

DEEP & WIDE

*extending our roots
to broaden our reach*

**ROGER PATTERSON
& DAN HALL**

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Tools to Help You Have a Great Small Group Experience:



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- 1 Notice in the Table of Contents there are three sections: (1) Sessions; (2) Appendices; and (3) Small Group Leaders. Familiarize yourself with the Appendices. Some of them will be used in the sessions themselves.
 - 2 If you are facilitating/leading or co-leading a small group, the section Small Group Leaders, will give you some experiences of others that will encourage you and help you avoid many common obstacles to effective small group leadership.
 - 3 Use this workbook as a guide, not a straightjacket. If the group responds to the lesson in an unexpected but honest way, go with that. If you think of a better question than the next one in the lesson, ask it. Take to heart the insights included in the Frequently Asked Questions pages and the Small Group Leaders section.
 - 4 Enjoy your Small Group experience.
 - 5 Pray before each session—for your group members, for your time together, and for wisdom and insights.
 - 6 Read the outline for each session on the next pages so that you understand how the sessions will flow.

OUTLINE OF EACH SESSION

A typical group session for the Deep and Wide study will include the following sections. Read through this to get a clear idea of how each group meeting will be structured:

INTRODUCTION. Each lesson opens with a brief thought that will help you prepare for the session and get you thinking about the particular subject you will explore with your group. Make it a practice to read these before the session.

COME TOGETHER. The foundation for spiritual growth is an intimate connection with God and God's family. You build that connection by sharing your experience with a few people who really know you and who earn your trust. This is helpful preparation for being able to share what Christ has done in your life with anyone you meet—which is what a disciple is ready to do. This section includes some simple questions to get you talking—letting you share as much or as little of your story as you feel comfortable doing. Each session typically offers you 2 options. You can get to know your whole group by using the icebreaker question(s), or you can check in with 1 or 2 group members for a deeper connection and encouragement in your spiritual journey.

WATCH THE VIDEO. When the study directs you to, you'll start the video and watch a short teaching segment. You can watch the videos online. Each session's teaching will include biblical insights from your pastor. Space is provided in this study guide to take notes you can use in the discussion to follow.

LEARN TOGETHER. In this section, you'll have an opportunity to read a passage of Scripture and discuss both the teaching and the text. You won't focus on accumulating information but on how you should live in light of the Word of God. We want to help you apply the insights from Scripture practically and creatively, from your heart as well as your head. At the end of the day, allowing the timeless truths from God's Word to transform our lives in Christ should be your greatest aim.

STUDY NOTES. This brief section provides additional commentary, background, or insights on the passage you'll study in the Learn Together section.

GROW TOGETHER. God wants you to be a part of His Kingdom—to weave your story into His. That will mean change. It will require you to go His way rather than your own. This won't happen overnight, but it should happen steadily. By making small, simple choices, we can begin to change our direction. This is where the Bible's instructions to "be doers of the Word, not just hearers" (James 1:22) comes into play. Many people skip over this aspect of the Christian life because it's scary, relationally awkward, or simply too much work for their busy schedules. But Jesus wanted all of His disciples to know Him personally, carry out His commands, and help outsiders connect with Him. This doesn't necessarily mean preaching on street corners. It could mean welcoming newcomers, hosting a short-term group in your home, or walking through this study with a friend. In this study, you'll have an opportunity to go beyond Bible study to biblical living.


DAILY DEVOTIONS. Each week on the Daily Devotions pages we provide Scriptures to read and reflect on between sessions—a month's worth of reflections to keep God's Word near your heart. This provides you with a chance to slow down, read just a small portion of Scripture each day, and reflect and pray through it. You'll then have a chance to journal your response to what you've read. Use this section to seek God on your own throughout the week. This time at home should begin and end with prayer. Don't get in a hurry; take enough time to hear God's direction.

SERMON NOTES. Bring your study guide with you each Sunday and take notes during the sermon in the provided blanks. Answers for the blanks can be found on page 147 in case you miss a week or a blank.



Growing Deep and Wide
STARTS WITH GOD





Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.

JEREMIAH 17:7-8

INTRODUCTION

*You cannot
serve two
masters.*

You cannot serve two masters. Jesus said this. It's impossible to serve two masters equally. You can only love one, which leads to hating the other. When it comes to money as a master, money is a ruthless taskmaster. Money is never satisfied. Think about this: if things could make you happy, you'd be happy. You've got a lot of things. But, serving money creates a longing for more. It's just not satisfying. But, serving God, well, that's another story.

COME TOGETHER

Each of us has a story. The events of our life—good, bad, wonderful or challenging— have shaped who we are. God knows your story, and He intends to redeem it—to use every struggle and every joy to ultimately bring you to Himself. When we share our stories with others, we give them the opportunity to see God at work. When we share our stories, we also realize we are not alone—that we have common experiences and thoughts, and that others can understand what we are going through. Your story can encourage someone else, and telling it can lead to a path of freedom for you and for those you share it with.

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to give you insight as you study. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

Before you start this first meeting, get contact information for every participant. Take time to pass around a copy of the Small Group Roster on page 135, a sheet of paper, or pass around your Study Guide, opened to the Small Group Roster. Ask someone to make copies or type up a list with everyone's information, and email it to the group during the week.

Then, begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- 1 On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being totally uncomfortable and 10 being completely comfortable, how do you feel when the church brings up the topic of money? (And you can't choose 4, 5, or 6).
- 2 What attitudes about money stand out from your childhood?



- Whether your group is new or ongoing, it's always important to reflect on and review your values together. On page 128 is a Small Group Agreement with the values we've found most useful in sustaining healthy, balanced groups. We recommend that you choose one or two values—ones you haven't previously focused on or have room to grow in—to emphasize during this study. Choose ones that will take your group to the next stage of intimacy and spiritual health.
- If your group is new, welcome newcomers. Introduce everyone—you may even want to have name tags for your first meeting.
- We recommend you rotate host homes on a regular basis and let the hosts lead the meeting. Studies show that healthy groups rotate leadership. This helps to develop every member's ability to shepherd a few people in a safe environment. Even Jesus gave others the opportunity to serve alongside Him (Mark 6:30-44). Look at the FAQs in the Appendices for additional information about hosting or leading the group.
- The Small Group Calendar on page 130 is a tool for planning who will host and lead each meeting. Take a few minutes to plan hosts and leaders for your remaining meetings. Don't skip this important step! It will revolutionize your group. If anyone is hesitant, simply tell them to think about it, and you'll get back to them.

Scan the QR code to be taken to the video for this session. This can also be accessed by going to:
cityrise.org/deepandwide



WATCH VIDEO SESSION 1

Record key thoughts on the following page, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Learn Together section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions, and direct the discussion.





LEARN TOGETHER

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes section to guide your reading and discussion.

READ: MATTHEW 6:19-24

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, ²³ but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

- 3 What is the downside of storing up treasures on earth?
- 4 What are some practical ways to store up treasure in heaven?
- 5 Reread Matthew 6:22-23 replacing “healthy” with “generous,” and “bad” with “stingy.” How do people’s viewpoints toward generosity affect their whole beings?
- 6 What do you believe is a proper attitude toward money?





STUDY NOTES

Healthy, verse 22, implies generous.

Masters, verse 24. The use of the term “master” here does not in any way condone slavery. Jesus used an analogy that was easily understood by those He was speaking to because of slavery’s unfortunate prevalence in the culture. In our day as in theirs, free people choose who or what to follow.

Money, verse 24, Greek mammon, a Semitic word for money or possessions.

GROW TOGETHER

Our Creator is certainly after more from us than a grudging acknowledgment that He exists. There are plenty of people who are willing to admit there’s a God, but they still don’t want to have anything to do with Him. God wants you to be a part of His Kingdom—to weave your story into His. That will mean change—to go His way rather than your own. This won’t happen overnight, but it should happen steadily. By starting with small, simple choices, we begin to change our direction. We can build a legacy that will please God. The Holy Spirit helps us along the way—giving us gifts to serve the body, offering us insights into Scripture, and challenging us to love not only those around us but those far from God.

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you’ve learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then think about practical steps you can take in the coming week to live out what you’ve learned.



