group are quite eager to share and will take the initiative. Remember to give them one or two minutes to refresh their memory and to prepare to share. Be alert to any who are not sharing from their reading. Draw them out. Before or after class find out if there are any problems.

#### 4. Discuss the Bible study “Prayer—Part 2” (pages 45-49).

How are you doing at discussing the Bible study material in the time allotted? Decide what your goals are, allocate your time wisely, and emphasize key points accordingly. Prepare your study and think through how you will lead it. (But, be willing to make adjustments in your group when you see that it would be helpful to deviate in some way from your original plan. The focus you put on a particular study should happen by design, not by default. You know the material and you have come to know your group—plan accordingly. In your lesson preparation, continue to review the suggestions on pages 9-13 in this leader’s guide.

Additional discussion questions are provided for you in Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11. **Answers you might expect people in your group to give are in blue.** There is no one right answer to these “understanding questions.” They stimulate a little more discussion, pushing the group’s understanding deeper.

Ask an additional question **to the group, not to one person**, and only after one or more have answered the question being discussed. You don’t want the “understanding questions” to become a whole new expanded study. You might use one or two of the additional questions during a Bible study discussion. Ask these “understanding questions” sparingly—like you would add a little salt and pepper to your food.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Prayer—Part 2” (pages 45-49):

Question 6     Romans 10:1—What group would be to us today like Israel was to Paul?  
                     “**Maybe our family and relatives who are our extended family.**”  
                     “**Maybe the ethnic group from which we come.**”

Matthew 9:37-38—How does this differ from praying for non-Christians?  
                     “**This is praying for an increasing number of Christians who know how to share the salvation message and know how to help a new Christian grow.**”  
                     “**Some will become pastors or missionaries.**” “**Most will have regular jobs and attend a good local church.**” “**These are people who can reach out to the non-Christians around them.**”

**5. Discuss The Wheel Illustration (pages 49-53).**

This illustration communicates the essentials for a vibrant Christian life that touches the lives of others. It shows what a balanced Christian life looks like.

As you know, the students have read and marked this material in preparation for this class. Ask someone to read the short paragraph under the large wheel on page 49.

Ask the group: “What are some of the highlights that you saw under “The **Volitional** Dimension (Your Relationship to Your Will)” (page 50)? Ask the same question for the next section “The **Vertical** Dimension (Your Relationship to God)”—page 51. Then ask for highlights from “The **Horizontal** Dimension (Your Relationship to Others)”—page 52

(During the discussion there are appropriate times to have one of the Scripture verses read aloud. Some leaders have each of the verses read when their “dimension” is being discussed).

Next, let the group summarize “The Composite.” You might ask: “What are some of the implications of this last section on the composite. What do you see there?” A few will make comments. You might share a thought or two, but be careful that they do most of the talking. (Another way is that they share first and you fill in what you think they have left out.)

**6. Discuss how to use *My Completion Record* (page 7)**

Say something like, “On page 7, let’s look at the page called “*My Completion Record*.” Here you sign each other off for the various assignments as you complete them. Your group members will find it encouraging and motivational to see a growing number of things signed off.

Here are two important standards to maintain for people signing off one another on the *Completion Record*:

- Husbands and wives should not sign each other off. (I jokingly say that “it sometimes leads to divorce or murder.” Keep it light but commit to this.
- There should be a one-week break between signing off their last *Beginning With Christ* memory verse and having “Quoted all BWC verses at one sitting” signed off on the *Completion Record*. Let’s maintain our standards but not come across as harsh or unreasonable. Lead through affirmation for work done well and done right. Rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15) as they complete their assignments along the way.

**7. Read the “Assignment for Session 5” (page 53).**

Ask someone to read this assignment. Ask for any questions or comments about the assignment.

**8. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or have someone close the session in prayer.

**Session 5****Book 1**

This session may have the most material to cover of any of the eleven sessions in book 1. But it is excellent content that groups love to discuss. This means that, as the leader, you want to keep things moving right along without it feeling like you are rushing the people in your group.

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray for God's blessing on this time together.

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review 1 John 5:11-12, John 16:24, and 1 Corinthians 10:13.**

Ask the students to break up into review groups as usual and quote the three verses. After their review work, you might ask who was able to say all three verses word perfectly. Be sure to commend everyone for their good work.

