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SMALLER GROUPS TO MAKE A BIGGER CHANGE



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CORE On-Ramp

What is CORE?

Welcome to CORE! CORE groups consist of 3-4 people of the same gender who are committed to growing in their relationship with Jesus and with one another. These groups meet on a consistent basis and, together, progressively develop the seven CORE habits.

The first two weeks of CORE is the On-Ramp. During this time, you will get to know each other better, discuss the CORE basic principles, organize your meetings, and create accountability. Once you finish the On-Ramp, you will dive into the seven habits of CORE. You will spend four meetings cultivating each of the seven habits. Every time you meet, there will be discussion questions which provide opportunity to grow in your walk with Christ and build genuine friendships.

Creating a CORE Schedule

For the first six weeks, as you explore the On-Ramp and CORE habit one, we encourage your CORE group to meet weekly. After that, bi-weekly or monthly may be more realistic. If you do meet less than weekly, each member should stay on track with the weekly CORE curriculum. At the end of each section there will be a meeting summary. If your group meets monthly or every other week, this meeting summary may be helpful to guide your discussion.

CORE On-Ramp

Meeting 1: Getting to Know Each Other More

Every person has a story. Begin your first meeting together learning each other's story. Open your time with prayer and then discuss the following questions:

What are three important things about you? (Consider your family, your background, your current life situation.)

Describe your journey in becoming a follower of Jesus.

- What did your life look like before Jesus?
- Describe your collision with God's grace.
- How has life changed since deciding to follow Christ?

What are your hopes and expectations for this CORE group?

- What is one area you'd like to grow in spiritually?
- How often would you like to meet?
- What does it look like for you to connect with others during the week?

Together, make a schedule outlining the next few months. Decide together how often, where, and when you will meet.

CORE On-Ramp

Meeting 2: Understanding CORE Principles

How does someone grow spiritually? We often assume that spiritual growth comes from personal discipline and behavioral change. But the Bible teaches that change always begins with grace. Grace is the undeserved favor of God. It's God's holy influence upon the soul which causes you to not only turn to Christ but to become all that God intends. The principles of grace are seen in the following scripture passage. Take a few moments and read these verses aloud:

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

CORE Principle #1: God Is for You.

Paul begins by telling us that the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared through Jesus. The cross is the irrevocable evidence that God is for you.

Do you believe that God is for you? When has this belief been tested? How does this belief impact your life?

CORE Principle #2: You Exist for God.

Paul says that God saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy. God didn't save you because you were worthy. Rather, he saved you because of love!

What does it mean to you to exist for God?

CORE Principle #3: You Haven't Reached Your Max.

We were saved by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit now lives within you. This means that the power of God is now available to you.

How does knowing that God lives in you change the way you see yourself?

CORE Principle #4: Eternity Reframes Everything.

Paul concludes by writing, “So that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

What does the hope of eternal life mean to you?

Before ending your CORE meeting, take a few moments and pray for one another.

CORE On-Ramp Summary

In CORE On-Ramp, we learned each other's story and set the course for future meetings.

Key thoughts include the following:

- How did each member of your CORE group come to faith in Jesus?
- What are each person's expectations and hopes for CORE?
- How does growth by grace, rather than human effort, change the way we approach our faith?

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

SECTION OVERVIEW

A.W. Tozer wrote, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” If this is true, then the biggest problem in your life is not your finances, your job, or your relationships. Your biggest problem is an inaccurate view of God. The challenge with knowing God is that he is not like anyone else you know. To actually know him, you must intentionally and methodically reprogram your thoughts about him. This is why daily time alone, seeking God, is one of the most crucial habits in your life.

The habit of seeking God has three important elements: *time*, *the Bible*, and *prayer*. First, you must set aside time to seek God. If this is a new habit for you, begin by setting aside the first 15 minutes of your day for God. If you have practiced this habit for a while, target one hour every morning. One hour is long enough to completely disrupt your routine, but short enough to actually be possible with some sacrifice.

CORE Habit 1: *Spend the first hour of your morning alone with God.*

The Bible

Approaching the Bible can be a little intimidating, especially if this is new for you. Here are three simple ways to study the Bible. These practices will help you SOW God’s truth deep into your heart: systematic reading, one-topic study, and waiting and repeating.

S—Systematic Reading. Choose one book in the Bible and read one or two chapters each day until you’ve completed that book. As you read, write down what stands out to you. Write down questions you may have and any application for your life from the passage.

O—One-Topic Study. A second helpful way to read the Bible is to study one specific topic. For example, use a concordance to study every time the Bible refers to *holiness*. Learn the context of each passage to develop your understanding of that topic.

W—Waiting and Repeating. A third way to approach the Bible is to go back to a verse or passage that stood out to you and meditate on it. Memorize it, pray about it, and worship God with the truth contained in its words.

Prayer

Here are three types of prayer to keep you focused. Just as we SOW God's truth into our hearts, we also DIG deeper with him through prayer.

D—Demonstrate Your Love. Demonstrating your love for God is called worship. This is time to recalibrate your heart toward him, taking yourself out of the center of your thoughts and putting God at the center. Sing a song. Lift your hands. Make a list of what you are thankful for.

I—Intercession and Requests. To intercede means "to stand between." God invites his people to stand between the needs of life and the throne of heaven. Find a specific promise in the Bible and pray that promise over the need.

G—Godly Confessions. Take time to ask God to reveal any specific sins in your heart, turn them over to God, and forsake them. Consider 1 John 1:9. Then confess out loud your identity in Christ. Speak the truth of who he says you are over your life. Consider 1 Corinthians 5:17.

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

Meeting 1: Where do I Need to Grow?

Begin your time together in prayer. Then discuss: Do you have a daily habit of seeking God alone? What does that look like for you?

Take time together to assess your time with God. Each person in your group, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 1: Relationship

I devote an hour every morning to seeking God.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I practically apply the Bible weekly.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I enjoy and look forward to prayer.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I sense the love of God towards me throughout my day.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am growing in my knowledge of Scripture.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am growing in my love for God.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I approach my time with God each day with a sense of expectation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Talk through your results. What stood out to you? How do you want to grow? Take time during this group to set a goal for your time alone with God.

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

Pair up with someone in your group for accountability. When will you talk next about your goal? Remember, God does not love you because you spend time alone with him. He loves you because he is God. Discuss as a group how you will guard your heart from trying to “prove” to God that you love him by spending time alone with him.

