

L E A D E R ' S G U I D E

The *Holy Life* Bible Study Series

GOD'S ROAD MAP
FOR US:

The Plan of Holiness

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BOOK 1

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Introduction

One of my favorite things about a DVD home movie is the special features section. It contains inside information from the movie director, writer, or actors. Often these key players give personal interviews; they present their perspectives on the film and provide new insights that can be found nowhere else.

That's what I hope to accomplish in this Leader's Guide. I want to give you a view of the Bible study series from my perspective. This leader's guide will offer emphasis on certain ideas and alternative teaching methods or insights that I was unable to include in the book because of length constraints.

How did this Bible study series come about? My book *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip* was published in 2001 by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City and was well received. Soon after it was released, people began to question me about ways to dig deeper into God's Word to make a biblical case for holiness. Even though I used numerous biblical references throughout the text of that book, the references were not presented in a systematic fashion. This Bible study series is my attempt to coach you, the reader, as you participate in a tour of God's Word that emphasizes holiness.

I make frequent reference to *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip* in this leader's guide, and I recommend you read the book before beginning this Bible study series. It contains important information that will enhance each weekly session. I will also occasionally reference other books of mine: *Coffee Shop Theology*, *More Coffee Shop Theology*, and *Dismantling the Myths*. These three books explain difficult theological concepts in everyday language and will be helpful to you if you come across particular points for which you would like further clarification.

It's my very strong conviction that the best way to renew interest in holiness in our churches is not to argue about it or discuss it logically in small groups but to encourage believers to go directly to God's Word and study the Bible for themselves. I've designed this study series to take Bible students systematically through the Word so that they can discover what God has to say on the subject.

I remember a Bible professor I had in seminary who said, "God has not called you young ministers to be His defense lawyers; He's called you to study and preach the Word." I believe that. My goal for this Bible study series is for you to pursue a systematic study of the Bible that will allow God and the Holy Spirit to teach and speak to you.

I make occasional references to extreme sports because living for God is a lot like participating in an extreme sport. It's intense and exciting and requires total commitment. I think you'll have a blast, and I believe you'll be amazed at what God will teach you through His Word.

Preparing to Teach

Class leader, keep the following guidelines in mind as you prepare to teach this Bible study series:

- Read each book in its entirety before you begin the group study.
- Read this leader's guide in its entirety to get a feel for the general direction of the book study.
- Think of any teaching resources you will need for each individual session, such as a whiteboard, chart paper, markers, overhead projector, 3 x 5 cards, Post-it notes, etc.
- Think of students in your class you need to contact ahead of time to secure their permission to use personal stories or to get them to share their personal testimonies.
- Outline each lesson plan in your own words or map it on your own paper so you will feel a sense of direction for each session.
- Pray for the direction of the Holy Spirit: (1) in the way you prepare, (2) in what you say in class, (3) in the way you respond to comments or questions by class members, (4) in the way you give time for the Spirit to speak to class members' hearts as the session progresses.

Using This Guide

This leader's guide is simply that—a guide. It suggests key points, lines of thought, discussion questions, personal reflection times, and a variety of other exercises to enhance your class time. Use the suggestions from this guide however you find them helpful and devise your own plan if you wish. Expand the amount of time devoted to activities you think will work well in your group and feel free to delete activities you think may not work so well.

The key is to engage class members in material from the book and to help them find ways to apply it to their own lives. This study can change lives—not because the ideas from the book are so unique or rich but because as the students read God's Word it will give the Holy Spirit the opportunity to direct them.

I designed this study guide to call attention to additional ideas and to enhance the thoughts expressed in the textbook and to encourage you to address certain concepts or discussion questions. I have not created an entire time-usage plan for each session. Rather, I have endeavored to furnish more than enough material to work with in the Bible, the textbook, and this leader's guide so that you can design a lesson plan based on what works best for your group. Have fun with it!

I start many of the leader's guides with a "Background Check" where I place cross-referenced material from *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*, *Coffee Shop Theology*, *More Coffee Shop Theology*, and *Dismantling the Myths*. This material, along with the material in the Bible study books, furnishes plenty of information to lead a lively group discussion.

