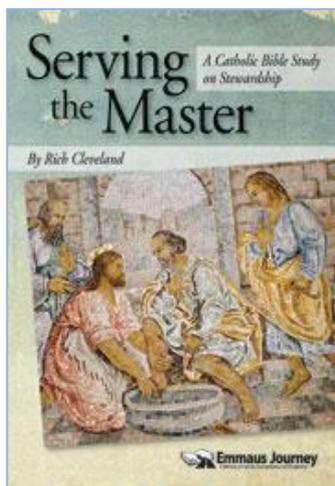




## **A Small-Group Facilitator's Guide For *Serving the Master***



### **A Catholic Bible Study from Emmaus Journey**

This small-group facilitator's guide provides suggestions for leading each aspect of this bible study. In addition it provides helpful small-group dynamics principles which will enhance your group.

Emmaus Journey is committed to encouraging among Catholics, enthusiasm for, and commitment to daily scripture reading and reflection and regular participation in scripture based small groups.

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Emmaus Journey

PO Box 63587 • Colorado Springs, CO 80962-3587

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## **Leading *Serving the Master***

This study, *Serving the Master*, will be relatively easy to lead, inasmuch as the material is fairly comprehensive, and could technically be led simply by proceeding from question to question. However, because the concepts involved in reflecting on stewardship should be life changing, it will be helpful to enhance the material by asking probing questions at the right time.

The material can be broken down into three segments for the sake of the discussion. Normally it would be best to plan on a ninety minute discussion; however it could be compacted into sixty minutes if necessary or expanded to two hours. However because the three parts of each session are interspersed you will need to keep the discussion moving at a pace that will ensure that you get done in time while at the same time not cutting the discussion short. The three segments are:

1. The Introductory reflection
2. Important quotations and support material
3. Questions on Scripture passages

Normally a session would consist of having participants read aloud the introduction and taking time to discuss the points that are covered there. This can usually be done by simply asking, "What did you get from this introductory material?" or "What impressed you from reading the introductory material." This material, though succinct, is full of pertinent points and is valuable for setting the stage for the discussion.

The session continues by having the question you are to discuss read aloud, along with the Scripture passage. It is important for people to turn to the passage in their Bible and follow along because you are in fact going to be discussing the content of the verses. After the above has been completed one or more persons should be asked to share their answers. At this point you simply need to decide whether the discussion has been adequate or whether you should use additional questions which you have prepared to drive the discussion to a deeper or more comprehensive level.

The quotes are interspersed to shed light on the material studied and to reflect insight from the Church and respected Catholic leaders.

These should also be read aloud and the participants given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

As the facilitator it is your responsibility to set the pace regarding preparation, attitude, and application. You can do this by being open and honest as you share, and by usually going first to demonstrate what you expect of others.

As we have observed various groups and facilitators, two situations have recurred frequently. The first has to do with the preparation of members of the group. Quite frequently people read the passage provided for a question and write down their reflections on the passage without actually answering the question provided in the lesson. As you know, the Scriptures are filled with an abundance of information, so a host of ideas can come out of a passage. However, as a community, the group is supposed to be reflecting on and answering a specific question on the same passage. So please encourage the participants to make sure they read and understand what the question is asking, before they record their answer.

A second observation is for those who facilitate a group. Frequently, in their desire to be thorough many facilitators feel the need to answer every question in each lesson. In a ninety minute session, if the discussion is lively, there is no way that every question can be answered thoroughly during that time frame. Consequently, a facilitator should have decided ahead of time which questions are essential to answer to adequately cover the material. With one eye on the clock, as the discussion progresses, the facilitator should move the group through the material and if necessary omit some of the material that is less pertinent. Keep in mind however, that members of the groups should have an opportunity at the end of the evening to share anything that was particularly important to them which you may not have discussed.