Together, decide what your consistent CORE meeting rhythm will be. End your group by praying for each other. Release all striving, and receive the love and grace of God needed for real growth.

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

Meeting 2: Being Alone

Begin your meeting together with prayer. How has spending time alone with God impacted your life this week? What has God taught you?

Read Mark 1:35 aloud together. What stands out to you? Why do you think Jesus went to a desolate place to spend time with God? What distractions have you faced this week? How have you overcome them?

One of the most important things about time alone with God is finding the right place. It needs to be a place where you can focus and be free from distraction. Where have you been meeting with God? What could you do this week to find a desolate place?

What is one thing you could do this week to seek God more passionately?

Conclude your time together by praying for each other. Pray that God would ignite a deeper passion in your heart to seek him.

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

Meeting 3: The Bible

Begin your meeting by sharing your experiences from the last week. Did you find a desolate place? How did it impact your time alone with God?

How do you usually approach the Bible in your time alone with God? Do you have a reading plan or a routine? Share your thoughts with each other.

Consider the “SOW” model of Bible reading:

S—Systematic Reading

O—One-Topic Study

W—Waiting and Repeating

What in this model is missing in your routine?

What could you add this week to your routine from this “SOW” model? What scripture could your group memorize together this week?

Create a weekly schedule as a group for your Bible reading. For example: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, focus on systematic reading. Tuesday and Thursday focus on a one-topic study. Saturday and Sunday practice waiting and repeating.

Pray for one another to conclude your meeting. Ask God to make his Word come alive as you study it!

Section 1: The Habit of Relationship

Meeting 4: Prayer

Begin your meeting by sharing one thing God spoke to you in your time alone with him this week.

What does the practice of prayer look like in your life? Where do you focus? What do you regularly pray about? How has prayer shaped your relationship with God?

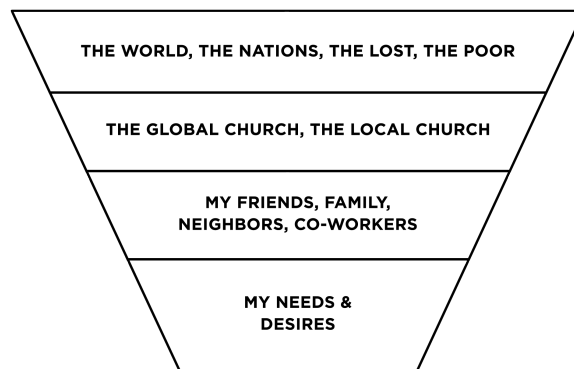
Consider the “DIG” Model for prayer:

D—Demonstrate Your Love
I—Intercession and Requests
G—Godly Confession

How do you practice these three types of prayer? Where are you weak? What do you seem to avoid?

What can you do this week to take your prayer life to the next level?

Consider writing down specific requests for each of the following areas and praying them every day this week:



Conclude your meeting by praying for one another.

Section 1 Summary

In Section 1 of CORE, we focused on the Habit of Relationship: *Spending daily time alone with God.*

Key thoughts include the following:

- Do you have a habit of devoting time alone with God each morning? What do you do during that time? How much time do you set aside? Consider increasing that time to one hour alone with God, first thing, each morning.
- Where do you meet with God? Find a desolate place where you can focus. Discuss together the importance of finding the right place.
- How do you approach the Bible? Review the SOW method, and incorporate the elements of that method into your routine. What changes can you make?
- How do you approach prayer? Review the DIG method and begin practicing these three types of prayer regularly. How can you take your prayer life to the next level?

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

SECTION OVERVIEW

Most of us love comfort. We want comfortable clothes, comfortable furniture, and comfortable conversations. We even prefer comfort foods. Comfort has become such a priority in our culture that it deeply influences what we are willing to think or talk about.

Although there is not necessarily anything wrong with outward comforts, Jesus calls us higher. As you grow in the first habit, developing a closer relationship with Jesus, there will be something on the inside that propels you out— that something is the love of God.

You will find yourself interacting with others who are far from God, and the Spirit of Jesus will tug on your soul. How can you stand by and say nothing? How can you watch your friend or your neighbor struggle without a living relationship with God? As God's love grows within you, it will push you beyond what is comfortable.

But how do you effectively share your faith? How do you engage those around you in spiritual conversations? There is no perfect method, but there is a perfect motive. It must begin with *love*. Out of a heart of love, you can grow in the second CORE habit:

CORE Habit 2: *Share your faith every week.*

You might read this and think, “Share my faith once a week? Are you serious? I don't share my faith once a year!” Maybe this seems unrealistic right now, but let me assure you, *you can do this*. Start moving out in this direction and God will meet you. He will open up unexpected doors and stand with you even when you feel unqualified. Begin with daily prayer, asking God for opportunities. As you start to share about Jesus with friends and neighbors, a new spiritual fire will grow in your heart. God will take your relationship with him to a new level as he uses your life to impact those around you for eternity.

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

Meeting 1: Learning to Share

Begin your meeting with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit.

Take time to fill out the following assessment. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 2: Radiance

I regularly pray for people who are far from God.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live each day aware of the reality of heaven and hell.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live each week as though I care about the lost.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I engage in a spiritual conversation with anyone far from God every week.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I recognize opportunities throughout each week to share Christ.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I invite church to people regularly.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am living with a holy sense of urgency.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Talk through your results. What stood out to you? How do you want to grow?

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

Can you think of a time when you effectively shared your faith? What happened? How did you feel after that experience? How did sharing your faith impact your passion for Jesus?

Make a list of five people you know who are far from God. Share that list with your CORE group. Commit to pray for your list every day this week.

Conclude your time together by praying for everyone on your list by name.

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

Meeting 2: The Reality of Eternity

Begin your meeting together in prayer. Have you spent time this week praying for those in your life who are far from God? What impact has that made on you?

Read Romans 9:1-3 and Romans 10:1 out loud together. What stands out to you about these scriptures?

Paul used the phrase “unceasing anguish” because he is confronting the reality of hell. Hell is probably the most unmanageable topic in all of the Bible. Has the truth of hell impacted your witness for Jesus? If so, how? If not, why not?

Scripture teaches that hell is a real place (Revelation 21:8) and that those who reject Christ will experience eternal torment and separation from God (Matthew 25:46). We are told that God does not want to send anyone to hell, and it’s his purpose that all who place their trust in Christ would spend eternity with him in heaven (1 Timothy 2:4); hell was originally for Satan and his demons (Matthew 25:41). If the reality of hell was more real to you, how would it affect your prayer life? What will do you this week in response to these truths?

