

# LIFE ON MISSION

Joining the Everyday Mission of God

## LEADER'S GUIDE: SIX-WEEK STUDY

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the 1990s. The 1990s have been a period of rapid change in the way that we think about and practice ecology.

There are many reasons for this. One is the increasing emphasis on the need for evidence-based policy-making. Another is the increasing awareness of the need to integrate different disciplines and approaches. A third is the increasing emphasis on the need to understand the complex interactions between different components of a system.

These changes have led to a new paradigm in ecology, one that is more integrative and more evidence-based than the traditional paradigm.

In this paper, we discuss the challenges of integrating different disciplines and approaches, and the need for evidence-based policy-making.

We also discuss the need for a new paradigm in ecology, one that is more integrative and more evidence-based than the traditional paradigm.

Finally, we discuss the implications of these changes for the future of ecology and policy-making.

We believe that these changes are essential for a better understanding of the world and for a more effective policy-making process.

We hope that this paper will contribute to the ongoing discussion about the future of ecology and policy-making.

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## APPENDIX

# LEADER'S GUIDE: SIX-WEEK STUDY

### HOW TO USE THIS LEADER'S GUIDE

*Life on Mission* seeks to deliver a solid gospel foundation with everyday mission practices. It offers engaging stories threaded with powerful questions to help people take their next steps to living life on mission.

Ideally, we encourage the reader to discuss and process the content within community. Our goal is for small groups, missional communities, Sunday school classes, church plant core teams, and church staffs to work through the book together and allow it to shape the way they live on mission.

This Leader's Guide is intended to be a helpful resource for any leader or group facilitator. It is based on a six-week discussion of the book (taking a few chapters per week). However, feel free to take this at your own pace and spread the discussion over more weeks if that would be better for your community.

The guide is simple and straightforward, including highlights from each chapter to help focus your conversation, a few helpful questions to guide discussion, and some practical challenges. You may want to read the chapter highlights aloud as a refresher before starting each chapter's discussion. Also, refer back to the questions embedded in the content of each chapter. Your group members should have already worked through those questions during their reading for that designated week.

## SIX-WEEK READING PLAN: OVERVIEW

### **Week 1: The Big Picture**

Chapter 1: Everyday Missionary

Chapter 2: The Current Reality

### **Week 2: The Big Picture**

Chapter 3: The Mission of God

Chapter 4: Kingdom Realignment

### **Week 3: Gospel Foundations**

Chapter 5: The Gospel

Chapter 6: Spiritual Maturity

### **Week 4: Gospel Foundations**

Chapter 7: Biblical Community

Chapter 8: Intentional Discipleship

### **Week 5: Mission Practices**

Chapter 9: Identify

Chapter 10: Invest

### **Week 6: Mission Practices & Ministry Steps**

Chapter 11: Invite

Chapter 12: Increase

Chapter 13: Pitfalls and Plans

## WEEK 1: THE BIG PICTURE (CHAPTERS 1 & 2)

### Chapter 1: Everyday Missionary

#### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Your life has a mission. If you are a follower of Jesus, then He has a purpose and plan for you.
- An everyday missionary is one who lives life on mission where God has placed him or her.
- The ultimate aim of our lives is to glorify God!
- Understanding that God is sovereign is essential for mission. A missionary must recognize that God is at work in the world and ask His children to respond to that work.
- If you determine the success of mission, then that isn't a God-centered mission. If God directs the success of the mission, however, then you are on the right track.
- The reality of God's love and grace should propel us toward living on mission.
- A weak gospel foundation leads to fragile mission practices.
- The overall goal of all life on mission is to serve the glory of God. That goal in turn provides the necessary fuel and endurance for the mission.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How have you struggled with figuring out what God's will is for you? In what ways is it freeing to think that His primary will is for you to simply glorify Him where you are?

2. How do God's sovereignty and God's love form the correct motivation for mission? How do they take away unnecessary pressure from mission?

