

The 2:7 Series

A course in personal discipleship to strengthen your walk with God

Book 3

Leader Guide

Version 3.1



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Introduction

The 2:7 Series

What the Holy Spirit expresses through Paul in Colossians 2:7 clearly defines what *The 2:7 Series* is designed to help accomplish in the lives of people working through this discipleship training material.

1. For Christians to be built up in Christ and established in their faith. This series of courses includes instruction in practical Bible study techniques, scripture memory skills, a vital devotional life, and how to be more effective in evangelism.
2. For Christians to learn to overflow with gratitude in their everyday lives. The series helps an individual learn to experience a stable, consistent walk with the Lord.
3. For Christians to be instructed. This implies that training must take place before individuals develop into the kind of Christian lay people whose lives will have an impact on their communities.

Each course in *The 2:7 Series* builds on the previous one. A person needs to complete Book 1 before going on to Book 2, and complete Book 2 before doing Book 3.

Important

1. Leader Guide

It is important for one person to act as group facilitator during each 2:7 meeting. This may be the same person each time or the responsibility may be shared by two or three different people (preferably those who previously have gone through *The 2:7 Series* themselves).

This leader guide is based on extensive use of *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* and experiences in using Books 1 and 2. It is imperative for the group leader to use this leader guide material every week as part of his or her careful preparation. These pages are filled with proven principles, methods, and suggestions. Using the leader guide can significantly lighten your preparation load as group leader.

2. Leader Training

Learn more about online 2:7 group leader training at www.2-7series.org. If you think it is the right time for you, consider registering and studying through this free and helpful online training.

Group Size

Professionals in the field of small group discussions say that 4-8 people makes for the best discussions. For this course, **plan for up to 10 participants in your group**—not including yourself (and your husband or wife). Remember that each person over 10 reduces how much each person in the group gets to talk. It is wiser to break a group of 12 or more into two groups. Your only limitation may be the number of qualified group leaders available.

Study Books

It is imperative for each person in your group to have his/her own copy of *Bearing Fruit in God's Family*. People should write their name or put an address label on their book for easy identification (on page 2 or 3).

Each person is expected to complete 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, *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* becomes a valued possession as a reference book for 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.

The Challenge Continues...

The following guidelines can be valuable for helping you effectively lead your group through *Bearing Fruit in God's Family*. Refer to these guidelines from time to time as you continue leading your group through this course.

Seeing Lives Strengthened and Deepened

During Books 2 and 3 your group members experience:

1. Solid spiritual growth through consistency in quiet time, Bible study, and scripture memory.
2. Foundational ministry training through study, discussion, and individual field assignments.
3. Exercises that prepare people to reach out to others with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This leader guide is not the final authority on how to lead your group. Each leader and each group is unique. But the information included here offers you valuable help!

Remember that *The 2:7 Series* is only a means to an end. These are excellent and proven materials. However, printed materials and programs do not produce disciples. *Only a disciple can make a disciple*. It is imperative that you practice what you teach. As you know, only as the Spirit of God uses the Word of God (the Bible) in a life can there be significant and lasting transformation.

These concepts should guide your thinking as you help each member of your group grow in spiritual maturity in Christ. You may see your own spiritual life and ministry skills take on new, positive dimensions as well.

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 for winning and training others.

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

Members of your group also need to be encouraged to share (with people outside of your group) things they are learning during the group sessions and what they are experiencing in their daily relationship with God.

Evaluating Your Leadership

The following questions for evaluating leadership are for your own personal reflection. In your group be listening for answers to these questions. Don't let these topics be added to the regular assignments in the *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* workbook.

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|---------------|--|
| Who? | Who am I serving? Who are the people in my group? Do I really know them? |
| What? | What are my goals for <i>Bearing Fruit in God's Family</i> , and 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? |

Rarely can a group facilitator do all these things well. The list is a reminder. We want to do well what we can do well. We trust the grace of God for the rest.

Getting Organized

1. **When** will your group meet? Since you need 60 to 90 minutes for each *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* study, the Sunday school hour is usually not long enough.

So when should you meet? Your final decision may involve some sacrifice on your part—you may have to give up an evening or part of Saturday each week that you wanted to save for yourself. But, you've decided to serve this group. Determine what time is best for you and 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. People who commute to work early in the morning may not want to be out late. Couples with young children may have days or times that are easier for them to find baby-sitters. (Or your church provides childcare that is important to some members of your group). 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 good, 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 interaction. You may need space for from eight to twelve people. Arrange seating so the group spreads out in a circle or oval. This way they can see each other and talk to one another more easily. There are times when the group divides briefly into groups of two or three. There needs to be space for that.

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 snacks or refreshments simple.

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

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 light refreshments and conversations? Discuss this and set guidelines that help your people to plan when to arrive and how long to stay.

Handling Potential Problems

Your group may face problems like those listed below. Considering them in advance, so you are 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 a “dry” period in their spiritual life.

Difficulties such as these will not disappear. Deal with them with an attitude of love and concern. Here are several suggestions:

1. Talk alone with the people 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 makes them accountable to one another.
3. Share some concerns with the entire group. Point out your goals for this discipleship training and your wanting them to commit to those same goals. Do this in a positive, encouraging way.
4. Give occasional “locker room chats”—as a coach would with his/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 situations 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 near the end of a session. You want the group to be eager to return next week.
2. Try to **involve each group member** in the discussions.
3. **Avoid embarrassing people.** Some may feel uncomfortable at first in such activities as reading aloud, praying aloud or talking in a group.
4. As the leader, **participate** in all the activities. A new group especially needs to see your example.
5. Give clear **instructions** they will understand.
6. Be yourself. Use the outlines given in the leader guide for each session, but **avoid being mechanical** about it.
7. **Arrive prepared.** Your people can get discouraged if you seem to not know what you are doing—especially when they have given time to come prepared.
8. Review the leader guide as part of your preparation each week. **Have clear goals** in mind for each session (but stay flexible).

Between Meetings

Your commitment to the group includes more than your time during your group sessions. Accomplishing your goals for developing disciples may require additional activities on your part.

1. Establish a **genuine friendship** with those in your group. If possible get to know them outside of your group meetings. Strong friendships enhance your group sessions. During *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* you might have one or two social activities as a group—like having a simple potluck before one of your sessions. If possible do some fun things 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 assignments you ask 2:7 participants to **read and mark certain sections** of the material. An example is *Priorities: Part 2* on pages 85-90. The benefit for them and for the group is that when those pages are discussed, each person sees what he/she has marked and **immediately has things to share in the group**—not having to nervously search through several unmarked pages. From time to time underscore the value of marking/highlighting almost everything that is read in the 2:7 books. It sets one up for participation.