Conclude your time together by praying for one another. Pray that God would deepen your compassion for those who are far from him. Pray that God would compel you beyond your comfort zone as the opportunities arise.

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

Meeting 3: Prepare to Share

What has God been doing in your life this past week? How has the truth of heaven and hell impacted your life?

Read Colossians 4:2–6. What stands out to you in this passage?

In this scripture, Paul outlines an effective way to share your faith. He begins by telling us to be devoted to prayer. Regular prayer for those far from God softens your heart and gives you greater compassion. Think of a time you felt deep compassion for someone. Share that experience with your group.

Next, Paul tells us to walk in wisdom toward those far from God (v.5). Wisdom is using the right knowledge at the right moment. Wisdom always begins with listening so that you can deeply understand the other person.

Who in your life has been a good listener to you? How does listening change the dynamic in a relationship?

Do you feel like you are a good listener to those in your life who are far from God? How could you listen better?

Conclude your group this week by praying for one another. Pray that God would give you opportunities this week to provide a listening ear to someone who is far from him.

Section 2: The Habit of Radiance

Meeting 4: Stepping Out

Begin your group by reflecting on the last week. Did God give you an opportunity to provide a listening ear to someone far from him? What happened?

Read together Colossians 4:5–6 again. Paul tells us to make sure our conversation with unbelievers is full of grace. Consider your story of grace with God. Briefly share with each other:

- Who were you before Jesus?
- How did you collide with his grace?
- What difference has Jesus made?

These three questions make up your testimony. Your testimony is a powerful tool in sharing your faith with others. Consider the people who are far from God in your life that you have been praying for. Who on your list will you call this week and initiate a spiritual conversation? Share the name of that person with your group.

Conclude your meeting by praying for one another and the conversations you plan to have. Pray for courage, wisdom, and divine favor. Commit to each other to initiate a spiritual conversation with someone on your prayer list this week.

Section 2 Summary

In Section 2 of CORE, we focused on the Habit of Radiance: *Share your faith every week.*

Key thoughts include:

- Do you regularly share your faith with those far from God? Why or why not? Have you led someone else to faith in Jesus? What holds you back?
- Sharing your faith effectively begins with prayer. Make a list of five people you know who are far from God and commit to pray for them daily. Hold each other accountable.
- How has the reality of hell impacted your prayer life for the lost? What model do you find in Romans 9:1–3 and Romans 10:1?
- Can you articulate your testimony? Answer: Who were you before Jesus? How did you collide with his grace? What difference has Jesus made?
- Commit to share your testimony with someone on your prayer list this week.

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

SECTION OVERVIEW

God wants to speak to you. He wants to personally guide you, teach you, and comfort you. The Bible is God's living Word, and it reveals the truth of God to us. The Bible teaches us about a God who is active and present in the life of his people; he does not just want you to just collect facts about him. Jesus taught that his followers would know his voice (John 10:27) and that his Spirit would guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Paul said that all of God's children would be led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14). God wants to personally speak to you.

Knowing God's will for your life can be intimidating. When theologians talk about the will of God, they are actually speaking of the "three wills" of God. First, there is God's **sovereign will**. This refers to his perfect, secret plan that cannot be stopped. Our response to the sovereign will of God must be a deep inner surrender.

Along with his sovereign will, there is also the **moral will** of God. We are told in the Scripture that it isn't his will that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9), yet some do. It isn't his will for people to commit murder or lie, yet some do. God's moral will is often broken by humanity, and ignoring his will comes with consequences. This is why we must learn God's moral will and, with his help, obey it.

Lastly, there is God's **unique will**. This is his personal plan for you. He cares about every detail in your life like a loving, liberating, father does, and he wants to guide you.

Four simple tests can help you avoid confusion when it comes to discerning God's voice:

1. **The Doctrine Test.** When trying to hear God’s voice, first ask, “What does the Bible teach on this topic? Does my decision align with the teaching of Scripture?” The counsel of a pastor or leader from your church can be helpful here.
2. **The Disciple Test.** Next, ask, “Does this decision make me more like Jesus?” Does it push me to trust God more? Will it stretch my heart to love him more?
3. **The DNA Test.** Thirdly, ask, “Does this decision seem to fit with how God has been working in my life recently?” You’re looking for clues of the work of God’s providential hand in your life. The more you are aware of his overall guidance, the more clearly you can discern his specific guidance.
4. **The Dinner Table Test.** Lastly, ask, “When I sit down at the table with wise, mature Christians who know me and love me, what do they think of my decision?” Notice it doesn’t ask: “When I sit down with friends who think just like me, what do they say?” Invite mature Christians into your process as you learn to discern God’s voice.

If you want to be led by God, one thing is absolutely necessary: *availability*. You must create space, asking him to guide you and to speak. This leads us to our third CORE habit:

CORE Habit 3: Obey the daily promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Following the promptings of his Spirit can make the difference between blessing and brokenness, favor and frustration—and even life and death. But each follower of Jesus must have an **EAR** to hear. If you will *expect*, *ask*, and *revere*, his voice will become more and more clear in your heart.

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

Meeting 1: Create Space

Begin your group this week by reflecting on CORE Habits 1 and 2. How are you doing with your daily time with God and sharing your faith? What is God teaching you?

Take time to fill out this assessment tool. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 3: Receptivity

I create space in my heart and life to listen for God’s guidance.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live spiritually confident, free from an inner sense of condemnation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I keep track of the impressions God’s Spirit has been giving me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live with a confident sense of God’s will for my life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I expect God to speak to me throughout the day.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I regularly ask God to speak to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live each day available to God.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

Take time to process your scores together as a group. What stood out? Where did you score low?

Discuss a time when you believe God spoke to you clearly. What was that like?

What roadblocks do you face when it comes to hearing God and obeying his promptings?

Take a few moments and pray for one another. Ask God to speak to you like never before. Receive the grace and faith to believe you can hear God's voice daily.

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

Meeting 2: God's Will

Open your time together in prayer. Have you experienced the prompting of the Holy Spirit in the last week? What did he speak to you? How did he speak?

God's will can often feel uncertain. There is his sovereign will, his moral will, and his unique will (see section overview for details). When trying to determine God's unique will, consider the following four tests:

1. **The Doctrine Test.** What does the Bible teach on this topic?
2. **The Disciple Test.** Does this decision make me more like Jesus?
3. **The DNA Test.** Does this decision fit with how God has been working in my life?
4. **The Dinner Table Test.** What do other mature Christians think?

