

# Study Guide: Reclaiming the Ancient Mindset

## Lesson 1: Reclaiming the Ancient Mindset

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Begin by asking God to open your hearts and minds to understand His Word as the original audience would have understood it. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and reveal spiritual truths.

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**Question:** Share about a time when you read a letter or message intended for someone else. What did you understand? What did you miss without knowing the full context?

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## Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **The Bible was written FOR us, but not TO us** - We must understand the original context and worldview to fully grasp God's message.
2. **Three Modern Western Filters that block our understanding:**
  - o **Rationalism** - Demanding scientific proof for everything
  - o **Individualism** - Focusing on personal spirituality over community
  - o **Materialism** - Believing only the physical world is real
3. **The Two-Floor Problem:** Modern culture separates the "real world" (science, facts, nature) from the "supernatural world" (God, angels, miracles). Ancient people saw these as one unified reality.
4. **Genesis 1-11 reveals three supernatural rebellions:**
  - o The Fall (Genesis 3) - Consequence: Death
  - o The Watchers (Genesis 6) - Consequence: Depravity
  - o Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) - Consequence: Disinheritance
5. **Jesus came to reverse all three consequences** and restore what was lost.

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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding Our Filters (15 minutes)

1. Which of the three modern Western filters (rationalism, individualism, materialism) do you struggle with most when reading the Bible? Why?

2. Can you think of a Bible passage that has confused you or seemed irrelevant? How might reading it through an "ancient mindset" change your understanding?
3. The sermon mentioned we live with a "two-floor reality" - separating the natural from the supernatural. How does this affect our daily Christian walk and our prayers?

## **The Ancient Worldview (15 minutes)**

4. The Israelites never separated the natural from the supernatural - it was all one reality to them. How would viewing the world this way change:
  - How we pray?
  - How we view spiritual warfare?
  - How we understand world events?
5. Read Exodus 33:12-16 (Moses refusing to go without God's presence). Why was Moses so adamant about God going with them rather than sending an angel? What does this teach us about the spiritual realm?
6. The first commandment says "You shall have no other gods before me." If the ancient Israelites understood this as referring to real spiritual beings (not just idols), how does that change the meaning of this command for us today?

## **The Three Rebellions (15 minutes)**

7. We're familiar with the Fall in Genesis 3, but many haven't considered Genesis 6 and 11 as equally significant rebellions. Why do you think these are less emphasized in modern teaching?
8. The sermon stated that God gave the nations over to follow rebellious spiritual beings (disinheritance), then started His own family through Abraham. How does this help you understand:
  - The uniqueness of Israel?
  - Jesus' command to "make disciples of all nations"?
  - The Day of Pentecost in Acts 2?

## **Jesus as Cosmic Victor (10 minutes)**

9. We often see Jesus primarily as a suffering servant. How does viewing Him also as a "cosmic victor" who defeated demonic forces change your understanding of:
  - The crucifixion and resurrection?
  - Your identity as a believer?
  - Your mission in the world?
10. Read 1 John 3:8 - "The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil." What are the "works of the devil" that Jesus came to destroy?

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## **Practical Applications**

## This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2)

### Option 1: Reading with New Eyes

- As you read your Bible this week, pause when you encounter something that seems strange or confusing
- Ask: "How would a first-century Jew or early Christian have understood this?"
- Journal about what new insights emerge

### Option 2: Recognize the Filters

- Each day this week, identify one way that rationalism, individualism, or materialism affects how you think about your faith
- Pray specifically about that filter and ask God to help you see beyond it

### Option 3: Spiritual Awareness

- Spend time this week acknowledging that you live in a world where the natural and supernatural intersect
- Practice "seeing" your daily activities as part of God's cosmic story
- How does this awareness change your prayers, decisions, or conversations?

### Option 4: Community Focus

- Since individualism is a Western filter, intentionally invest in your church community this week
- Reach out to 2-3 people from church just to encourage them
- Remember you're part of a "collective covenant community"

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## Memory Verse

**Luke 8:10** - "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but to others they are parables, so that seeing they may not see and hearing they may not understand."

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## Looking Ahead

Next week we'll explore why a literal six-day creation matters - not just scientifically, but biblically and theologically. Come prepared to have your understanding of Genesis 1 expanded!

## **Additional Resources**

- Read Genesis 1-11 this week with fresh eyes
- Consider journaling questions or insights that arise
- If you missed the previous teaching on spiritual warfare, ask your group leader about accessing that material