

The Journey: Deepen

Week of January 29, 2017 | Lesson 4 | Ephesians 4:17-24



For the Disciplemaker

The second step along the 4D Discipleship Pathway toward spiritual maturity is DEEPEN. The most important way to deepen one's relationship with Christ is to study and apply the truths of God's Word. Not only should Bible study be done in a relational environment like a home group, but also individually and personally with the Lord. FBCW is challenging each person to daily read the Bible. Encourage your home group participants to follow one of the plans available on www.bible.com if they do not yet have a Bible reading plan.

The Previous Step

Use the first third of *Group Time* to build relationships and review the previous lesson.

- Care and Share
Welcome arriving participants. Invite them to enjoy the refreshments and to share about their week. Next, everyone should share prayer requests and pray together.
- Check-Up
Ask for volunteers to quote Philippians 3:12-14 from memory. Ask others to describe the first step in the 4D Discipleship Pathway. Next, call for volunteers to summarize the key truths from Ephesians 4:11-16. Revisit the next steps that each participant has shared recently by asking them to describe any progress they have made.
- Cast Vision
State: Recall when you first met your spouse or best friend. What did you do to deepen your relationship with him/her? Why would anyone want to deepen his/her relationship with Jesus? Deepen is the second step on the 4D Discipleship Pathway. What things would you do to deepen your walk with Jesus? How long should you keep it up? Next inquire about daily Bible reading plans used by group participants. Describe some found on www.bible.com and encourage them to select one. State: Be ready next week to share with the group the reading plan you are following.

Bible Study and Discussion

Use the second third of *Group Time* to **discover** and **deepen** in the Word.

- Read the Word
Ahead of time, prayerfully read Ephesians 4:17-24 several times and personally answer the discussion questions. You may develop additional questions as needed.
Call on a participant to read aloud Ephesians 4:17-24 while others follow in their own Bibles. Next, direct the participants to silently reread the verses and attempt to identify the author's main point. Now ask the discussion questions and encourage note-taking on the "Home Group Bible Study Discussion Guide."

Teaching (DISCOVER the basic teaching):

- What is the main point of this passage?

- How should a follower of Christ live, as a disciple or as a pagan? Why?
- What key truths does God want you to believe and understand?
 - What characterizes an unbeliever's lifestyle according to this passage?
 - Why are their ways and thinking futile?
 - What can the lack of understanding God's Word ultimately lead to?

Rebuking (DEEPEN my understanding):

- According to this passage, what is the "wrong" that God is opposing?
 - In what ways do you as a believer still live like an unbeliever?
- What sin, temptation, or false belief should be avoided?
 - Why do many who put confidence in their own intellect and rational thinking believe the things of God are foolishness?
- How does your life compare to what God has said is right or wrong?

Correcting (DO make changes):

- In light of this passage, what changes does God want you to make?
 - What does it mean to take off your old way of life? How do you do it?
 - Is this a one-time event or a process? Why?
- What do you need to stop doing?
- What do you need to start doing?
 - What is the new self and by what means can you put it on?
 - What role does personal Bible study play in putting on the new self?

Training (God is preparing you as a disciple to DISCIPLE others):

- What Christ-like character and habits does God want you to develop and demonstrate?
 - How does a change in your thinking about Christ affect your behavior?
- For what is God preparing and equipping you?

The Next Step

Use the final third of *Group Time* to prepare to **do** and **disciple**.

- Identifying My Next Step
Guide participants to ask God, in a time of silent and individual prayer, to help them DISCOVER what they should DO differently this week as a result of the Bible study. Following the prayer time, ask each participant to write down and share his/her next step (spiritual action goal). Also ask, "Who in your circle of friends would benefit from hearing the truths from today's Bible study? Share it with him/her this week."
- Partnering
Participants should not take their next steps by themselves. In the time that remains, direct them to partner with another participant or two to plan ways each one can accomplishing his/her next step. They should also practice retelling the lesson's key truths in a conversational manner--as if they were telling it to someone outside the group. Each set of partners should close *Group Time* by praying for one another with respect to their individual next steps.