## **Specific Suggestions for Handling Each Chapter**

The following information provides some specific ideas on how to handle each section. For an experienced facilitator this information will have marginal value, though there will be some suggestions which will be helpful or which will stimulate some ideas of your own. For the person who is new at facilitating a group these suggestions will be helpful ideas that you can immediately incorporate into your plan for leading. In the process you will also find that your creativity will come alive and you will need to rely on these suggestions less and less.

Each chapter includes objectives which we hope to see accomplished through the material. As the facilitator this information both helps you understand what the focus of the chapter is, or could be, as well as provides direction as you pray for your group participants each week.

Lastly you will find some additional questions, and an occasional comment, that you can use to help move the group into discussion of the material. When you prepare, any ideas you decide to utilize should simply be written into the margin of your book rather than taking the facilitator's guide with you into the discussion group.



# Suggestions for Session 1: The Foundation of Being a Disciple of Jesus

## **Objectives:**

To lay the foundation for a successful small group.

To kick off the study by having a fun and a thought provoking first session together.

To introduce several important aspects of discipleship.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Get acquainted with the others in your group by sharing the answers to these questions:

What is your name?

What is your favorite dessert?

What one item do you own that best expresses who you are?

This first session will set the tone for the entire course. Begin with a positive attitude and graciously welcome those who have come. Hold off passing out the material until the introductory material is finished. If your group has been together for some time, they will know each other quite well, however it will still be a fun exercise to complete question two and three in the getting acquainted exercise above. If you have any new people make sure that you facilitate relationships by pointing out natural connections, such as mentioning to the new person others in the group who are employed in the same or similar professions, or who are from the same state, etc.

Review the material on page 6-9 with the group. You can do this by reading the letter of recommendation by Father Sean Wenger. Continue by reading aloud the Introduction. When you come to the "helpful attitudes to keep in mind," have members of the group read each section aloud, with your making occasional comments on points that are especially important to you.

## **A Commitment Card**

Sometimes the process of drawing up a group covenant is pretty time consuming so an alternative is to present to the group a Commitment

Card which explains your commitment to them as a facilitator, and then gives them a chance to respond in kind, stating and agreeing together what should be their commitment to you and the group. Below is an example of a Commitment Card which was used at Holy Apostles Parish in Colorado Springs.

## Holy Apostles Small Catholic Communities

### Commitment Agreement

#### Our Commitment To You

To be present weekly

To communicate any changes promptly

To provide a pleasant meeting environment

To thoroughly complete each lesson

To prepare to facilitate the discussion graciously and effectively

To participate with openness and teachability

To pray for you and the group

To start and end on time

#### What Should Be Your Commitment?

Regarding Attendance?

Regarding Communication?

Regarding Lesson Preparation?

Regarding Participation?

Are there other areas?

Here is how you should present it:

- Have a copy for each member of the group
- Explain, "Here's my commitment to you." (At this point read the commitment statement you are making.)
- When finished ask, "Are there other things I should consider?" Be sure to consider their suggestions and if necessary add them to your card.
- Then ask, "What should be your commitment to me and to the group?" Point out the areas they might want to consider. Make a note of their comments, and then when you think they are finished summarize the suggestions and ask, "Can we agree, and commit to do these things?"
- Redo the card during the coming week with their commitments listed and give everyone a copy of the Commitment Card.

## The Introductory Material

Read the introductory material and point out the similar ways a wheel and a cross have been used to illustrate the Christian life. Explain that during this session we will study and discuss each of the six parts of the wheel. Point out that in this session we will be discussing the rim, the spokes, and the hub of the wheel.

## THE RIM

Because people did not have time to prepare this first lesson, the way to handle the material this evening is to have someone read the paragraph from each section. Then have everyone look up the Scripture passage, and someone read aloud the Scripture passage and the question. Take several answers and then give people a few seconds to record their answer.

## CHRIST THE CENTER

Continue using the same method as mentioned above asking, "What stands out to you from these paragraphs about Christ the Center?" etc.

Question 2: How does hearing God's Word and receiving Eucharist enhance our devotion to Christ?

Question 3: Describe what it means to be rooted and grounded?

## MEANS OF GRACE

Where do you find difficulty connecting your love for Christ with love for others?