Then express your excitement about this session. You might say something like "This is going to be one of the most helpful and exciting times we will have during this course, and I believe you will find it interesting."

**3. Share with the group something you have read and marked in your Bible this week.**

You might open with a statement something like this: "What are some of the interesting things you've been reading this week that you'd like to share with the rest of us?"

At the end of the sharing, the group might briefly answer these questions: "What Bible books have you found particularly interesting to read?" "How is Bible reading and marking encouraging you?"

**4. Complete and discuss "Practical Suggestions on Prayer" (pages 55-59).**

This is an exciting training segment—one you can look forward to and facilitate with enthusiasm. Up to this point, the student has simply been reading The Scriptures. In a way, he or she has been having half a quiet time. Though you may have never used the term "quiet time," the course attempts to help the student learn how to have a successful quiet time. In this session you will add the other half of the quiet time—prayer.

Ask whoever is next in the circle to read the quotation in the "Think About" box. You or others in the group may or may not have a comment about the quote. You don't need to promote a discussion on this.

Those in your group will have completed questions 1a, 1b, 1c, 4 and 5. So you just need to go around the circle and let each person share how he or she answered one of those questions. You or others may make brief comments as you move through 1a, 1b and 1c.

Then ask the next person in the circle to read the 1d question. Share with them what they write in on the two blank spaces on 1d: “They talk to me as I listen and I talk to them as they listen.” This is a more profound statement than it appears on the surface. The implications are huge!

At this point you may say something like: “So in having true fellowship with God, He speaks to us as we are reading in The Scriptures—these are His words to us. Then as we pray to God and respond back to Him through prayer, fellowship has happened. If one person does all the talking and the other does all the listening, that is not true fellowship. It is a lecture. If we do all the talking in prayer, and God does all the listening, that is not true fellowship. Nor is it quality fellowship if God does all the talking and we only listen.

Occasionally someone in a group suggests that God speaks to us in prayer as well as from The Scriptures. Ordinarily you would reply something like this: “Thank you for that comment. That is a good point. It is true that God impresses us occasionally with a certain thought while we are praying. Perhaps we could say that the primary way God speaks to us is through The Scriptures. The ability to sense God “speaking” to us when we are praying or silent comes with spiritual maturity and is a result of obedience to God (John 14:21).

“When you and I help a new Christian establish fellowship with God, we put the focus on spending consistent time in The Scriptures. The Scriptures reveal God’s mind, and it is important for the young Christian to have God speak to him or her in this way. And, of course, we never outgrow the need to have God speak to us through The Scriptures. So, we could say that God’s primary and most consistent means of speaking with men and women is through His Word.” (Most of the time you won’t need this thorough an explanation, but it’s here to help you if you need it sometime.)

Ask the next person in the circle to read the short paragraph preceding number 2, and then the next person reads number 2—about poor communication with God.

In the blank spaces in number 2, ask them to write in “Word” on the left side and “Prayer” on the right side. Then the next person reads the paragraph at the top of page 57.

In number 3 you ask them to write “Word” on the left, “Respond” on the top right and “Other Prayer” on the bottom right.

They continue to take turns reading through number 4, the next person answers 4a—there may be some discussion. The next person answers 4b—and there may be a little further discussion.

They have read number 5. If time is slipping away, just ask for some of the things they thought were highlights in that section. The goal is for them to gain a biblical sense of how The Trinity is involved in prayer.



### 5. Read and discuss the “How” and “Why” of using *My Reading Highlights* (pages 59-61).

There are enough printed copies of *My Reading Highlights* to last for the rest of *Growing Strong in God’s Family* and a few weeks beyond (see pages 123-152). Those in your group need to look at one of those pages as the group reads around the circle.

Ask them to read aloud through “How to Use My Reading Highlights” (pages 59-60). You want them to locate the various sections on the *My Reading Highlights*—for example, “translation,” “year,” “date,” and so on. They can keep one hand on a copy of *My Reading Highlights* and the other hand on pages 59-60. The small circle by each day will be used to keep track of Scripture memory review in order to complete “Reviewed all BWC verses for seven Consecutive Days” (see *My Completion Record*, page 7).