Where in your life are you trying to determine God's will right now? How can these four tests be helpful in your current situation?

One thing that will block your ability to hear God is an unsundered heart. Is there anything in your heart that is not submitted to him? Is there anything that has been off-limits to God in your life? Discuss this together.

End your meeting by praying for one another. Surrender anything to God that you have been holding back.

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

Meeting 3: Availability

As a group, read Acts 9:10–19. Discuss Ananias’s reaction to God’s voice. What stands out to you in this story? How would you feel if you were Ananias?

Consider what would have happened if Ananias had ignored God that day. Can you think of a time when you missed a divine opportunity? What happened?

Think of a time when you made yourself available to God. What was the result?

As you think about your life, do you live with a holy awareness of God and his promptings? Why or why not? What could you do this week to increase your awareness and availability?

End your time together by praying for people in your life who are far from God and renewing your commitment to CORE Habit 2. Then ask God to give you holy promptings and direction throughout your week this week.

Section 3: The Habit of Receptivity

Meeting 4: Ears to Hear

Begin your meeting by reflecting on last week. Did God speak to you in any unique ways? How did you make yourself available?

Hearing God requires that you have an EAR to hear. This means you must *expect*, *ask*, and *revere*. First you must expect God to speak to you.

Do you feel like you regularly expect God to speak to you? Why or why not? One way to increase your expectation is to cling to a promise in Scripture. What Scriptures increase your expectation of hearing God?

Do you daily ask God to speak to you? Commit to one another to pray daily for his voice in your life.

Is your life marked by a reverence for God and his voice? How can you prioritize the voice of God more in your daily life?

End your meeting with a time of prayer, asking God for ears to hear him. Ask for an increase of miracles and supernatural encounters in your life.

Section 3 Summary

In Section 3 of CORE we focused on the Habit of Receptivity: *Obey the daily promptings of the Holy Spirit.*

Key thoughts include:

- God wants to speak to you! How active is the voice of God in your life? What do you think holds you back from more clearly hearing his voice?
- God's will can sometimes seem confusing. Reflect on the four tests outlined in the section overview. How can these tests be applied to a decision in your life right now?
- God speaks to surrendered hearts. Is there any part of your life that is not surrendered to God?
- God speaks to those who make themselves available. How can you become more available for God?
- To develop an EAR to hear you must *expect*, *ask*, and *revere*. What Scriptures increase your expectation?
- How can you prioritize the voice of God more in your daily life?

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

SECTION OVERVIEW

Think about the last time you heard the word *intimacy*. Was the person using it to describe the close connection between God and your soul? Most likely, the word was used in reference to sex. In our world today the message of our culture is that if you want to satisfy your deep inner urge for intimacy, sex is the only way to do it.

In 1 Corinthians 6, the apostle Paul deals with the confusion around sex that was ransacking the church. Accustomed to a society which encouraged sexual experimentation and expression, the believers at the time saw sex simply as a physical appetite, like food for the stomach (1 Corinthians 6:12–14). Three times in this passage, Paul wrote, “Do you not know?” In other words, misinformation can have tragic consequences. Your thirst for intimacy can lead you further away from what can actually satisfy your heart. He then introduced a critically important truth: “The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord” (1 Corinthians 6:13). True satisfaction comes from God himself, and sharing in his *holiness*.

God has a specific design for humanity. Just as a car runs on gasoline, God designed humanity to run on himself. To try and satisfy your ache for intimacy with sex is to misunderstand your design. So, what happens when people obey their natural impulses to experiment sexually, outside of the marriage between a man and a woman? In the physical realm, there is a flash of pleasure, and then it’s over. You may never see that person again. But in the invisible world, far more has taken place. Fusion has occurred. Two souls have mingled together. Whether you realize it or not, you have left something behind. You have lost a part of yourself.

Paul taught that sex in marriage is a gift from God but that it’s not an end in itself. The body is meant for the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:13) and whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him (1 Corinthians 6:17). Just as a man and a woman are fused together

through the act of sex, and the lines between where one begins and the other ends are blurred, so faith in Christ connects the Spirit of God to the spirit of man. The two are fused into one, and the lines between where God begins and man ends are blurred. This is the gift of eternal life! It is the truest, deepest answer to your heart's cry for intimacy.

We live in an era where stretching the boundaries is celebrated but not all boundaries are meant to be broken. Sometimes the bravest thing to do is to commit yourself to live within boundaries. God's boundaries are not intended to limit your life but widen it. Just as guardrails are placed along a highway to keep you safe and on track, every limit he commands is for your benefit. Scripture teaches at least four specific boundaries that must be embraced for your heart to ever be satisfied.

Boundary 1: The boundary of a flawed soul. The first step toward freedom and victory is not choosing your own path but acknowledging your own brokenness. Sin has distorted the soul, and each of us is flawed and broken beyond repair, which means that you can't trust yourself in the area of sexuality, and you can't figure out your own way. You are not a good person who needs to be made better or even a bad person who needs to be made good. According to Jesus, you are a dead person who can come alive only by his power (John 5:25).

Boundary 2: The boundary of real accountability. Accountability is the direct acknowledgement to another person that you need help. In this context, accountability means finding a mature follower of Jesus of the same gender who is living in victory and inviting him or her into your mess. First confess to this person your areas of struggle with sexual sin. Then commit to talk regularly about your areas of weakness until you see habitual victory.

Boundary 3: The boundary of a future picture. In those moments of temptation, take the time to write out or think through a picture of the future. What will be the result of following through on sexual temptation? What will life be like when it's over? Consider the guilt, the shame, and the loss of spiritual confidence.

Boundary 4: The boundary of resurrection power. Jesus didn't leave us helpless in the area of sexual temptation. He put his Spirit within us, giving us the power to say no when temptation knocks. The key to accessing that power is first understanding that you have it. This leads us to our fourth CORE Habit:

CORE Habit 4: *Live within the accountability of biblical sexual boundaries.*

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

More than any other kind of sin, sexual sin can devastate your relationship with God. That is why CORE Habit 4 is so critical to your spiritual maturity and joy. If you feel like this habit is out of reach, rest assured that it's not. Take the first step toward healing and repentance and watch God transform you, day by day—from the inside out.

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

Meeting 1: Being Honest

Start your group by discussing the elephant in the room. Talking about sex can be pretty uncomfortable. What makes this topic so difficult? What has been your experience in talking with other Christians about sexuality in the past?

