

Plan for Using the “Living the Word” Guides in Home Churches During the Mighty Acts Study

For this series, we are shifting the focus of the guides from the week before the sermon to the week following the sermon. That means that we will present a lesson on Sunday morning on one of the mighty acts of God, and then we will spend the following week reflecting on and trying to live out what we hear from the Word of God. That’s why we are calling the guides “Living the Word” rather than “Study Guide.”

Here’s how the format is intended to work for this series:

- The guide for the following Sunday will be emailed to home church leaders and posted to the website on Tuesday afternoon, so that leaders can prepare for home church whenever their schedule allows. (So you should have received this past Tuesday, Feb. 3, the guide for the “Creation—Part 2,” which is the lesson for this coming Sunday. The guide is labeled “Week 3” and dated, Sun., Feb. 8 - Sat., Feb. 14.)
- This Sunday morning, Feb. 8, we will present the lesson on Creation—Part 2 and the “Living the Word” guides will be passed out to the members.
- Sunday evening (or whenever your group meets) home churches will discuss questions from the “In the Gathering” section of that guide. Groups may also look at the “In the World” section if time allows. And we encourage you to spend some time in prayer.
- We encourage you to also provide an opportunity for members to share any experience they may have had from their time “on the mountain” or “around the table” during the past week. Don’t put people on the spot, but allow for anyone to share if they wish.
- Members are encouraged to live with the Word during the week. We hope they will find time “On the Mountain,” that is, set aside some quiet time with God to reflect on the Word. We hope they will find some time to sit “Around the Table” with their families and talk about the truths we are learning about God and ourselves. And we hope they will give prayerful thought to the impact they are having “In the World” around them.

This means that we are placing the emphasis on what members do with the Word in the week following the sermon and home church, rather than on what they do to study and prepare for the lesson. We hope this approach will enhance their relationship with God during this series. We are writing the discussion questions in a way that hopefully will make it possible for members to engage in a discussion based on what they have heard in the sermon and read together in home church, rather than on what they have prepared in homework. And we hope it will also encourage some discussion of how they have lived the Word during the previous week.

However, we know it places home church leaders in a little more awkward situation. You will be living the Word through the week, along with the members, based on the previous week’s study. But you will also need to prepare at some point for leading the next week’s discussion. We hope these guides will be easy to use and not require too much work in preparing to lead the upcoming discussion. And we hope you will be able to live the Word from the previous week, without getting too confused when you begin to prepare for the next discussion.