

Session 2: Being Shaped by Scripture

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Immersing ourselves in Scripture leads to Christ-centered transformation, changing the way we think and behave.

Head Change: To know that true transformation comes from being shaped by Scripture rather than culture or our own capacity to change.

Heart Change: To feel a longing to be filled by God's Word instead of other influences.

Life Change: To engage in a regular rhythm of Scripture reading so that we learn and express Christlike attitudes and actions.

OPEN

Did you play “Follow the Leader” as a child? Are you someone who would rather follow their instructions or go your own way?

Even though “Follow the Leader” is a simple children’s game, it teaches an important lesson: we are all following someone. Whether it is a charismatic leader, an ideology, or our own intuition, we are all living in accordance with the one we follow. Many of us may even be unaware of what or who we are following or influenced by. When we don’t know who we are following, we will be led to places we don’t intend to go.

In session 2, Derwin shares how we can be led away from God’s good plan for our lives by cultural and personal influences. However, the holy habit of being shaped by Scripture will help us stay true to our identity in Christ and create a godly transformation in our everyday attitudes and actions.

VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

What is the relationship between Jesus and Scripture?

How do the things or people we follow shape our habits?

How does Scripture talk about our spiritual identity? In what ways does it differ from what our culture says?

Watch Session 2: *Shaped by Scripture* (14 minutes).

REVIEW

Derwin started this session by sharing a moment of crisis in his life. That experience prompted him to literally cling to God's Word. **Have you ever had a crisis in your life that made you look for comfort or peace? Where did you turn?**

Our circumstances can prompt us to seek guidance, but, whether we seek it out or not, our culture often tries to guide our thoughts and actions. Derwin warned us that our culture can cause us to have a skewed understanding of ourselves, especially when we compare ourselves to others. **Do you ever compare yourself to others? If so, in what ways?**

What are some problems with comparing ourselves to others? How does comparison typically make you feel about yourself?

Comparison can lead to idolatry, which is finding our value or meaning in something created rather than in God. **What kinds of things do people in our culture idolize? How do our idols shape our behavior?**

Since our culture and circumstances can give us a false view of ourselves, we need Scripture to remind us of our God-given identity. Instead of turning to the opinion of others, we can hear from God, who loves us and encourages us to find our identity in what he says about us. **Why is it essential that our identity is associated with Jesus rather than something or someone else?**

Derwin shared that engaging with God's Word is not about collecting information but seeking transformation. **What do you think it looks like to read the Bible for transformation as opposed to gaining information?**

While we have responsibility to foster our spiritual growth, Philippians 1:6 tells us that no matter where we are in our relationship with God, he *will* complete the work he has started in us. Becoming holy is ultimately God's work in us. While our culture tells us we are solely responsible for changing ourselves, we can rely on God's loving hand to guide us through certain change. **How do you view your role in your own spiritual growth? How can God's promise to make us holy give you peace and hope?**

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BIBLE EXPLORATION

We become what we consume. Whatever media or influences we take in will affect the way we think, act, and speak. Psalm 1 gives us warnings about the sources we choose to be influenced by and how being rooted in God's Word brings nourishment to our soul.

Read Psalm 1:1–3.

The psalm starts by telling its readers that happiness comes from not listening to negative influences. If we are not careful, some voices in our lives can sweep us off the path that God intends for us to be on. **How do negative influences drag us away from a godly and life-giving path? What influences have drawn you away from God before?**

Some bad influences or voices are more recognizable than others. Some may seem beneficial on the surface but are not rooted in the truth of Scripture. We have to be discerning of the influences in our lives, judging whether they are true or simply what we want to hear. **How do you know if an influence in your life is healthy for you or not? What influences, if any, need to be ignored or uprooted?**

The psalm continues by explaining that the happy person finds guidance from God. **What makes God's instruction in Scripture more beneficial than other influences?**

We see that the psalmist encourages us to delight in God's Word rather than having a begrudging obligation to it. God wants to lead us to himself—the source of joy, peace, and happiness. **Do you see time in Scripture as a chore or a joy? What could you do to find more delight in God's Word?**

Verse two shows us two benefits of delighting in God's Word: bearing beneficial fruit and being sustained in difficult seasons. His Word is good today and for whatever tomorrow brings. **What is an example of a fruit that is a result of being rooted in God's Word? How can others benefit from the fruit God produces in our lives through his Word?**

The picture of a leaf not withering refers to an evergreen life, being sustained regardless of the season and

especially in difficult seasons of “drought” in our lives.

How has God’s Word sustained you in difficult seasons?

How might our hope in difficult seasons point others toward finding strength through God’s Word?

Psalm 1 also gives us practical instruction on how to engage with Scripture. Whenever you read the Bible, think deeply about what it says, and then meditate or dwell on it throughout your day. **What is the difference between merely reading rather than meditating on something?**

If you haven’t already, what would it look like to establish a regular habit of meditating on Scripture?

LAST WORD

The threats of misguided influences linger around every corner. The world is clamoring for us to listen to its advice about love, joy, comfort, and happiness. If we aren’t careful, we can be led away from God to attitudes and actions that hurt ourselves and others.

God has something much better for us. His Word guides and protects us with the truth. It shows us who Jesus is, who we really are, and how to become more like Christ. The Bible is a holy influence that leads us to God. By building a habit of seeking its voice throughout your day, you will be transformed into a steadfast man or woman of God.