Take time to fill out the following assessment. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 4: Righteousness

I regularly turn to God as my ultimate source of identity.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I have allowed God’s view of sexuality to reframe my perspective.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am living habitually free from destructive sexual habits.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I take sexual sin as seriously as God takes it.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am living from a posture of dependence, deeply aware of my own brokenness.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am living with honest, transparent accountability in my life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I regularly access and depend on the resurrection power of Christ to say no to lust.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

What stood out to you in the assessment? Talk through your lowest score. How do you want to change and grow in this habit?

Where have you struggled most when it comes to God's view of sexuality?

Where have you tried to change? What has been the result? Where are you struggling right now?

Conclude your meeting by praying for one another. Pray that God would help you open up in the very personal area. Pray for honesty, humility, and transparency in your group.

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

Meeting 2: It's Not Too Late

Begin your meeting together with prayer. Then read Proverbs 7:1–27. This is a description of temptation. What does this passage teach us about how temptation works? Where do you see yourself in this passage?

Shame is one of the most powerful weapons of the devil. Where do you carry shame in this area of sexual purity? How has it hindered your relationship with God?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11. Paul writes that “such *were* some of you.” How does he describe the change that Jesus has made in our lives? What does this mean to you?

According to the Scripture, you have been washed, sanctified, and justified. What do these words mean for your life? How can you apply them right now?

End your time together by praying for one another. Pray that God removes all shame and that every person receives the full forgiveness of Jesus.

,Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

Meeting 3: Boundaries

Begin your meeting today by reading Matthew 5:3. What do you think it means to be poor in spirit?

The first boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of a flawed soul*. This means that when it comes to sexuality, you can't trust yourself. How have your desires and God's truth been in conflict?

What does it mean for you to submit to God's view of sexuality?

The second boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of real accountability*. In this context, accountability means finding a mature follower of Jesus of the same gender who is living in victory and inviting him or her into your mess. First confess to this person your areas of struggle with sexual sin. Then commit to talk regularly about your areas of weakness until you see habitual victory. Break your CORE group into pairs. Commit to one another to be honest about your sin and discuss the next step toward holiness. How often will you talk? How can you strengthen each other in this area?

End your meeting by praying for one another in your pairs of two.

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

Meeting 4: Living in Victory

Begin your meeting by reflecting on the last few weeks. How is God challenging you in this area of sexuality? How has it impacted you?

The third boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of a future picture*. Discuss together: what type of person do you want to be in the future, when it comes to sexual purity? What type of spouse? What type of parent or friend? How would sexual sin ruin those dreams?

What impact does sexual sin have on your relationship with God? How does life look different from a place of consistent purity and victory?

The fourth boundary is *the boundary of resurrection power*. Read Romans 6:6 and Romans 6:11–14. What stands out to you from these verses? What do they tell you about the power within you?

Discuss with your accountability partner how often you will talk and pray about sexual temptation. Make a plan to walk with each other all the way to freedom.

End your meeting by praying together.

Section 4 Summary

In Section 4 of CORE, we focused on the Habit of Righteousness: *Live within the accountability of biblical sexual boundaries.*

Key thoughts include:

- The topic of sex is often uncomfortable to talk about. What makes this topic difficult for you? What has been your experience in discussing this topic with other Christians in the past?
- Shame is one of the most powerful weapons of the devil. Where do you carry shame in this area of sexual purity? How has it hindered your relationship with God?
- Read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11. Paul writes that “such *were* some of you.” How does he describe the change that Jesus has made in our lives? What does this mean to you?
- The first boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of a flawed soul*. This means that when it comes to sexuality, you can’t trust yourself. How have your desires and God’s truth been in conflict? What does it mean for you to submit to God’s view of sexuality?
- The second boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of real accountability*. Break your Core group into pairs. Commit to one another to be honest about your sin and discuss the next step toward holiness. How often will you talk? How can you strengthen each other in this area?
- The third boundary of CORE Habit 4 is *the boundary of a future picture*. Discuss together: what type of person do you want to be in the future when it comes to sexual purity?
- The fourth boundary is *the boundary of resurrection power*. Read Romans 6:6, and Romans 6:11–14. What stands out to you from these verses? What do they tell you about the power within you?

Section 4: The Habit of Righteousness

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

SECTION OVERVIEW

What makes you feel secure? What makes you feel important? What gives you a sense of control? For many of us, there is one thing that informs our sense of security, our sense of worth, and our feeling of control: *money*.

According to Scripture, having money is not sin. Money provides certain opportunities, and it also comes with certain dangers. Specifically, the danger of money is that having it creates a false salvation: a mirage of self-sufficiency and security. In fact, people with any degree of wealth will eventually attach their hearts to their money. (See Mark 10:24-27).

How do we live free from unhealthy attachments to money, and instead, develop healthy attachments to God? The first thing we must do is change our *concept of life*. A concept of life is the story that informs the way you see the world. Some people see life as a race, and they are always competing against someone else. Some people see life as a journey, and they live for a new experience. According to the Bible, life is a **stewardship**. This means that everything you have is a gift from God: your talents, your relationships, your time, and your money. You are a steward, called by God to use your gifts for his purpose.

One of the ways God teaches our hearts to trust him, rather than our money, is through generosity. By giving some of what we have, our hearts learn to steward his gifts and experience the fullness of his blessing. Jesus wasn't kidding when he said it really is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)! By learning to give, we learn to act like God.

Scripture outlines three principles of generosity that we can use grow our hearts and become good stewards. They are *priority* giving, *percentage* giving, and *progressive* giving.

Priority Giving: God teaches us to trust him by commanding us to give first (Matthew 6:33). When we give last, after all the bills are paid and the needs are met, there is no faith involved in the transaction. But when we give first, before any of our needs are met, we are making a declaration to the world and to God that he is our source, our safety, and our provider!

Percentage Giving: Generosity looks different for every person. Jesus illustrated this truth when he noticed a woman in the temple giving her last two copper coins (Luke 21:1–4). He told his disciples that she had given more than all the rich people had, because she had given all she had to live on. Jesus didn't stop her from giving—even in her poverty! Each person must wrestle with the question, “*How much would I have to give in order to detach my heart from trusting in things and attach my heart fully to God?*” Scripture introduces the principle of the tithe (giving 10 percent of my income) as a starting place to teach our hearts to trust him.

Progressive Giving: Like all areas in your spiritual life, God wants you to grow and stretch over time. Progressive giving means that you regularly assess your standard of living and your standard of giving, inviting God into the assessment and allowing your heart to stay in a place of dependence and faith. This leads us to the fifth CORE Habit.