Each study is filled with references to Scripture. It may not be possible, given your time limitations, to read all of the passages aloud during each week's study session. However, provide opportunity during each group session to read some of the scriptures aloud. God enlivens His Word to the hearts of hearers better when it is read aloud than when we simply refer to it by chapter and verse. Assuming everyone will have studied the weekly focus scripture thoroughly before coming to the study session, this should be a time of review for everyone.

Each study has several sections of "Group Discussion." Encourage class members to write their thoughts as they read the material prior to coming to the Bible study session. If the space provided is not adequate for members to record their thoughts, encourage them to write their responses in a notebook. A three-ring binder works well and allows class members to add new material as desired.

Remind the participants to bring their notebooks with them when they come to class and to be prepared to share their answers with the entire group.

Each study also has space devoted to “Personal Reflection.” These questions and exercises are more private. Never call on a class member to publicly give his or her response to one of these exercises. You may ask if a volunteer wishes to share with the group, or you may share your own answers to these questions. Take care to not embarrass class members by asking for more information than their comfort levels allow.

Each study has at least one “Group Activity.” These are important to encourage your group members to interact with one another in different ways and should be fun and lively. You can make the activities competitive or a group project. Either way, encourage everyone to participate. Participants will remember more of what they have studied if they go over the material in class in unique ways and take an active part.

Each study closes with a section called “For Further Study.” Here’s your opportunity to cross-reference the scripture lesson for the week with other passages in the Bible. Please remind folks that the themes we study are not simply found in one location in the Bible. They are themes that thread their way throughout scripture. Martin Luther taught the important Bible study method of letting scripture interpret scripture. That is, one of the best ways to learn the meaning of a passage of scripture is to read other scriptures that discuss the same topic. Many study Bibles use this approach. Teach your class members to use this method of study and apply it to this Bible study series.

Remember to take time at the end of each study for students to write additional questions or discussion ideas on 3 x 5 cards and place them in the “Odds and Ends” box. You’ll discuss these questions at the end of each book in this series of studies.

Presentation Ideas

One of the keys to good discussion is variety. Don’t always present material from the book in lecture form, and don’t always conduct a discussion by asking a question for the group to answer. There are a variety of presentation ideas throughout the study series that can usually be found in the Group Activity section. If you find that your group responds well to certain activities, make a note of these and use them again from time to time. Just don’t wear out a good activity through overuse!

The following is a list of suggestions of group activities.

1. If you wish to use an alternate method to simply having an open-group discussion, you might give each class member two or more (depending on the number of questions being answered) large Post-it notes. Ask group members to write their answers to your questions on their Post-it notes. Then, let them stick their answers on a large piece of poster board with the main idea of the question written on it. You may also simply write the main idea of the question on a chalk or white board and post their responses below it. The leader can then read all of the answers and lead a discussion.
2. Divide your students into small groups—one group for each question you will ask. Assign each group one of the questions. Allow discussion time, then let each small group present its answer to the larger body.
3. Give each class member two 3 x 5 cards. Ask them to write their answers to the questions in

