

KNOWING THE TRUTH

PART ONE: GOD AND HIS WORD

This booklet is designed to help you, a church leader, train others to serve and lead in the local church.

WHY BOTHER WITH TRAINING?

Most churches would love to have a few new leaders. But new leaders don't just magically appear! Leaders need to be identified, trained, and encouraged.

- Even naturally 'gifted' leaders benefit from training. People who are 'gifted' musicians received lessons and training at some point, and they have to practice regularly.
- Timothy was a 'gifted' leader (he received a 'gift from God' for ministry, 2 Timothy 1:6). But Timothy also received training, instruction, encouragement and feedback from Paul, an older and more experienced leader (see 1 and 2 Timothy).

WHO DOES THE TRAINING?

Future leaders can receive training and input from books, helpful websites, conferences, and classes. It makes sense for people with more experience in ministry to help those with less experience.

- Long-serving Sunday School teachers can train newbies. Veteran preachers can mentor newcomers. Skilful Bible study leaders can give input to those still learning how to lead.
- The Bible tells us that Bible-teaching leaders in the church have a responsibility to train and equip others for ministry and service. Ephesians 4:11-12 says that pastors and teachers are to "prepare God's people for works of service".

HOW CAN WE TRAIN?

Many of us are not professional teachers. Many of us wish we had received better training (instead of being ‘thrown in the deep end’!). So how can we train others well?

Planning a training programme is a lot like planning a journey on ‘Google Maps’.

Choose Destination: Where are we going? What is the goal of the training you are planning to offer? It’s good to clearly answer this question: “By the end of this training, what should the trainees know and be able to do?” It’s also worth asking “how can we know that we have arrived?” In other words, how will you assess the trainees to check that they are making good progress?

Choose Starting Point: Where are we starting from? How close, or far away, are the trainees from the final goal? What do they already know? What can they already do?

Choose Travel Mode: On Google Maps you can choose to drive, walk, bike, or take public transport. There are different ways to travel depending on your situation. There are also different ways to train others for ministry. Would it be best for the trainees (and you) to read and discuss a book together, go to a conference together, meet for informal Bible studies, should you run a class in your local church or enrol in online Bible College courses? You may try a number of different options.

Choose Your Route: Sometimes Google Maps will suggest a few ways different ways to get to your destination. You could take the fastest route or the slow and scenic way. What would be best for the people you are trying to train? What points do you need to cover to reach your destination? What themes and passages of the Bible will you need to visit along the way? Will you offer some short training opportunities to get them serving quickly, or would it be wise to take your time and not rush the process?

HOW DO I USE THIS BOOKLET?

These training booklets offer busy church leaders a plan for training people in the local church. They are designed to be:

- Short—each course is usually 5 sessions
- Interactive—a discussion not a lecture
- Flexible—you can use the bits you want and leave the rest
- Manageable—each session might take between an hour and 1.5 hours
- Realistic—they require minimum preparation and resources
- Scalable—you can use these with one trainee or 20

KNOWING THE TRUTH 1: COURSE OVERVIEW

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course learners will be able to use relevant Bible passages to explain what their own church believes about God and his Word.

ASSESSMENT:

- Trainees will discuss key Bible beliefs with their trainer during each session.
- Trainees will prepare a series of short Bible studies (or talks) to explain to others what their church believes and teaches.

COURSE PLAN:

Session	Points to cover
One	Knowing the truth about the Bible
Two	Knowing the truth about God
Three	Knowing the truth about Jesus—who he is
Four	Knowing the truth about Jesus—what he has done
Five	Knowing the truth about the Holy Spirit