Point out that you will be handling this part of the Wheel Illustration in two sections; God's Word, Prayer and the Sacraments constituting one section, and A Loving Witness, and A Loving Life the other sections.

## **God's Word**

Question 5: What are the promises Christ makes in this passage regarding his Word (Commandments)?

## **Prayer**

## **The Sacraments**

What sacraments are recognized by the Catholic Church?

Question 7: What results were seen in these disciples lives?

### **A Loving Witness**

Question 8: How do you feel about being a witness and having a witnessing responsibility?

### **A Loving Life**

#### **Quote by —Pope John Paul II, *Be Not Afraid!***

Take a moment to have someone read aloud this great statement by Pope John Paul II. Read it with emphasis a second time, pointing out one or two phrases that you feel are important.

Who is the Holy Father talking about when he says “The Church”? What would be a good synonym to use?

Question 10: Let several share their feelings on this question.

Question 11: Take time to let people explain what they would like to see added to this illustration. As Catholics there are probably some helpful additions we could make. Perhaps you could have a flip board on which you could draw a picture of the wheel with its various parts, and the groups additional suggestions.

Read the closing paragraph on page 18. Point out the chapter titles, to wet their appetites for coming sessions.

## **PREPARATION FOR SESSION 2**

Have the assignment read aloud.

Point out to them that in Session 2 and at the beginning of each of the other sessions the group will spend several minutes sharing from their daily Scripture reading. Take the time necessary to read through and discuss “Introduction to Daily Scripture Reading.” Point out to them the five steps which are introduced, and explain that these practical methods will make their daily Bible reading come alive for them.

Stress to them how important it is during these next three weeks to faithfully complete their daily Bible reading assignments. Once they become familiar with the methods and established in a daily pattern (time and place) for reading the Bible each day, they will find it a wonderful and enlightening experience. People can choose to read from whichever book of the Bible they prefer. Recommend that it should probably be in the New Testament.

Explain that the "My Reflections" pages should be used to record at least one significant highlight that comes from your daily Bible reading. It will be from the "My Reflections" pages that each will have an opportunity to share one of their highlights each week.

Close in prayer.



# Suggestions for Session 2: God's Trustworthy Steward

## **Objective:**

To provide a general understanding of stewardship.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Share insights from your prayer time and daily Bible reading.

This weekly sharing of insights is an integral part of this series. As facilitator you should come ready and eager to share, and be very affirming of those who do share. For this and the next two weeks you should encourage everyone to share, and be attentive to people who are struggling with faithfulness in this discipline. You should talk to them one-on-one to encourage them.

Make sure that you have done the daily reading assignments completely. Since each person is sharing what "impressed" them from their daily Bible reading you should not endeavor to correct what they share. Simply express thanks for their sharing and/or some form of affirmation.

## The Introductory Material

Have the quote from *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* read aloud. Be ready to share one thing that stood out to you from this quote, and then ask for other's input.

Have these paragraphs read aloud by a couple people, and open it for the participants' comments. You might point out that "discipline without desire equals drudgery."

Point out that we are seeking a general understanding of stewardship from this lesson.

## Questions 1-2

Have these two questions completed in order. Have the passage of Scripture and the question read aloud, before a participant shares their answer. Take additional comments from the group.

## Questions 3, a-c

What are some words that would convey the opposite meaning of “trustworthy”?

Question 3, d

What motivates you to serve God?

Quote

Have the quote from *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response* read aloud and take comments from the participants.

Question 4, a

Encourage participants to listen to the areas others mention to see if they discover additional areas in which they should practice stewardship.

Question 4, b

This provides a good opportunity to discover what participants are struggling with in the area of stewardship. Ask for any lessons others have learned on how to deal with these pressures.

### PREPARATION FOR SESSION 3

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1-5 on “Jesus’ Responsible Servant,” pages 34-39.

Have the assignment read aloud.

Consider reproducing a copy of the Lectionary Bible Reading Record found on the Emmaus Journey web site for each participant and encourage its use to help establish consistency in their daily Scripture reading.