7 How do people invest in corrosive materials or eternal ones? What is the result?

8 Think about what you have invested yourself in (your time, talent, and treasure). How do your investments stand up to Jesus' standard? Can they be devoured, rusted, or stolen?

9 How are you investing in what brings Christlikeness?

10 What's one thing you can do this week to refocus your investments toward what is eternal?

11 Take a look at the Circles of Life diagram above and write the names of two or three people you know who need to know Christ. Commit to praying for God's guidance and an opportunity to share with each of them. Perhaps they would be open to joining the group? Share your lists with the group so you can all be praying for the people you've identified.

- Also consider someone—in this group or outside it—that you can begin going deeper with in an intentional way. This might be your mom or dad, a cousin, an aunt or uncle, a roommate, a college buddy, or a neighbor. Choose someone who might be open to “doing life” with you at a deeper level and pray about that opportunity.
- This week, how will you interact with the Bible? Can you commit to spending time in daily prayer or study of God's Word (use the Daily Devotions section to guide you)? Tell the group how you plan to follow Jesus this week, and then, at your next meeting, talk about your progress and challenges.
- Commit together to taking a risk and going deeper in your group and in your relationships with each other.
- Ask, “How can we pray for you this week?” Invite everyone to share, but don't force the issue. Be sure to write prayer requests on your Prayer and Praise Report on page 132.
- Close your meeting with prayer.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

DAY 1 Read Hebrews 11:8

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

REFLECT:

It's easy to think, "if God told me to go, I'd go—but have you?" Under what circumstances have you responded to God the way Abraham did?

DAY 2

Read Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

REFLECT:

How are you invested in the church's mission?

DAY 3

Read Proverbs 3:35

The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.

REFLECT:

Note that legacy parallels inheritance. What would you say are the 3 main examples of the faith legacy you have created to leave behind at this point in your life? What would you change?

DAY 4

Read Ephesians 3:6

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

REFLECT:

What do you have in Christ that you have not in any way earned? As you begin to engage with the Deep and Wide study, in what areas of life are you wanting to be more active in sharing the inheritance you have in Christ?

DAY 5

Read Philippians 4:19

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

REFLECT:

How can we know the truth of this promise unless we are willing to stop gripping on to the things of this life as if they were our true security? What do you need to release into God's hands as you seek to be all in to what He wants to do in you and in us?

DAY 6

Use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your reflection time this week.

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 1

FIRST TO THE LORD

2 Corinthians 8:1-7

¹We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ²for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴begging us earnestly for the favor[b] of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. ⁶Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

OUTLINE

Those who are abundantly generous...

1. Don't wait for perfect _____
2. Give themselves first to the _____
3. Seek to Grow in the grace of giving

This is what overflowing generosity looks like.

1. God gives grace for the season to the churches
2. Ingredients of the generosity of the Macedonian churches
 - a. _____ — Some sort of big challenge/pressure
 - b. _____ — There was no limit to their joy
 - c. _____ — Just the facts of their economic situation

Application: Ideal circumstances don't have to be present for _____.

Application: Joy that has no _____, _____, or _____ in our lives so that we aren't defined by our circumstance.

Application Question: Does our giving reflect a Jesus first commitment that has an:

1. Investment mindset? _____
2. According to our means? _____
3. And sacrificially at times? _____

BOBBY'S STORY

My name is Bobby, and I'm 83 years old. I've had the privilege of being a member of this church for 53 years, and I was the treasurer for 32 years. I've encountered many blessings over that time and seen God provide in wonderful ways that showed us where He wanted us to go.

One instance of this was early in Pastor Barry's ministry when we were remodeling our sanctuary. We got to the point where we were short \$65,000 to finish the project for the year. We discussed six members that we could maybe ask to help make up the difference, and we decided on that Thursday that we would go home and pray about it. By the weekend, if we still needed help, we'd consider asking them for it.

Sunday came around, and I was going across the muddy street to the church, and one of the couples on our list was over there waiting for me out front. They said they had \$10,000 to give us and asked if and where we needed it. I told them about our situation, and they were happy to give it.

That same night, I got a call from another member saying basically the same thing. He had \$10,000 to give and wanted to see if we needed it. I told him the same story and he said he'd go and try to find another \$10,000, which he did. The next morning, a third member on that list called and said he



had \$20,000 to give and someone who was not even on the list called Pastor Barry to offer \$17,000.

The short version is that by Wednesday, we had \$65,250 without asking for a cent. When that story got around, even more people gave. What that meant to me was the Lord was working with this church to see that it kept going, because He had bigger and bigger things for us to do in the future. He certainly did do bigger and bigger things, and I know that He is only just beginning to bless and use CityRise.



Growing Deep and Wide
CHALLENGES MY TRUST

2

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[a] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

INTRODUCTION

Trust seems like a rare commodity.

Trust seems like a rare commodity these days. It's hard to know who to trust or what to trust. Even the trusted names in news seem to lead us for their own purposes. When you don't know who to trust, it's easy to default to trusting only in yourself. The problem is that when you look at your life and your resources, you have arrived exactly where you are because you trusted in yourself. What would it look like to trust God in all areas of your life?



COME TOGETHER

As we said last week, when we share our stories with others, we give them the opportunity to see God at work. Your story is being shaped, even in this moment, by being part of this group. In fact, few things can shape us more than community.

When we share our stories, we can encourage someone else, and learn. We experience the presence of God as He helps us be brave enough to reveal our thoughts and feelings.

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

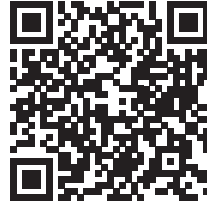
Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking:

- 1 What is your favorite season of the year? Why?
- 2 What has been your favorite season of life so far?
- 3 In the last session we asked you to write some names in the Circles of Life diagram. Who did you identify as the people in your life who need to meet Jesus? Go back to the Circles of Life diagram on page 63 to help you think of various people you come in contact with on a regular basis; people who need to know Jesus more deeply. Consider ideas for action and make a plan to follow through on one of them this week.





WATCH VIDEO SESSION 2



Scan the QR code to be taken to the video for this session. This can also be accessed at:
cityrise.org/deepandwide



Use the notes space provided to record key thoughts, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Learn Together section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions, and direct the discussion.





LEARN TOGETHER

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes section to guide your reading and discussion.

READ: JEREMIAH 17:7-8

⁷ *“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.*

⁸ *He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

4 How does being planted by the stream symbolize trust?

5 When you think about the people in your life, family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors, what do they seem to trust the most? Where is your trust?

6 When you think of the Christians you know, how much of their trust is in the Lord? 100%? 90%? 50%?

7 Other than God, who or what do you trust the most?



STUDY NOTES

Blessed, verse 7, also translated as happy.

Roots, verse 8, literally trust.

GROW TOGETHER

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then think about practical steps you can take in the coming week to live out what you've learned.

- 8 How have you experienced God's abundance in your life?
- 9 What is the difference between a person whose trust is **IN** the Lord and a person whose trust **IS** the Lord?
- 10 Do you believe God's nature is one of abundance? Why or why not?
- 11 What helps you increase your trust in God?





Here are some simple ways to connect with God. Tell the group which ones you plan to try this week, and talk about your progress and challenges when you meet next time.

- **Prayer.** Commit to personal prayer and daily connection with God. You may find it helpful to write your prayers in a journal.
- **Daily Devotions.** The Daily Devotions provided in each session offers an opportunity to read a short Bible passage five days a week during the course of our study. In our hurry-up world, we often move too quickly through everything—even reading God’s Word! Slow down. Don’t just skim, but take time to carefully read and reflect on the passage. Write down your insights on what you read each day. Copy a portion of Scripture on a card and tape it somewhere in your line of sight, such as your car’s dashboard or the bathroom mirror. Or text it to yourself! Think about it when you sit at red lights or while you’re eating a meal. Reflect on what God is saying to you through these words. On the sixth day summarize what God has shown you throughout the week.
- Ask, “How can we pray for you this week?” Invite everyone to share, but don’t force the issue. Be sure to write prayer requests on your Prayer and Praise Report on page 132 .
- **Close your meeting with prayer.**

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

DAY 1 Read Philippians 2:4

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

REFLECT:

How does trusting God translate into less concern about self and more interest in helping others and the Body of Christ?