KNOWING THE TRUTH 1: SESSION ONE

SESSION AIM

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Summarise what Jesus and his friends said about the Bible.
- Use relevant verses to explain what your church believes about the Bible.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussion	<p>Imagine asking people in your neighbourhood/community this question: “If God is real, do you think he is speaking to people today?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– What sort of answers would you hear?– How would you answer this question? <p><i>If working in a group, you could write your thoughts on a whiteboard and discuss them together.</i></p>										
Bible study	<p>God speaks to us in his Word, the Bible. What did Jesus and the apostles believe about God’s Word?</p> <p>Look up these verses and discuss what they teach us about the Bible.</p> <table><tr><td>Matthew 5:17-20</td><td>Luke 4:1-13</td><td>Luke 24:25-27, 44-49</td></tr><tr><td>1 Thessalonians 2:13</td><td>2 Timothy 3:15-17</td><td>Hebrews 4:12</td></tr><tr><td>1 Peter 1:23-25</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	Matthew 5:17-20	Luke 4:1-13	Luke 24:25-27, 44-49	1 Thessalonians 2:13	2 Timothy 3:15-17	Hebrews 4:12	1 Peter 1:23-25			
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Reflection	<p>What you believe about the Bible is important. How you use the Bible is also very important!</p> <p>Discuss these questions together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) During a normal week, how many ways is the Bible read and taught in our church and in all of its ministries? ii) What is good about the Bible teaching in our church? What could we improve about our Bible teaching? iii) How can we help people read the Bible for themselves? How important is this to us as leaders?
Conclusion	<p>At the end of this course trainees should have prepared a series of short Bible studies (or Bible talks) to explain what your church believes and teaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You may use these studies to help newcomers understand your church’s ‘Statement of Faith’. – You may want to plan a sermon series on ‘Things We Believe’. – Or you may want to run refresher courses for people who already attend your church, key leaders and volunteers, etc. <p>For homework, plan a short Bible study (or talk) on “The Bible”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a look at your church ‘Statement of Faith’. What does it say about the Bible? • Try to put the key points from your ‘Statement of Faith’ into everyday language. Think of examples or illustrations that might help people understand. <i>(For example, if your ‘Statement of Faith’ says that the Bible is “inspired” — what does this mean? How could you explain it to a new Christian?)</i> • Plan which key points you will teach, as well as the order you will present them in. • What Bible passages would you study together in order to understand these truths?


KNOWING THE TRUTH 1: SESSION TWO

SESSION AIM

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Describe some of God's main attributes/characteristics.
- Use relevant verses to explain what your church believes about God.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussion	<p>Different people believe different things about God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Some believe there is one God, others believe there are many gods. – Some people think God knows us and makes plans for our life. Other people believe God is distant and not closely involved in the world. <p>How would you describe God to people in your community? What are the most important things to say about him?</p> <p><i>If working in a group, you could write your thoughts on a whiteboard and discuss them together.</i></p> 
Bible study	<p>In some ways we are like God. In other ways God is very different from us!</p> <p>Look up these verses and think about God's attributes/ what he is like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Which of these attributes do we share in some small way?</i> – <i>Which of these attributes only describe God, and show that he is different from us?</i> <p>Unchanging — Psalm 102:26-27 Eternal — Psalm 90:2 Loving — John 3:16 Holy — Psalm 99:9 Sovereign — 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 Kind — Exodus 34:6</p>

Reflection	<p>The Bible teaches that the one true God is ‘triune’: one God who eternally exists as the three persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</p> <p>– <i>How would you explain ‘the Trinity’ to a new Christian?</i></p> <p>Read and discuss these passages below. Each passage shows us how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit work together to achieve God’s work.</p> <p>CREATION — Genesis 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16 SALVATION — 1 Peter 1:1-2 PRAYER - Hebrews 10:19-22 and Romans 8:26-27</p> <p>– <i>Do you find any of these passages helpful for teaching others about ‘the Trinity’?</i></p>
Conclusion	<p>At the end of this course trainees should have prepared a series of short Bible studies (or Bible talks) to explain what your church believes and teaches.</p> <p>For homework, plan a short Bible study (or talk) on “God”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a look at your church ‘Statement of Faith’. What does it say about God? • Try to put the key points from your ‘Statement of Faith’ into everyday language. Think of examples or illustrations that might help people understand. <i>(For example, if your ‘Statement of Faith’ says that God is “sovereign” — what does this mean? How could you explain it to a new Christian?)</i> • Plan which key points you will teach, as well as the order you will present them in. • What Bible passages would you study together in order to understand these truths?