Close in prayer. Be creative and use variety to make your prayer time meaningful.

# Suggestions for Session 3: Jesus' Responsible Servant

## **Objective:**

To understand that stewardship involves serving; serving God and serving people.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

We have not mentioned the importance of opening in prayer yet in this facilitator's guide, however we assume that you recognize its importance and are beginning each session with prayer.

## **The Introductory Material**

Have several people read through these paragraphs aloud. Take comments and questions from the group. Consider asking, "How did you first learn responsibility as you matured?"

## **Question 1, a-c**

Would you describe yourself as one to whom much has been given, or entrusted, or one to whom little has been given? Why?

## **Question 2, a,b**

Have the group discuss the following follow-up questions: "What does talent refer to?" "What are your talents?" "Which talents do you have buried?"

## **Quote**

Have the story about Dr. Moon read aloud.

## **Question 3**

Ask the group how they feel about social action, and where it fits in this concept of stewardship?

## **Question 4**

Read and discuss as written.

## **Question 5**

What should we do if we are not motivated to serve as a faithful steward?

## Quote

Take time to discuss the quote by Thomas a' Kempis.

## PREPARATION FOR SESSION 4

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1–7 on “Stewardship of Our Heart,” pages 46-51.

Have the assignment read aloud.

Remember to allow adequate time to pray as a community for the needs of the group and the parish.

# Suggestions for Session 4: Stewardship of Our Hearts

## **Objective:**

To help participants' clarify the importance of managing our heart and its response to God so that we will be able to fulfill our responsibilities as a steward.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

For variety this week why don't you break up into groups of two or three and each share several things that impressed them from this last week's Scripture readings.

## The Introductory Material

Have the introductory paragraphs read aloud, and take comments from the group.

On the last paragraph consider asking, "Who do you know who has simply become stewards of their hearts in extraordinary ways?" Or, "Who are the models of stewardship that you admire?"

## Question 1

This can be an especially fun and interesting exercise. Ask people, "Which ones interested you, and why?" Have them read the passage of Scripture before they share. After they share on one of the heart conditions, ask if others also chose that one, and encourage them to add their comments.

Ask people to put an asterisk (\*) by those heart conditions they think result from good stewardship of the heart. Then take a minute to see if you can agree on which ones need an asterisk, however it isn't important that everyone have the same conclusion.

## Question 1, a

Have everyone in the group share on this question.

## Question 2

Discuss what a person should do if they recognize that their heart is far from God.

## Question 3 and 4, a, b

Read and discuss as written.

Question 4, c

When you get to the terms they are asked to define, make sure that you have several people share their definitions.

Question 5, b

This question can be a good opportunity for the participants to learn practical spirituality from one another. Don't hesitate to ask people who mention a helpful way to store good treasure in their heart to elaborate on their answer.

Quote

Have the quote by St. Francis de Sales read aloud and discuss with people what he means by not leaving sin "in our affection." Ask for some examples of what he is talking about.

Question 6

Have a different participant take each passage and share their answer. Before others share, Ask, "Do you find these passages discouraging or encouraging? Why?" Ask for additional comments and questions from the other participants.

Quote

Read the paragraph and quotation aloud and ask for comments from the group.

Question 7

Treat this question in the same manner as the previous one. Discuss with the group how someone who has an unhealthy heart would go about receiving healing and begin a fresh start. This, and the previous quote, are also good places to talk about the value of the Rite of Reconciliation.

Quote

Before reading the assignment, pause for a few moments of quiet contemplation and then pray together this prayer from *The Imitation of Christ*.

## PREPARATION FOR SESSION 5

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.

2. Complete questions 1-5 on “Yielding Our Hearts to God,” pages 58-61.

Have the assignment read aloud and then close with group prayer.



# Suggestions for Session 5: Yielding Our Hearts to God

## **Objective:**

To follow up on the basic information covered last week, and to suggest practical means for maintaining a heart that is responsive to God.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

Before, during, or after the sharing from their weekly Scripture reading, ask the group how this daily discipline interfaces with the concept of stewardship of the heart.