Ask if there are any questions or comments about how to use the *My Reading Highlights* before going into an explanation of the reasons why (page 60). In addition to providing a transition, this will also clear up any questions before going on to new material.

Have them continue to read around the circle through “Why Use *My Reading Highlights*.” You might say something like: “Here are some excellent reasons for using *My Reading Highlights*. Here on pages 60 and 61 we see some of the benefits that have been seen in the lives of other students involved in this course, and we can expect to derive some of these same benefits as we use *My Reading Highlights*.”

### 6. Discuss the Bible study, “The Word” (pages 61-66).

Start out with a brief discussion of the “Think About” question. Read the question aloud and let several in your group respond.

Ask someone to read the next paragraph. Then continue on through the lesson—with each person reading and answering a question when it is their turn. **As a part of your preparation, you will find it helpful to continue reviewing pages 3-14 in this leader’s guide.**

Additional discussion questions are provided. You don’t need to use them all. Maybe use from 1-3 of them to stimulate discussion. [Answers you might expect people in your group to give are in blue.](#)

Additional Discussion Questions for “The Word”:

- Question 1 Nehemiah 9:13-14; 2 Samuel 23:1-3a; Jeremiah 1: 6-9—What makes the Bible unique when compared to other religious books?  
[“God dealt directly with many of those who wrote Scripture.”](#) [“Some passages God dictated directly.”](#) [“For much of Scripture the Holy Spirit led men to write what God wanted said—using their own vocabularies.”](#) [“Look at the last line on page 64.”](#) [“Other religious books were written by people, and they sound like it.”](#)
- Question 2 What are some ways we demonstrate our confidence in the reliability of Scripture?  
[“I stake my eternal destiny on Scripture.”](#) [“I apply its principles to make my marriage work.”](#) [“It reveals God to me—It lets me ‘see’ Him.”](#)



- Question 3a Mark 7:6-9—What are examples of “tradition” to which some people give undue authority?  
 “Praying to Mary.” “Praying to saints.” “Following The Ten Commandments is the way to get to heaven.” “That when we die we will be angels playing harps.”
- Question 4a 2 Timothy 3:16—Give an example of how God used His Word in your life in one of these four ways.  
 “I didn’t know how to pray. Scripture taught me how.” “After I said things that were ‘white lies’ I read verses that showed me not to do that again.”
- Question 7 Ezra 7:10—Which of the things Ezra did do you think is hardest to do?  
 “Apply teachings.” “But it’s hard to teach unless people are eager to learn.”

Remember at some point to have everyone open to the **overview of all the books in the Bible, page 64**. Point out the categories and organization of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. This is a great page!

**7. Read the “Assignment for Session 6” (page 67).**

Ask for someone to volunteer to read the assignment. Answer any questions about the assignment.

**8. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or have someone close in prayer.

**Session 6**

**Book 1**

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray for God’s blessing on this time together.

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review 1 John 5:11-12, John 16:24, 1 Corinthians 10:13, and 1 John 1:9.**

Have the students break into verse review groups and quote the four passages. Encourage them to keep the verses sharp by reviewing them daily. As they learn more verses, there may be a tendency to let their review slide. Share some of your own struggles and victories in Scripture memory.

**3. Share with the group something you have read and marked in your Bible this week.**

At some point suggest to your group that when recording the “Best Thing I Marked Today” it is quicker and simpler to write down the exact quotation from the verse. This eliminates the extra step of having to paraphrase. Some of the students, however, will elect to paraphrase the main “thought” of the passage or verse; that is also acceptable.

As you start you might say something like: “For this session we want to do our usual sharing from what we’ve been reading. You may either share directly from what you marked in your Bibles, or you may wish to read one or two entries from *My Reading Highlights*. As we progress in the course we will get to the point where we only share from what we have actually written down on *My Reading Highlights*, but for now that doesn’t matter. Whichever way you prefer to share tonight will be fine. Take a few seconds to look over your *My Reading Highlights* and decide what you will share.” A pause—then, “Who would like to go first?”

In this session especially commend those who share from *My Reading Highlights*. You might say something like “That’s really terrific” or “You have recorded something that is very meaningful” or “Thank you for sharing those thoughts.”