DAY 2

Read Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

REFLECT:

This is the alternative to worry Jesus offers in the extended passage of Matthew 6:25-34. In what ways is worry a clue that we're not trusting God?

DAY 3

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

REFLECT:

How do you need to trust the Lord with all your heart right now?

DAY 4

Read Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

REFLECT:

How is your heart following your treasure?

DAY 5

Read Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

REFLECT:

If faith and trust are closely related in our relationship with God, what evidence is apparent in your life that you believe "that He is" and you believe "that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him?"

DAY 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 2

ABOUNDING TO SERVE

2 Corinthians 8:8-15

⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine.

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. ¹⁰ And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. ¹¹ So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. ¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³ For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness ¹⁴ your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. ¹⁵ As it is written, "Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack."

OUTLINE

Those who give themselves first to the Lord...

1. Give _____
2. Give with a _____
3. Give from their _____ to serve those in need

The Nature of Giving

1. Genuine love is _____
2. When we give sacrificially it is to _____ benefit
3. Willingness is _____ to make it acceptable

Application: You can't give _____

Application Question: Are you ready to give from what you do have to see it to completion? Why or why not? And sacrificially at times?

KEITH & SAVANNAH BROWNING'S STORY

We are Savannah and Keith. We met in college at the University of Florida, and in 2013 we found a home in Houston after moving for a job opportunity. We have two girls who we love and cherish; Ansley is 11 and Emerson is six. We both grew up in church and met in the Baptist Collegiate Ministries in college. We became friends, and then later we dated and got married. The student ministry was a great spiritual foundation for when we moved and joined Crosspoint.

Crosspoint was the first church we visited after moving, and on that first day David and Denise Glenn invited us to a new class for young couples. That's when we really jumped right in. Denise and David felt like a mom and dad, because they felt close to us, even though we had moved from thousands of miles away and didn't know anyone. They were a really great influence for our family as we started our new lives. I remember the Glens challenged us to give more than what was "routine," and it was really difficult at first, because when we moved to Houston, we had multiple mortgages from our houses in Florida and Texas, so we had to trust God to provide for us.

We were tithing on our net, but they challenged us to give based on our gross income. It was a challenge, but it really opened up opportunities to give more and more to support the Lord's work, and it slowly became the new normal, even though at one point we disagreed on how much we should be giving and had to work through it. It was a hard time for us financially, so the idea of giving more was challenging. But we know God deserves our first and our best, so we ultimately decided to give more.

We're always reminded of Phillipians 4:19: "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." As we gave to God, we began to see Him provide more and more for our needs in ways we would never expect. All these big changes happened as Savannah was no longer working, so we increased our giving while also cutting our income in half. As natural planners, it was difficult, but at the same time it was beautiful and sweet to see how the Lord provides.

David and Denise Glenn have influenced us and our giving so much, yet we've heard they owe their generosity to another influence whom we have never even met. It's amazing how the Lord continues to work through the hearts of others, and these faithful people have passed down an inspiring legacy to us and to you. While we too will likely never meet who is reading this, we pray that our story impacts how you give in the same way.





Growing Deep and Wide
EMPOWERS US TO PRAY BOLDLY



Do not be anxious about anything,
but in everything by prayer and
supplication with thanksgiving let your
requests be made known to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

INTRODUCTION

*Have you
ever prayed
boldly?*

Have you ever prayed boldly? What is a bold prayer? The Bible tells us that we have not because we ask not. When you think about it, most of the things you've acquired have come about from asking. You don't need to be afraid to ask God for anything. The worst that could happen is that God would tell you "no" or "wait." Of course, the very worst thing is not receiving because you never asked God boldly.

COME TOGETHER

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

Sharing personal stories builds deeper connections among group members. Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- 1 What could you use a little more of right now?
- 2 What does it mean to lack nothing?







LEARN TOGETHER

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes section to guide your reading and discussion.

READ: PSALM 37:25-26

*²⁵ I have been young, and now am old,
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken
or his children begging for bread.*

*²⁶ He is ever lending generously,
and his children become a blessing.*

READ: PROVERBS 3:9-10

*⁹ Honor the Lord with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;*

*¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

3 What does it mean to honor God with the first fruits of your wealth

4 How does God honor those who honor Him?

5 How have you experienced God's blessing in the way these verses describe?



STUDY NOTES

And his children become a blessing, Psalm 37:26, Or the names of their children will be used in blessings OR others will see that their children are blessed.

Firstfruits, Proverbs 3:9, the first agricultural produce of a season, especially when given as an offering to God.

Your wealth, Proverbs 3:9, can also mean your crops or your income.

GROW TOGETHER

God wants you to be part of His Kingdom—to weave your story into His. That will mean change. It will require you to go His way rather than your own. This won't happen overnight, but it should happen steadily. By making small, simple choices, we can begin to change our direction. The Holy Spirit helps us along the way, by giving us gifts to serve the body, offering us insights into Scripture, and challenging us to love not only those around us but those far from God.

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned in this session.





- 6 How have you seen the righteous blessed by God?
- 7 What would it feel like to be more generous to others?
- 8 2 Corinthians 9:8 says, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.” What would it look like to have this verse fulfilled in your life?
- 9 What is one thing you can do this week to show generosity to someone?

- What steps will you take this week to grow in your relationship with God? If you’ve focused on prayer in past weeks, maybe you’ll want to direct your attention to Scripture this week. If you’ve been reading God’s Word consistently, perhaps you’ll want to take it deeper, and try memorizing a verse. Tell the group which one you plan to try this week, and talk about your progress and challenges when you meet next time.
- Ask, “How can we pray for you this week?” Invite everyone to share, but don’t force the issue. Be sure to write prayer requests on your Prayer and Praise Report on page 132.
- Close your meeting with prayer.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

DAY 1 Read Mark 7:6

And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

REFLECT:

In the solitude of your heart's thoughts, how committed are you to this challenge of honoring God with everything?

DAY 2 Read Revelation 4:11

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

REFLECT:

How does this verse make the case for making everything we are and everything we have available to God 24/7?

DAY 3 Read Matthew 8:8-9

But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

REFLECT:

How did this centurion combine faith with honor to acknowledge Jesus’ power?

DAY 4 Read Luke 19:8

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

REFLECT:

What happened in Zacchaeus that would cause him to honor God with 100%?

DAY 5 Read 1 Samuel 2:29-30

Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?’ Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,’ but now the Lord declares: ‘Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

REFLECT:

God let Eli know that he was honoring his sons more than he was honoring the Lord. What promise did God also give that we can count on?

DAY 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.

SERMON NOTES

WEEK 3

LEADING WITH INTEGRITY

2 Corinthians 8:16-24, 9:1-5

¹⁶ But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you. ¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord. ¹⁸ With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel. ¹⁹ And not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will. ²⁰ We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, ²¹ for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man. ²² And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found earnest in many matters, but who is now more earnest than ever because of his great confidence in you. ²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. ²⁴ So give proof before the churches of your love and of our boasting about you to these men.

¹ Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, ² for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them. ³ But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. ⁴ Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. ⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.

OUTLINE

This message deals with the planning and administration of the resources to accomplish the vision. God's people should expect excellent oversight and planning.

1. Principle: 2 Cor. 8:16-24 Leaders must demonstrate integrity and trust with God's Resources by employing: a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
2. Principle: 2 Cor. 9:1-2 The People who come ready with a zeal to give, _____
3. Principle: 2 Cor 9:3-5 Leaders who do advanced planning can _____

Application Question: What steps could you take in your own life to be more intentional and organized about your giving?

DAVID AND DENISE GLENN'S STORY

We are David and Denise Glenn, and we've been at CityRise now for 10 years. We grew up as believers, and when we came back from living overseas, it was very clear that God led us straight to CityRise. We wanted to sink our roots here to do what God had called us to do.

We jumped into serving as greeters, and we'll never forget meeting Keith and Savannah Browning. We bumped into them one Sunday and there was an instant connection. God gave us an open door to influence and lead, and we were able to share what God had been doing in our lives with younger couples. This is our heart, and we love being with young families.

