

CONNECT4

Consistent Spiritual Disciplines for Life Change

Life Group Participant Guide



Thank you for being part of CONNECT 4. You remember how to play this game, right?

You grab one of these discs and place it in an empty slot; your opponent does the same thing. Then if you are lucky, intelligent, strategic enough, or your opponent is easily distracted, you get four discs in a row. You win.

Winning is awesome! We want you to win every single day. We want you to experience victories in all areas of your life. That happens more often when we follow JESUS and live out the disciplines he modeled for us.

You may have heard this said before, people who engage in scripture four or more days of the week have lower odds of getting drunk by 57%, viewing pornography by 61%, gambling addiction by 74%, and having sex outside of marriage by 68%...and on an even more positive note...Christians are more likely to engage in daily evangelism and discipleship when they are in God's word.

This CONNECT4 study will motivate you to connect four or more days each week in the disciplines that JESUS modeled and lived out.

Our challenge for you is to TRY. That is it, TRY. Each day, one day at a time....strive to commit to doing the disciplines discussed. Each week commit to showing up to your life group and worship. Be intentional about spending time with JESUS four or more days each week and see what happens when you do.



Reading the Word should never be a “_____” or a “have-to” or a “_____” type of activity...it SHOULD be a _____.

As a man, Jesus had to _____ and _____ the Scriptures.

Reading the Scriptures gives us a greater appreciation for the great lengths to which our Savior went in order to _____ us. Embracing this truth helps us fix our eyes steadfastly on the One who is the author and finisher of our faith.

If Jesus needed (and desired) to _____, _____ and _____ the Scriptures—how much more should we do the same?!

NOTES:

CONNECT4 Days This Week:

Use this week’s daily readings to connect four in reading scripture.



Daily Readings

DAY 1

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:2

Observation: What comparison is Peter making in this verse, and why is it imperative that we prioritize reading God's Word ourselves?

Application: Peter is not suggesting that only "immature Christians" ("like newborn infants") need to crave the "pure spiritual milk" of the Bible, but ALL of us need it for sustenance and growth. What determination will you make to read God's Word daily in order to grow in your walk with Jesus?

Prayer: Lord, please give me a hunger and thirst for your Word that exceeds any other hunger or thirst that I might have for anything else in this world. May you and your Word be my greatest passion and my greatest pleasure and treasure! AMEN.



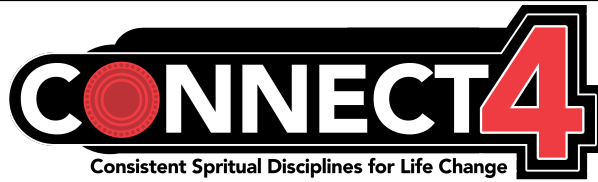
DAY 2

Scripture: Psalm 119:18

Observation: Are your “spiritual eyes” as wide-open and attentive to God’s Word as your “natural eyes” are open to the things that they see on a daily basis?

Application: Pray before reading from God’s Word that you might be given insight beyond your own abilities to understand (and apply) what you read. Is it possible that God will reveal “wondrous things” for us, to not only behold but, to embrace and apply to our lives?

Prayer: Lord, please open my eyes in ways that allow me to see you and your desires for me. Your Word is full of things I need to see and embrace. I want to see and know the “wondrous things” your Word has to offer me and then follow hard after you. AMEN.



DAY 3

Scripture: Romans 15:4

Observation: Words “written in former days” refers to the Old Testament writings—they were written for our instruction and encouragement. Really? Even the Old Testament is relevant to me today?

Application: As you read (even the Old Testament), make a concerted effort to recognize that ALL the words of Scripture are GOD’S WORDS (2 Timothy 3:16). Even though they (and the New Testament) were written for His purposes in the lives of those who were the target audience at the time of the writing, they were also written for everyone who would take the time to read and apply them throughout the centuries...that means me and YOU.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for such a comprehensive Word. I am undeserving, yet very grateful and appreciative, of Your loving kindness toward me. May your Word bring instruction and encouragement to me in these days of, seemingly, constant trials and trouble. Your Word always brings HOPE, and for that I am eternally grateful and blessed. AMEN.



DAY 4

Scripture: Joshua 1:8-9

Observation: What else in your life really requires your meditation “day and night?” What promise accompanies the command in verse 8? What promise accompanies the command in verse 9?

Application: How can you go about meditating on the Word of God every day...day and night? What has to happen to make that possible? You have to be IN the Word daily!! If you are going to DO what it says, you first have to KNOW what it says.

Prayer: Lord, I do want to be prosperous and successful, at least in the way that you define prosperity and success. I realize that my best shot at that becoming reality, is to take my time and just “hang my feet over the edge” of your Word, and simply be with you. Jesus, may I be a strong and courageous man or woman, who is no longer controlled by fear, but is eager to totally trust in you—the one who is with me wherever I go. AMEN.



Jesus was _____ in prayer.

Jesus teaches persistence in prayers through parables.

A good way to maintain consistency and focus in prayer is to use the acronym FACTS. FACTS stands for:

- F = _____
- A = _____
- C = _____
- T = _____
- S = _____

Jesus demonstrated _____ (**Power**) in prayer.

The power of prayer is not in _____ (**who**) is praying or the words you use. The power of prayer is in _____ (**who**) you are _____ (**praying**) to.