#### **4. Discuss *The Hand Illustration* (pages 69-71).**

*The Hand Illustration* is an expansion of The Word spoke in *The Wheel Illustration*. The Word spoke is the foundational spoke. *The Hand Illustration* provides more insight into how we can make the Word of God an integral part of our Christian life.

Your group has not been assigned to read or study *The Hand Illustration*. You are going to walk them through it as various ones read segments of the text aloud.

As you start this section, tell them that they are welcome to make any comments they would like as each of the five items and verses are read. For some of the five, no one will participate. It varies with the group as to how many participate on specific topics and questions.

#### **5. Discuss “The Quiet Time” (pages 71-72).**

Have one person read the two definitions: 1a and 1b. Then ask someone else to read the quotation by E.M. Bounds.

They have done this section as part of their homework assignment

Ask what they thought of the comments under number 2. Then continue around the circle, taking turns reading. Each person can share what he or she wrote down for the verse that is their turn to answer. Do this for all eight verse references. They don’t need to turn to the Bible and read the verse before answering.

To finish that section, have someone read the Brother Lawrence quotation. You might ask the group how they think what Brother Lawrence said would work practically—have a brief discussion—just a few comments.

#### **6. Discuss “Quiet Time, Reading Plans, and Bible Study” (pages 72-74).**

The purpose of this material is to clarify the spiritual benefits gained from Bible reading and Bible study and to understand their differences. They will have already read and marked this section as part of their assignment for Session 6.

To start the discussion, ask someone to read the title and opening paragraph.

Then ask the individuals in the group (as you continue around the circle) to summarize each of the sections, one at a time: Under **1. Bible Reading**: “A. Quiet time reading—the mindset,” “the pattern,” and “the goals.” Then, let them summarize “B. Reading Plans—more

time, less personal.” Then ask the group to summarize “C. Having Both a Quiet Time and a Reading Plan.” Continue around the circle to discuss **2. Bible Study** (pages 73-74).

**7. Read the “Assignment for Session 7 (page 74)."**

Have someone read the assignment aloud. Remind them that we are all bringing our *Reading Highlights* with us next time.

**8. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask two or three to pray—especially praying about things that became major topics during discussion during this session.

## Session 7

Book 1

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone to pray. A prayer request may have come up as people were chatting before the meeting started—that could be prayed for as well.

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review your first four *Beginning with Christ* memory verses.**

Have the students review together as usual and see how much they can get signed off on the *Completion Record*. Say something like: “Let’s break right into our verse review groups. Let’s see how many things we can get signed on the *Completion Record*. Then we will come back together.” (This can take from 5-20 minutes.)

**3. Share at least one item from *My Reading Highlights* with your group.**

First, give them two or three minutes to look over their recent entries on their *My Reading Highlights*. Make a two or three word comment to each one after he or she shares. You acknowledge them by saying something like: “Thanks,” “OK,” “Thank you—someone else?” or “Thank you for that insight.” You are acknowledging them, not evaluating them, so you would rarely use evaluation terms like “good” or “excellent.”

It would be good if everyone in the group shares one entry from *My Reading Highlights*. Don’t rush the students, but do keep things moving. Welcome silence. Silence allows people time to decide what they want to say.

You will allow them to share just from their Bibles. But, you really want them to share what they actually wrote down on *My Reading Highlights*. Even if they have something written on *My Reading Highlights*, they may tend to adlib their sharing rather than reading directly from what they have written. You can set the example by going first.

In this session or the next you may agree together that you will only share from what is actually written down on *My Reading Highlights*. Don’t present the idea in a legalistic way.

You will find that they will respond to such a simple but important challenge. (You have to know your group. Each group you lead will have a different mix of people).

**4. Discuss the Bible study “Christ the Center” (pages 75-80).**

Start the “Christ the Center” Bible study discussion by having someone read the opening statement and paragraph above the box.

Ask several to read their answer to the “Think About” question—or they can give an impromptu answer. Allow time for several to respond. Then continue through the Bible study discussion in any way you choose to lead it. You may want to review pages 10-14 in this leader’s guide as you decide how you want to lead the study.

**5. Read “Assignment for Session 8” (page 80).**

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 8.