CORE Habit 5: *Structure your life around priority, percentage, and progressive giving.*

Our hearts rarely release control without a fight, and money is a sensitive topic for many people. But if God does not have control of your money, your spiritual growth will always be stunted. As we learn to trust God and discover the truth of his principles, our hearts move from fear to faith, and we find the provision and freedom that comes with trusting him.

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

Meeting 1: Do I Really Trust?

Begin your group with some honest discussion. Money is a very sensitive topic for most people. What are your biggest concerns as your group begins a discussion about money? What makes you uncomfortable?

Take time to fill out the assessment below. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 5: Resources

I intentionally forsake wealth as a source of safety, security, and status, because I find these things in Christ.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live as a steward rather than as an owner.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I trust God more with my money today than I did a month ago.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I see a deep desire to be more generous in myself.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I set aside money to give first before spending on anything else.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I intentionally give a specific percentage of everything I earn.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I have increased my overall giving in the last year.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

What stood out to you as you reflect on your results? Where did you score high? Where did you score low?

The Bible teaches that life is a stewardship. What does that mean to you? Do you feel more like an owner or a steward of what you have? How has your relationship with God changed your thinking in this area?

When it comes to the topic of money, what is most difficult for you to discuss? Where has your value as a person or your sense of security gotten tangled up with your money? What do you want God to do in this area of your life?

End your meeting by taking time to pray for each other. Pray that God would grow our hearts and our understanding in the area of money.

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

Meeting 2: My First Priority

Begin your meeting by reading Matthew 6:33 together. How does this verse apply to the way we think about money?

When it comes to money, what is your first priority? Is it your mortgage, your groceries, or your student loans? What would it mean for you to make giving to the work of God your first priority?

Read Proverbs 3:5–6 together. What does it mean for you to trust God with all your heart, specifically in the area of money? Where do you struggle to trust him?

Have you experienced a time in life when you trusted God fully, and he came through? If so, share about that experience.

End your meeting by praying together. Share out loud any roadblocks in your heart that would keep you from fully trusting God. Ask God to remove those roadblocks. Commit together to trust him completely.

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

Meeting 3: Percentage Giving

Open your time together with prayer. Briefly share how you have been doing in the Habit of Relationship (time alone with God), the Habit of Radiance (sharing your faith), and the Habit of Receptivity (obeying the promptings of the Spirit).

Share together your overall philosophy around money management. Do you live on a monthly budget? How do you decide what you should spend, save, or give?

Read Malachi 3:10 together. In the Old Testament, the people of God expressed their trust and dependence on God by giving a *tithe* (the first 10 percent of one's income) back to the work of God. In the New Testament, Jesus taught that tithing is a good starting place to develop a generous heart (Matt 23:23). What is your experience with tithing?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 out loud. What stands out to you in this passage? What is God trying to teach us about generosity? Consider the promise that God attaches to a generous life (v.8). How does this promise impact you?

How is God challenging you right now in the area of money? How do you want to grow? What would you have to do in order to release control and trust God more?

End your group by praying for each other.

Section 5: The Habit of Resources

Meeting 4: Expanding your Life

Open your time together in prayer. How has God been challenging you since your last meeting?

Read Matthew 6:26. What does this passage teach us about the nature of God? How does that truth impact the way you think about money?

Read Proverbs 11:24–25 together. This is an example of an *abundance* mindset. A *scarcity* mindset believes that if you are generous there will not be enough for you. A scarcity mindset clings to what you have. An abundance mindset operates from the conviction that God is your provider and he will always bless the generous. Where in your life have you operated from a scarcity mindset? Where do you see evidence of an abundance mindset?

What would have to change in order for an abundance mindset to dominate your life?

Progressive giving means that you expand your generosity as God expands your income. What do you think is the next step for you to progress in generosity? What will you do about it?

End your meeting by committing to each other to take the next step in your generosity. Pray for one another.

Section 5 Summary

In Section 5 of CORE, we focused on the Habit of Resources: *Structure your life around priority, percentage, and progressive giving.*

Key thoughts include:

- Spiritual maturity is impossible without a lifestyle of generosity. What does it mean to you to see life as a stewardship?
- When it comes to money, what is your first priority? Is it your mortgage, your groceries, or your student loans? What would it look like for you to make giving to the work of God your first priority?
- Read Malachi 3:10 together. In the Old Testament, the people of God expressed their trust and dependence on God by giving a *tithe* (the first 10 percent of one's income) back to the work of God. What is your experience with tithing?
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–8 out loud. What stands out to you in this passage? What is God trying to teach us about generosity? Consider the promise that God attaches to a generous life (v. 8). How does this promise impact you?
- Progressive giving means that you expand your generosity as God expands your income. What do you think is the next step for you to progress in generosity? What will you do about it?

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

SECTION OVERVIEW

We live in a world that celebrates ceaseless activity. Our phones and computers are always nearby. Busyness is worn as a badge of honor. We don't know how to truly unplug. All the of ceaseless activity of life results in one thing: *stress*. That's the word we use to describe the overtaxing of our physical, emotional, and psychological reserves. Stress leads to burnout, and burnout causes followers of Jesus to wander from God.

So often, our ceaseless activity is a symptom of a deeper problem. Below the surface, most people attach their value to their performance. In other words, your worth is found in what you produce. With that mindset operating below the surface of our lives, it's no wonder so many of us work ourselves into exhaustion!

The Bible offers a radical solution to a life of constant pushing, striving, and working. It's found in the rhythm of Sabbath. The word *Sabbath* comes from the Hebrew word *Shabbat*. It literally means "to cease to stop." The word can also be translated "to celebrate." This is the dual essence of the Sabbath. God tells his people that, on one day out of seven, he wants them to completely stop. Don't labor. Don't push any of your goals forward. Just stop and celebrate.

The day of rest was given to God's people as a physical reminder of a deeper spiritual truth: the greatest need of your life is rest for your soul and that comes only from perfect acceptance before God. As a sinful person, your conscience is never on sure footing before a holy God and that's why Jesus called himself the lord of the Sabbath. Christ is your Sabbath rest, fully paying the debt of your sin on the cross.

So how do you find true inner rest? You find it by realizing that, when God looks at you, he sees your life through the lens of his Son. And because of the cross, God sees you and is deeply satisfied with you. You don't have to perform. In the eyes of the one whose

opinion matters most, you are his beloved. This is the true Sabbath. No more posturing, no more proving. You are loved by God.