One of the first things we shared about was giving and our journey with tithing. We initially never tithed despite being taught to. When we first got married, we were students and had nothing, so we thought "we cannot afford to tithe." But we were convinced that we were meant to give on our full income of what God has given us, and as soon as we started to give faithfully on our gross, God really started to bless us and give us peace in our lives.

We had just moved to tithing on the gross when we met this older gentleman who shared how he came to giving 50% of his income. We were in shock, and it really moved us. For us, we came to realize that the 10% tithe is only the baseline for our giving, and we know that although giving 50% is probably not for everybody, for us it was what we were called to do.

We give as much as we can, but God always gives more. It's amazing how God gives to us

so that we can continue to give even more. It's unbelievable how much fun it actually is, that He always provides for us so generously, and we have such a blast giving.

What's amazing about this whole story is that what we slowly learned from this humble West Texas rancher, we got to share with the Brownings, and we were able to hear from them how they were impacted by our story. It's amazing the way that God works, that He would use others to share motivation that influences other people to give.

It's been so great to watch the Brownings grow in their faith and their giving. Who knows what God's calling you to do? He may have touched your heart just because of all of our stories. We don't know where He's going to take you, but it's so exciting to think about the legacy we've helped to carry on and how God raises up His kingdom from generation-to-generation.





Growing Deep and Wide
SHIFTS THE HEART FROM NO TO YES



Whoever sows sparingly will also
reap sparingly, and whoever sows
bountifully will also reap bountifully.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6

INTRODUCTION

*You have been
blessed to be
a blessing.*

What you have been given was given to you as a trust. You have been blessed to be a blessing. When you give, it never runs out. When you open your hands, share, and love, you invest into others out of a spirit of hospitality and generosity. It multiplies. It grows and flourishes. That's the nature of the kingdom.



COME TOGETHER

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

As we have said in previous lessons, sharing our personal stories builds deeper connections among group members. Your story may be exactly what another person needs to hear, and listening to others' stories is an act of love and kindness to them—and could very well help them to grow spiritually.

Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- 1 How have you experienced generosity?
- 2 What would the world call “rich”?
- 3 Share one prayer request and one thing you want to thank God for. Spend some time praying about what you've shared.
- 4 Take some time for each person to share about how they're doing on the challenge of inviting the people on the Circles of Life diagram to church or your small group. What specific conversations are you praying about for the weeks to come?





WATCH VIDEO SESSION 4



◀ Scan the QR code to be taken to the video for this session. This can also be accessed at: cityrise.org/deepandwide

Use the notes space provided to record key thoughts, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Learn Together section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions, and direct the discussion.







LEARN TOGETHER

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes section to guide your reading and discussion.

READ: 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

READ: MATTHEW 25:14-18

¹⁴ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.

5 What can we do to ‘store up treasure’ according to 1 Timothy 6?

6 How are you experiencing what is “truly life”?

7 Why were the servants in Matthew 25 given different amounts?

8 According to Matthew 25, what should you do with what you’ve been given?



STUDY NOTES

Haughty, 1 Timothy 6:17, means arrogantly superior and disdainful.

Servants, Matthew 25:14, or bondservants. A bondservant is a person bound in service without wages.

Talent, Matthew 25:15, a monetary unit worth about twenty years' wages for a laborer.

GROW TOGETHER

- 9 What has God given you? How are you investing it?
- 10 How does believing you are self-made interfere with God's plan for your finances?
- 11 Do you feel you are sowing sparingly or bountifully? Why?



- 12 What shift do you need to make?
- Is it from withholding to investing?
 - Is it from owning to managing?
 - Is it from how little to how much?

- 13 What is one thing you can do this week to show generosity?

- Each of you in the group has different gifts and abilities. And every small group has tasks and roles that need to be done. How could you serve this group—perhaps with hospitality or prayer, by organizing an event, research or study of a topic, or inviting new people?
- Spend some time praying about those you know who might respond to a simple invitation: to come to a church service, to join your small group, or even to just have coffee and talk about spiritual matters. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind people you can pray for.
- Groups grow closer when they serve together. How could your group serve someone in need? You may want to visit those who are homebound from your church, provide a meal for a family who is going through difficulty, or give some other practical help to someone in need. If nothing comes to mind, spend time praying and asking God to show you who needs your help. Have two or three group members organize a serving project for the group, and then do it!

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

DAY 1 Read Luke 9:62

Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

REFLECT:

How will you keep from getting distracted or looking back during the next two years?

DAY 2 Read Revelation 3:21

The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

REFLECT:

As the One who overcame, what help does Jesus offer to us as we seek to be overcomers?

DAY 3 Read John 16:33

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

REFLECT:

If yesterday's verse was overwhelming, how does this one settle things a bit?

DAY 4 Read Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

REFLECT:

As someone once said, "The only problem with a living sacrifice is that it keeps crawling off the altar." This verse is Paul's invitation to a full commitment. What is keeping you from being a living sacrifice?

DAY 5 Read Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

REFLECT:

How might the next two years be the most transformative work of God in your life since you became a follower of Jesus? How does that possibility influence your willingness to be all in?

DAY 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.

ARE YOU A CHEERFUL GIVER?

2 Corinthians 9:6-9

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

OUTLINE

Cheerful Givers...

1. Understand _____ (v. 6)
2. Are Excited about _____ (v. 7)
3. Are Confident in God's ability to _____ (v. 8)
4. Understand God's _____ (v. 9)

Give Freely/Give Cheerfully

Application: Decide how you will _____

Application: Be excited about what you get to give to God and _____

Application Question: Are you confident in God's ability to cause you to abound? What gets in the way of your trusting God to bless you when you give?

TRICIA'S STORY

I met my husband here in Houston about 14 years ago playing touch rugby. We were both super competitive, and we ended up getting married. We have three children now. They are 11, nine, and seven years old.

Over the last few weeks we've been involved in Fight for It. Pastor Robby reached out to us asking whether we'd be interested in leading a small group, and my initial reaction was a "no", as I thought looking after the kids and working would be too much to handle at the same time. Eventually, though, I realized there was probably a reason I was being asked to do this, so I let Pastor Robby know I was interested.

Through that, I've been able to connect with two other mothers, and it's been such a wonderful way for us to get closer and to learn about serving. Sometimes it feels like I'm pouring from an empty cup, like I have nothing to give, but connecting with the other moms in the group has helped me realize that serving doesn't necessarily mean being out there in the community serving insane hours of your time volunteering; it actually starts in your own home. Gratefulness, that you have the opportunity to serve your spouse and your family, is a blessing, and it's helped me shift my mindset from "how will I get through the day" to "this is such a blessing that I've been given, that I get to serve my family."

Since October we've met a lot of Afghan refugees through Houston Welcomes Refugees. My husband is always eager to serve, so together we've had the opportunity to help and meet a lot of these families who I now call friends and family.

It can be a struggle for me to find the energy to serve, but I've learned how much it's helped me mentally, and it always gives me a fresh perspective on what's worth fighting for and what to be grateful for.

What I would encourage you to think about as you too have these opportunities to serve is that, while you might feel overwhelmed, just start small. Look at the people around you, your roommate, your neighbor, your partner, your family. There's always a need out there that may not be apparent, so start off small.

I would also encourage you to think about how even if you are yourself exhausted, or even though you may not have the capacity to help out strangers, it is always tremendously beneficial when you courageously stretch yourself and put yourself out there to help other people.

Even though you may be in a difficult season, it always helps to serve.





Growing Deep and Wide
IS EXPONENTIAL IN NATURE

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

PROVERBS 11:25 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION

Generosity is exponential!

This verse always reminds me of the final scene of the movie, It's a Wonderful Life. George Bailey, whose family Building and Loan has run on hard times through a series of errors, is at his wits' end. He returns home to find the whole town in his living room giving what they have to George because over the years he showed generosity to them. Wouldn't you like to have friends like that? Wouldn't you like to be the recipient of such generosity when you needed it? Generosity is exponential!



COME TOGETHER

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

As we have said in previous lessons, sharing our personal stories builds deeper connections among group members. Your story may be exactly what another person needs to hear to encourage or strengthen them. And listening to others' stories is an act of love and kindness to them—and could very well help them to grow spiritually.

Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- 1 What has surprised you most about this group? Where did God meet you over the last five weeks?
- 2 Tell the group about someone who has a fruitful life.
- 3 What has God been showing you through these sessions? What positive changes has your group noticed in you? Check in with each other about the progress you have made in your spiritual growth during this study. Make plans about whether you will continue your relationship after the group has concluded.
- 4 Take some time for each person to share about how they've done with inviting the people on the Circles of Life diagram to church or your small group. What specific conversations are you praying about for the weeks to come?



WATCH VIDEO SESSION 5



Scan the QR code to be taken to the video for this session. This can also be accessed at: cityrise.org/deepandwide

Use the notes space provided to record key thoughts, questions and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Learn Together section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions, and direct the discussion.







LEARN TOGETHER

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes section to guide your reading and discussion.

READ: PROVERBS 11:30

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise.

READ: PROVERBS 11:25 (NIV)

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

READ: MATTHEW 10:38-39

³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

READ: JOHN 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

5 What does it mean for life to beget life?

6 How does giving away your life help you to find life? How have you seen this work?

7 According to John 15, what is the secret of bearing much fruit?

8 What does it mean to abide in the vine?





STUDY NOTES

Fruit, Proverbs 11:30, also translated the seeds of good deeds.

whoever captures souls, Proverbs 11:30, also translated, a wise person wins friends or those who win souls are wise.

Abides...bears much fruit, for apart...you can do nothing, John 15:5, Jesus is relating to his own dependence on His Father and His helplessness without Him (John 5:19, 30).

GROW TOGETHER

How has God changed your story during this five-week study? What new things is He asking you to do? What truth has transformed your heart? Think about specific steps you want to take to live a new story, to walk more closely with God so you can be part of His story and engaged in His kingdom.

- 9 Who invested in you personally? What did they do?
- 10 How has God led you to be generous with others? How were you refreshed?
- 11 Why are people reluctant to give away their lives?
- 12 How is busyness the opposite of abiding?
- 13 How can you intentionally abide in the vine this week?



- Since this is the last meeting in this study, take some time to celebrate the work God has done in the lives of group members. Have each person in the group share some step of growth they have noticed in another member. (In other words, no one will talk about themselves. Instead, affirm others in the group.) Make sure each person gets affirmed and noticed and celebrated in some way.
- If your group still needs to make decisions about continuing to meet after this session, have that discussion now. Talk about what you will study, who will lead, and when you will meet.
- Review your Small Group Agreement on page 128 and evaluate how well you met your goals. Discuss any changes you want to make as you move forward. If you plan to continue to meet, and your group starts a new study, this is a great time to take on a new role or change roles of service in your group. What new role will you take on? If you are uncertain, maybe your group members have some ideas for you. Remember you aren't making a lifetime commitment to the new role; it will only be for a few weeks. Maybe someone would like to share a role with you if you don't feel ready to serve solo.
- Close by praying for your prayer requests and take a couple of minutes to review the praises you have recorded over the past five weeks on the Prayer and Praise Report on page 132. Spend some time thanking God for all He's done in your group during this study.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

DAY 1 Read Philippians 3:7-8.

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

REFLECT:

How is this a picture of joyful surrender for a good reason?

DAY 2 Read Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

REFLECT:

In what ways does this verse describe basic surrender to God on our part?

DAY 3 Read Galatians 2:20-21

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

REFLECT:

How do you identify with Paul's description of the surrendered life in these verses?

DAY 4 Read John 12:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

REFLECT:

What are some aspects of your life that you still need to surrender to God for His plans?

DAY 5 Read John 8:36

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

REFLECT:

How has this study affected the sense of freedom that you have in Christ?

DAY 6

Reflect on the verses from this past week, and use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your Daily Devotions time this week.

YOUR GOD AND YOUR FINANCES

2 Corinthians 9:10-15

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

OUTLINE

God supplies for us and multiplies our resources so that we will sow more in order to increase the harvest of our righteousness.

1. Principle: God has a _____ for our finances (v. 10-11a)
2. Principle: God has a _____ on our finances (v. 11b-14)
3. Principle: God has a _____ through our finances (v. 15)

Application Question: Do you believe that God has a purpose for your finances? What is it?

Application Question: What would stop you from giving yourself first to the Lord so that you can give Him whatever He wants? _____

Application: Pledge Day!

DORIS EBY'S STORY

My story of giving started a long time ago in 1957 when my husband Hardy and I moved to College Station for him to pursue his masters and teach part time. We had two girls; Carol was two and Cindy was one.

The salary wasn't great. I still remember it was \$400 before deductions, so we had to be careful. I took care of the finances, because Hardy was always busy with going to school or teaching. Every month I had to write down on a sheet of paper what we needed to pay, and we had to live on what that was.

One month, there was one expense we couldn't afford, so I wrote down my solution to show to Hardy. We'd have enough if we skipped our offering to the church.

We weren't tithers at this point, but when he looked at the paper, he said "No, you go ahead and write that check." And I did write that check with the intention of showing him in the end that I would be right.

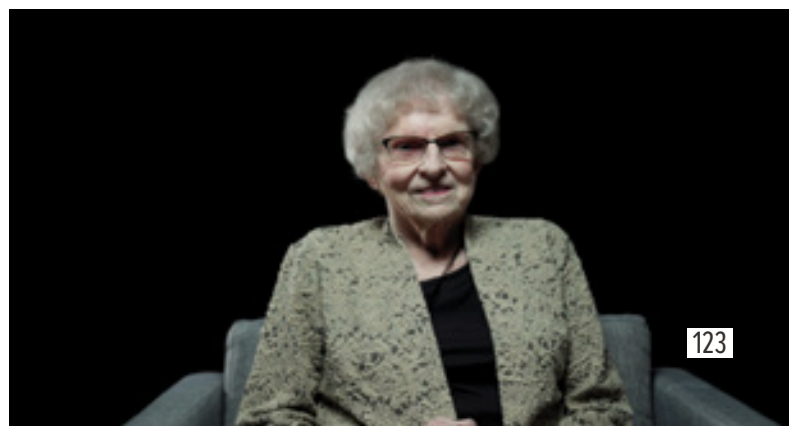
We took the check on Sunday, and I was still worrying about finances. On Tuesday he called me and told me that an engineering firm had called for him to do surveying work for the next few Saturdays, and through that the Lord got my attention. He taught me to be faithful and in return He would be faithful always.

From that point on, we became faithful tithers, and God always provided enough. Later when I became a widow at a young age, providing for six children alone would get hard sometimes, but there was always enough. He's led me through that and more, and it's such a blessing to see that I'm being obedient and He's blessing me because of it. It's so neat that I can give my tithe every month and to give to missions and other things that the church needs, and He's always given me enough.

It's an old saying that you can't outgive God, and it's true.

If you're having trouble tithing, I believe if you really just try it for a while, you will see that God will be faithful. For me, giving became very joyful for me, and it still is. Because He's always serving me, I want to serve Him. I hope I have done a good job over the years, and I hope to continue to serve and to worship Him.