KNOWING THE TRUTH 1: SESSION THREE

SESSION AIM

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Explain, from the Bible, why Christians believe Jesus is both God and man.
- Identify some common misunderstandings people have about Jesus.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussion	<p>In Mark 8:27 Jesus asked his disciples “Who do people say that I am?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>How would different people answer that today (Jewish people, Muslims, atheists, religious people, liberal Christians...)?</i> <p>Jesus then asked his disciples “But who do you say I am?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>How would you answer that question, in 5 words or less?</i>
Bible study	<p>The Bible teaches two big truths about Jesus: he is fully God, and he is fully human!</p> <p>Look up these verses. What do they teach us about who Jesus is?</p> <p>Mark 4:35-41 (<i>compare with Psalm 107:23-29</i>) Luke 2:1-7, 52</p> <p>John 1:1-2, 14 John 10:30-33 John 20:26-28</p> <p>Romans 5:18-19 Titus 2:13 Hebrews 4:15</p> <div> <pre> graph LR A[] --- J(JESUS) B[] --- J C[] --- J D[] --- J E[] --- J F[] --- J </pre> </div> <p><i>If working in a group, you could make a ‘mind map’ with the word “JESUS” in the middle. Make a note of all your group learns as you read these verses.</i></p>

Reflection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jesus is fully God. He is divine. 2) Jesus is also fully human. He became a man. <p>Many people have struggled to believe both of these facts. This has led to false teaching and wrong theology. Find out more about the following errors from a Dictionary of Theology, or a helpful website such as www.gotquestions.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Docetism • Arianism • Apollinarianism <p>– <i>Do you think some people in your church might struggle to understand Jesus today? Do these errors still exist in some people's thinking?</i></p>
Conclusion	<p>At the end of this course trainees should have prepared a series of short Bible studies (or Bible talks) to explain what your church believes and teaches.</p> <p>For homework, plan a short Bible study (or talk) on “Jesus”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a look at your church ‘Statement of Faith’. What does it say about Jesus (<i>who he is</i>)? • Try to put the key points from your ‘Statement of Faith’ into everyday language. Think of examples or illustrations that might help people understand. (<i>For example, if your ‘Statement of Faith’ says that Jesus is “the eternal Son of God” – what does this mean? How could you explain it to a new Christian?</i>) • Plan which key points you will teach, as well as the order you will present them in. • What Bible passages would you study together in order to understand these truths?