DEEPER WALK

Memorize: Be reminded of the need to be influenced by God’s Word rather than the world by memorizing Romans 12:1–2.

Read: Meditate on Romans 12:1–2 throughout the week. What thought patterns do you need renewed with the voice of Scripture?

Pray: Ask God to help you rely on his truth to guide you and to give you the discipline to meditate on it regularly.

Session 3: Seeking and Saving the Lost

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: We are called to bring people to Jesus to experience the same transforming grace he has shown us.

Head Change: To know we play a vital role in God's plan to redeem the world.

Heart Change: To feel a deep gratitude for God's grace and a longing for others to experience it.

Life Change: To bring others to Jesus through our prayers, words, and actions.

OPEN

Have you ever seen a movie or been to a restaurant that was so good you had to tell others about it? Tell us about your experience.

Whether it is singing the praises of a steak or an actor, we love telling people about what we enjoy. It is almost impossible not to share our good experiences because we know that our joy can be multiplied through others experiencing what we have.

That same type of joy comes through sharing God's grace with our friends who don't know Jesus. In session 3 of *Holy Habits*, Derwin talks about how sharing the gospel with others should be a natural outflow of joy from encountering God's grace in our lives.

VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

What is the Good News?

What motivates us to share God's grace with others?

What does it look like to bring people to Jesus?

Watch Session 3: *Seeking and Saving the Lost* (8 minutes).

REVIEW

When we place our faith in Jesus we say “yes” to forgiveness, grace, and being a part of God’s family. We are also saying “yes” to his mission. But sharing our faith is oftentimes excluded from the benefits of our salvation and thought of as an unwanted chore. **Why does sharing our faith sometimes seem more like an obligation than a privilege? What do you think would help change our perspective on it being an obligation or duty to fulfill?**

Derwin told us that the more we understand grace, the more we will want to share it with others. **What is your understanding of grace? Why do we need it?**

How has your life been made different by the good news of Jesus? How can you remind yourself of how God has changed your life more frequently?

While understanding God’s grace and mission are essential to evangelism, we must also understand how to share the good news. Derwin noted that evangelism is not about our ability to convince others to believe, but our availability to be used by God who calls people to himself. **In what ways is God using your availability to him to share the gospel with others? Is there anything God may be calling you to do to make yourself more available to him?**

Derwin shared about Jesus healing a paralytic in the book of Mark. Jesus told the man that his sins were forgiven and to get off his mat and walk. While the world only saw a paralyzed man, Jesus saw a man in spiritual need, forgiving his sin before healing his legs. It is essential that we, like Jesus, consider spiritual health a necessary part of other people’s healing. **How can you care for a person’s spiritual health before they come to Christ? What can you do to help people spiritually as well as their physical needs?**

We often feel the pressure of saving other people. As a result, we become paralyzed at the thought of messing up evangelism. But salvation is solely God’s work, we are called to simply pray for and share with people while letting God change their hearts. **Has God placed a non-Christian on your heart to pray for more regularly? If so, how can you go about praying for their salvation?**

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BIBLE EXPLORATION

God's great work is reconciling the world to himself, forgiving us and bringing us into a right relationship with him. In the book of Corinthians, the apostle Paul talks about the ministry of reconciliation—a ministry we all share. Each of us can call people to be reconciled to their creator.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18–21.

Paul emphasizes that God alone initiated and accomplished the work of reconciliation. Even though we were disobedient to God, he pursued peace with us through Jesus's work on the cross. **How would you define "reconciliation"? How could you use these verses to describe God's grace to others?**

Verse 21 shares one of the most astounding statements of God's love for us. Even though Jesus was sinless, our sin was put on him. Jesus received the punishment that we deserved and we, in turn, get his righteousness. **Do you ever feel guilt or shame for your sins? How might your life change if you trusted that Jesus has wiped all of your sin away on the cross?**

Salvation is God's work, but he shares the responsibility of the ministry with us. It is an incredible opportunity that many of us do not actively participate in. **What personal or cultural challenges may prevent you from fully participating in the mission of reconciliation?**

The good news is that the ministry of reconciliation is not a solo endeavor. Our ministry is shared amongst all our brothers and sisters in Christ. **What are some ways we can encourage or support each other to share the gospel? Is there a particular ministry effort in our community that we can do together?**

Paul goes on to tell us that we are ambassadors of Christ. We represent God to the rest of the world through our Christlike attitudes and actions. **How does knowing that you represent the King of Kings affect the way you act or speak in front of others? Is there an area of your life God may be calling you to represent him in more faithfully?**

We have been put in strategic locations to fulfill an intentional duty just like ambassadors. God has a plan to use you to share his love with your neighbors, coworkers, or friends. **Who, specifically, has God made you an ambassador to? What can you do to communicate God's desire to reconcile with them this week?**

LAST WORD

God invites us to be his ministers of reconciliation to a world in desperate need of his love and grace. While the mission of God can feel daunting, it is God's mission, and we get to do it together as a community. Our role is simply to be available to God so that he can share the grace we have received and enjoy with others.

We are all in unique positions to carry our friends, family, and acquaintances to Jesus, who is the only one who can heal them. Where has God placed you to share his grace?

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read 2 Peter 3:8–9 and consider how God's heart for people to come to know Christ can help us be more intentional with those outside our faith.

Pray: Make a list of a few friends or family members who do not know Jesus and commit to praying for the Holy Spirit to make them receptive to God's love.

Be Bold: Share your story of salvation with someone who does not know Jesus this week.