- a particular section on each of these cards and drop their cards in a basket or box. Read each answer out loud and lead a discussion from students' answers.
4. Take two sheets of paper and type a sentence starter on each of them. An example of a sentence starter is "The most important idea I learned from this passage of scripture is . . ." Have your class members sit in two rows. Pass one sheet down each row and have students write their personal answers to the question coming down their row. Collect the two sheets and read the responses.
 5. Put the four key words of your Bible study for the week in large letters across the top of a whiteboard at the front of the classroom. Give each class member four Post-it notes. Ask them to write on their Post-it notes the way each of these concepts applies to their hearts or lives. When everyone has finished writing, have class members place their Post-it notes under the words on the board to which they apply. Read all responses.
 6. One week before this class session, ask four class members to serve on a panel to present their answers to a particular section of questions. Give them the questions in advance so they can prepare their responses. During class time, you read the questions and let panel members answer them.
 7. An alternate method to having a whole-group discussion on a particular subject such as "consecration" is to place the words "Reasons I should consecrate" in a circle in the middle of a large piece of poster board. Then draw six lines out from the circle like spokes on a bicycle wheel. On another sheet of poster board place the words "Difficulties to consecration" in a circle in the middle. Draw six lines out from the circle as you did before. Divide your class into two groups and have them write responses to these questions on the lines coming from the circle. You, as the group leader, can then read all of the responses at the conclusion of the exercise.
 - The most important reason I should consecrate myself to God is . . .
 - The most difficult thing about consecrating to God is . . .
 8. A good visual aid for the material in a particular lesson can assist in your presentation of it. For example, place each of the five key words describing the Holy Spirit on five large sheets of poster paper. Place one word at the top of each sheet. List the concepts that explain each word under the key words. Use a different color marker for each key word. Tape these to a chalkboard or on the wall for presentation. You may also do the same thing with a PowerPoint presentation using a computer and projector.
 9. Rather than lecturing the week's material, present the information in the form of the *Jeopardy* television game show. Begin reading characteristics of one of the key concepts. Have students raise their hands when they think they know which one you are talking about. They answer in the form of a question, such as, "What is a bush?" [the thing that caught Moses' attention in the desert].
 10. This takes a little extra work, but it brings variety to your presentation. Write 10 questions and answers from your presentation material. Type a question on a note card; type the answer on another note card. Do this 10 times for each question and answer. You may also position the questions and answers in sections on your computer screen, print as many sets

as you need onto card stock paper, and cut them out. Shuffle the cards and let the Bible study group match the questions with the correct answers. It's more fun to make two sets, divide the class into two groups, and see which group can complete the activity first.

Welcome to the Adventure

Background Check

Read chapter 1 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Some of the stories in that book make the same points as this study. There are also some additional discussion questions at the end of the chapter.

Preparing for This Study

You will find helpful direction for group leaders on page 5 of Book 1. Some of the key goals of this first session are:

1. Help all class members become acquainted with one another.
2. Help class members get to know you as the group leader.
3. Help people relax and talk to one another.
4. Create excitement and enthusiasm for the adventure ahead of your group in this Bible study exercise.
5. Give a general overview of the main concepts in Book 1.
6. Seek the Holy Spirit's direction as you study God's Word together.

You will probably get some fun group interaction by asking volunteers to share their answers to the Personal Reflection questions on page 8. Don't let the conversation take too much time, however.

Questions 3, 4, and 5 of the Group Discussion section on pages 9 and 10 offer an opportunity for you to make an important point of comparison between our parenting joys and frustrations and God's. Sometimes we think of God as so "wholly Other" that we forget He experiences a full range of emotions in His interaction with us just as we experience in our dealings with one another.

Give particular attention to the ideas on the bottom of page 11 and the top of page 12. Help your class members get excited about going on an adventure with God. Encourage them to put themselves in a childlike mood of exploration and investigation as they study the Bible—as if they're reading it for the first time. If you are successful in doing this, the class members will find themselves excited and rewarded as the Holy Spirit teaches them truths from God's Word each week.

The final group activity of Study 1 calls for a prayer that God will bless your efforts as you study His Word. Though I don't mention it at the close of every study, I trust you will direct your group each week in a prayer for God's Holy Spirit to speak to every Bible study member's heart. We only truly learn new spiritual truth when He instructs us.

Please take seriously the suggestion to provide an "odds and ends" box of some sort. It can be a wooden box you purchase at a craft supply store or a cardboard box from home covered with decorative paper. The box type doesn't matter. Bring it to class every week. Keep 3 x 5 index cards handy for students to write their unanswered questions or topics they would like to discuss further. We will designate time at the end of each Bible study series to address the questions in the box.