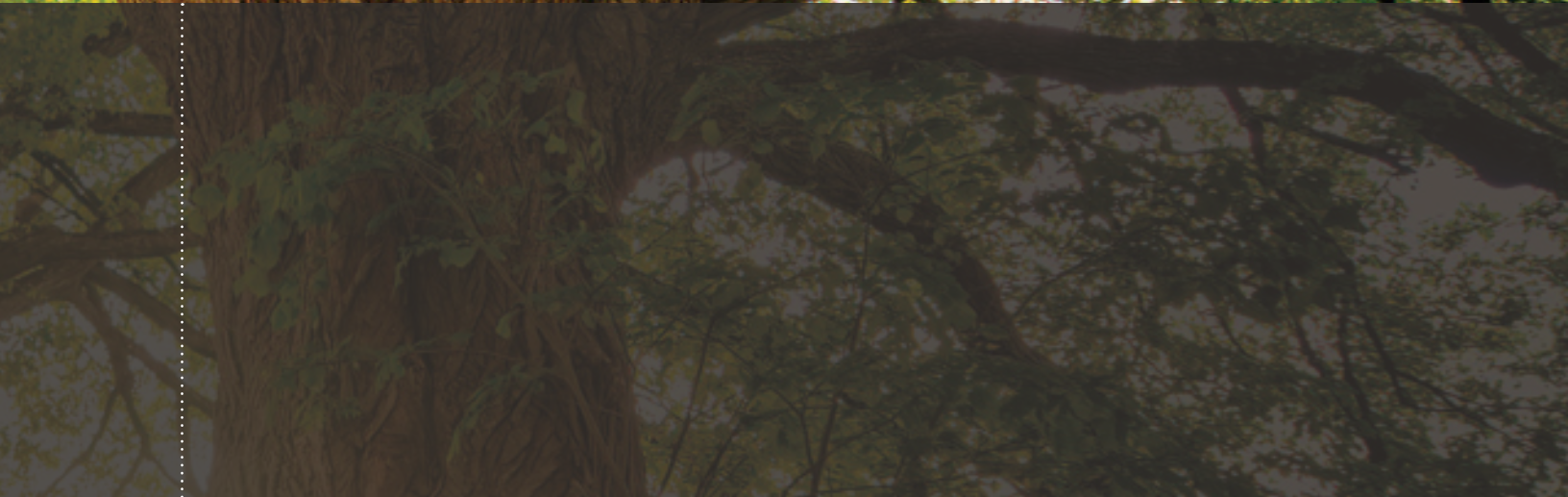
I've always known Jesus was with me. When we were still in College Station, we were driving with our baby boy to see my husband's grandmother. A drunk driver hit us head on, and he was killed, but we all survived. There's no way you can get through that without knowing Jesus is by your side. He gave me strength and a peace that only He can give.





APPENDICES





Resources to make your Small Group
experience even better!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I am jumping into Deep & Wide, how does this change my tittle and “over and above” giving?

During this two-year period, every contribution to God through Deep & Wide is a contribution to our generosity initiative. This means that everything from our general ministry budget (which is anything BUT general!) to our special community events, our mission work locally and globally, and our campus and digital expansion projects will all be fueled through the Deep & Wide initiative. So every single dollar given within the next two years will fuel this life-changing mission!

What are you asking me to do?

First and foremost, we are asking you to pray and seek God’s leading on what He is asking of you. Prepare your heart to hear Him, and then listen to what He says. Engage in a Community Group during this season, if you haven’t already. Spend time in personal reflection with God in the Deep & Wide Workbook. Have great conversations with your spouse, your family or others who are on this same journey as you. Through prayer, we are asking that you make a sacrificial commitment to gospel-centered generosity— whatever it is that God leads you to do. Follow His leading. Finally, we ask that you prepare to be amazed. It is an awesome God we serve. He is moving in huge ways, and we anticipate an unprecedented impact from our collective Deep & Wide commitments—something only God can do. Please mark your calendar for our Advance Commitment Night (Sunday, May 15), and prepare to experience a life-changing worship service that will forever be remembered as a defining moment for our church and for your own faith.

Are there additional ways besides cash that I can give more towards Deep & Wide?

Be creative as you explore ways you and your family can give towards the Deep & Wide Initiative. You might have some stocks, cryptocurrency, property, or even some stored resources that God has blessed you with and just might be calling you to give. While stocks may be transferred to the church, other types of property or assets may be liquidated by you as the owner and the proceeds donated to the Deep and Wide generosity initiative. Please let us know if you need assistance with facilitating gifts of stock or cryptocurrency, and we would be happy to help you with that. You can contact Liana Fairbanks at liana.fairbanks@cityrise.org to make a gift of this type.

How long is my commitment?

We are asking that everyone make a two-year commitment, which is 24 months. The fulfillment period for your commitment will begin with our First Big Give on the weekend of June 5, 2022, and will culminate in June of 2024.

Does it matter which CityRise Campus I attend? Will my giving stay tied to my location?

Deep & Wide is a one-fund initiative meaning all of our giving is united, just like our mission for Jesus. However, we have campus-specific projects that will be designated as priorities for each location. We all get the benefit of combined giving with the ability to fund projects at each location that might not otherwise be possible.

What if I am severely in debt right now? Am I still supposed to give?

If you are someone currently seeking to make payments to pay off debt right now, we commend you for making progress on that. And you should continue to do so. We would be happy to encourage you in this journey and/or to get you enrolled in a local personal financial ministry course to help you advance in your efforts. Please contact us if you need assistance with this. We would be honored to help.

What if I have never given to CityRise before?

Deep & Wide was crafted specifically with current givers and potential givers in mind. Deep & Wide is a “one fund” generosity initiative, meaning that it is different from a traditional capital campaign where you are called to give an extra gift above and beyond your normal giving, thus creating two steps for people who aren’t yet giving. Deep & Wide is a call to sacrificial, gospel-centered generosity for absolutely everyone. If you have never given before, this is your chance to get in the game with a committed sacrifice. Remember that our primary goal is 100% engagement so we believe God is calling all of us to step in.

What if I am new here?

Deep & Wide is about the vision for our church and our personal discipleship in giving as followers of Jesus. We believe that the local church is one of the most compelling missions to give towards, and we would really love for you to make us your home and join us in Deep & Wide. If you are ready for it, this is a perfect time for you to put a stake in the ground and make this your church. We want you to join in on this adventure of living out the mission God has for us.

What if I haven’t been baptized yet?

Great question. People take different spiritual steps at different times. Some people begin praying before they begin attending church. Others begin going to a Community Group before they begin talking to God in prayer. Giving is another spiritual step, and it comes at different times for different people. All we ask is that you ask God what His next right step is for you...and that you do that.

One thing is for sure, however. Just like other spiritual disciplines, giving draws us closer to God. And God is calling all of us to give. The Bible says: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:19). Whether you have taken the spiritual step of baptism or not, we would encourage you to still join us in the Deep & Wide Initiative. We firmly believe it will draw you closer to God and hopefully to a place where you are ready to make the decision to become baptized.

How can I give?

We have several options for giving. One is our giving envelopes that are provided each weekend in all of our services. You can also give online anytime at www.cityrise.org/give or through your financial institution’s bill pay feature. As noted above, you may also transfer gifts of stock or cryptocurrency by contacting Liana Fairbanks in our business office.

I have more questions!

Great. For your first stop, check out our Deep & Wide website www.CityRise.org/deepandwide. That will give you more info about this giving initiative and also point you to the right person as well.

SMALL GROUP AGREEMENT

Our purpose is to provide a predictable environment where participants experience authentic community and spiritual growth.

GROUP ATTENDANCE

To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent. (Completing the Group Calendar on page 130 will minimize this issue.)

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved.

RESPECT DIFFERENCES

To be gentle and gracious toward people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or “imperfections.” We are all a work in progress.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

ENCOURAGE GROWTH

Accept one another as we are while encouraging one another to grow.

SHARED OWNERSHIP

To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

REFRESHMENTS/MEALTIMES

CHILDCARE

MEETING DETAILS

When we will meet (day of week) _____

Where we will meet (place) _____

We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____

We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.

Our primary worship service time will be: _____

Date of this agreement: _____

Date we will review this agreement again: _____

Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study?

SMALL GROUP CALENDAR

Planning and calendaring can help ensure the greatest participation at every meeting. At the end of each meeting, review this calendar. Be sure to include a regular rotation of host homes and leaders, and don't forget birthdays, socials, church events, holidays, and mission/ministry projects.

DATE	LESSON	HOST HOME	DESSERT/MEAL	LEADER
Monday, January 15	1	Steve and Laura's	Joe	Bill

WEEKLY CHECK-IN

Briefly check in each week and write down your personal plans and progress targets for the next week (or even for the next few weeks). This could be done before or after the meeting, on the phone, through an email message, or even in person from time to time.

MY NAME:		
	OUR PLANS	OUR PROGRESS
SESSION 1		
SESSION 2		
SESSION 3		
SESSION 4		
SESSION 5		

PRAYER & PRAISE REPORT

SESSION 1

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

SESSION 4

SESSION 5



MEMORY VERSES

Clip and review the Memory Verses on
the other side of this page.