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, “On page 9, let’s read through this list of goals we had for Book 2. Let’s start with Andy and go to the left. Andy, would you read all of number 1, and then we’ll read on around the circle. After Andy reads, you say “thank you.” Then: “Susan, would you read those next two goals?” 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 cover the material and get audible participation. These become things you don’t have to read aloud yourself. There are sections of the 2:7 materials that are not mentioned in the assignments—but you can choose to have various segments read aloud if you wish. Look for places where you can have a change of pace. Variety is

good. These exercises are incremental steps toward people becoming a leader for a 2:7 groups or Bible studies 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. 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 sometimes underscore things that are important or not understood. Most questions you are asked can be directed back to the group. Other questions you may choose to answer outright—and move on.

First, prepare your lesson as a group participant. Then prepare your lesson as group leader. Have in mind the sections where you discuss material they have read and marked—you want to discuss segments one at a time. Have in mind the sections where you will have them read around the circle. In some Bible studies you may have a follow-up question or two as people answer questions in their book.

Perspective on Bearing Fruit in God's Family

In *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* you are building on the training your people received in *Growing Strong in God's Family* and *Deepening Your Roots in God's Family*. Their capacities have increased during Book 2. Here in Book 3 they meet new challenges that may stretch them a bit. The workload is about the same as it was in Book 2. They continue to sharpen their "My Story" (salvation testimony)—and they are encouraged by new insights into themselves and their spiritual journey. As with Books 1 and 2, Book 3 only impacts a life to the degree that the Holy Spirit works in and through the materials, the Word of God, and the influence of group members on one another.

Goals for Bearing Fruit in God's Family

The main goals are to continue to develop the group members' walk with Christ and to upgrade their ministry effectiveness. You are seeking to develop habits and patterns in each person's life that continue long after going through the 2:7 training material.

You want to help your 2:7 group members reach the following milestones:

1. To experience a more consistent and meaningful quiet time by:
 - a. Combining meaningful Bible reading and prayer.
 - b. Having at least 14 consecutive quiet times during the course.
 - c. Recording daily quiet time thoughts on *My Reading Highlights*.

2. To retain the five or six memory verses from Book 1 and the 6-12 “Live the New Life” verses memorized in Book 2.
3. To memorize 6-12 “Proclaim Christ” verses from the TMS.
4. To complete and discuss five Bible studies on Christian character.
5. To experience six methods for meditating on Scripture.
6. To give a personal salvation testimony in less than four minutes—with or without written outline notes (bullet points on paper).
7. To present *The Bridge Illustration* satisfactorily to a classmate.
8. To study and discuss principles for setting and fulfilling priorities.

Flowchart for *Bearing Fruit in God’s Family*

How and when various topics are emphasized in Book 3:

Bible Study

- “Introduction to Bible Study—Book 3”—Session 2.
- Bible study on five Christian character subjects—Sessions 3, 5, 6, 8, 11.

Meditation

- “Ways to Meditate on the Scriptures—Part 1”—Session 1.
- “Ways to Meditate on the Scriptures—Part 2”—Session 2.

Scripture Memory

- The TMS in Book 3—Session 1.
- Memorizing at least six verses on the gospel—Sessions 2-7.
- Continue the normal verse review pattern—Sessions 2-11.

Evangelism

- “Openly Identifying with Christ”—Session 1.
- Memorizing at least six verses on the gospel—Sessions 2-7.
- Tell “My Story” with or without notes—various sessions.
- “Relationship Evangelism Bible Study”—Session 4.
- “The Bridge Illustration”—Session 7.
- Practice giving “The Bridge”—various sessions.

Priorities

- “Verse Analysis of Matthew 6:33”—Session 9.
- “Priorities-Part 1”—Session 9.
- “Priorities-Part 2”—Session 10.

Quiet Time

- Sharing quiet time highlights—Sessions 2-11.

Prayer

- A regular activity—all sessions.

Preparing to Lead Book 3

As you prepare to lead Book 3, think back on what worked, what didn't work, and what could have been done better in Books 1 and 2. Learn from your experiences. Continue using the methods that have been effective with your group.

Here are things to remember as you lead Book 3, *Bearing Fruit in God's Family*.

1. The **goal** of *The 2:7 Series* is to produce disciples who walk with God and effectively minister to others.
2. Watch for signs of **fatigue and stagnation**. Your people have worked faithfully for several months. In Book 3 they may show signs of tiring—especially men and single-parent women. They feel the pressure of preparation time as well as their work, church and family commitments.
3. How are your group members **relating** to each other? By now they have probably developed warm friendships among themselves. Group members often initiate fellowship and care for one another.
4. How is your own presentation of *The **Bridge** Illustration*? Can you give them a good model to follow?
5. Are you avoiding the trap of letting your preparation and study time replace your **quiet time**? Your preparation is necessary, but be careful to maintain your own personal relationship with God.
6. The material on **priorities** (Sessions 9-10) is extensive and packed with important principles and application. Before beginning this material, get a total picture of what you are attempting to do. Don't view it as two separate lessons, but rather as one entity. Prepare this subject as a package.
7. Maintain a **tentative schedule** of when your group members will be giving their "My Story" in less than four minutes with or without notes.
- 8.

The Format for Session 1-11 in this Leader Guide

For Sessions 1-11 you will find:

1. The specific goals you want to accomplish during each session.
2. Detailed instructions on how to lead each segment on the outline (at the beginning of each session).
3. Occasional reminders designed to prod your memory on what to be planning or watching for as you progress through the course.

NOTE: Most 2:7 groups plan to meet for two hours each week. They spend 1½ hours on the lessons and allow 30 minutes for conversation and informal fellowship. Groups have 30 minutes of fellowship and light refreshments before or after the lesson. Other groups have 15 minutes both before and after class. Do what is best for your situation.

Graduation Plans

It is a significant milestone for the people in your group to complete all three courses in *The 2:7 Series*! Plan a graduation at the end of Book 3, “Bearing Fruit in God’s Family.” It is an opportunity to recognize work well done. It can be a significant encouragement and motivation to your people, as well as a fun and uplifting event.

You can ask your group what they would like to do when you are about half way through Book 3. You can organize a surprise graduation and simply ask them to reserve a certain block of time on their calendar. Be creative and enthusiastic.