Meeting God

Background Check

Read chapters 1 through 3 of *Coffee Shop Theology* and chapter 3 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Give special attention to the discussion questions at the end of the chapter. This material provides important reminders that your class participants probably need to hear. I've taught Bible studies for many years and am very aware that Christians sometimes fall victim to strange ideas about God. Take care that your participants are not made to feel embarrassed as you guide them into a fuller understanding of who God is.

Preparing for This Study

You may learn a great deal about each class member's perception of God from the group activity on page 14. Remember that an individual's perception of God shapes his or her religious faith and impacts his or her daily life. Urge class members to explore what they honestly believe about God.

Don't immediately correct anyone's misperceptions. The purpose of this exercise is to put all of the evidence on the table. You can correct errors later in the session in an indirect manner. If you appear to pass quick judgment on individuals' ideas, they will be much less likely to share in the future.

Because of space limitations, I was rather brief in my introduction to Moses on page 15. Make certain the class remembers the context that placed Moses out on the backside of the desert in the first place. As you discuss the bush, remind class members that God never writes messages in the sky like skywriting planes sometimes do. He usually works through very ordinary circumstances in our lives. Encourage your students to watch for God's movement in small, daily ways.

Questions 6 and 7 on page 16 provide an excellent opportunity to introduce biblical symbols of holiness. Encourage class members to start a list of such biblical symbols and keep the list current throughout the Bible study series.

Isaiah provides a classic image of God's holiness, and if students capture the vision of what happened in Isaiah's heart, it will help them be receptive to what God can do in their hearts. God didn't create us with a cookie cutter, and He will work with each of us on an individual basis. But, rest assured, God will find ways to speak to each person.

Spend plenty of time on the Group Discussion questions found on page 18. Each question is important not only for this lesson but also for the entire Bible study series. If students grasp solid answers to these questions, they will have a strong foundation for understanding the lessons that follow.

Close the session with prayer.

In His Image

Background Check

Read chapters 14 and 15 of *Coffee Shop Theology*. It's very important for you to help class members understand their divine origin as well as their spiritual relatedness to our Creator God. We're not just created beings; we carry a portion of His image. Awesome!

Preparing for This Study

Help the class members interact on the ways children become like their parents. Solicit examples from participants of ways their children speak and act like them, or ask them to reflect on ways they have seen other people's children emulate their parents.

After reading the verses listed on page 21 and discussing the five questions, place strong emphasis on God purposefully creating humanity and giving us special favor in His created order. This should help students feel added worth in God's special favor toward them. While you do not want to call on people to share their answers to the personal reflection questions on page 22, it might be helpful for you to share some of your own.

I find that many people, even in the church, live with low self-esteem. Rather than thinking too highly of themselves, they think too poorly of themselves. They feel like failures and refuse to forgive themselves for sins or mistakes of the past, even the distant past. They question, "How could God love me after what I did?" Well, He does, and this passage proves it. Find a variety of ways to affirm your class members by reminding them that they are created in God's image.

Lead a discussion of question 3 on page 24. While it is a personal reflection question, you can share your answer and ask for volunteers to give a reasoned response, even if they do not feel comfortable sharing a personal one. Be sure to explore the question from the perspective of how we should live in our:

- Spiritual lives
- Personal and private lives
- Moral and ethical lives
- Social lives
- Public lives
- Workplace lives

Close the session with prayer.

Created to Be Holy

Background Check

Read chapter 16 in *Coffee Shop Theology*. The purpose of this lesson is to remind us that God created us to be a certain way and live a certain way—holy.

Preparing for This Study

This study has a variety of scripture texts from both the Old and New Testament to give us insight of what God has in mind for our lives. Give plenty of attention to God's hopes and dreams for us. This is a central concept of the entire Bible study series, and we will refer to it many times throughout the study.

Have fun with the group activity on page 27. Take time to explore all concepts presented by your class members and save their responses to these questions so that you can refer to them again in later Bible studies.