MEMORY VERSE CARDS

SESSION ONE

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree
planted by water, that sends out its roots
by the stream, and does not fear when
heat comes, for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit.

JEREMIAH 17:7-8

SESSION TWO

And God is able to make all
grace abound to you, so that
having all sufficiency[a] in all
things at all times, you may
abound in every good work.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

SESSION THREE

Do not be anxious about
anything, but in everything by
prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving let your requests
be made known to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

SESSION FOUR

Whoever sows sparingly
will also reap sparingly, and
whoever sows bountifully will
also reap bountifully.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6

SESSION FIVE

A generous person will
prosper; whoever refreshes
others will be refreshed.

PROVERBS 11:25 (NIV)

SMALL GROUP ROSTER

EMAIL										
PHONE NUMBER										
NAME										



SMALL GROUP LEADERS

Key resources to help your leadership experience be the best it can be.



HOSTING AN OPEN HOUSE

If you're starting a new group, try planning an "open house" before your first formal group meeting. Even if you have only two to four core members, it's a great way to break the ice and to consider prayerfully who else might be open to joining you over the next few weeks. You can also use this kick-off meeting to hand out study guides, spend some time getting to know each other, discuss each person's expectations for the group and briefly pray for each other. A simple meal or good dessert always make a kick-off meeting more fun.

After people introduce themselves and share how they ended up being at the meeting (you can play a game to see who has the wildest story!), have everyone respond to a few icebreaker questions:

- What is your favorite family vacation?
- What is one thing you love about your church/our community?
- What are three things about your life growing up that most people here don't know?

Next, ask everyone to tell what he or she hopes to get out of the study. You might want to review the Small Group Agreement and talk about each person's expectations and priorities.

Finally, set an open chair (maybe two) in the center of your group and explain that it represents someone who would enjoy or benefit from this group but who isn't here yet. Ask people to pray about inviting someone to join the group over the next few weeks. Hand out postcards and have everyone write an invitation or two. Don't worry about ending up with too many people; you can always have one discussion circle in the living room and another in the dining room after you watch the lesson. Each group could then report prayer requests and progress at the end of the session.

You can skip this kick-off meeting if your time is limited, but you'll experience a huge benefit if you take the time to connect with each other in this way.

LEADING FOR THE FIRST TIME

- Sweaty palms are a healthy sign. The Bible says God is gracious to the humble. Remember who is in control; the time to worry is when you're not worried. Those who are soft in heart (and sweaty palmed) are those whom God is sure to speak through.
- Seek support. Ask your leader, co-leader, or close friend to pray for you and prepare with you before the session. Walking through the study beforehand will help you anticipate potentially difficult questions and discussion topics.
- Bring your uniqueness to the study. Lean into who you are and how God wants you to uniquely lead the study.
- Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Go through the session several times. If you are using the video session, listen to the teaching segment. Consider writing in a journal or fasting for a day to prepare yourself for what God wants to do. Don't wait until the last minute to prepare.
- Ask for feedback. Perhaps in an email or on cards handed out at the study, have everyone write down three things that went well and one thing that could be improved on. Don't get defensive. Instead, show an openness to learn and grow.
- Prayerfully consider launching a new group. This doesn't need to happen overnight, but God's heart is for this to take place over time. Not all Christians are called to be leaders or teachers, but we are all called to be shepherds of a few someday.
- Share with your group what God is doing in your heart. God is searching for those whose hearts are fully his. Share your trials and victories. We promise that people will relate.
- Prayerfully consider who you would like to pass the baton to the next week. It's only fair. God is ready for the next member of your group to go on the faith journey you just traveled. Make it fun, and expect God to do the rest.







LEADERSHIP TRAINING 101

Congratulations! You have responded to the call to help shepherd Jesus' flock. There are few other tasks in the family of God that surpass the contribution you will be making. As you prepare to lead, whether it is one session or the entire series, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind. We encourage you to read these and review them with each new discussion leader before he or she leads.

- 1 Remember that you are not alone. God knows everything about you, and He knew that you would be asked to lead your group. Remember that it is common for all good leaders to feel that they are not ready to lead. Moses, Solomon, Jeremiah and Timothy were all reluctant to lead. God promises, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). Whether you are leading for one evening, for several weeks, or for a lifetime, you will be blessed as you serve.
- 2 Don't try to do it alone. Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy leadership culture. If you can enlist a co-leader to help you lead the group, you will find your experience to be much richer. This is your chance to involve as many people as you can in building a healthy group. All you have to do is call, and ask people to help. You'll probably be surprised at the response.
- 3 Just be yourself. If you won't be you, who will? God wants you to use your unique gifts and temperament. Don't try to do things exactly like another leader; do them in a way that fits you! Just admit it when you don't have an answer, and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it, and you'll sleep better at night!

- 4 Prepare for your meeting ahead of time. Review the session and the leader's notes, and write down your responses to each question. Pay special attention to exercises that ask group members to do something other than engage in discussion. These exercises will help your group live what the Bible teaches, not just talk about it. Be sure you understand how an exercise works, and bring any necessary supplies (such as paper and pens) to your meeting. If the exercise employs one of the items, be sure to look over that item so you'll know how it works. Finally, review Outline for Each Session so you'll remember the purpose of each section in the study.
- 5 Pray for your group members by name. Before you begin your session, go around the room in your mind and pray for each member by name. You may want to review the prayer list at least once a week. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of every person uniquely. Expect God to lead you to whomever He wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead!
- 6 When you ask a question, be patient. Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question. Keep in mind, if silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple "thanks" or "good job." Then ask, "How about somebody else?" or "Would someone who hasn't shared like to add anything?" Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who aren't ready to say, pray or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time.
- 7 Provide transitions between questions. When guiding the discussion, always read aloud the transitional paragraphs and the questions. Ask the group if anyone would like to read the paragraph or Bible passage. Don't call on anyone, but ask for a volunteer, and then be patient until someone begins. Be sure to thank the person who reads aloud.
- 8 Break up into smaller groups each week or they won't stay. If your group has more than seven people, we strongly encourage you to have the group gather sometimes in discussion circles of three or four people during the LEARN TOGETHER sections of the study. With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they're learning and ultimately get more out of it. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member. It can also help people feel more loved in your group. When you gather again at the end of the section, you can have one person summarize the highlights from each circle. Small circles are also helpful during prayer time. People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more time to actually pray. When you gather back with the whole group, you can have one person from each circle briefly update everyone on the prayer requests. People are more willing to pray in small circles if they know that the whole group will still hear all the prayer requests.

- 9 Rotate facilitators weekly. At the end of each meeting, ask the group who should lead the following week. Let the group help select your weekly facilitator. You may be perfectly capable of leading each time, but you will help others grow in their faith and gifts if you give them opportunities to lead. You can use the Small Group Calendar to fill in the names of all meeting leaders at once if you prefer.
- 10 One final challenge (for new or first time leaders): Before your first opportunity to lead, look up each of the five passages listed below. Read each one as a devotional exercise to help yourself develop a shepherd's heart. Trust us on this one. If you do this, you will be more than ready for your first meeting.

- Matthew 9:36
- 1 Peter 5:2-4
- Psalm 23
- Ezekiel 34:11-16
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12

SERMON NOTES KEY

**IN CASE
YOU
missed it!**

If you missed a week or a blank, each week's sermon notes are right here for you to fill in all the blanks!

WEEK 1

1. Circumstances
2. Lord
 - a. Affliction
 - b. Abundance of Joy
 - c. Extreme Poverty

Application

1. Joy to abound
2. Limits, lifts, or lids

WEEK 2

1. Sacrificially
2. Readiness to completion
3. Abundance

Nature of Giving

1. Sacrificial
2. Our

Required

Application

1. What you don't have

WEEK 3

- 1a. Good planning
- 1b. Transparency
- 1c. Uprightness
2. Compel others to get involved
3. Steward God's resources well

WEEK 4

1. Sowing and reaping
2. What they get to give
3. Cause them to abound
4. Abounding Nature

Application

1. Sow
2. Be confident in God's ability to
3. abound in every good work

WEEK 5

1. Purpose
2. Call
3. Gift for us

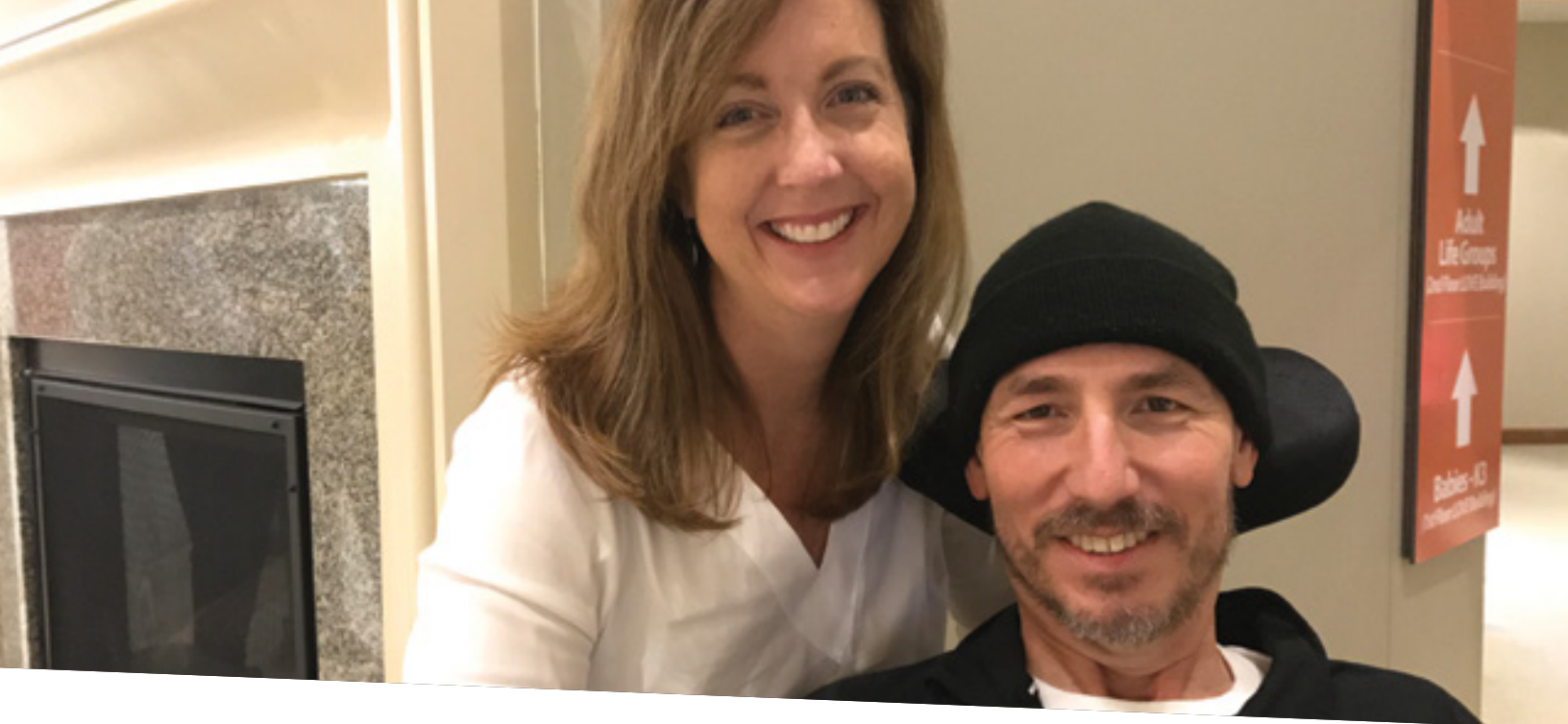


ABOUT ROGER PATTERSON

Dr. Roger Patterson is the Senior Pastor for CityRise, a network of churches and ministries committed to lifting our city and our world by generously giving the gospel of Jesus Christ. CityRise includes campuses in and around the greater Houston, Texas area. He has held the role of Senior Pastor since 2010.

Roger graduated from Houston Baptist University in 1995 with a degree in Speech Communication and Christianity and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where he received his Master of Divinity in 1998 and Doctor of Ministry Degree in 2006. With over fifteen years of experience in the subordinate leadership role in the local church, Roger coauthored *Leading from the Second Chair* with his friend and colleague Mike Bonem. Roger has extensive experience in training other leaders, whether they are in the first or second chair, to understand the dynamics of what it looks like to lead and to follow.

Roger is also the author of *Fight For It* and *A Minute of Vision for Men*, a 365-day devotional guide aimed at bolstering men's lives by helping them determine God's vision and purpose for their lives. Roger and his wife, Julee, have been married for 26 years and have three children: Brady, Cooper, and Carson. Roger loves to coach his kids' sports teams, play golf, hunt, and spend time with his family.



ABOUT DAN HALL

Dan Hall has nearly four decades of experience in leadership development. From inner-city redevelopment to consulting with business, political and religious leaders in over 27 countries worldwide, Dan specializes in personnel and leadership development, strategic planning and executive coaching.

Dan has served as Lead Pastor of 3 churches as well as Transitional Sr. Pastor of 4 others, leading in significant revitalization. He was the first pastor of Cornerstone Church, a church plant in Clinton, Ms, in 1986, which grew from 7 persons meeting in a home to over 500 in attendance. Cornerstone Church was blessed to give 49% percent of its operating budget to community ministries and world missions. Dan then pastored Graceland Baptist Church in New Albany, IN, leading it from 850 in attendance to nearly 2000, and the largest SBC church in Indiana. During those four years, baptisms increased 800%, the budget tripled and the church built a 2600 seat auditorium debt free. He then pastored Christ the Rock Community Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fl, which was in bankruptcy and nearly dissolved. In two years, the church grew from 1800 in regular weekend attendance to over 4000, including 11,000 over Good Friday and Easter weekend.

Dan has served as Transitional Lead Pastor at four churches, serving between 10 months and three years at each. All 4 churches experienced stabilization and/or growth in both attendance and giving while also experiencing strengthened leadership and clarity of mission.

Dan's work with leadership teams is a key strength. He helps church or business leadership teams identify clear strategies of where they want to go, identifying obstacles and healthy ways to address them while focusing on core values and unity.

Dan and his wife Hazel have 6 children and 8 grandchildren and live in Madison, Ms.

DEEP & WIDE

EVERY ROOT & EVERY BRANCH.

What is Deep & Wide? When we were at the D Bar J Ranch filming the 30 Days to Easter, at one point I was sitting on this long, low tree branch making a video clip. I had the tree sketched in pencil by an artist, because I kept feeling that this tree is a lot like our church. It's probably eighty-five or ninety — maybe a hundred years old. It has a vast canopy that is absolutely gorgeous, and it sits right in the middle of the front yard of this house on a thousand acre ranch. I say, "This tree has a lot of purpose. And for it to provide the canopy, the shade and shelter it provides, whether for animals or the people sitting in the swing underneath, it has to have deep, deep roots." I said, "That's a lot like who we are right now, church. If we are going to continue to extend the shade of God's grace out to our city, we've got to deepen our roots so we can widen our reach."



ABOUT ROGER PATTERSON

Dr. Roger Patterson is the lead pastor of CityRise, a multi-site congregation of West University Baptist Church, Crosspoint Church Bellaire, and CityRise Missouri City, located in the heart of Houston, Texas. Through CityRise, Roger has created the CityRise Network, a network of churches, ministries, non-profits, and global partners whose vision is to lift the city and world by generously giving the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is a husband to Julee and father to Brady, Cooper and Carson. He is the author of Fight For It, A Minute of Vision for Men, and co-author of Leading from the Second Chair.



ABOUT DAN HALL

For four decades Dan has served as a business leader and as Lead Pastor of three churches as well as Transitional Lead Pastor of 4 others, leading in significant revitalization. He has been the pastor of Cornerstone Church, in Clinton, MS, Graceland Baptist Church, in New Albany, IN, and Christ the Rock Community Church, in Fort Lauderdale, FL. All these churches experienced tremendous growth under Dan's leadership. Dan's work with leadership teams in both the church and the business world is a key strength as he helps leadership teams identify clear strategies for where they want to go, identifying obstacles and healthy ways to address them while focusing on core values and unity.