“How great is the love of the Father lavished on us that we should be called children of God!” 1 John 3:1

Notes:

Connect4 Days This Week -

Connect to God in prayer 4 times this week. Establish a regular time and place to pray daily. Focus first on your relationship with the Father (Faith, Adoration, Confession & Thanksgiving) then present your prayer requests for yourself and others (Supplication).



Daily Readings

DAY 1

Scripture: Luke 5:16.

Observation: What is a pattern of Jesus' prayer that you observe in this text?

Application: How can you adopt this pattern of Jesus' praying into *your* prayer life?

Pray:



DAY 2

Scripture: Matthew 6:5-8

Observation: What are “do this” and “don’t do that” attitudes and actions in praying that Jesus teaches in these verses?

Application: How can you adopt this pattern of Jesus’ teaching into *your* prayer life?

Pray:



DAY 3

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13

Observation: What are the elements of this model prayer? What do you make of the prayers focusing on “us” vs. “I or me”?

Application: How can you adopt this pattern of Jesus’ praying into *your* prayer life?

Pray:



DAY 4

Scripture: John 17:1-26

Observation: How and who did Jesus pray for in vs. 1-5? vs. 6-19? vs 20–26?

Application: How can you adopt this pattern of Jesus' praying into *your* prayer life?

Pray:



What are things we can do to practice Christ-sharing connectivity?

Jesus _____ to see who was unengaged...and then he moved to engage him.

Jesus surprises people with _____. He meets people as people and conveys openness and welcome.

Jesus invites him into something that _____.

Jesus has laid the groundwork with Zacchaeus with his _____.

Let's use words and stories that make us _____.

Work hard to kill off language and sentiments that are _____ of other people.

Don't strive to be a _____ person; be a person who is proven consistent and available, _____ in people's lives.

Let's be an entourage of people who long for, pray for, and support the wild, inexplicable reconciliation that God brings about in people's lives, because he's brought it about in ours. Let's surprise people with openness and change that is only possible with God.

NOTES:

CONNECT4 Days This Week:

Surprise someone with personalization and connection each day this week; offer a spiritual conversation or an invite four or more days in a row. "Show up" in people's lives in life-giving, loving ways.



Daily Readings

How did Jesus model and cultivate connection? How did people come to feel He was approachable and available to them? What might He have been saying, what stories was He telling, that would have been in Zacchaeus' mind as he climbed a tree that day?

Below are readings that give us a glimpse into the way Jesus cultivated connection with Zacchaeus and others. How might we cultivate connectivity with others as a result?

Day 1

Scripture: Luke 18:8-14

Observations: What might have made this particular story notable and hopeful to Zacchaeus?

Application: How are you sharing hopeful stories and words? Who would you most likely draw towards yourself: pharisees or tax collectors?

Prayer:



Day 2

Scripture: Luke 18:18-30

The Parable of the Rich Ruler

Observations: How might Zacchaeus' story be similar to this one? How is it different?

Application: How might you be able to offer the possibilities of God like Jesus did?

Prayer:



Day 3

Scripture: Luke 18:35-43

Observations: What is the pattern of Jesus' response to people who usually go unseen?

Application: If we follow Jesus' "way" or method, what should be our response to people who usually go unseen and need our mercy?

Prayer:



Day 4

Scripture: John 15:1-8

Observations: How do we bear fruit, according to this passage?

Application: What fruit are you seeing? Are there branches that need to be pruned in your life so that you can be more fruitful in your connection to others?

Prayer:



Whenever there is trouble about who is the _____, there is trouble over who is the _____.

Are you guilty of calling "_____" in serving others at times?

In **John 13:4-5** *"So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him."*

Jesus grabbed a _____!

What does JESUS' response say to you? How is it speaking to you?

Mark 10:45 *"FOR EVEN THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, but to SERVE and lay his life DOWN as a ransom for many!"*

Two ways you can PICK up your towel and practice SERVICE every day this week:

- 1) Be intentional and go to people.
- 2) Remember meeting small needs speaks BIG.

NOTES:

CONNECT4 Days This Week:

Be intentional and serve 4 or more people this week. These can be small or large acts of service. Just string together 4 days of intentional pick up the towel type moments.



Daily Readings

How did Jesus model serving? Well, he did it. Jesus, who was deserving of being placed on a high pedestal, took to the floor and placed himself in a posture that was not deserving for a king.

Day 1:

Scripture: John 14:1-5

Observations: What are you observing in this text? What was about to happen? What do you think was going through Jesus' mind?

Application: How can you apply what you read and observed?

Prayer:



Day 2:

Scripture: John 14:6-11

Observations: What are you observing in this text? What stands out about Peter's response? Why did Jesus tell Peter he didn't understand at this moment what he was doing?

Application: How can you apply what you read and observed?

Prayer:



Day 3:

Scripture: John 14:12-19

Observations: What are you observing in this text? What is Jesus leading his disciples to do? What about Jesus' modeling is different?

Application: How can you apply what you read and observed?

Prayer:



Day 4:

Scripture: John 14:21-30

Observations: What are you observing in this text? When did this conversation take place? How do you picture the environment at this time of the dinner?

Application: How can you apply what you read and observed?

Prayer: