

## DISCOVER

Each topic will provide a scriptural foundation, the concepts underlying the topic, and questions for the students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic. It is anticipated that these will be taught in a small group setting and take approximately 45-50 minutes. You are free to modify the concepts taught into your own words, but actual scriptural references should be included. There is a student handout for each teaching module which also includes student assignments.

## DEMONSTRATE

In preparation for this topic, think of examples of how the Word of God has impacted your own life and how it could be incorporated into your group's walk with the Lord.

## DEVELOP

Each module will contain questions for the students to answer that should give you an opportunity to determine if the Key Considerations are understood.

## DEEPER

Be sure to leave time at the start of each meeting to allow the students to share their answers/responses to their previous assignments.

## DISCERNMENT

The Disciple has a good understanding of the subject.

The Disciple has expressed ownership of the concepts.

The Disciple is integrating the concepts into his/her personal walk with Christ.

## DAILY LIVING

A memory verse is provided at the end as a suggestion for students to practice and pray through each day.

## LEADER OVERVIEW

*This topic is designed to help the student learn how to study and apply Scripture, show how to plan and develop a personal Bible study, and how to correctly use the Scriptures.*

*The foundation of any Biblical based discipleship must be the Word of God – the Bible. As humans we are prone to rely on our own devices; however, as Believers we find that we have a hunger and desire to learn all there is to know about the One who has become the center of our new life.*

*As we grow in our Christian walk, just as a newborn moves from mother's milk to solid food, we too will move from the milk of the Word to nourishment as a mature man or woman in Christ. This only comes through study of the Word of God.*

## GOD'S WORD—THE BIBLE

The Bible comes in many “versions” and translations and it is instructive that you should eventually have more than one version to compare what is being said for greater understanding. We all have our own “favorite” that we use more often than any other, and if comfortable with that we should use that version. We have chosen to use the New American Standard Bible (NASB 1985) as the standard for the Discipleship Pathways curriculum.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ITSELF?

The Key Verse for the Discipleship curriculum is 2 Timothy 3:16-17 which says, *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”*

The author of Hebrews 4:12 has this to say about the Bible: *“For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”*

- **The Bible is living** – It is not a dead document but alive and full of vitality to believers. We can be confident that we serve a living God who has given us a document that is alive.
- **The Bible is active** – An active Bible implies continuing movement, one that does not change but moves with us as we grow. It is energetic and powerful. As we study it more, we have a better understanding of the Word, and realize the power available to us.
- **Sharper than a two-edged sword** – The ancient sword was both a defensive and offensive weapon. It is important to train diligently to be able to use the sword correctly, efficiently and effectively.

When we wield the sword of the Word of God well, and listen to what the Word of God says to us, it will cut to the depth of the division of our soul and spirit and our joints and marrow. When we are mature and listen, we will be actively involved in the will of God for our lives.

- **Able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart** – The Word of God will confirm for us the Will of God in our lives.

## DISCUSSION

*What is your favorite version or translation of the Bible and why?*

*Does “all” really mean ALL?*

*How could the Bible be used as an offensive weapon?  
As a defensive weapon?*

Having a document that gives us guidance in our daily lives (if we are willing to listen) is a priceless gem. Too often we try to reach “the will of God” through emotion or feelings without really studying the Word, and allowing the Sword to pierce deep into our hearts. It is this Pathway to Discipleship that we will use to study the Word of God, to mature into believers that will be able to reproduce themselves, and to “make disciples of all the nations.”

## What do the chapter and verse numbers mean? Are they inspired too?

When the books of the Bible were originally written, they did not contain chapter or verse references. The Bible was divided into chapters and verses to help us find Scriptures more quickly and easily. It is much easier to find "John chapter 3, verse 16" than it is to find "for God so loved the world..." In a few places, chapter breaks are poorly placed and as a result divide content that should flow together. Overall, though, the chapter and verse divisions are very helpful. They act as our roadmap on the Pathway to Discipleship.

The chapter divisions commonly used today were developed by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton put the modern chapter divisions into place around A.D. 1227. The Wycliffe English Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use this chapter pattern. Since the Wycliffe Bible, nearly all Bible translations have followed Langton's chapter divisions.

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish rabbi by the name of Nathan in A.D. 1448. Robert Estienne, who was also known as Stephanus, was the first to divide the New Testament into standard numbered verses in 1555. Stephanus essentially used Nathan's verse divisions for the Old Testament. Since that time, beginning with the Geneva Bible, the chapter and verse divisions employed by Stephanus have been accepted into nearly all the Bible versions.

## How to read the address.

Look at Psalm 12: 6. The way to read this is:

**Psalm** – this refers to the book of the Bible (there are 66 books of the Bible and Psalms is in the “middle” when you open it). You can look at Psalms in the same way you would look at a Book.

**12** – this refers to the 12th Psalm (there are 150 Psalms). You can look at the 12th Psalm in the same way as a chapter.

**6** – this refers to the 6th verse of the 12th Psalm (there are 8 verses in Psalm 12).

## DISCUSSION

*Do you have any questions about how to find a Bible reference in the Bible?*

*Do you have a Bible reading plan in place now? If not, when will you?*

*See the Digging Deeper Section for some suggested Bible verses to look up.*

So the address can be looked at as a “Book”, “Chapter”, and “Sentence”.

Now that we know how to look up the address of a Scripture reference – lets look at Psalm 12:6 – what does it say about the Bible?

Psalm 12:6 – *“The words of the Lord are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.”*

## METHODS OF STUDYING THE BIBLE

One of the most efficient and easiest ways to study the Bible is to have a plan. You can be haphazard and “open” the Bible to any page and read any verse and you will probably gain something from that. However, God would have us to be organized, have a plan, and be deliberate in our study.

Your current Bible may have a recommended plan to read the Bible in a year or you can select from numerous plans at:

<http://www.bibleplan.org/> or  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/>

## It is important to obtain some benefit from the Word of God – what is in it for me?

Whenever you read the Word of God, you should always read with idea of learning something. What is the benefit for me? This not a selfish thought, but should be an expectation that God will reveal something to you on a regular basis. This comes through prayer and being open to God speaking to you through His Word in a careful and thoughtful manner. This does not mean that, like Judas when he realized what he had done in betraying Jesus hung himself. If you read that verse just by itself and believed God was telling you to hang yourself – it would violate Scriptural principles, as God will never tell you or ask you to kill yourself – but Satan will.

## DISCUSSION