Possible graduation activities:

1. Have a potluck dinner together.
2. You and/or your pastor recognize them in a church service or key Sunday school class (This is a good way to motivate and recruit other people for this type of training!).
3. Give them each a small gift like a book on walking with God or other practical topic.

The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul...— Proverbs 13:19 (KJV)

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 five Bible study group discussions.

Usually each of the 11 sessions in *Bearing Fruit 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 3, 5, 6, 8 and 11—will lead a Bible study discussion as well as facilitating the other lesson activities. Each time you prepare to lead, you will find it helpful to review the suggestions in this section.

2:7 Group Member Preparation

A key ingredient to stimulating and beneficial Bible study discussions is for each member in the group to have his/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 with an incomplete lesson, don't ignore them or give words or 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 feel rejected. At the beginning of the discussion you might assign such a person one or two questions they can prepare and be ready to share when you get to that part of the lesson. To graduate from this three-book training series a person needs to have filled in all of the blank lines in the Bible studies. So accountability will catch up to them. Stay positive.

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 (even if you have been through this material several times). You want correct, practical answers but without becoming academic and theoretical. When you get excited about the topic of a study, you are well on your way to being an energetic 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? Think through and plan in advance. This makes 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 want to remain flexible and be willing to make adjustments if needed.

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 without an appropriate passage of Scripture. Mostly, this problem is 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 homework. Each week concentrate on 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 other people and it creates an informal, warm atmosphere. The group leader is thought of as a peer because he/she is not seated in a prominent place.

2. *Don't dominate.* As leader, you are both a facilitator and a participant in the group. Talk less than those in the group. As the facilitator you give direction and ask

questions. As a participant you share your insights and written 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 you are able to answer everything. 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 recruit a volunteer to take a difficult question to the pastor or an associate pastor. The volunteer comes back to the group with an answer.

4. *Work together.* Your role as group leader is not a teaching responsibility, just as a group member's role is not to sit, listen, and take notes. All of you in the group work together finding answers and clarifying issues.

5. *Too talkative.* You may soon find that one or two people in your group 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 often takes a pause before (name) and (name) will talk. Try to share only your best thoughts in the group. Thank you for your help with this!"

6. *Too quiet.* When you direct a question to the group, give quiet people eye contact. Sometimes ask one of your less vocal people to read a quotation or answer a specific question. Gradually they become more comfortable talking. *Bearing Fruit in God's Family* is designed to build confidence and enable people to participate with a growing confidence. Quoting verses and working on *My Completion Record* (in groups of two or three) each week also helps people feel more secure.

7. *Acknowledge answers.* Thank people when they participate. Thank them for reading a paragraph or answering a question. This is particularly important for those quieter ones. 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 model good group leader skills, people will remember how you did it and one day will be effective leaders with their own group.

8. *Ask the group.* Usually you address your questions to the group, not to any 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.

9. *Get several answers.* After one person has given an answer to a Bible study question, you 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 complex question can be answered by three or four people. “Think about” and “application” questions might be answered by half of the group—or more if you wish. Ask people to read their answers exactly the way they have written them in the book. This keeps things moving. After they have read their written answer they might express an additional ad lib sentence or two for clarification.

10. *Application and Summary questions.* In the *Bearing Fruit in God’s Family* Bible studies you find a sprinkling of application and summary questions. As you discuss the answer to these questions, give them priority. You may consider some questions important enough to ask several to give their answer. For some questions you may ask every person in your group to share their answer.

This is not a comprehensive list—but these are a few examples:

- Page 31, question 5e (application question)
- Page 34, question 10 (application question)
- Page 44, question 1a (summary question)
- Page 46, question 4 (summary question)
- Page 48, question 10 (summary question)
- Page 48, question 13 (application question)
- Page 56, question 9c (application question)

The “Think About” Questions

You have observed the “Think About” question at the beginning of each of the Bible studies. Remind 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 their mind moving toward the Bible study topic. You can ask several to answer the “Think About” question before you move into discussing the actual Bible study content. This pulls people’s minds away from their busy day into the subject at hand.

You notice there is no correct or “school answer” to “Think About” questions. They stimulate thinking and promote discussion.

How to Lead the Bible Study Discussion

In the five Bible studies, your goal is to have every question answered by at least one person. When an answer is simple and straightforward, you 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, you probably will 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 go through the questions in order.

As you go around the circle, also ask people to 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.

People are advanced enough by Book 3 that you don't have to "lead them by the hand." You will find yourself more frequently using the second method below.

2. Question-by-question—sharing at random. In this method you 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 13 above).

In this leader guide for Sessions 3-5, 10, and 11 you are given some additional Bible study discussion questions. Use them sparingly. As you know, you cannot ask one of these "understanding questions" until after someone in the group has shared an answer to the question for which you have an additional discussion question. You can effectively lead the discussions by only using these two methods—even without using the "understanding questions."

You will appreciate the discussions during the Bible studies in "*Bearing Fruit in God's Family*." Enjoy!

Session 1

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 1

- To review the highlights of Book 2 and preview Book 3.
- To briefly discuss meditation and practice two methods for meditating on Scripture.
- To encourage pre-evangelism and evangelism by:
 - a. Discussing “Openly Identifying with Christ.”
 - b. Discussing current use of their *Evangelism Prayer List*.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. “Reviewing the Goals of Book 2 in *The 2:7 Series*” (pages 9-10).

Go around the circle and have this segment read aloud. The intent is to help people rejoice in what they have completed. Reading this gives them a sense of accomplishment and motivates them to continue to do well. Weekly consistency accumulates into a completed course and many personal benefits.

3. Preview Book 3.

Convey a sense of excitement as you lead the group in looking over *My Completion Record* on pages 7-8. Instead of mentioning possible difficulties, focus on benefits for them as they successfully complete these requirements.

Point out that the memory verses are valuable for use in ministry. These are key gospel verses! For 14 consecutive days they need to review the “*Live The New Life*” verses they memorized during Book 2. Strongly encourage them to review all of their memory verses five out of seven days every week. Field experience has shown that students who do this will excel in scripture memory. They will not only know the verses expertly, but their life and ministry will be enriched by the verses as well. You, the group leader, want to set the pace in verse review! You need to be able to tell them your successes in scripture memory review, and ways you have overcome obstacles.

Most weeks there is time for the group to share highlights from their quiet times. Sometime during the course each person needs to check off 14 consecutive quiet times on *My Reading Highlights* – and then get it signed off on *My Completion Record*.

The several evangelism requirements relate to a skill, knowledge, or an activity. “Openly Identifying with Christ” (page 18) gives practical suggestions on how one might fulfill the “Identified with Christ” requirement. If you can, share a personal example of how you recently did this.