God uses the weekly routine of Sabbath to write on your heart the truth of the gospel. Without this intentional time and space, the love of God will only be a theory in your life. In order for your heart to internalize who you are in him, you must take time to pause, pray, and play. A weekly practice of Sabbath is a twenty-four-hour block of time in which we stop work, enjoy rest, and delight in God. This leads us to our sixth CORE Habit:

CORE Habit 6: *Practice living by grace through a weekly Sabbath routine.*

Pause: Sabbath is a day to stop. This means something different for every person, but stopping should feel a bit uncomfortable. To pause probably means not checking email or social media and creating space for rest. If that feels like pure torture at first, then you're probably on the right track. After a little while you will stop squirming and resisting, and the waters of your soul will begin to calm.

Pray: Sabbath is a special day to commune with God. It's during these times of prayer on Sabbath that God preaches to you the story of your identity. He convinces your soul that you are his. Sabbath is a time to meditate on the truth that you are loved and accepted—not because of what you do, but because of what Christ has done.

Play: Sabbath should include fun. Fun looks different for every person, but having fun on Sabbath is an act of faith. It's enjoying the gift of life even though things are still undone in your world.

Doing Sabbath well takes intentionality and planning. Thinking through your upcoming Sabbath day and making time to pause, pray, and play, will not happen unless you are incredibly purposeful. You may feel guilty, unproductive, or wasteful. But soon, the blessing of Sabbath will begin to feed your soul and inject life into every other day of the week.

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

Meeting 1: Changing your Routine

Begin your meeting with prayer. What comes to mind when you hear the word “Sabbath”? How is Sabbath different from a day off?

Fill out this assessment. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 6: Rhythm

I am living free from the false virtue of ceaseless activity.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I find my value in Christ above my performance.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I take a twenty-four-hour Sabbath each week.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I live confidently aware that God is satisfied with me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I take time to plan my activities before the Sabbath day comes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I intentionally pause, pray, and play during my Sabbath time.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I deeply enjoy and look forward to the weekly gift of Sabbath.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain your current practice of Sabbath-keeping. Is this something you do? Is this a new idea? If you have intentionally practiced Sabbath, what have you learned?

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

What stood out to you in this assessment? Where did you feel convicted by God? Is there anything in you that resists the weekly practice of Sabbath? If so, why?

Read Matthew 11:28–30 together. What do you think God is trying to say right now to you through this passage of Scripture?

End your meeting by praying for one another. Pray that God would begin to more deeply convict your heart about the regular practice of Sabbath.

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

Meeting 2: Pause

Do you feel like you are currently living with too much stress? Share with each other the biggest stressors in your life right now.

Read Luke 10:38–41 together. What stands out to you in this passage? Do you relate more with Mary or Martha? Why?

Discuss your weekly routine or schedule. Is it a constant sprint, or is there space for pause throughout your week?

Set a timer in your group for four minutes. Start the timer, and remain completely silent for the entire time. Once the four minutes is over, discuss what that felt like. What was challenging about that exercise? What did you feel God saying to you?

What would it look like for you to plan a 24-hour period this week for Sabbath? When will you do it? What would you need to move around in your schedule? Commit to one another to set aside a Sabbath time this week. What will “pausing” look like for you?

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

Meeting 3: Pray

Begin your group with prayer. How did your experiment with Sabbath go this past week? Share what worked and what didn't. What did you try? What did you learn?

Prayer can take a lot of different forms. In CORE Habit 1, we introduced three forms of prayer through the DIG method: demonstrate your love, intercession and requests, and godly confession. Prayer can also be expressed through contemplation and silence. It can look like taking a walk with God alone, taking time to journal, or meditating on Scripture. What other forms of prayer have made a significant difference in your life?

What could you do to express prayer to God in a new or different way on your next Sabbath day?

Read Psalm 42:4–8. This psalm represents a type of “self-talk” that is important for a healthy soul. The psalmist reminds himself about the unfailing character of God in the midst of his suffering. Share 3–4 important truths that you need to remind your soul on a regular basis.

How can you incorporate these reminders into your next Sabbath? What will you do this week to take your Sabbath time of prayer to the next level?

End your meeting with a time of prayer for each other, giving your cares and worries over to God. Ask him to teach you the secret of his rest.

Section 6: The Habit of Rhythm

Meeting 4: Play

Do you have any hobbies that bring you life? This could include games, sports, outdoor activities, food, time with friends, etc. Share two or three activities that re-energize you. Why do you think they bring you life?

Jesus said that he came to bring us *abundant* life (John 10:10). Paul taught that God gave us *everything* to enjoy (1 Timothy 6:17). Do you see God as someone who wants to bless you? Is there anything in you that resists the idea of God as a Good Father?

Most people fall into one of two categories. We either live our whole lives focused on “play” (obsessed with vacations and new toys), or we live our whole lives focused on “business” (always working, feeling guilty any time we stop). Which direction do you seem to lean? Why do you think you lean that way?

How can you incorporate “play” into your Sabbath day each week? What will you do differently this week?

End your meeting by committing to one another to *pause*, *pray*, and *play* during a 24-hour Sabbath day this coming week. Pray for one another to fight against the temptation to ignore or forget God’s command to Sabbath.

Section 6 Summary

In Section 6 of CORE we focused on the Habit of Rhythm: *Practice living by grace through a weekly Sabbath routine.*

Key thoughts include:

- The routine of Sabbath begins by understanding that our current routine of constant busyness does not work. Read Matthew 11:28–30 together. What do you think God is trying to say right now to you through this passage of Scripture?
- Sabbath is a 24-hour period where you intentionally *pause, pray and play*. Do you currently practice a weekly Sabbath routine? What does that look like? How could you take your routine to the next level?
- Set a timer in your group for four minutes. Start the timer, and remain completely silent for the entire time. Once the four minutes is over, discuss what that felt like. What was challenging about that exercise? What did you feel God saying to you?
- What would it look like for you to plan a 24-hour period this week for Sabbath? When will you do it? What would you need to move around in your schedule? Commit to one another to set aside a Sabbath time this week. What will “pausing” look like for you?
- Most people fall into one of two categories. We either live our whole lives focused on “play” (obsessed with vacations and new toys), or we live our whole lives focused on “business” (always working, feeling guilty any time we stop). Which direction do you seem to lean? Why do you think you lean that way? How can you incorporate “play” into your Sabbath day each week? What will you do differently this week?

