

Recommended Resources for Small Group Equipping

This is a work in progress – updates are on-going. Please let me know any suggestions that you have for this list.

Telling our faith story

- See Director of Outreach for teaching materials and templates – these are used in every Discover Grace Class

Understanding and sharing the gospel

- See Director of Outreach for various gospel presentation materials that can be used with your group

Studying the Bible and applying it to our lives

- **How to Study the Bible - by Robert M. West.** This guide provides a brief, concise overview of personal Bible study for the layperson. Long-time Bible teacher Robert West gives insight into the types, tools, and techniques of personal study, offering both practical guidance and encouragement to pursue the command of 2 Timothy 2:15. Covering topics such as the inductive method, word studies, commentaries, dictionaries, and concordances, “How to Study the Bible” also emphasizes the personal benefits of private Bible time. *(Short, but effective guide – covers basics)*
- **Living By the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible - Howard and William Hendricks.** With over 300,000 sold, “Living by the Book” will remove the barriers that keep Scripture from transforming your life. In a simple, step-by-step fashion, the authors explain how to glean truth from Scripture. It is practical, readable, and applicable. By following its easy-to-apply principles, you'll soon find yourself drawing great nourishment from the Word—and enjoying the process! The Living by the Book Workbook is the perfect complement to provide practical application of lessons. (An excellent and comprehensive guide – college level)
- **Read the Bible for Life: Your Guide to Understanding and Living God's Word - George H. Guthrie.** The Bible may be the most-purchased book in the world, but it is often the least read and least applied due to a basic lack of understanding and motivation on the part of readers. Read the Bible for Life aims to improve biblical literacy in the culture and the church by simultaneously moving readers toward greater skill in reading the Bible well and toward a deeper commitment to applying Scripture to everyday life. George Guthrie discusses the basic tools and attitudes needed to read the Bible more effectively. Chapters focus on the various types of literature in Scripture and how to read them well. The book also discusses issues such as reading the Bible in context, choosing and reading a Bible translation, reading in times of sorrow or suffering, and reading the Bible with your family.

- **Bible Book Studies** - There are many, many options for a study guide to go with a study of a particular book of the Bible. There are some examples below – each has strengths and weaknesses. Some have a workbook format with a daily reading and space to answer questions. Others focus on background material to help the student understand the context and meaning of the book. You will probably be able to find a series that matches your teaching style and the needs of your group from this list (although there are many others!) Note that some are more complete than others with a study guide for all almost all the books of the bible, others have only a few studies for some of the books in the New Testament. We have sample copies of each of these for you to review to see which would work best.
 - Blackaby – Encounters with God Series also know as A Blackaby Bible Study Series
 - Engaging God’s word – Community Bible Study – Engage Bible Studies
 - LifeChange Bible Study Series – NavPress
 - Life Lessons – Max Lucado – NT only – Thomas Nelson
 - MacArthur Bible Studies – John Mac Arthur – Thomas Nelson

Praying and listening to God *(these are all excellent, each with its own tone and approach)*

- **Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference? - Philip Yancey.** Philip Yancey explores the intimate place where God and humans meet in Prayer. Polls reveal that 90 percent of people pray. Yet prayer, which should be the most nourishing and uplifting time of the believer’s day, can also be frustrating, confusing, and fraught with mystery. Writing as a fellow pilgrim, Yancey probes such questions as: •Is God listening? •Why should God care about me? •If God knows everything, what’s the point of prayer? •Why do answers to prayer seem so inconsistent? •Why does God sometimes seem close and sometimes seem far away? •How can I make prayer more satisfying?
- **Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God -Timothy Keller.** Christians are taught in their churches and schools that prayer is the most powerful way to experience God. But few receive instruction or guidance in how to make prayer genuinely meaningful. In Prayer, renowned pastor Timothy Keller delves into the many facets of this everyday act. Keller offers biblical guidance as well as specific prayers for certain situations, such as dealing with grief, loss, love, and forgiveness. He discusses ways to make prayers more personal and powerful, and how to establish a practice of prayer that works for each reader.
- **A Praying Life: Connecting With God In A Distracting World - Paul E. Miller.** Author Paul Miller shares his insights and conclusions about how to connect the broken pieces of your life and allow prayer—even poorly delivered—to fill the gaps with meaning and substance. Miller's down-to-earth approach and practical nature will help you see that your relationship with God can grow and your communication with Him can get better. Parents will find Miller's family-life experiences especially helpful.
- **Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God – Dallas Willard.** Being close to God means communicating with him--telling him what is on our hearts in prayer and hearing and understanding what he is saying to us. It is this second half of our conversation with God that

is so important but that can also be so difficult. How do we hear his voice? How can we be sure that what we think we hear is not our own subconscious? What role does the Bible play? What if what God says to us is not clear? The key, says best-selling author Dallas Willard, is to focus not so much on individual actions and decisions as on building our personal relationship with our Creator. You'll gain rich spiritual insight into how we can hear God's voice clearly and develop an intimate partnership with him in the work of his kingdom.

Understanding our identity in Christ

- **Lifetime Guarantee: Making Your Christian Life Work and What to Do When It Doesn't - Bill Gillham.** As a professor, counselor, and radio host, Gillham heard countless stories of people who tried to live the Christian life but repeatedly failed. Then he realized that only one person can live like Christ—Jesus Himself—and that He wants to live His life through each and every believer. Readers will appreciate Gillham's gut-honest and encouraging tone as they discover...
 - the root of their problems—the techniques they have developed for satisfying their needs for love and self-esteem
 - the key to victory—their true identity in Christ
 - God's goal for their lives—conformity to Christ's image as He lives through them
- **The "Life Study" Guide – Bill Gillham.** In this video series, Bill and Anabel present the truth of your identity in Christ and how to allow Christ to live in and through you. This is practical teaching in a warm, intimate setting and is perfect for home, small group, or congregational viewing. These eleven sessions are each approximately 30-35 minutes in length.