**6. Close the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask two or three to pray and you pray last.

## Session 8

Book 1

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray. You can ask for a volunteer or call on someone.

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review all five *Beginning with Christ* verses.**

Remind them that there are only three more sessions left to get their *Completion Record* all signed off. As they get together to quote the five memory passages they can get other items initialed as well.

This brief review time is another opportunity for the students to review all five of the verses they have learned. Several will have memorized the optional outreach verse, John 5:24. Encourage them and in a positive way challenge them to keep reviewing all of these verses every day. (You need to be doing the same. Continue to be an example and pacesetter for them).

When you are back together, ask how many were able to quote all five passages without a mistake. Were some able to quote all six verses? Look for opportunities to affirm your people.

Ask how near some of them are to having all their course requirements signed off on the *Completion Record*. Encourage those who are a little behind to get caught up by the next session if possible.

**3. Share with the rest of the group one or two entries from *My Reading Highlights*.**

Follow the same procedure as the past several weeks. Keep the sharing moving, and praise those

who share from *My Reading Highlights*. Also affirm those who share something practical and relevant to their lives.

Are you reminding them of the need to do **seven consecutive verse reviews** and **seven consecutive *My Reading Highlights* entries** before the end of the course?

Are you making plans to check five *My Reading Highlights* for each person over the next two or three weeks?

Some leaders check out two or three people in Session 9-11. Others look through students' *My Reading Highlights* that have been photocopied or scanned and emailed. You can hand them your written comments or email your suggestions. You may still look through some *My Reading Highlights* at your meetings, but this second approach allows a closer, unhurried look. Also, an actual written reply shows that you really want to help them and that you are willing to write down your suggestions for their benefit.

What do you look for?

- Does their “how it impressed me” follow logically from the biblical “thought” they wrote down? Did they understand what the verse said?
- Are they making practical, personal application in “how it impressed me” or are they vague and theoretical?
- Is there variety in what impresses them or are they on one track like doctrinal, self-condemnation, rules and regulations, moral liberty, or questions about what they don't understand.

You look for patterns. You look for things for which you can affirm them. You may see some weaknesses in their life, but this may not be the time to confront them about those things. Commend them for what they are doing well. Give an example of how they could have made a personal application from one of their “thought” verses. Both make suggestions and affirm. Personal applications should be incremental steps, not huge undertakings.

#### **4. Share what has impressed, helped, or challenged you during this course.**

You might say something like: “We would like to take a few minutes right now to give each of you an opportunity to express some of your reactions to what you've been learning and doing in this course. We are approaching the end of the course. Please share with us what has most impressed, helped, or challenged you during the time we have been meeting together. Feel free to share once or twice.”

The purpose of this exercise is to help the students realize the benefits they have received. You will find that it is encouraging and motivational for them. Don't hurry them. Since there is no Bible study this week, there is adequate time.

#### **5. Read and discuss the Evangelism Suggestions (pages 81-82).**

Have the students read around the circle aloud—each taking a paragraph or two. At this point they feel comfortable enough to decide how much to read. One of your goals over the weeks is to make the group less and less leader-dependent.

Ask the people to make comments and observations as you go through each of the three evangelism sections. If they ask questions, direct each question to the group and get their answers before you give your input. You do not want to be known as the expert who has all the answers. You want to function as a facilitator, not as an authority figure.

**6. Discuss “The Wheel and The Hand in Your Life” (page 83).**

Remind them that they can jot notes under the two number 4’s during this discussion.

Have someone read aloud the short opening paragraph. Discuss the answers to “The Wheel” and “The Hand” separately. Have them hold up their hand on “the strongest” as you mention each of the six parts of the wheel. Then do the same with “the weakest.” Then let a few people comment on what they wrote on number 3. Follow the same approach with “The Hand.” People love to talk about these things.

**7. Discuss “Guide to Conversational Prayer” (pages 84-85).**

As you know, they have studied this section as a part of their homework. Mention to them that we want to read this section aloud in the group, make comments or observations as we go through, and then experience a few minutes of conversational prayer together.

**8. Read the “Assignment for Session 9” (page 85).**

Have someone read the assignment for Session 9.

