

JOURNEY 101

# KNOWING GOD



LEADER GUIDE

JOURNEY 101  
STEPS TO THE LIFE GOD INTENDS

KNOWING GOD

Leader Guide

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## STEPS TO THE LIFE GOD INTENDS

This three-part basic faith course is designed to teach what it means to know, love, and serve God. Each of the three separate, interactive six-week studies uses a group teaching format, combining video teaching and small group table breakouts. The three studies include:

**KNOWING GOD.** Explore the good news of the Bible and discover Bible study tools and resources to deepen your understanding of God and the Scriptures.

**LOVING GOD.** Experience spiritual transformation through spiritual practices that will help you fall more in love with God and grow in your relationship with God and others.

**SERVING GOD.** Understand the biblical context for service that will enable you to use your hands, your time, and your spiritual gifts to serve others and share Christ.

### **COMPONENTS:**

**Participant Guide (1 for each study)**—Six interactive session guides with space for responding to questions and activities and recording personal reflections.

**Leader Guide (1 for each study)**—Six complete session guides for facilitating a group with additional leader helps.

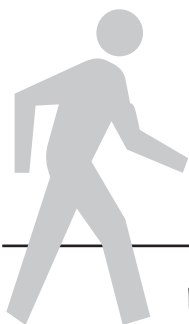
**Daily Readings**—Serves as the devotional companion for the entire three-part Journey 101 series. Ninety devotions (thirty devotions per study).

**DVD**—3-disc set (120 minutes per DVD/study; 360 minutes total)

**Preview Book**—Provides an overview of the topics covered in the entire three-part Journey 101 course.

**Leader Kit**—One each of the components listed above.

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LEADER GUIDE

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JOURNEY 101: KNOWING GOD  
LEADER GUIDE

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# Introduction



## THE JOURNEY

When we give our lives to Jesus Christ and commit to follow him, we embark on a lifelong journey of knowing, loving, and serving God. Growing as a Christian and becoming a committed follower of Jesus Christ means . . .

**knowing God by becoming theologically informed,**

**loving God and experiencing spiritual transformation, and**

**serving God by using our hands to serve others and share Christ.**

Journey 101 is a three-part course designed to help you guide individuals on this journey of knowing, loving, and serving God. The destination or goal is to help participants engage in the discipleship journey and move toward becoming deeply committed Christians—people who know, love, and serve God with increasing passion and dedication. As you lead participants toward this destination, creating an atmosphere where they can experience growth and find support, you will help to provide answers to the following questions:

- How does a deeply committed Christian grow to know God more deeply?
- How would our lives be transformed if we loved God with the fullness of our hearts?
- How should we, as deeply committed Christians, be serving in the world?

To help you and your group know that you are on the right track to your destination, we have identified fifteen markers to guide you. We call these markers the



fifteen core traits of a deeply committed Christian. These traits paint a picture of what it looks like to live as a deeply committed follower of Jesus Christ. Each study in the Journey 101 series focuses on five of these core traits. (See pages 12-13 for detailed descriptions of these core traits.)

Because starting any journey can sometimes be daunting, particularly for those who may be new to the faith or the church (or your church in particular), Journey 101 serves as a navigation system that provides directions, routes, and traveling companions to support and encourage participants along the way. Here is a description of what your group will learn in each study:

## **KNOWING GOD**

- Gain a better understanding of the essentials of the Christian faith.
- Experience new Bible study tools and resources.
- Discover more about the church.
- Discuss ethics and our Christian response to life's decisions.
- Understand more about God's will for your life.

## **LOVING GOD**

- Learn about the Holy Spirit's transforming power in our lives.
- Understand more about what it means to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love your neighbor as you love yourself (Luke 10:27).
- Understand and experience key spiritual practices including Bible study, prayer, worship, fasting, guidance, and journaling.
- Learn to recognize the "fruit" of God's transforming activity in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

## **SERVING GOD**

- Focus on the Bible's concern for the poor and for justice, while learning how to be instruments of God's love in a broken, hurting world.
- Learn how to share the good news of Jesus in loving, winsome, and non-judgmental ways.
- Understand spiritual gifts and talents and how to use those gifts to bless others and build up the body of Christ.
- Learn how our money and material possessions are not a measure of success or a means of self-gratification, but a resource to responsibly use to glorify God.

- View time as a gift from God, to be used in keeping with God's purposes, avoiding compulsive busyness and submitting our calendars to God's guiding and control.

These separate, six-week studies combine to create a complete discipleship course. Although it is recommended that participants take each study, there is no set order in which they must be completed.

## **ABOUT THE PARTICIPANT GUIDE**

Because Journey 101 is designed as an in-class experience (everything takes place in the group setting; there is no homework to be done outside of class), the participant guide is every participant's "map" for the weekly group experience. Communicate to participants the importance of bringing their participant guides to each class, along with a pen or pencil and a Bible. Be sure to have extra writing utensils and Bibles on hand for those who forget or who may not own a Bible.

Invite participants to follow along in their participant guides as you lead them through each session. Questions and activities that are to be answered or completed in the book are highlighted in bold type. Encourage group members to write in their participant guides as directed so that they will have their own personal record of their journeys and the insights they gained along the way.