I've buried a key spiritual principle in my presentation at the bottom of page 28 that could bring deliverance from lives of bondage for some of your class members. I have many Christian friends who honestly believe God calls us to impossible goals when He asks us to live holy lives. They see Him as a slave-driving parent who can never be satisfied with their lives because they always fall short of the perfect standard of His perfect performance. Never! God's dreams and goals for us are both realistic and realizable. If your students approach the Word from this perspective, it will change them forever. God only calls us to a life He wants to help us live.

Spend as much time as possible exploring the concepts on page 29 and the group discussion questions that follow on page 30. If your students make the connection that the God of the Egyptian deliverance is their personal God who seeks to help them in the same way, it will open their minds to new possibilities of His will for them.

End this session by driving home the point that this holy God we discussed in study 2 wants to make us holy as well. It's not a fairy-tale dream of a doting grandparent; it's a road map from our Creator!

Close the session with prayer.

The Way We Were

Background Check

Look back over the material you read a few weeks ago in chapter 14 of *Coffee Shop Theology*.

Preparing for This Study

After considering the material at the top of page 33, give particular attention to the material at the bottom of this page. It's a very important concept. So often we lament about how much better our lives would be if our circumstances were different. We may even feel sorry for ourselves. What's worse, we may make excuses for our behavior because circumstances are not conducive to a better life. Remind class members that Adam and Eve had it all in the garden, and *all* wasn't enough! It hardly ever is.

You might follow the presentation of this thought with a group discussion of question 3 on page 34. I'm sure you'll get some interesting ideas from class members. There's something to learn here about human nature.

Give plenty of time to the group activity on page 35. You might also explore the notion found in the last sentence of the text on page 35: "Idle hands or an idle mind for long periods of time can become dangerous." Give some examples of when and how this is true.

What can we learn about human nature from the material presented on page 36? God gave us a long list of things we can do and one thing we should not do. And where did we head? Right for the forbidden fruit! Why? For me, one of the most important discoveries of this entire Bible study series is found at the top of page 37. That whole "forbidden fruit" thing was about one simple truth: God asks us to not seek to be morally independent from Him. He wants to define right and wrong for us. So simple and yet so profound. Make sure your class members grasp this truth.

Most people spend their entire lives trying to change God's mind or redefine right and wrong in their own terms. It's the classic problem of the postmodern mind. Folks want their own personal definitions of right and wrong based on the things they want to do in their lives. Nothing much has changed since the Garden of Eden!

You have plenty of discussion questions on page 38 to keep your group busy. I'd like to suggest you also give some attention to discussing the last two sentences on page 38. You'll discover a principle of spiritual life and daily challenge for defaulting to God for His direction for our moral convictions. You can have a great discussion with this one.

Close the session with prayer.

Choosing Not to Follow Directions

Background Check

Read chapter 2 in *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip* and chapters 17 through 18 of *Coffee Shop Theology*. Check out the discussion questions at the end of chapter 2 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*.

Preparing for This Study

It should be reasonably easy to get a good discussion going on this study because each class member should have personal experience with the subject:

- Satan's skillful tactics
- The purpose of temptation
- The nature of temptation
- Forms of temptation
- God's will and purpose for us

Here are directions for the Group Activity on page 41. Divide the class into pairs and assign one of the questions in the Group Activity to each pair. After discussion time, have each pair report its responses.

Even though it's a Personal Reflection question, you can lead a great discussion of possible or hypothetical answers to the questions at the top of page 43.

Allow time to discuss all of the questions at the bottom of page 43 and the top of page 44. Answers to these questions will provide an important foundation for understanding why humans so easily fall prey to Satan's temptations.

The bottom of page 44 provides important truth about God's personality. Notice His understatement and patience. Notice how He draws rather than drives. What does this tell you about the way God works with us today?

Allow time to address question 3 on page 45. It's worth exploring.

Close the session with prayer.

Restoration Promised

Background Check

Read chapter 4 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip* and chapters 19 through 20 of *Coffee Shop Theology*. Give attention to the discussion questions at the end of the *Breaking Free* chapter.

Preparing for This Study

Take time for all of the questions on page 48. Give particular attention to questions 3 and 4. They are extremely important for understanding why God didn't destroy humanity following our fall.