3. Which camp do you tend to fall in most?

a. The "I'm not a professional" camp

b. The "I'm too busy pondering" camp

c. The "Why are we doing this?" camp

4. What from chapter 1 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life?

## Chapter 2: The Current Reality

### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- America's evangelical population loses 2.6 million people per decade.
- While many evangelical denominations are on the rise, they still fall woefully behind in catching up with the population growth and cultural changes.
- Entire cities that were once vibrant, gospel-transformed places are now spiritually boarded-up wastelands.
- When things seem bleak and hopeless, God shows up and breathes life into our situation.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Did this chapter change your perspective about the need for the gospel in North America? If so, how?
2. How does understanding the realistic spiritual landscape in North America affect your thoughts toward your everyday life?
3. What from this chapter stood out to you, and how could this impact your life?

WEEK 1'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:

Ask God to let you see your community and city as He does.

Spend some time this week examining your city and community and ask God to show you where it lacks gospel influence. As God begins to reveal the current reality, ask Him how you can live on mission where you are.

## WEEK 2: THE BIG PICTURE (CHAPTERS 3 & 4)

### Chapter 3: The Mission of God

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- As we push deeper into what it looks like to join God in His mission, we should take caution not to skip “why” it’s important.
- The current reality of our world is certainly a motivation for what we do as everyday missionaries, but the ultimate motivator is God Himself.
- Our missionary God is not waiting for you or me—He is already at work.
- God has always been about forming a gospel people for a gospel mission.
- As we are changed and freed by Jesus, we are compelled to want to be where He is—right in the middle of the greatest rescue mission ever given, led by God Himself.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go? What did God show you?
2. In what ways does understanding God's mission throughout history affect you?
3. How do you see your everyday life as a part of God's mission to bless the world? In what ways can this truth be something you are constantly aware of?
4. What from this chapter stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

**Chapter 4: Kingdom Realignment**

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- God is still King of His kingdom.
- Jesus is a King who gets down into the mess of humanity, who goes to ultimate lengths to seek and save the lost and restore people back into His kingdom.

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- In the standard economy of a kingdom, kings are not servants and servants are not kings, yet King Jesus is both.
- Jesus calls us to repent of building our own kingdoms.
- The kingdom of God is the best thing we could ever get swept up in.
- He calls us to repent of chasing after our own fame and glory, and instead pursue His fame and glory. It's the best trade we could ever make.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does knowing that God is our King strip away any hopelessness that might creep in when we consider the decline of the church in North America?

2. What self-centered kingdoms have you pursued with your time, energy, and resources? What do repentance and getting swept up in God's kingdom look like for you?

3. What from chapter 4 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

## WEEK 2'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:

Walk around your neighborhood this week and introduce yourself to any neighbors you do not know. Bake some cookies (or something else delicious) and give them as gifts. Be bold. Have fun. Watch God work.

## WEEK 3: GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS (CHAPTERS 5 & 6)

### Chapter 5: The Gospel

#### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Living out a gospel mission is not a guilt or fear-driven task—it is the good life.
- A missionary who isn't grounded in the good news of Jesus is no missionary at all because he or she does not have good news to proclaim.
- Though we are more sinful than we'll ever truly know, we are *still* loved by God more than we could ever imagine.
- If Jesus is your Savior, the pressure is off.
- The gospel is not based on what you do for God, but what God has done for you. It is not “you do” but “Jesus did.”
- The gospel is how we become Christians, but it is also how we grow as believers—through meditating on God's Word and applying it to every fabric of our lives.
- The gospel stands opposed to earning, but it should by grace propel us toward great effort.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?
2. How do you struggle to believe that “if Jesus is your Savior, the pressure is off”?
3. In what ways do you tend to believe that God’s feelings toward you rise and fall based on your spiritual performance (instead of being secured by Jesus’ righteousness)?
4. What from chapter 5 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

## **Chapter 6: Spiritual Maturity**

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- As you grow a deeper understanding of your identity in Jesus and submit your sinful nature to the Holy Spirit’s work, spiritual maturity will be consistently present.
- The gospel doesn’t just free you; it changes you.
- Knowledge does not equal maturity.