## The Introductory Material

Be prepared, after having the introductory information read aloud, to elaborate on one of the thoughts from it. A couple phrases on which it may be especially helpful to elaborating, after you ask others to share, are:

“The wellspring of Christian spirituality is our inner life.”

“It is God who brings about changes...”

“...we cooperate with the Spirit.”

You might also ask the question, “How do we resist the Spirit?” or “How do we cooperate with the Holy Spirit?”

## Question 1

It might be helpful prior to discussing David’s prayer of confession to either explain the circumstances of David’s prayer, or ask if someone can explain it. You will find the incident in 2 Samuel 11:1-12:15.

## Question 1, b-c

If you did not talk about the Rite of Reconciliation previously this would also be a good time to discuss it. Some may have had negative experiences with confession in the past. Take some time to list as many positive things as the group can discern regarding the value of participating in the sacrament of confession.

## Quote

Have the quote by Fr. Henri J. M. Nouwen read aloud. Ask for comments on this quote.

#### Question 2

Have a different participant handle each passage of Scripture and the follow-up question. They should be sharing both the things they identified in the passage which they can do to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and their answer to the follow-up question.

#### Question 3

Have several share their answers.

#### Quote

Have the quote from Pope Paul VI read aloud without comment.

#### Question 4

Have each participant read their paragraph.

#### Question 5

Ask for volunteers to share their answers, however you should consider going first to set the pace for the others. Don't pressure people to share but encourage them to share openly.

#### Quote

This too would be a good prayer to use to close the session. Give people a chance to quietly collect their thoughts in silence, and then pray this prayer together in unison as a group.

#### PREPARATION FOR SESSION 6

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1–7 on “The Way in Which We Live: Our Time and Our Work,” pages 68-73.

Close in prayer.

# Suggestions for Session 6: The Way in Which We Live: Our Time and Our Work

## **Objective:**

To consider the practical implications of how stewardship is worked out in our daily lives.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

There are a lot of practical tools that can be used to spice up our daily reading, such as various translations which will give fresh insight. Take a few moments to see what tools are working for participants in your group and consider introducing them to some of other helpful tools you may know about, such as a Bible dictionary, etc.

## **The Introductory Material**

Have several take turns reading these paragraphs aloud, and then ask people for their impressions of the material. Consider asking people how they respond to the definition mentioned in paragraph one, and what they would add, or perhaps remove from the definition.

Point out that this lesson and next week's lesson will be specifically addressing the phrase, "the way in which we live."

## **OUR TIME**

### **Question 1, a**

Several phrases in this passage could be elaborated on such as, "futility of the mind." Think through on the passages and identify those phrases you would like the group to amplify. If you have a Bible dictionary, you might bring it to show the participants how it could be helpful, or look up several of the phrases in different translations to see how they are rendered by other translators. Of course you will want to be sure and use respected translations.

### **Question 1, b**

This is an important insight to grasp. So often we try to change the negative qualities we see in ourselves, our family, or others' lives, and replace them with positive ones without realizing the significance of the cause and effect relationship. For there to be lasting change, coming from a non-legalistic spirit, we must focus on the cause that is brings about the effect that is either desired or not desired.

#### Question 2

This is a good place to use the question "Which do you feel is most important?" This question allows participants to express their emotional response rather than intellectual information.

#### Question 3

Read and discuss as written.

#### Quotes

After having the quotes and paragraph read aloud ask, "How does our use of time affect our witness?"

#### Question 4

Read and discuss each of the passages, providing an opportunity for comments after each.

#### Quote

Have the quote by Pope John Paul II read aloud. Consider asking, "What phrase in his statement is most encouraging or challenging to you?"

#### Question 5

Handle these questions in a routine manner, having the passages read aloud and answered by various participants. Be prepared if you are running out of time to selectively cover the more important passages in question 4 and 5.