When any Bible study has all the answers filled in it is complete and can be signed off. They can tell their “MY Story” either with or without outline notes. But encourage them during this course to get to where they don’t need notes. Someone needs to time each testimony. The timer should give a signal (tap the table three times or hold up three fingers) when the three minute mark is reached. This helps the person finish under the four-minute target.

The requirement to pray over one’s *Evangelism Prayer List* for seven consecutive days is an exercise designed to increase consistency. A student may keep track of this on his/her *My Reading Highlights* (by checking the small square for each day) or by using any other record-keeping method.

There are three requirements to sign off regarding *The Bridge Illustration*.

- *Outline*: The person draws out the illustration and knows where the verses go. It is not necessary to quote the verses or ask the questions as they draw the illustration on paper. They simply get all of the ingredients on paper without help from someone else.
- *Lecture presentation 1*: The person presents *The Bridge Illustration* to someone in the class in lecture form without asking questions. This means drawing the illustration step by step and explaining in logical sequence how *The Bridge Illustration* explains the gospel. The students will want to practice several times at home before making this presentation.
- *Lecture presentation 2*: This is done in the same way that “lecture presentation 1” was done. The intent is that the second presentation will be done more skillfully. The students still need to practice at home before making this presentation.

The Bible studies cover excellent, practical subjects. As the group leader, you are the Bible study leader every week. Prepare prayerfully and carefully. Those in your group come to class each time with their Bible study completed. Don’t be vindictive if one or two people don’t have a completed study. They need to have a written answer for every question in a Bible study before it can be signed off. Encourage the students to start work on the Bible study early in the week so the Holy Spirit can speak to their hearts through it. Doing preparation at the last minute takes the joy out of both the preparation and the discussion time.

There are several excellent short projects in this course listed under “Other.” These are high impact, practical subjects. Each of these items can be signed off on *My Completion Record* after the segment has been studied and all of the questions answered.

One delightful task as a 2:7 group leader is to verify when everything has been signed off on each *My Completion Record*. You then sign off the “Leader’s Check,” confirming the person’s graduation from Book 3 in *The 2:7 Series*.

4. Survey “**Scripture Memory Guide—Week One**” (page 10).

Have group members read pages 10 and 11 aloud. Take your usual turn as the group reads around the circle. Make a brief comment after each section has been read aloud. Remind your group that each of the first six weeks they will be memorizing a verse. **For the remaining weeks they review these verses at the beginning of each session.** It is particularly important for people to give special attention to the scripture memory assignments in the early weeks.

5. **The TMS in Book 3** (pages 11-13).

Have the group read these pages aloud by continuing to read around the circle. Remind the students that they want review daily their memory verses from the previous two courses as well as any verses they have learned in Book 3. If the verses are neglected, recall can fade. It is wise to regularly review their verses so they don’t lose their investment. It keeps the verses sharp and available for the Holy Spirit to use in their life and in their ministry to others.

6. **Do the group exercise “Ways to Meditate on Scriptures—Part 1”** (pages 14-18).

There are six methods for meditating on Scripture presented in Book 3. Only the first two methods are done this week. At home the students complete an exercise for each of the other four methods. That work is discussed by the group the next week.

Have the verses and introductory material read aloud (page 14). Reflect together on the value of meditation, and the seeming absence of it in our busy lives. Be sure the term meditation is understood before you explain how to meditate. Ask for their reactions to what this introductory material says.

Have them read aloud **1—Paraphrase** at the top of page 15 and **2-Questions** at the bottom of page 16. Explain that as soon as you read these two segments, they do the two exercises on their own. (Don’t have the translations of the verses read aloud. They refer to them as they write the two exercises). After the information for these two methods has been read, briefly answer their questions. Then give them about 10 minutes to paraphrase 2 Timothy 3:16 and to jot down questions and answers for Hebrews 10:24-25.

When you continue as a group, ask several to share their paraphrase. Ask how this method of meditation on the passage spoke to them. How well did it get them into the content of the verse?

Then ask several to share some of their questions and answers from the second exercise. Again ask how well this method pulled them into the content of the passage. It may need to be clarified that, in real life, it is often helpful to have identified a specific question even though no immediate answer is available. There are not always instant answers to questions, problems, and difficulties in life.

Next, ask someone to read “*Meditation Exercises in Session 2*” on page 18. Be sure they are clear about what they will do in each of these exercises before next week. Glance over pages 22-24, where they apply meditation methods 3, 4, 5, and 6.

7. Discuss current use of the *Evangelism Prayer List*.

It has been said, “People don’t do what you expect; they do what you inspect.” Encourage your people to pray for their evangelism prospects—to keep these people in mind. Encourage them to arrange time with the people on their list. They want to deepen their friendships with these people.

How frequently have they prayed for these people? Have they added or subtracted people from their list? How has the list helped? What have they learned about themselves by using this list? What are they learning about the kind of people they are best suited to reach? How are they finding time for these people?

People in your group will be selecting one or two people from their *Evangelism Prayer List* with whom they think they would feel comfortable openly identifying with Christ. Some will already have done this. The next thing on the class schedule is to discuss what this will entail during this course.

8. Read and discuss “Openly Identifying with Christ” (pages 18-19). Ask for this page to be read aloud and briefly discuss its content.

9. Read the “Assignment for Session 2” (page 20). Ask someone to read the assignment aloud. In Session 2 there is an opportunity for some to share their “My Story” (with or without outline notes) in under four minutes. This becomes part of several sessions. Ask which one or two people would like to do theirs next week, and possibly assign some of the people beyond next week.

10. Close the session in prayer.

Are you praying for each person in your group? What are you asking God to do for them? (See Mark 10:51a: “‘What do you want me to do for you?’ Jesus asked him.”) Make sure you allow adequate time in each session for a little conversational prayer.

Session 2

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 2

- To help the group experience the benefits of four more methods for meditating on Scripture.
- To motivate those in your group to thoughtfully prepare their Bible studies during the course.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote their verses on “All Have Sinned”: Romans 3:23 and Isaiah 53:6 (recommended but optional).

Don't forget the importance of encouragement and praise during verse review. Get Book 3 off to a positive start. Point out the usefulness of the *Proclaim Christ* verses for sharing the gospel. Also point out that later in the course they will be using these verses to illustrate the gospel.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

This is the first chance to share quiet time thoughts since Session 10 in Book 2. Make the most of this time together in the Word. Are most people sharing? Are you thanking them and commenting as various people contribute their thoughts?