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

SECTION OVERVIEW

Jesus gave his followers one specific commission before he ascended into heaven. He told us to go and make disciples (Matt 28:18–20). Tragically, many Christians are busy with so many other activities that little or no thought is given to the process of making disciples. Reflect on your own life. Do you have a plan to make disciples? Can you look back over your life and point to disciples you have made?

The CORE habits outlined in this resource serve as a roadmap for the process of discipleship. Each CORE Habit builds on the last one. No one ever fully “arrives” in the development of these habits. The goal of these CORE Habits is not to grow your resume before God. The goal is to grow your *love* so that you can become more like God! Christian maturity, in its most basic form, can be summed up like this: *Christian maturity means growing in love.*

CORE Habit 1: Relationship. *Receive* the love of God daily by seeking him in the morning.

CORE Habit 2: Radiance. Learn to *give* the love you have freely received by stepping out of your comfort zone and sharing Christ with others.

CORE Habit 3: Receptivity. *Abide* in love throughout the day, learning to depend on his Spirit for guidance and direction.

CORE Habit 4: Righteousness. Grow in holiness as you *obey* love, and surrender your natural desires to his design for your sexuality.

CORE Habit 5: Resources. Grow your *trust* in love by practicing financial generosity.

CORE Habit 6: Rhythm. *Submit* to love by practicing a weekly Sabbath.

CORE Habit 7: Replication. *Stretch* your love by investing your best in someone else.

In order to truly mature in your relationship with God, you must give what you learn away. There is no greater joy in life than to see someone you love experience God (3 John 1:4)!

This leads us to our seventh and final CORE Habit:

CORE Habit 7: Build an intentional circle of discipleship.

There is someone in your circle of influence that God has called you to lead in a discipleship relationship. What does that look like? It looks like regularly meeting with that person and coaching them through the 7 CORE Habits outlined in this material! It might even mean starting another CORE group with a few new friends and helping them along the journey. Through the process of investing in someone else, both you and your friend will experience tremendous, life-changing, spiritual growth!

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

Meeting 1: Called to Disciple

Open your meeting with prayer. What has God been doing in your life recently? How has God been challenging you or deepening your relationship with him?

Fill out this assessment. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “never true of me” and 10 being “always true of me,” rate where you fall in each area.

CORE Habit 7: Replication

I have more mature and less mature people in my life whom I regularly meet with for the purpose of spiritual growth.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I have someone in my life who I am reaching out to and challenging in their personal spiritual growth.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I regularly initiate spiritually challenging conversations with others.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I plan to continue walking closely with a small group of spiritually hungry believers because I see the value in this.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am experiencing the joy of playing a role in the spiritual growth of another.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I can point to a growing number of people whom I am discipling.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am carefully growing as a disciple-maker, taking inventory of my heart and motives.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

What in this assessment stood out to you? Where did you feel God's conviction?

Do you see yourself as a leader? Do you feel a conviction to help others grow spiritually? How has that conviction played out in your life?

Do you feel like you are a Christian who is successfully making disciples? Why or why not?

Read Matthew 28:18–20 together. What would need to change for you to take this command more seriously?

End your time together by praying for one another. Ask God to stretch you, making you a more effective leader in his Kingdom.

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

Meeting 2: Reflection

Open your time together in prayer. What have you enjoyed most about this CORE group?

How have you grown spiritually as a result of this CORE group? Which CORE Habit was most challenging for you?

What new routines have taken root in your life? What have you learned from someone else in the group that has made a significant difference for you?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. How has your group become the body of Christ to each other? How have you been changed by one another? How have you completed one another?

Take time to pray for each other. Ask God to give you specific words or impressions for each person in the group. Share these words with each other as a way to strengthen and encourage one another.

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

Meeting 3: Becoming a Leader

Share about someone in your life who is more spiritually mature and who has helped you grow in your walk with God. What did they do for you? How did they help you grow?

List 2–4 people in your life who you think you can help grow in their faith. What is the nature of your relationship now?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:3–12. In this passage, Paul described the heart of a godly leader and disciple-maker. What characteristics stand out to you?

Notice that leadership in the church is all about serving. It's not about titles or power. When have you seen spiritual leadership that didn't act from a servant's heart? (Share your experience without gossip or naming names.) How did that impact your life?

What will you do this week to initiate a new discipleship relationship with someone in your life?

Pray for one another before you end your meeting.

Section 7: The Habit of Replication

Meeting 4: The Next Mountain

Begin your meeting with prayer. As you come to the end of CORE Module 1, it is important to use this time to plan your next step. There are three options for your group:

Option 1: Continue to meet regularly, working through CORE Module 2.

Option 2: End your group, so that everyone in it can start a new CORE Group with new people who you want to help grow in their faith.

Option 3: Continue meeting with CORE Module 2 AND add another Core Group to your schedule full of new people who you want to help grow.

Discuss together: What is next for your CORE group?

What is next for you as a leader who makes disciples? Will you meet one-on-one with a few key people? Who? How often?

Will you begin a new CORE Group? When? With whom?

Finalize your next steps and commit to hold each other accountable to act. Read Acts 20:32 over each person, then pray for one another, commissioning each member of your group to make disciples. Pray for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit and the power to lead people closer to Jesus.

Section 7 Summary

In Section 7 of CORE, we focused on the Habit of Replication: *Build an intentional circle of discipleship.*

Key thoughts include:

- Every Christian is called to make disciples. Your spiritual growth will hit a ceiling until you own this calling from God. Do you see yourself as a leader? Do you feel a conviction to help others grow spiritually? How has that conviction played out in your life?
- How have you grown spiritually as a result of this CORE group? Which CORE Habit was most challenging for you? What new routines have taken root in your life?
- List 2–4 people in your life who you think you can help grow in their faith. What is the nature of your relationship now? What will you do this week to initiate a new discipleship relationship with someone in your life?
- As you come to the end of CORE Module 1, it is important to use this time to plan your next step. There are three options for your group:
 - **Option 1:** Continue to meet regularly, working through CORE Module 2.
 - **Option 2:** End your group, so that everyone in it can start a new CORE Group with new people who you want to help grow in their faith.
 - **Option 3:** Continue meeting with CORE Module 2 AND add another CORE Group to your schedule full of new people who you want to help grow. Discuss together: What is next for your CORE group?
- Finalize your next steps and commit to hold each other accountable to act. Read Acts 20:32 over each person, then pray for one another, commissioning each member of your group to make disciples. Pray for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit and the power to lead people closer to Jesus.

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