Emphasize the importance of prayerfully and thoughtfully completing the Evangelism Prayer List. They should be aware that Satan may oppose the completion of the list and, that it is not uncommon for students to put this off until the last minute.

**9. Have a brief time of conversational prayer on two or three topics.**

You want to prepare ahead of time to lead this prayer segment effectively. Decide on two or three topics for which you will ask the group to pray conversationally.

A few topics other groups have used are: praise, thanksgiving, forgiveness, personal pressures or concerns, needs of the church, needs of others outside the group, and opportunities for sharing the gospel.

Make it clear what your topics are and the order in which you pray on those topics. Clarify that you will participate in the conversational prayer with them—that you might pray once or twice during the prayer time and that you will also pray last to close off the prayer time in a few minutes. Then ask someone to lead off on the first topic.

(As needed you can give verbal guidance during the prayer time while all heads are bowed—like saying “Let’s go on to the second topic: \_\_\_\_\_”)

<b>Session 9</b>	<b>Book 1</b>
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**1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray. You can ask for a volunteer or call on someone.

**2. Break into groups of two or three, review all five *Beginning with Christ* verses, and get items initialed on *My Completion Record*.**

By now everyone should have the memory requirements completed and initialed on the *Completion Record*. They are now quoting verses they know and deepening their confidence in saying them aloud. Several will have memorized the optional outreach verse, John 5:24.

**3. Share entries from *My Reading Highlights* with the rest of the group.**

By now your sharing together from the Word of God should be very meaningful and personal. The sharing times will help draw the group together in an atmosphere of rich fellowship, care, and concern for one another. In most sessions you want to be one of those who shares from *My Reading Highlights*.

**4. Discuss the Bible Study “Obedience” (pages 87-91).**

Each week continue to briefly review “How to Make the Bible Study Discussions Effective” on pages 10-14 in this leader’s guide.

Have someone read the opening paragraph and quotation by John Stott.

Read the “Think About” question aloud:

Ask how some of them answered that question. Thank or acknowledge each answer verbally or with eye contact and a “yes” nod. Remember there is no “right” answer to any of the “Think About” questions. “Think About” questions get minds moving into the subject at hand, and they help stimulate discussion.

Continue the approach of reading and answering Bible study questions around the circle. Various ones in the group will comment on some of the answers, and you continue as a participant as well as the facilitator of the group.

Apply the principle of “Get several answers”—see page 12 in this leader’s guide.

Continue through the Bible study discussion on “Obedience.”

**5. Discuss your Evangelism Prayer List. (page 82).**

Have them get out the 3 x 5 card on which they have recorded their Evangelism Prayer List.

Below are some questions you could ask to stimulate discussion and assist the students to learn from one another on this assignment. Don’t use all the questions. (You know the people in your group and how they think). The questions you choose to ask should be directed to the group, not to individuals in the group—then individuals will answer your question



- a. How much did you pray and for what did you pray before you actually wrote out your list?
- b. From where do most of your names come? Work? Neighbors? Elsewhere?
- c. How difficult was it for you to come up with 5-10 names of non-Christian acquaintances?
- d. About how many non-Christian contacts do you have who are already close friends?
- e. What pattern do you see in the type of person to whom you tend to gravitate?
- f. What else did you learn or observe in your experience of making up this prayer list?

Encourage them to carry the Evangelism Prayer List as a bookmark in the Bible they use for quiet time reading. You want the students to do two things as a result of these three discussions on the Evangelism Prayer List.

- You want them to identify and list their friendliest non-Christian contacts.
- You want them to begin praying for these people.

If students go on in *The 2:7 Series*, they will be involved in further inputs and exercises to sharpen their evangelism effectiveness. Books 2 and 3 in *The 2:7 Series* build on what they learn and experience in this course. Only God can open hearts to the gospel message. Reinforce the importance of each of us consistently praying for those we want to see come to Christ.

#### **6. Read the “Assignment for Session 10 (page 91)”**

Have someone in the group read the assignment. Ask if there are any questions about the assignment. Answer questions.

#### **7. Have a brief time of conversational prayer.**

Have a brief time of conversational prayer on two or three topics. You can plan the topics in advance or ask the group for options and you choose from their topics.

