

## Study Recommendations from the Discipleship Team

This list includes our study recommendations from the past several years. Please also refer to the Discipleship Resource for other ideas of what to study as you pursue growing in relationship with Jesus and one other.

### **Bible Studies**

**Bible Studies** published by the [Good Book Company](#)

If you are interested in studying a book of the Bible, The Good Book Company publishes over 40 guides covering Old and New Testament books, as well as studies on topics such as contentment, the Holy Spirit and the Apostle's Creed. These studies have a helpful leader guide at the back.

- Old Testament study – ***Judges: The Flawed and the Flawless*** by Tim Keller  
Judges shows us a God who is relentlessly loving to unlovely people; who continually rescues people from the consequences of their own flaws and failings; and who points forward to the flawless Savior. (Six-session study)
- New Testament study – ***Colossians: Confident Christianity*** by Mark Meynell  
This six-session study emphasizes that the way to grow and be fruitful as a believer is to understand who Jesus Christ is – the awesome ruler of the universe who became a man to reconcile us to God. This is the heart of the Christian gospel that not only saves us, but is also the only the basis for genuine Christian growth.

***Ephesians*** on [RightNow Media](#) with J.D. Greear.

The Book of Ephesians is a survival manual—it equips believers to thrive in a world that hates the message of Jesus Christ. J.D. digs into the text of Ephesians verse-by-verse and challenges believers to live out the gospel. (10-14 minute video clips; free downloadable study guide on RightNow Media)

Note: [RightNow Media](#) is a free resource to you with 15,000+ Bible studies from over 250 publishers.

***The Book of James*** on [RightNow Media](#) with Francis Chan

The book of James speaks to the realities of a living faith in Jesus—the kind of roll-up-your-sleeves and get-your-hands-dirty discipleship that is borne out of an authentic relationship with the risen Lord. Francis Chan works through James verse-by-verse, challenging followers of Christ to move beyond a private, intellectual knowledge of God and His Word, to a vibrant faith that impacts every square inch of life. There are twelve video sessions (7-12 minute clips) available on RightNow Media with a free downloadable discussion guide. There is also a downloadable Leader Guide available for purchase from RightNow Media.

***The Gospel-Centered Life*** published by Serge

Lots of Christians talk about the gospel, but how many really understand the gospel and know how to apply it to their lives? This nine-lesson small group study helps you understand how the gospel shapes every aspect of life.

***The Gospel-Centered Parent*** published by Serge

This nine-session small group study helps parents apply the gospel of Jesus Christ to their families. Each lesson looks at parenting through the lens of God's grace for sinners (parents and children) and gives parents a gospel center to their parenting. Parents learn how to live out the biblical principles of faith, repentance, and faithfulness to their calling as parents with their children. Each lesson is self-contained, with clear teaching from Scripture, and requires no extra work outside of the group setting.

***Gospel Identity: Discovering Who You Really Are.*** This study helps you discover your deep need for Jesus, the blessings we've been given through our new identity in Jesus, and how that impacts all of life. (10 sessions; leader guide included at the back)

***Gospel Growth: Becoming a Faith-Filled Person.*** This study focuses on the role of faith in the transformation of Christians by the power of the gospel. Study topics include the role of faith and repentance in transformation, the power of the Spirit, and how identifying with Christ grows us to be like him. (10 sessions; leader guide included at the back)

***The Gospel of Mark: The Jesus We're Aching For*** by Lisa Harper (For Women's Groups)

Follow Jesus through his early days of ministry all the way to the cross. It's there we discover what it means to be the recipients of His excessive compassion and the very reason for His all-consuming passion. This study is recommended for groups that are interested in diving into Scripture and learning more about the heartbeat of Jesus and developing an intimate relationship with Him. This study comes in the form of a workbook with six sessions.. There is a DVD with teaching from Lisa Harper available for this study, but it is not necessary to use. You could treat this book as a stand-alone study or could choose to watch the DVD portions together in your small group time.

***Six Weeks in the Gospel:*** The Gospel isn't a fad, a hobby, or a set of rules. The Gospel is the heartbeat that runs through every moment, every thought, every decision, every relationship. The Gospel is for every day. We hope this six-week study can be a launch pad to center your life on Jesus and His life-giving, life-saving Gospel. We offered this as a church-wide study during Lent several years ago, and we'd love to see all groups go through it at some point. Copies of the study are available in the Discipleship team office.

## **Books**

***The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love with the God Jesus Knows*** by James Bryan Smith

This study is helpful for those who want to grow deeper in using spiritual disciplines. This transformative book helps you discover the narratives that Jesus lived by – to know the Lord he knew and the kingdom he proclaimed – and to practice spiritual exercises that will help you grow in the knowledge of our good and beautiful God. An 8-session discussion guide for small groups is in the back of the book.

***The Imperfect Disciple: Grace for People Who Can't Get Their Act Together*** by Jared Wilson

This is a discipleship book that isn't afraid to be honest about the mess we call real life. Through humor and stories, Jared reminds us how the gospel actually works through us and in us, even when we can't get our act together. (10 chapters – [Discussion Guide](#))

***Jesus Outside the Lines: A Way Forward for Those who are Tired of Taking Sides*** by Scott Sauls

This is a must read given the culture of our day. Scott speaks directly about the issues of our day in a way that is practical, full of grace and truth. (10 chapters – [Discussion Guide](#))

***Law and Gospel: A Theology for Sinners (and Saints)*** published by Mockingbird

This book offers a great summary of the distinction between Law and Gospel, with an emphasis on how we experience this in our daily lives. For those Christians at the end of their rope, end of their strength, and tired of pretending - this book is for you to remember that Jesus is the Savior of the weak, needy and helpless even after salvation. Written with the non-theologian in mind, this short book unpacks the good news of God's grace. A free downloadable study guide (with six sessions) and leader notes are available from [Mockingbird](#).

***One Way Love*** by Tullian Tchividjian

Real life is long on law and short on grace—the demands never stop, the failures pile up, and fear sets in. Life and culture demand a stable marriage, successful children, and a certain quality of life. Anyone living inside the guilt, anxiety, and uncertainty of daily life knows that the weight of life is heavy. We are all in need of some relief. Tchividjian calls the church back to the heart of the Christian faith—grace. A six part teaching series is available on RightNow Media with a free downloadable study guide.

***A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World*** by Paul Miller

This is for a group that wants to know the joy and power of a vibrant prayer life. (13 session study guide available for purchase to supplement your discussion and personal experience)

***Soul Keeping: Caring For the Most Important Part of You*** by John Ortberg

Ortberg explains why our souls matter, what they actually are, and how we can help keep them—and ourselves—healthy and whole. This book is practical and speaks with relevance to one of Christianity's most mysterious and neglected topics. A DVD and study guide are also available.

***Unshamed: Healing Our Brokenness and Finding Freedom From Shame*** by Heather Davis Nelson

Whether it's shame related to body image, relationships, marriage, parenting, work, or a hidden sin we've never confessed, this liberating book explains how we can find forgiveness and healing in the God who replaces our shame with his righteousness. This book is recommended for a group that has been together for at least a year and is interested in authentic sharing about their lives at a heart level. There are nine chapters with questions for reflection and discussion at the end of each.