Though no homework is involved, participants may wish to use the devotional companion, *Journey 101 Daily Readings*, in their private devotions while completing the three-part Journey 101 series. These devotions will help to enrich their understanding and application of what they are learning in class.

## **ABOUT THIS LEADER GUIDE**

This leader guide provides outlines for six group sessions, each structured for 90 minutes. If desired, you may adapt the format for either a 60-minute session or 120-minute session by making the adjustments outlined below:

### **Original 90-minute Format**

Welcome—5 minutes

Connect—5 minutes

Reflect—3-5 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion—10 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion—10 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion—10 minutes

Review—3-5 minutes

Closing—5 minutes

Pray Together—5 minutes

### **Adapted 60-Minute Format**

Welcome and Connect (combined and abbreviated)—5 minutes

Reflect—3 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion (abbreviated)—5 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion (abbreviated)—5 minutes

Video Highlights—10 minutes

Group Discussion (abbreviated)—5 minutes

Review—2 minutes

Closing and Prayer (combined and abbreviated)—5 minutes

### **Adapted 120-Minute Format**

Welcome—5 minutes

Connect—10 minutes

Reflect—3-5 minutes

Video Highlights - 10 minutes

Group Discussion - 15 minutes

Video Highlights - 10 minutes

Group Discussion - 15 minutes

Video Highlights - 10 minutes

Group Discussion - 15 minutes

Review—10 minutes

Closing—5 minutes

Pray Together—10 minutes

Whichever format you choose, each session plan follows the same order. After welcoming participants and offering a prayer, you will lead participants through a get-to-know-you activity followed by a brief personal reflection exercise. Next, you will play three video segments (8–10 minutes each), pausing after each for group discussion. This is the primary “teaching time” of the session. The videos present the content while the group discussion helps participants to process it and make application. Note that more questions are provided than you may have time to cover. Select the questions you wish to cover

and put a checkmark beside them. Encourage participants to reflect on the questions you do not cover in class on their own.

After the final group discussion, you will briefly review the main points of the session and ask a couple of key comprehension questions. As the session draws to a close, you will invite participants to respond to the lesson in a closing activity. Finally, end the session with a time of prayer.

We believe that nothing in the world will bring you greater joy, greater challenge, and greater meaning than the journey into life as God intended us to live it. As you begin the journey, open yourself to what God has to teach you through the Scriptures, prayer, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

# FIFTEEN CORE TRAITS OF A DEEPLY COMMITTED CHRISTIAN

## KNOWING GOD

**Christian Essentials**—Deeply committed Christians understand the essential gospel on which most Christians agree, across denominational lines and centuries, expressed in historic creeds such as the Apostles’ and Nicene creeds, and can share the gospel intelligently with non-Christian friends.

**Bible Understanding**—Deeply committed Christians know the grand sweep of the Bible’s story of salvation, including a basic timeline of biblical events. They understand the divine/human nature of the Bible and know how to read it, not merely as an ancient document or a reference book of spiritual answers, but for personal spiritual growth.

**Church/Denomination**—Deeply committed Christians value the church as the body of Christ, God’s people journeying in community, and know the teachings characteristic of their particular denomination.

**Basic Christian Ethics**—Deeply committed Christians understand how to apply their Christian faith to important ethical issues and are committed to living out Christian ethical principles such as justice, integrity, peace, and responsibility for the well-being of others.

**Knowing God’s Will**—Deeply committed Christians know the broad scope of God’s purpose for human beings, and have a growing sense of how to discern God’s will for their lives through prayer, Bible study, and the wisdom of other Christians.

## LOVING GOD

**Surrender**—Deeply committed Christians surrender the control of every aspect of their lives to Jesus, repent of sin, set aside their own desires and sense of importance, and offer their lives in obedient service to God.

**Transformation**—Deeply committed Christians are being continually transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and sense that power molding their values, priorities, and relationships into more Christlike patterns.

**Spiritual Disciplines**—Deeply committed Christians practice various spiritual disciplines (for example, prayer, Bible reading, worship, solitude, meditation, fasting) as a means of surrendering to Jesus and opening their life to the Holy Spirit’s transforming activity.

**Fruit of the Spirit**—Deeply committed Christians are continually growing in the inner qualities and outward actions identified as “the fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22-23: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (NRSV).

**Authentic Community**—Deeply committed Christians share their faith journeys with groups of Christian friends in mutual encouragement and accountability, developing spiritual honesty and trust through sharing and support.

## SERVING GOD

**Service to Others**—Deeply committed Christians are instruments of God’s love in a broken, hurting world, living lives of service to others with a strong (though not exclusive) focus on the Bible’s concern for the poor and for justice.

**Sharing Christ**—Deeply committed Christians are eager to share the good news of Jesus in loving, winsome, and non-judgmental ways, and are ready to “give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15).

**Spiritual Gifts/Talents**—Deeply committed Christians understand clearly with “sober judgment” (Romans 12:3) which spiritual gifts and talents they have, and use those gifts to bless others and build up the body of Christ.

**Financial Gifts**—Deeply committed Christians view money and material possessions not as a measure of success or as a means of self-gratification, but as a resource for whose use they are responsible to God, and they submit their financial lives to God’s guiding and control.

**Time**—Deeply committed Christians see time as a gift from God to be used in keeping with God’s purposes, avoid compulsive busyness, and submit their calendars to God’s guiding and control.