You might ask one student to begin the prayer time on the first topic. This can become a highlight of every session as the students become comfortable praying conversationally.

## Session 10

Book 1

#### **1. Open the session in prayer.**

Pray or ask someone in the group to pray. You can ask for a volunteer or call on someone.

#### **2. Break into groups of two or three, review all five (or six) memory verses, and get items initialed on *My Completion Record*.**



This gives them another chance to review all their memory verses. Each time they do this, the verses become sharper and the content and meaning have a greater opportunity to impact their thinking and lifestyle.

While in these small groups they want to get some of their final items initialed on the *Completion Record*.

### 3. Share entries from *My Reading Highlights* with the rest of the group.

Go ahead and share first. Though they are sharing at random and not going around the circle in order, you keep track of who hasn't yet shared. You would like to see everyone in your group share at least once. You may need to call on one or two of them to ask them if they would like to share something.

### 4. Discuss the Bible study, "Fellowship" (pages 93-98).

Have someone read the opening quotation by John Stott. Then briefly discuss the "Think About" question. Continue on through the Bible study discussion, "Fellowship."

Additional discussion questions are provided for you in Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11.

Answers you might expect people in your group to give are in blue. There is no one right answer to these "understanding questions." They stimulate a little more discussion, pushing the group's understanding deeper.

Ask an additional question **to the group, not to one person**, and only after one or more have answered the question being discussed. You don't want the "understanding questions" to become a whole new expanded study. You might use one or two of the additional questions during a Bible study discussion. Ask these "understanding questions" sparingly—like you would add a little salt and pepper to your food.

#### Additional Discussion Questions for "Fellowship":

Question 2 Why is sharing so crucial to both the individual Christian and the group?  
 "What we express verbally becomes clearer to us." "We learn from one another's answers." "What we hear from others stimulates our thinking."  
 "We gain further understanding right on the spot."

Question 4 Proverbs 27:17—How do you feel we sharpen one another as Christians?  
 "From others we can pick up attitudes and insights that motivate us." "We may see inside someone's life in a way that makes us want to be better or more like them." "We can hear mistakes others have made and resolve to not to make the same mistake."  
 Ecclesiastes 4:9-10—What are some examples of two being better than one?  
 "Some heavy things can be lifted by two people, but not my one." "A team can do more than an individual." "It's called synergy." "Team

teaching is often an excellent way to run a seminar or class.” “Two parents can contribute a balance in a marriage or family.”

- Question 10 Ephesians 4:11-13—What percentage of the ministry should be done by “professional” Christians? What percentage by lay people?  
 “The ideal would be for lay people to do 90% of Christian ministry, and for ‘professionals’ to do the other 10%.” “I think 20% professionals and 80% lay people is a good immediate goal for our church.”
- Question 11 James 5:16—How do you think confession to another Christian affects spiritual healing?  
 “If I admit my problem to another Christian, then I am not carrying it alone.” “A big part of healing is admitting my need—like at alcoholics anonymous each person says, ‘hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am an alcoholic.’” “Galatians 6: 1-2 is a good passage on this.”

**5. Read “Assignment for Session 11” (page 98).**

Have someone read the assignment for Session 11.

**6. Have a brief time of conversational prayer.**

Session 11

Book 1

**1. Open the session in prayer.**

**2. Break into groups of two or three and review all the verses that you have memorized.**

They will also get some final things initialed and dated on *My Completion Record*.

**3. Share at least one item from *My Reading Highlights* with your group.**

Let them share at random. They read directly from *My Reading Highlights*. Some may want to share more than once.

**4. You sign off “Graduated from Growing Strong in God’s Family” for those who need it.**

On each student’s *Completion Record* you sign off “Graduated from *Growing Strong in God’s Family*”—assuming that everything else has been initialed. You can do this now, at the end of this class session, or when you see students over the next week or two. This opens the door for them to go on into the excellent training in Book 2, “Deepening Your Roots in God’s Family.”

**5. Discuss “Why Memorize Scripture” (pages 99-100).**

**Part 1**—As a participant as well as group leader, you will have completed this assignment as the others have. Take your turn in the sharing around the circle. Don’t skip yourself, but don’t lecture, just participate.