4. Discuss “Ways to Meditate on Scripture—Part 2” (pages 22-24).

Let everyone share responses to the exercises on these pages. Point out that while six methods have been presented, each person will probably find one or two methods more useful than the others.

Ask group members to tell which methods they liked best and why. Ask them what ideas they have for incorporating these methods of meditation into their quiet time, Bible study, or other activities.

5. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

Put this week's two or three presenters at ease. You want them to relax and enjoy telling their salvation story. It will be timed, but that is for their benefit so they can sense what four minutes feels like. If a testimony runs too long, something needs to be deleted from it. If it is less than 2 ½ minutes in length, something should be added to it.

Get a volunteer timer each week for the “My Story” presentations. The timer should signal the presenter at the three minute mark by holding up three fingers or tapping the table three times. This helps the presenter to finish in under four minutes.

Those who go over four minutes or under 2 ½ minutes will have another opportunity to present. It is not uncommon for people to need two or three attempts in order to hit the 2 ½ – 4 minute window. Ask for one or two volunteers from the group to tell their “My Story” next session, unless assignments were made earlier.

6. Read “Introduction to Bible Study—Book 3” (pages 24-25).

Have several people assist in reading this segment aloud. A brief discussion is appropriate, or simply answer any questions the students may have. Sometimes two or three in the group have comments and then you can continue on.

7. Read the “Assignment for Session 3” (page 25).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 3. Encourage your people to enjoy the course and avoid unnecessary stress by:

- a. Staying current and sharp on their memory verses.
- b. Completing their Bible study early in the week between classes.

8. Close the session in prayer.

You may suggest for this prayer time that they focus on what could keep each person in the group from getting the most out of Book 3—how Satan might attack.

Session 3

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 3

- To emphasize the benefits of a fruitful Christian life and the prerequisites for living such a life.
- To give ongoing affirmation and encouragement to members of the group as they continue to work at completing their course requirements.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote verses on “Sin’s Penalty”: Romans 6:23 and Hebrews 9:27 (recommended but optional).

Remember that the objective of scripture memory is not only to be able to quote the verses, but to also understand, apply and use them. From time to time, ask if they have been able to use their memory verses in their own life or in ministering to others.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

Most weeks you share something from one of your quiet times. During the week think about what you might share. Be ready with a quiet time thought that is **simple** and **uplifting**. You may be a more mature Christian than others in your group. Some people are discouraged by complicated, theological explanations. This also heads off competition of who can share the deepest, most wonderful insights from their quiet times. And everyone benefits from hearing something encouraging and uplifting. God is speaking to us individually through our quiet times. So on any week there is a broad spectrum of scriptural insights shared by the group.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

Each week encourage and affirm those who tell their salvation story. There is trauma in testimony preparation and sharing.

5. Discuss the Bible study, “The Call to Fruitful Living” (pages 28-35).

Be thorough in your preparation. First, answer the questions for your own growth and benefit. Then, prepare to lead.

Begin by asking someone to read the introductory paragraph on page 28.

Next, let the group “brain storm” some possible answers to the “Think About” question. Allow several to share. If the answers are brief, a person could share more than once. Spend three or four minutes on this question. Remember that there is a “Think About” question at the beginning of every Bible study. Its purpose is to get the members of the group talking and to draw their minds into the topic at hand.

Here are additional questions you might ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. Ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for “The Call to Fruitful Living”:

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------|--|
| Question 2 | John 15:8 | What does it mean to “bear much fruit”? |
| Question 3 | Galatians 5:22-23 | What relationship do you see between any two of these qualities? |
| Question 4 | 1 Peter 2:12 | What are some examples of “good deeds”? |

- Question 4 Which of these three areas do you think is the most important?
- Question 6 In what way do you think acquiring wisdom differs from acquiring knowledge?
- Question 8 Philippians 3:4-14 How would you define “attitude”?

Ask for each of the four summaries to be read aloud (pages 34-35). Usually just read around the circle with a different person answering each of the summaries. Occasionally, another person wants to briefly comment on a summary after it is read. This should not lead to a lengthy discussion of each summary. Keep it brief.

6. Read the “Assignment for Session 4” (page 35).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 4. Commend them for persevering. They have completed Books 1 and 2 in *The 2.7 Series* and are well into this third and final course!

7. Have a short period of group prayer.

Perhaps focus on non-Christians who are listed on each person’s *Evangelism Prayer List*. You can have them pray by verse review groups, in groups of two or three, in two groups, or the whole group together. It is easy for each individual to pray for someone on his/her list. It takes too much time to share requests and then pray for each other’s evangelism prospects. They pray for their own prospects.

Session 4

Book 3

GOAL FOR SESSION 4

- To clarify that both proclaiming the gospel and affirming the gospel are essential elements in the process of evangelism.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote their verses on “Christ Paid the Penalty”: Romans 5:8 and I Peter 3:18 (recommended but optional). Most people have now memorized half of the verses they will memorize during Book 3.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

Keep in mind those who have been sharing in previous weeks and those who haven't shared much. You may still need to call on the quiet ones by name if they don't volunteer. Something like: "Chris, what could you share with us from your reading?" or "Pat, we'd love to hear one of yours." Observe whether people share from *My Reading Highlights* or directly from their Bible. Some weeks limit sharing to only what they have written on their *My Reading Highlights*. After reading a *My Reading Highlights* entry, they may briefly elaborate on what they read.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their "My Story" with or without notes.

Thank each one who shares. The timer person gives them a warning at three minutes to help them finish in under four minutes. Do you have volunteers to give their testimony next week?

5. Discuss the "Relationship Evangelism Bible Study" (pages 38-41).

This important Bible study both instructs and motivates. You will find that all three sections provide interesting and significant discussion material. Start by asking someone to read the paragraph under "Two Key Ingredients" on page 38.

You might lead the study section by section rather than question by question. Ask them what they observed or learned out of "Proclaiming the Gospel." People share at random. Their sharing skips around in that section. (All of the questions don't have to be answered before you move to the next section—it is at your discretion). Then, they share at random in "Affirming the Gospel." Then handle "The Process of Relationship Evangelism" in the same way.

Here are additional questions you can ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. (You are asking a question about their answer). Always ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for the "Relationship Evangelism Bible Study":

Question 1 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 How would you define "reconciliation"?

Question 2 Mark 16:15 Would you call the U.S. and Canada "mission fields"? Why or why not?

Question 7 To what degree are we limited to being only able to minister to people similar to us in background and station in life?

Question 7 What is another word for "affirming"?