Spend time talking about God's comfort, hope, forgiveness, and restoration as presented on pages 48-49. They offer important insights into God's parental heart.

Make sure class members understand the head-and-heel reference discussed on page 50. It's important in salvation history and to our understanding that Satan will ultimately be defeated.

I've presented alternate suggestions regarding God's judgments on pages 51-52. I'm not saying our traditional interpretations of the judgments announced to Adam and Eve are not correct. I'm simply saying there may be another way of looking at this passage that will offer additional insights. I'm speculating somewhat, but I think it's speculation worth considering. Think about it and see what your group thinks.

Give ample time to the Group Activity on pages 52-53. Important truths about human nature, human free will, and temptation can be emphasized.

Close the session with prayer.

Abraham: The Blameless Man

Preparing for This Study

I'm particularly fascinated with the Bible's character study of Abraham. He wasn't a perfect man by any stretch of the imagination. He had weaknesses and failures just like everyone else. Yet God calls Abraham "my friend" and refers to him as a blameless man.

Blameless. That's one of the most important biblical words for understanding human holiness. Many discussion battles have been waged across the years in churches and homes regarding God's intention for His children. More often than not, the notion of flawless perfection, faultlessness, and perfect performance are held up as the standard.

However, the Bible never presents human holiness as flawlessness. That's why it's important that you and your students gain solid grounding in this biblical notion of blamelessness. Abraham is a model for us. This study is crucial to the entire theme of the Bible study series. Study 8 is buried in the middle of Book 1, but it's one of the most important studies of the entire series.

After an extended group discussion of the questions on page 56, ask class members to give specific biblical examples of the kinds of things Abraham experienced in his life. Headings are bulleted at the bottom of page 56.

I didn't explore the notion of God making contracts with humans on page 57, but you might wish to lead an extended discussion of why God did this and what it tells us about Him and about how we should live to keep our end of the bargain.

Take time to read all of the verses referring to blamelessness listed in the middle of page 57. This is a key concept to understanding human holiness.

Ask for volunteers to share possible responses to question 5 at the bottom of page 58 or give your own. Make sure class members understand the difference between perfect performance and an undiluted desire to do God's will.

Give particular attention to the spiritual truth that we are Abraham's children. That is, simple trust and faith in God are credited by Him as righteousness. Just as He called Abraham, God calls us to "Walk before me and be blameless."

Close your session with a time of prayer to thank God for the liberating truth that faith in Him leads us to blamelessness and frees us from bondage to a standard of perfect performance. Celebrate the freedom we have in Christ.

A Systems Approach

Preparing for This Study

This study may appear boring and irrelevant to our spiritual lives at first glance. It's really not, though; it's an interesting study in object lessons. If students catch the concept of finding the meaning in each object of the lesson, it will add interest to the session.

Give particular attention to questions 2 through 4 on pages 61 and 62. Passing the faith from one generation to another is essential for its survival. Our faith is never more than one generation from extinction if we don't do our part in passing it to our children. God gave us tools for passing our faith with the object lessons of this study.

I'm sure some students will wonder why I spent so much time presenting the five offerings of Leviticus. After all, they're Old Testament rituals of the old covenant. We live in the new covenant. Why bother with them? Because they offer important spiritual insight into our salvation history, and they help us discover what God wants us to remember about our faith and our relationships with Him. A thorough grasp of these five offerings will bring a deeper understanding of our New Testament faith.

Questions 2 through 4 are particularly important in the Group Discussion questions on page 64. The concepts drawn from each question make direct application to the new covenant.

Take time to highlight the holiness symbolism in Leviticus. The paragraph in the middle of page 65 suggests a start for your thinking. Don't just state the Levitical requirement as I have done; draw the application to our lives from each.

Spend plenty of time at the end of this session with the Group Activity on pages 65 and 66. This will give you an opportunity to make sure students make the connection between the spiritual truths highlighted in the Old Testament sacrificial system and our faith today. We cannot understand the New Testament without a firm grasp on the spiritual insights of the Old Testament.