Go around the circle and have each person share **one** of the reasons they wrote down under Part 1. If the first person says something about helping to meditate on The Scriptures, you might then ask if anyone else had that reason—and how did they word their entry? You continue on to the next person who shares a reason he or she has listed. Ask if others wrote down that same idea.

By the time you go around the second time there will be some people who have run out of things to contribute. Allow them to pass and go on to the next person. When it gets down to one or two who still have something left to share, have one of them share whatever he or she has left. Do the same with the other person.

Do not rush during the sharing. Before the discussion, remind the people in your group to list on page 99 additional reasons they hear from others. This gives everyone an expanded list of reasons for memorizing Scripture.

After the people in the group have accumulated their lists of reasons, you may want to complete the segment by saying something like: “I am sure that you are convinced there are some fantastic reasons for hiding God’s Word in our hearts. Scripture memory can give us some great benefits. It can help us grow spiritually. It can help equip us to minister to others.”

**Part 2**—Have someone read question 2a on page 100.

Everyone in the group will have written an answer or two under 2a before coming to class. Now that they have heard all the reasons given during the discussion, they may wish to write in additional reasons. Give them a chance to do this. It should take only two or three minutes. Then, go around the circle and have each person share the benefits that most motivate them. Take your turn when the sharing gets around the circle to you.

Cover 2b by asking the group what things they think could keep a person from being successful in Scripture memory. To close this off, go around the circle and have each person share one main thing that could most hinder him or her from doing well in Scripture memory.

Everyone who continues into Book 2 in *The 2:7 Series* will do more valuable Scripture memory. The work done on this page helps motivate them for the future and clarifies what it takes to succeed for a lifetime of Scripture memory.

This is often the session when, as the group leader, you will initial the last two items on nearly everyone’s *My Completion Record*. You may have already signed off a few people.

**6. Discuss the Bible study “Witness” (pages 100-104)**

Have someone read the quotation by Paul Little.

Discuss the “Think About” question. It is a fun and interesting question.

Continue on through the “Witness” Bible study discussion. This will be an excellent time to draw in some of their experiences in using the Evangelism Prayer List and relating to non-Christians.

Additional discussion questions are provided for you in Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11.

Answers you might expect people in your group to give are in blue. There is no one right answer to these “understanding questions.” They stimulate a little more discussion, pushing the group’s understanding deeper.

Ask an additional question **to the group, not to one person**, and only after one or more have answered the question being discussed. You don’t want the “understanding questions” to become a whole new expanded study. You might use one or two of the additional questions during a Bible study discussion. Ask these “understanding questions” sparingly—like you would add a little salt and pepper to your food.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Witness”:

- Question 1 Matthew 4:19—What are some of the things involved in following Christ?  
 “Confessing and forsaking sins.” “Obeying what The Scriptures say.”  
 “Spending time in the Bible and in prayer.” “Going where He leads me.”
- Question 6 Acts 20:24—What do you think developed this attitude in Paul?  
 “His own life had been radically changed by Christ.” “His experience in seeing other people come to salvation through Christ.” “His commitment to The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.”  
 Acts 20:24—What, if anything, in this attitude do you consider extreme and what do you consider normal?  
 “This should be the normal attitude for people who are in full-time Christian ministry. But most of us can’t give all of our time to evangelism and discipleship.” “All Christians should have the same attitude.”
- Question 7 Romans 10:13-15—What do you feel tends to be the weakest and strongest links in this chain?  
 “Someone being there to share the message of salvation.”  
 “Someone being there but they don’t share the message.”

### 7. Read aloud “Keep Growing,” (pages 104-105).

Have this section read aloud and briefly discuss its contents as you go through. These are very important pages! They commend the students for the things they have accomplished during this course.

Underscore the value of continuing on in *The 2:7 Series*. Completing Books 1, 2, and 3 can revolutionize their lives and their impact on the world around them. We don’t want to push them. We simply want them to understand the benefits of continuing on in *The 2:7 Series*, at least for one more book.

**8. Have a brief time of conversational prayer.**

Ask what things they suggest should be covered in this brief time of prayer. Agree on a couple of topics and let people pray as they feel led. You can close the prayer time or while heads are still bowed, ask someone (by name) to close in prayer.

**Book 1—Leader's Guide  
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