KNOWING THE TRUTH 1: SESSION FOUR

SESSION AIM

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Explain what Jesus' life, death and resurrection achieved for us.
- Describe how Jesus' rule and power are helpful for Christians today.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussion	<p>In this session we are going to think about what Jesus DID, as well as what Jesus is DOING today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>If someone asked you “what is Jesus doing right now?” how might you answer them?</i> 						
Bible study	<p>Look at the following verses that teach us about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Discuss what the Bible teaches us about Jesus.</p> <p><i>If you're working in a small group, you may like to copy this section onto a whiteboard and fill it in together.</i></p> <table> <tr> <td>JESUS' LIFE</td><td> <p><i>What problems, troubles and hardships did Jesus show he had power to fix in his life?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark 4:35-5:43 • Mark 6:30-44 </td></tr> <tr> <td>JESUS' DEATH</td><td> <p><i>What did Jesus' death achieve for his followers?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 5:6-11 • Hebrews 10:11-14 </td></tr> <tr> <td>JESUS' RESURRECTION</td><td> <p><i>What did Jesus' resurrection achieve for his followers?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 6:4 • 1 Peter 1:3 and 21 </td></tr> </table>	JESUS' LIFE	<p><i>What problems, troubles and hardships did Jesus show he had power to fix in his life?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark 4:35-5:43 • Mark 6:30-44 	JESUS' DEATH	<p><i>What did Jesus' death achieve for his followers?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 5:6-11 • Hebrews 10:11-14 	JESUS' RESURRECTION	<p><i>What did Jesus' resurrection achieve for his followers?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 6:4 • 1 Peter 1:3 and 21
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Reflection	<p>After his death and resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven where he is now ruling as king.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Discuss this scenario: Someone in your church is struggling as a Christian. They feel like they are always battling temptation and sin. They are the only follower of Jesus in their family. They try to talk to their neighbours or workmates about Jesus, but no one seems interested.</i> <p><i>How can the fact that Jesus is now in heaven, ruling as king, help a discouraged Christian? (You might refer to Acts 2:32-36 or Hebrews 4:14-16)</i></p>
Conclusion	<p>At the end of this course trainees should have prepared a series of short Bible studies (or Bible talks) to explain what your church believes and teaches.</p> <p>For homework, plan a short Bible study (or talk) on “Jesus”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a look at your church ‘Statement of Faith’. What does it say about Jesus (<i>what he has done in his life, death and resurrection</i>)? • Try to put the key points from your ‘Statement of Faith’ into everyday language. Think of examples or illustrations that might help people understand. (<i>For example, if your ‘Statement of Faith’ says that Jesus “died a substitutionary death” — what does this mean? How could you explain it to a new Christian?</i>) • Plan which key points you will teach, as well as the order you will present them in. • What Bible passages would you study together in order to understand these truths?

KNOWING THE TRUTH 1:

SESSION FIVE

SESSION AIM

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Explain, from the Bible, what Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit.
- Describe what it means that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to Christian people today.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussion	<p>Some Christians believe that they are more ‘spiritual’ than other Christians. They also say that some churches are more ‘Spirit-filled’ than other churches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Do you agree?</i>– <i>How can you tell if a church is truly ‘Spirit-filled’?</i>
Bible study	<p>There are lots of opinions about what the Holy Spirit does today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps Christians to do miracles• Gives new revelation to believers• Always works spontaneously• Causes people to ‘speak in tongues’• Helps Bible teachers and preachers <p>But when Jesus taught his disciples about the Holy Spirit, what did he emphasise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Read John 14:15-27 and John 15:26 - 16:15</i>– <i>What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do?</i> <p><i>If working in a group, you could write your thoughts on a whiteboard and discuss them together.</i></p>



Reflection	<p>One way the Holy Spirit helps Christian people today is by giving ‘spiritual gifts’. These are special abilities or strengths a Christian is given by the Holy Spirit to build up the church.</p> <p>No one passage in the Bible seems to list ALL of the ‘spiritual gifts’ God could possibly give. (For example, compare Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and 27-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>If someone asked you ‘what is your spiritual gift?’, how would you answer?</i> – <i>What do you think is more important for building up the church: the ‘gifts of the Spirit’ or the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ (Galatians 5:22-23)?</i>
Conclusion	<p>At the end of this course trainees should have prepared a series of short Bible studies (or Bible talks) to explain what your church believes and teaches.</p> <p>For homework, plan a short Bible study (or talk) on “the Holy Spirit”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a look at your church ‘Statement of Faith’. What does it say about the Holy Spirit? • Try to put the key points from your ‘Statement of Faith’ into everyday language. Think of examples or illustrations that might help people understand. <i>(For example, if your ‘Statement of Faith’ says that the Holy Spirit “dwells within believers” — what does this mean? How could you explain it to a new Christian?)</i> • Plan which key points you will teach, as well as the order you will present them in. • What Bible passages would you study together in order to understand these truths? <p><i>What will you do with these completed Bible studies? Who, in your church, would benefit from going through these studies (or listening to the talks) you have prepared?</i></p>