Understanding our calling and spiritual gifts

- **Experiencing God - Henry Blackaby.** This is a 13-week practical course for individual or small-group study to learn when God is speaking to you, how to join Him in what He is doing, and to experience Him at work through your life. Key Points (and outline) of the book:
 - God is always at work around you.
 - God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.
 - God invites you to become involved with Him in His work.
 - God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purpose, and His ways.
 - God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.
 - You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing.
 - You come to know God by experience as you obey Him and He accomplishes His work through you.

Making disciples

- **Saturate: Being Disciples of Jesus in the Everyday Stuff of Life – Jeff Vanderstelt.** Many Christians have unwittingly embraced the idea that "church" is a once-a-week event rather than

a community of Spirit-empowered people; that “ministry” is what pastors do on Sundays rather than the 24/7 calling of all believers; and that “discipleship” is a program rather than the normal state of every follower of Jesus. Drawing on his experience as a pastor and church planter, Jeff Vanderstelt wants us to see that there’s more—much more—to the Christian life than sitting in a pew once a week. God has called his people to something bigger: a view of the Christian life that encompasses the ordinary, the extraordinary, and everything in between. Packed full of biblical teaching, compelling stories, and real-world advice, this book will remind you that Jesus is filling the world with his presence through the everyday lives of everyday people...

- **Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ Paper– Greg Ogden.** We grow in Christ as we seek him together. Jesus' own pattern of disciple-making was to be intimately involved with others and allow life to rub against life. By gathering to study the Bible and encourage one another, we most closely follow Jesus' example with the twelve disciples. This workbook by Greg Ogden is a tool designed to help you follow this pattern Jesus drew for us. Working through it will deepen your knowledge of essential Christian teaching and strengthen your faith. This material is designed for groups of three. It has also been used successfully as an individual study program, a one-on-one discipling tool and small group curriculum.
- **The Gospel Project – Lifeway.** 66 books. Dozens of authors. A holy canon thousands of years in the making. Every word, every verse, bears His testimony. Of the Holy Messiah. Jesus Christ. Eternal King. The Gospel Project® is a chronological, Christ-centered Bible study that examines how all Scripture gives testimony to Jesus Christ. Over the course of three years, participants will journey from Genesis to Revelation and discover how God’s plan of redemption unfolds throughout Scripture and still today, compelling them to join the mission of God.
- **Explore the Bible – Lifeway.** Explore the Bible is a book-by-book Bible study for small groups that takes participants deep into the context of God's Word and challenges them to live it out in their own context. Explore the Bible presents a rich study experience that pursues biblical context through: balanced study plans, archaeological and historical background, in-depth Bible commentary, "Context passage" that reveals larger biblical context, and engaging group discussion questions for every book of the Bible
- **Reader's Guide to the Bible: A Chronological Reading Plan - George Guthrie.** Guthrie invites readers into the world of the Bible and offers guidance for walking day-by-day through its pages. May be used as a companion to any Bible translation. Features: Offers a daily Bible-reading plan that enables people to read through the Bible in one year, Offers daily help coaching in how to read an assigned portion of Scripture each day, Lays out the biblical story in 3 acts and 17 scenes to familiarize readers with the framework of the Bible’s story, Daily commentary provides orientation for reading Scripture on a day-by-day basis, Small-group discussion questions are provided at the end of each week for processing the week’s readings with others, Three foldout timelines help readers keep track of their place in the biblical story

Christian Life

- **Families Where Grace Is in Place - Jeff VanVonderen.** Now updated with discussion guides for families and small groups this book continues to minister to couples. Using his professional and

personal experience, VanVonderen shows readers how to nurture God-honoring relationships free of manipulation, legalism, and shame. This book is a practical and insightful discussion on living a graceful life and building a strong and happy home using God's tools.

- **Gospel Fluency** – Jeff Vanderstelt. Even if they want to, many Christians find it hard to talk to others about Jesus. Is it possible this difficulty is because we're trying to speak a language we haven't actually spent time practicing? To become fluent in a new language, you must immerse yourself in it until you actually start to think about life through it. Becoming fluent in the gospel happens the same way—after believing it, we have to intentionally rehearse it (to ourselves and to others) and immerse ourselves in its truths. Only then will we start to see how everything in our lives, from the mundane to the magnificent, is transformed by the hope of the gospel.
- **An Infinite Journey: Growing toward Christlikeness** - Dr. Andrew M. Davis. The Bible reveals that God has laid before every Christian two infinite journeys which we are to travel every day: the internal journey of growth into Christlike maturity, and the external journey of worldwide evangelism and missions. An Infinite Journey is a road map for the internal journey, laying out how we are to grow in four major areas: knowledge, faith, character, and action. We'll also discover that spiritual knowledge constantly feeds our growing faith, faith will transform our character, our transformed character will result in an array of actions more and more glorifying to God, and our actions will feed our spiritual knowledge. This upward spiral will lead us to become more and more like Jesus Christ in holiness. And not only will this book help us understand Christian growth in detail, it will also give us a passion to grow every day for His glory.