6. Read the “Assignment for Session 5” (page 41).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 5.

7. Close the session in prayer.

Ask several to pray conversationally about the material in the Bible study. Remind them that we want to be praying for one another during the week.

Session 5

Book 3

GOAL FOR SESSION 5

- To clarify what genuine love is and how important it is for Christians to demonstrate it in and through their lives.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote their verses on “Salvation Not by Works”: Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:5 (recommended but optional).

Get a reading of how well the group members are doing in getting their scripture memory verses signed off on *My Completion Record*. Compliment them for what they have done. Remind them to keep getting things signed off on *My Completion Record*.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

Ask what Bible books they have most enjoyed reading and why. How much do they feel the quiet time has become a part of their life? What have they been learning about the value of the quiet time?

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

Ask if anyone has had an opportunity to share their testimony with someone outside of this 2:7 group. If so, let them tell about it.

Have someone time the testimonies and give a three-minute warning. Determine which people have not completed the testimony requirement for this course. Who will be sharing their “My Story” in Session 6?

5. Discuss the Bible study, “Love in Action” (pages 44-49).

Some people feel they know this subject well already. Pray and prepare so this discussion is interesting and encouraging. The passages of Scripture in this study can become helpful for years to come.

Here are additional questions you can ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. (You are asking a question about their answer). Ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for the “Love in Action”:

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| Question 3 | 1 John 4:8-21 | What is the difference between saying “God is love” and saying “love is God?” |
| Question 3 | 1 John 4:8 | What are some things God is other than love? |
| Question 5 | John 13:34-35 | Must we <i>like</i> a person before we can <i>love</i> that person? |
| Question 6 | | What do you feel is the relationship between dependence on God and humility? |
| Question 8 | Romans 12:3 | How is it that thinking too little of oneself is also pride? |
| Question 11 | Proverbs 12:25 | How does this differ from flattery? |

Ask for each of the four summaries to be read aloud (page 49). Usually just read around the circle with a different person answering each of the summaries. Sometimes one or two people want to briefly comment on a summary after it is read. This should not lead to a lengthy discussion of each summary. Keep it brief.

6. Read the “Assignment for Session 6” (page 50).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 6. The Bible study, “Purity of Life,” is excellent, but is longer than some of the others. Everyone will want to start early—to answer a few Bible study questions each day.

7. Close the session in prayer.

Have a brief time of conversational prayer. Ask them to focus prayer on the children and close relatives of those in the group.

Session 6**Book 3****GOAL FOR SESSION 6**

- To emphasize—from the Bible study—the imperative of purity in the life of a Christian.

Reminders:

This is a good point in the course to check yourself on some of these items:

- Who am I serving?
- Why am I leading this group?
- Why are these people taking the course?
- Do I really know my group members personally?
- Am I familiar with the goal for each session?
- What needs and expectations does each group member have?
- What do I want to see happen in the lives of those in my group?
- How much social time am I spending to build relationships among those of us in the group?
- What is the quantity and quality of the time I spend praying for my 2:7 group members?

Rarely can a group facilitator do all these things well. The list is a reminder. We want to do well what we can do well. We trust the grace of God for the rest.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote their verses on “Must Receive Christ”: John 1:12 and Romans 10:9-10 (recommended but optional).

Ask the group how well they are doing in reviewing their verse cards from five to seven days each week. Tell them how much doing this has meant to you. Share your occasional failures as well.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

You may want to check to see how many in the group have had 14 consecutive quiet times and have it signed off. Be sure you have met this requirement as well.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

Have each one timed and at the three minute mark the timer gives a signal so the person can finish up in under four minutes.

What opportunities have some in the group had to share their salvation story?

5. Discuss the Bible study, “Purity of Life” (pages 52-58).

Keep in mind that during the quiet time we read for the enjoyment and refreshment of the passage. We look more for what impresses us than what Scripture specifically teaches in the passage.

In Bible study, however, we are more exacting in our handling of Scripture. Answers to Bible study questions should not state or imply concepts that are not expressed in the passage. Promote exactness in the group’s answers to Bible study questions without becoming perfectionistic.

Here are additional questions you can ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. (You are asking a question about their answer). Ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Purity of Life”:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|---|
| Question 1 | 1 Peter 1:15-16 | How is it that some non-Christians are able to live very moral and upright lives? |
| Question 2 | 2 Corinthians 7: 1 | What does the word “cleanse” or “purify” mean to you? What does it imply? |
| Question 3 | Colossians 1:21-23 | What are some words or phrases that mean the same thing as “holiness?” |
| Question 6 | | Are there any other excuses you can think of that you have heard someone make? |
| Question 10 | | Which of these is the most helpful to you personally? |

Ask for each of the four summaries to be read aloud (page 58). Usually just read around the circle with a different person answering each of the summaries. Sometimes one or two people want to briefly comment on a summary after it is read. This should not lead to a lengthy discussion of each summary. Keep it brief.

6. Read the “Assignment for Session 7” (page 58).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 7.

Remind them of the importance of carefully reading and marking the information about *The Bridge Illustration* (pages 60-70).

7. Close the session in prayer.

We sometimes fail to recognize—or admit to others—periods of dryness, or struggles in our walk with Christ. A closed group like this often develops a depth of honesty and fellowship where things can be said freely that we wouldn’t share with Christians who are casual friends. Hopefully our group gradually becomes better at receiving counsel, encouragement, and help from one another (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Close this session by allowing several to share a personal need or struggle if they wish. People can pray for themselves without first sharing the concern with the group. Pray conversationally.

Session 7

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 7

- To help the students become familiar with the contents of *The Bridge Illustration* as well as why and how it can be used effectively.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the groups they quote their verses on “Assurance of Salvation”: 1 John 5:13 and John 5:24 (recommended but optional).

After everyone returns to the group, you might ask how many of them have all of their verses signed off, including the verse(s) for this week.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

Ask them to primarily share what they have written on *My Reading Highlights*.

Encourage them to continue to **respond back to God in prayer** during their quiet times. They learned this back in *Growing Strong in God’s Family*, but it is still an important factor in keeping the quiet time vital.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

Be alert to one or two things in each testimony that you can comment on positively as an example for others. Encourage a spirit of gratitude for all God has done for each of us through Christ.

5. Discuss *The Bridge Illustration* (pages 60-70).

The testimony was described as a door-opener. Now, with *The Bridge Illustration*, your group learns a tool for clearly explaining the gospel. Go over the explanation of “The Bridge” in detail. Briefly handle questions.