#### **Our Work**

Read the introductory paragraph and the quote from *Your Work Matters to God*. Ask how do you feel about this view of work?

#### Question 6, b

Prior to having someone answer this question, ask the group to share how they "feel" about their jobs. Later when you close in prayer you can include some of what is shared if it is appropriate.

Question 7, b

What does complaining communicate to others about our view of life and God's involvement in it?

PREPARATION FOR SESSION 7:

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1–10 on “The Way in Which We Live: Our Finances and Our Words,” pages 80-85.

Have the assignment read aloud.

Point out that question 10 in next week's material should also include reflection on this week's material

Consider being creative a little in these remaining times of closing prayer.



# Suggestions for Session 7: The Way in Which We Live: Our Finances and Our Words

## **Objective:**

To consider the practical implications of how stewardship is worked out in our daily lives specifically as it pertains to our money and our speech.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

## The Introductory Material

Have several people read the introductory paragraphs and quotation aloud. Ask for their comments and questions.

Additionally you could ask, "How do you feel about discussing your views of money and speech?"

Before beginning with question 1 take a few minutes to review what was learned last week about the practical implications of stewardship.

Cover the questions in this session in a similar way as we have in the previous sessions. Have one person read the question and Scripture reference, and share their answer. Then open the discussion for other answers, comments, and questions. Additional ideas and questions will be interspersed amidst the facilitators guide for you to use as you deem necessary.

## OUR MONEY

### Question 1

Several people should share their answers to part (b).

What constitutes a "treasure in heaven?"

### Question 2

Ask several for their definition of "rich." After several have shared, follow up their comments with the question, "Then in light of your definition of 'rich' what does it mean to be 'rich' in good works?"

### Question 3

Be sure to focus on attitudes as you discuss question 3, b.

### Question 4, a

What would be comparable to a “widow’s mite” today?

### Question 4, b

This question should be discussed thoroughly, but be wary of people riding hobby horses as they share their views.

### Quote

After discussing question 4, make sure you read and discuss the quote by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Then if appropriate follow up these two parts with the question, “What should be our attitude toward supporting Church and religious ministries?”

### Question 5

A good way to handle question 5 is to have one person read the question and the first reference and then give their answer. With others reading and answering the question based on the other three references. After all four references have been read and answered, then open all of the question’s parts up for other comments.

Conclude the discussion by asking if there are some other “trustworthy” uses they can think of that haven’t been mentioned.

### Question 6

The passage in 1 Corinthians 9 is profound with its many principles on giving, so take some time as a group to dwell here and thoroughly plumb the depths of this passage. Perhaps you could compile a list of the various principles people discovered here. It is always good to keep asking what the implications are to the discoveries you are making.

## OUR SPEECH

### Question 7, b

This question is very valuable, for what they discover here becomes an important part of the solution to inappropriate speech as followers of Christ. So make sure that you draw from them some really practical ideas.

### Question 8

A follow up question, “What are some ways we fail to bridle our tongues?”

### Question 9

Have at least three people share all six of their guidelines.

### Quote

Have St. Francis de Sales’ quotation read aloud. Point out that if speech is a problem that it may be helpful to memorize the passages he mentions and pray them daily.

### Question 10

Remind them that their answer should also include material from last week. You should share first to encourage them to be open and personal.

### PREPARATION FOR SESSION 8

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1–5 on “Entrusted with Jesus’ Mission,” pages 92-96.

Have the Assignment read aloud.



# Suggestions for Session 8: Entrusted with Jesus' Mission

## **Objective:**

To help participants discover and respond to God's call to become involved in advancing His Kingdom on earth.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

## The Introductory Material

Cover the introduction as we have previously. Perhaps you should emphasize one or two things that impressed you from Pope Paul VI's statement.

Why do you think Pope Paul VI speaks so strongly ("can and must," and "it is unthinkable") about this responsibility to share the Good News?

## Question 1

There are several words in the Luke passage in question 1 that probably need to be clarified, such as "good news," "release," "recover the sight," and "go free." These words have deep spiritual connotation which it is important to grasp in the beginning of this discussion.

## Question 2

Have five people answer the parts of this question. However before they do explain that it is important to grasp a composite understanding of what Christ's mission is all about, and at the end of this question you would like several to summarize his mission for the group.

Question 2 provides a good opportunity to discuss the balance between a personal responsibility for the great commission and a corporate responsibility. The Great Commission as some call the mandate found in the passages in question 2, was given not just to an individual but to a group of individuals who represent the Church. So on one hand we need to personally become burdened to fulfill this great commission, but at the same time we must realize that it requires a group effort to reach the world. We each have a personal

responsibility to join with our fellow Church members in providing the efforts needed to advance Christ's Kingdom.

### Question 3

Have several people share their answers to this question.

Question 3 and the quote which follows question 4 are critically important. There are many ideas floating around as to how non-Christians obtain heaven, and as to what our responsibility is for telling them about Christ. Give people freedom to share their ideas however keep reminding them that one of the objectives of these studies is to find out what the Holy Spirit revealed through Scripture on these subjects, and to understand what is the Church's authoritative teaching. Encourage people who desire to learn more to refer to the reference material provided at the end of this session.

### Question 4

Listen for people to personalize the answer to this question and encourage them to not simply answer in general terms.

### Question 5

What is the most valuable lesson you learned from Paul and his team?

## PREPARATION FOR SESSION 9

1. Continue to read and mark your Bible daily, and record your thoughts in your prayer journal.
2. Complete questions 1-6 on "Ambassadors for Christ," pages 102-105.

Have the Assignment read aloud.

Point out that next week is the final session. Consider whether you should plan a congratulatory potluck the following week. If you do have a potluck in conjunction with Session 9 usually that means that the material will not be thoroughly discussed. This would result in the group not ending on a high note of accomplishment. So perhaps it would be better to have the potluck the following week.

Also consider whether the group would like to continue meeting in the future.

Close in prayer.

# Suggestions for Session 9: Discipleship: Stewardship of the Mission

## **Objectives:**

To consider the practical implications of how what it means to participate in Christ's mission.

To realize that both the fortunate and unfortunate events which enter our lives can and should be used as a witness for Christ.

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Share insights from your daily prayer and Bible reading.

## **The Introductory Material**

Have several participants read the introductory material. The introduction provides a good opportunity to talk about two issues, the fears we have about talking to people about Christ and the witness of our lives.

## **Question 1**

People usually fall into one of two categories; those who have profound experiences of God's involvement in their lives and those who don't think they have ever experienced God's involvement in their lives. Take time to let people talk about their experiences and hopefully come to realize that they have much to talk about.

## **Question 2, a,b**

Depending on the make up of your group, this can be an emotional time of sharing. The objective is to understand how God can use even the suffering and mistreatment we experience to proclaim to those observing us that he is a God of love. Take ample time to discuss these truths.

## **Question 3**

This question also covers an important aspect of the witness of our life. It will be helpful to make sure that people understand what it means to murmur and complain, and to differentiate between

murmuring and complaining and properly representing a situation which needs to be rectified.

How do people respond to a life that “shines”?

Question 4

2 Corinthians 5:17-6:2 represents the core concept which we all need to grasp regarding the part we play in Christ’s commission. Help people to understand what it means to be an ambassador of reconciliation and to embrace this role as Catholic Christians.

Question 5 a, b

Some follow up questions: “What is there about this message that would be offensive?” Also, “Do you find that people take offense at this message of reconciliation? If not, to what do they take offense?”

Quote

Have the quote from *Go and Make Disciples* read aloud.

Question 6

Conclude the reading and discussion of this question by stating, “Okay, in light of what we have discovered about being stewards of the great commission what changes do you think will take place in your life?”

## **CONCLUSION**

As the facilitator, read the “Conclusion” aloud and with emphasis adding your own affirmation for the group’s efforts.

Pray and thank the Father for all that the Holy Spirit has shown the group about being good stewards in Jesus’ Kingdom.