Close the session with prayer.

A Better Approach

Background Check

Read chapter 5 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip*. Focus on the discussion questions at the end of the chapter.

Preparing for This Study

We move now to a New Testament understanding and application of the Old Testament rituals we studied last week. It might be worthwhile to role-play the Group Discussion at the bottom of page 68. Ask class members to put themselves in the sandals of Old Testament worshipers. Go back in time; experience the moment of an animal sacrifice in 900 B.C. Transport the class to the Temple and see how they feel as you ask the questions on pages 68 and 69.

Take plenty of time with the Group Activity on page 70. The questions get at important spiritual truths. Give class members ample time to discuss their particular questions, then talk over their answers fully as an entire group.

Slow down and strongly emphasize the important material at the bottom of page 70. As I say in the book, this is one of the most important holiness insights in the entire Bible. Though they are Personal Reflection questions, ask students to give hypothetical answers (if theirs are too personal) to questions 2 and 3 on page 71. This, too, is an extremely important distinction to make about sanctification.

The standing/sitting contrast between the priests and Christ is an important one at the bottom of page 71. Focus attention on it.

Make sure you call attention to the material on page 72. The Old Testament sacrificial system was important for many reasons. However, Christ's death on the Cross rendered it obsolete and restored God's plan that our first parents derailed in the garden. Draw particular emphasis to questions 3 and 4 at the top of page 73. Many believers struggle in these two areas.

Close the session with prayer.

Holiness Requires the Cross

Background Check

Review the material in chapter 5 of *Breaking Free from Sin's Grip* that you may not have had time to cover in last week's study. It's important to make the connection that the Old Testament sacrificial system finds its completion in the Cross of Jesus Christ. Only then can we experience the holiness God desires for us.

Preparing for This Study

"Outside the camp" is one of the most insightful symbols of holiness in the Bible. Explore fully with your class the many ways this phrase relates to holiness both in the concept of the total removal of our sins and in our identification with Christ in His willingness to die outside the city walls of Jerusalem. An important symbol for our identification with Christ presents itself here.

Spend ample time on each question on page 77. All are extremely important for the overall theme of this Bible study series.

The material beginning at the bottom of page 77 offers additional insight into our holiness theme. Resisting the pull of the world is serious business. I've written an entire book on this subject called *Dismantling the Myths: Realigning Moral Choices with Faith*. Look particularly at chapters 4 through 6 for material that addresses the concerns of today's Bible study. The Group Activity on pages 78 and 79 is important. Emphasize this material.

Notice how the benediction discussed on page 79 brings us full circle back to God's original plan for humanity when He placed us in the Garden of Eden. Call attention to the fact that though Adam and Eve derailed the plan with their bad choice, they didn't end it. God worked through salvation history to get it back on track through Christ's death on the Cross. Now, we can live on earth as God intended for us to live—in relationship with Him.

Close the session with prayer.

Tying It All Together

Preparing for This Study

This Bible study book is designed to be taught over a three-month period. As you know, this time frame has 13 weeks in it. I wrote 12 lessons instead of 13 for a couple of reasons. (1) Sometimes a three-month block of time will include a holiday or some other reason that your group cannot meet. This gives you some slack so your group does not get behind with the material. (2) It's very possible that the material in this Bible study raised a lot of questions that need more time for answers. Check your "Odds and Ends" box. This is your opportunity to address those lingering questions. Take two weeks to wrap the material up. It's better to take a little extra time now than to move on to the next study with haunting questions still lingering in your students' minds.

This study gives you a chance to do a quick review of some of the most significant scripture passages encountered over the past 11 weeks. Review the material, discuss the questions presented in this week's material, and answer student questions from the past 11 weeks.

As soon as you feel you and your students have mastered the key concepts of this Old Testament study, you're ready to move on to Book 2 of this Bible study series. It's called *The Journey Within: Learning to Live the Holy Life*. It's a New Testament study of personal holiness. God bless you as you study God's Word together!

Close the session with prayer.