Plan to draw and present “The Bridge” so the group can see how it should be done. (Perhaps on a white board or large pad on an easel). Come prepared to make a sterling presentation! You might practice in advance with someone in the group so the two of you can role play a “Bridge” presentation in front of the group. (Or do it alone—that’s fine.) Explain “The Bridge” as you draw it out. You may or may not choose to use the questions.

During Book 3 every group member presents “The Bridge” at three levels of proficiency:

- (1) Just the outline (line drawing, topics, and verse references)
- (2) Lecture presentation 1 (explain it as you draw it out)
- (3) Lecture presentation 2 (explain it as you draw it out)

Book 3 does not required people to learn the questions that go along with drawing the illustration. Some start learning the questions during this course. Many make learning the questions a goal for after completing Book 3.

6. Read the “Assignment for Session 8” (page 70).

Ask someone to read the assignment for Session 8.

They need to practice the bridge outline several times before Session 8. What they draw will look like the graphic on page 65. The outline includes the bridge, the main points, and the verse references. Below is the sequence of the verse topics which you also see on page 61 in Book 3:

- **God’s Purpose** - Abundant Life John 10:10
- Eternal Life John 3:16
- **Our Problem** - All Have Sinned: Rom. 3:23; Isaiah 53:6
- Sin’s Penalty: Heb. 9:27; Rom. 6:23
- **God’s Remedy** - Christ Paid the Penalty: Rom. 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18
- Salvation Not by Works: Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
- **Our Response** - Must Receive Christ: John 1: 12; Rom. 10:9-10
- Assurance of Salvation: John 5:24; 1 John 5:13

7. Close the session in prayer.

Pray for Christians in the U.S. and other countries who are taking *The 2:7 Series* or other discipleship training. Pray that their lives and ministry skills will be sharpened and that God will work greatly through them for years to come!

Session 8

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 8

- That the group members will each successfully draw the outline of *The Bridge Illustration* from memory.
- To strengthen the group members' commitment to personal integrity.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

They want to quote all the verses memorized in Book 3 and get anything signed that they can on their *My Completion Record*.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts from *My Reading Highlights*.

You want to continue to share your own excitement about reading the Bible and responding back to God in prayer. Attitudes and habits are “caught” as much as they are taught. Which meditation methods are you finding most helpful? Share motivating discoveries from your quiet times when you think the topic is appropriate for the group.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

It is possible that by this time every person in your group has completed his/her “My Story” requirement. Those who have not completed it need to finish this work by Session 9 or 10.

5. Discuss the progress you are making with non-Christians.

You might ask, “How many are signed off for ‘Identified with Christ in a relating activity?’” Those in your group need to complete this activity in the next week or two so it is not left until the very end of the course.

What other things are happening in their friendships with non-Christians? Who has been able to share his/her “My Story” with a non-Christian?

Are friendships deepening with one or two non-Christians? Has anyone come to Christ? This brief discussion motivates everyone.

6. Break into groups of two and take turns presenting *The Bridge Illustration* outline.

Have a stack of 8 ½ by 11 plain bond paper on hand. You may want to have a few gel pens or ballpoint pens as well—be prepared.

There is time for each person to draw the outline twice. The two people take turns drawing. They don't need to talk through *The Bridge Illustration*—just sketch it out. They will sharpen their skill and be an encouragement one another as they work through this exercise.

7. Discuss the Bible study, “Integrity in Living” (pages 71-75). By now your group members are becoming skilled at talking about their Bible studies. You are both a leader and a participant in the group. Share from time to time, but mostly draw out the others and “direct traffic.”

Here are additional questions you can ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. (You are asking a question about their answer). Ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Integrity in Living”:

- | | | |
|------------|------------------|--|
| Question 3 | 1 Samuel 15:1-23 | What does it mean to “rationalize?” |
| Question 3 | 1 Samuel 15:1-23 | Do you think Saul was rationalizing in this incident or was he doing something else? |
| Question 7 | Psalms 51:1-5 | Are these qualities you have listed merely ideals or can a person really live this way? |
| Question 9 | | How much do you think a person’s conscience can be altered as a child? How much do you think it can be altered as an adult? |

Ask for each of the four summaries to be read aloud (page 75). Usually just read around the circle with a different person answering each of the summaries. Sometimes one or two people want to briefly comment on a summary after it is read. This should not lead to a lengthy discussion of each summary. Keep it brief.

8. Read the “Assignment for Session 9” (page 76).

Ask someone to read “Assignment for Session 9.”

There is quite a bit of homework to be done for Session 9. They complete “Verse Analysis of Matthew 6:33” and study “Priorities—Part 1.” These are interesting subjects, but require some thoughtful preparation.

People in your group need to come prepared to do “Lecture Presentation 1” for *The Bridge Illustration*. They each make a complete presentation to another person in the group—without asking the questions. They need to practice this “lecture” several times—**starting by referring to some notes and then getting away from using those notes.**

9. Close the session in prayer.

Have a time of brief conversational prayer. Pray for the individuals who have already heard or will yet be hearing members of the group “Identify with Christ.”

Session 9

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 9

- To understand the meaning and implications of Matthew 6:33.
- To learn several principles and guidelines for applying priorities.
- That the group members will each successfully do a lecture presentation of *The Bridge Illustration* from memory.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In the verse review groups they quote all the verses memorized in Book 3 and get anything signed that they can on their *My Completion Record*.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts.

After you have had a time of sharing, ask each one to describe his/her quiet time routine: where, when, average time spent, and how they do it? This can stimulate your group members as they hear how others spend their time. Ask each person to share which part of their quiet time is most meaningful to them.

4. Break into groups of two and take turns doing “Lecture Presentation 1” for *The Bridge Illustration*.

Each person needs to make the complete presentation—explaining it as they draw it out. If there is time, some can present it a second time. This practice is valuable!

After you are all back together, ask how it went. Are some of them beginning to feel comfortable with the contents of *The Bridge Illustration*? What comes easy? What seems to be difficult? **Practice, practice, practice is the key to proficiency.** Only the Holy Spirit can impact a life, but our skill in presenting *The Bridge Illustration* facilitates the communication of the gospel. The Holy Spirit then uses that truth that a person clearly understands. Group members can complete this requirement **outside of class** by meeting together in twos or threes and explaining *The Bridge Illustration* to one another.

5. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

It is possible that by this time every person in your group has completed his or her “My Story” requirement. We are getting down to the last two opportunities for group members to complete this requirement. Everyone should have this done—at the latest in Session 10.

6. Discuss “Verse Analysis of Matthew 6:33” (pages 77-80).

This verse analysis exercise reminds people of the meditation techniques discussed earlier. Basically this is a meditation exercise. In this case, a single verse is approached from different angles to grasp its meaning and application more completely.

Go over the parts of the exercise much as you would a Bible study lesson. Ask the group members to share their answers—section by section. Plan to get participation from everyone.

A verse analysis can be done with any verse. It can be used for personal study or with a group.

Have several volunteers read their paraphrase of the verse. In what ways do some of them more clearly understand the verse because of their paraphrase work? Ask several people to share how they chose to summarize the context surrounding Matthew 6:33.

Ask other people to take one of the four cross-references and read the thought they wrote down. If someone has another cross-reference that comes to mind, everyone may want to write that reference in the margin.

In Bible study, problems can be categorized as “real” or “possible.” A “real” problem is one for which you do not personally have an answer. A “possible” problem is one for which you have an answer, but you know that younger Christians may not.

Ask your people to volunteer at random to read their application. If someone feels their application is too personal they can opt out of the sharing.

7. Discuss “Priorities—Part 1” (pages 80-84).

Have the opening paragraphs on page 80 read aloud. Work through the rest of the exercise the same way that you would discuss a Bible study. Don’t rush, but move along. There is a lot to cover here.

When you discuss “Guidelines for Setting and Applying Priorities” (pages 82-84), have the bold statements read aloud (such as “Make responsible choices”)—then ask for a couple comments from the group on each of these nine items. Ask someone to read the “Conclusion” (page 84).

8. Read “Assignment for Session 10” (page 84).

Ask someone to read the “Assignment for Session 10.”

Assignments Lecture Presentations 1 and 2 for *The Bridge Illustration* may be completed **outside of class** if needed. Other *My Completion Record* signing may be done outside of class as well.

In Session 10 there will be an extended time for sharing quiet time thoughts. Each person will be able to share two or three of his/her best quiet time thoughts from the last week or two. **There are two weeks left for people to get everything signed off on *My Completion Record*.** Now is the time for the final push!

9. Close the session in prayer.

Have a time of brief conversational prayer related to priorities.

GOALS FOR SESSION 10

- To learn additional principles and guidelines for applying priorities.
- To enjoy an extended time for sharing quiet time thoughts.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

They quote their Book 3 verses and get anything signed that they can on their *My Completion Record*.

3. Share some quiet time thoughts from *My Reading Highlights*.

This is an extended time for sharing quiet time thoughts. People may share more than once. There is adequate time, but keep the sharing moving. You should read from your *My Reading Highlights* at least once and perhaps more.

4. Listen to two or three group members tell their “My Story” with or without notes.

This is the last classroom opportunity to fulfill this requirement.

5. Break into groups of two and take turns doing “Lecture Presentation 2” for *The Bridge Illustration*.

Each person makes the complete presentation—explaining it as they draw it out. If there is time, some of them may want to present it a second time. The more practice people get, the more proficient they become.

After you are all back together, ask how it went. How much more comfortable were they in this presentation? What other comments do they have about this second presentation?

Practice, practice, practice is the key to proficiency. Only the Holy Spirit can impact a life, but our skill in presenting *The Bridge Illustration* facilitates the communication of the gospel. The Holy Spirit then uses that truth that a person clearly understands. Group members can complete this requirement outside of a class session—by meeting together in twos or threes and explaining *The Bridge Illustration* to one another.

6. Discuss “Priorities-Part 2” (pages 85-90).

This material **does not need to be read aloud**. Your people have read and marked it prior to coming to class. Read the title for each major heading and have the group comment on what impressed them from that section. Start with “The Priority of God” and continue on through. Ask for their comments about the diagrams as well.

7. Read the “Assignment for Session 11” (page 90).

Ask someone to read “Assignment for Session 11.”

8. Close the session in prayer.

It is always appropriate to focus on thanksgiving during a prayer time. Close this session with brief prayers of thankfulness, including gratitude to the Lord for all they have done during the three courses of *The 2:7 Series*. Put the focus on what God has done—what He has done among them—not focusing on the workbook material, but on the Lord.

Session 11

Book 3

GOALS FOR SESSION 11

- To emphasize the importance of Christian character and its relationship to adversity.
- That the group members might realize how much they have accomplished during the three courses of *The 2:7 Series*.

1. Open the session in prayer.

Pray yourself—or ask for someone to volunteer to pray—or ask someone by name to pray. Usually keep this brief.

2. Break into verse review groups.

In their small groups they get anything signed that they can on their *My Completion Record*. **You as the leader sign off “Graduated from Book 3.”** You can sign off some of these now and others at the end of Session 11. Commend everyone for their good work!

3. Share some quiet time thoughts from *My Reading Highlights*.

Reinforce the idea that the quiet time is the backbone of one’s walk with God. A practical goal for the quiet time is for it to become a natural part of our lifestyle.

4. Discuss the Bible study, “Character in Action” (pages 91-97).

Discussing the “Think About” question could go on and on. Use the question to get into the subject, but proceed on into the study.

Here are additional questions you might ask during the discussion. As you know, you only ask an additional question after someone has answered the original question. (You are asking a question about their answer). Ask an additional question to the whole group, not to an individual.

Additional Discussion Questions for “Character in Action”:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------|--|
| Question 2 | Romans 8:28 | To whom is Paul referring when he speaks of those who love God? |
| Question 3 | James 1:2-4, 12 | What do words like “persevere” and “endure” imply? |
| Question 9 | Ephesians 5:20 | When is it appropriate to not give thanks or “turn the other cheek,” but pursue justice? |

Ask for each of the four summaries to be read aloud (pages 96-97). Usually just read around the circle with a different person answering each of the summaries. Sometimes one or two people briefly comment on a summary after it is read. This should not lead to a lengthy discussion of each summary. Keep it brief.

5. Read aloud “Keep On Keeping On” (page 97)—and on through page 99.

Ask them to read these final comments aloud around the circle.

6. Close in prayer.

Often the highlight of this session is the concluding prayer time. Allow at least 15 minutes. Here you can reflect together on what has happened, what needs to be worked on, and what God holds for the future. Allow adequate time for individual and group feelings to be expressed through prayer. Don't rush this time.

Have you planned a graduation event? Are you giving certificates of completion? (You can download certificates of completion at www.2-7series.org). Are your graduates going to be acknowledged at a church service? Think through what is best for your group in your particular church.

Good job 2:7 group leader. May God multiply the results of your efforts across your city, your state and into other countries of the world!

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. — 1 Corinthians 15:58 (NLT)