## SIX-WEEK LEADER'S GUIDE

- Our world does not need people who know more facts about God, but rather people who are falling deeper in love with God.
- Humility, obedience, and application are far more closely tied to maturity.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Where have you seen Jesus at work in your life recently? How is He growing you toward maturity?
2. Are there areas where you have knowledge but not application and obedience? Are there things you need to repent of in order to grow spiritually?
3. What fruit of the Spirit is less prevalent in your life?
4. What fruit of the Spirit is more prevalent in your life?
5. What from chapter 6 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

### WEEK 3'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:

Contemplate the ways you try to earn God's love and write those ways down. Then pray each day that God would free you from the performance trap. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas that you haven't given over completely to Him and ask Him to show you what pursuing health and obedience in those areas looks like in a typical week. Once He shows you, commit to following that. (Example: If you've been convicted about your prayer life, commit to pray for fifteen minutes every day this week.)

## WEEK 4: GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS (CHAPTERS 7 & 8)

### Chapter 7: Biblical Community

#### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Biblical community is built on committed, authentic, and caring relationships that urge one another toward Jesus and His mission.
- Everyday missionaries understand their biblical calling to be anchored to a group of believers, to whom they confess, with whom they repent, celebrate, and live in faith.
- You can't choose Jesus and not choose the church. They are a package deal.
- Biblical community is the group of believers with whom we walk through the good, the bad, and the ugly while digging deeper together into the gospel.
- Community is essential because it is one of the primary ways we grow in the gospel.
- We need one another to carry out the mission of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?
2. With whom are you walking in biblical community?
3. When was the last time you confessed your sin to another believer?
4. What changes could you make to move more purposefully toward being in consistent biblical community?
5. What from chapter 7 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life?

**Chapter 8: Intentional Discipleship**

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- As followers of Jesus, everyday missionaries understand they are sent, just as Jesus was sent.

- Jesus' ministry strategy was to pick twelve people and spend a ton of time with them.
- Disciple-making happens best in the context of relationships and biblical community.
- Discipleship cannot be divorced from community, because discipleship happens in community.
- As we pursue God's mission we have to focus on following those ahead of us, while at the same time helping those behind us stay on track.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?
2. Do you struggle with seeing mission as a “have to” rather than a “get to”? If so, what is off in your perspective?
3. Who has helped you take next steps toward Jesus? How can you encourage and thank them this week?
4. Who has God put in your life who you can intentionally help take next steps toward Jesus?



5. What barriers make it difficult for you to make disciples who make disciples? How can we as a group help remove those barriers?

6. What from chapter 8 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

#### WEEK 4'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:

1. Confess any current sin to another believer in your community, and ask them to remind you of the gospel in response.
2. Write down the name(s) of the person(s) you are going to help take their next steps toward Jesus and call them this week to set up a time to hang out.

## WEEK 5: MISSION PRACTICES (CHAPTERS 9 & 10)

### Chapter 9: Identify

#### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- If our souls are satisfied in Jesus, we can turn our eyes away from ourselves. By grace we can stop being self-absorbed. Instead we will identify people who desperately need the hope of Jesus.

- Where do you start in your efforts to join God in His work and be a disciple-maker? The short answer is to start where you already are. Go where you already go. Just go with new eyes.
- When we combine our natural rhythms and passions with the gospel and use them to build relationships, powerful things can happen.
- Identifying who God is leading you to may be as simple as taking a short walk with your eyes open.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?

2. Who has God placed around you that He may be calling you to be on mission with (coworkers, neighbors, friends, those who share hobbies/interests, etc.)? Mention specific names and pray for them.

3. Are there ways your passions or natural life rhythms may focus God's mission for your life?

4. What group of people is God leading you to focus your mission efforts on?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What changes could you make to be more consistently aware of what God is doing around you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What from chapter 9 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

## **Chapter 10: Invest**

### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Growing in the gospel will move you from identifying those around you who need the hope of Jesus to investing your life in theirs.
- As an everyday missionary, you are rooted in the knowledge that God is already on mission around you, and the fact that He has placed you in your environment because He wants to use you to reach the people around you.
- Being on mission is not about going to a specific place—it's about being intentional where you are.
- Share your life with people. Make friends. Ask them to lunch. Throw a party. Have a cookout. Invite them to go bowling. In short, build relationships.

- As we invest in the lives of people, we help them continue to take the next step toward Jesus, with the hope that one day they will become a reproducing everyday missionary as well.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?

2. What would it look like for you to invest in the people God has led you to identify? How can you consistently build relationships and spend time with them?

3. What changes might you need to make in order to truly invest in people?

4. What practical step can you take this week to invest relationally in someone?

5. What from chapter 10 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

**WEEK 5'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:**

Pray about who God wants you to be intentional with (neighbors, coworkers, friends, people with similar interests/hobbies, etc.). Write down one to three specific names and pray for them every day this week. Then write out how you will give of your time and energy to invest in them. Then do it.

**WEEK 6: MISSION PRACTICES  
AND MINISTRY STEPS  
(CHAPTERS 11, 12 & 13)**

**Chapter 11: Invite**

**CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- As we invite people into disciple-making relationships, biblical community is formed.
- Invitation includes making a concerted effort to be on mission in community with others.
- You need the encouragement, support, and accountability of community while you are on mission.
- Invite people to give their lives to Jesus. Speak the gospel.
- People need to see God's grace lived out among a group of people. They need to see other believers repenting, confessing, rejoicing in God's grace, and forgiving others. They need to see the gospel applied to life.
- Biblical community is like a city on a hill that emits a great light to those who are wandering around in a dark desert.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?
2. What would it look like practically for you to invite people into disciple-making relationships?
3. Do you have consistent relationships with other believers (biblical community) with whom you could invite others to join?
4. Who do you feel God is leading you to invite into a relationship with Jesus?
5. What conversation might you need to have with someone about the gospel?
6. What from chapter 11 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

## Chapter 12: Increase

### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Love for Jesus and His mission will compel you to identify the leaders around you, raise them up, and send them out to reach more people with the gospel.
- The goal is to see a movement! The movement includes spreading the gospel, bringing people into relationship with Jesus, and growing them to maturity. We desire to see more people groups reached, more churches started, and more small groups launched to enfold the lonely into community.
- The most effective thing you can do for the mission is to reproduce yourself as many times as possible, so that many more missionaries spread the good news of Jesus.
- The goal is to train them so well that you could disappear and the mission would not skip a beat.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the practical challenge from the previous week. How did it go?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the hardest part about making disciples and reproducing yourself as a missionary?

3. How does Jesus' promise in the Great Commission that "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20) encourage you in your disciple-making efforts?
  
4. What does the increase step look like in your setting? How can you be intentional about raising up others and sending them out?
  
5. Discuss the leadership development process from the end of the chapter. What would this look like in your context?
  
6. What from chapter 12 stood out to you, and how could this impact your life and ministry?

## **Chapter 13: Pitfalls and Plans**

### CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Ministry is simply the overflow of the gospel in you working itself out into practical terms in the world around you.
- An everyday missionary has a plan of action, understanding there will be pitfalls throughout the journey.
- Many times an unhealthy pace of ministry can lead to burnout and even to the destruction of a family.



## SIX-WEEK LEADER'S GUIDE

- Busyness is *not* a badge of honor to wear.
- We are called into meaningful ministry, but we are not responsible for every aspect of it.
- It is easy for our ministry motives to turn from being about Jesus to being about personal success.
- Actively pursue the missionary practices.
- Identify, invest, invite, and increase.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Of the five pitfalls mentioned, which one tends to be a problem area for you and why?
2. Discuss the first three personal reflection questions from chapter 13.
3. Summarize and discuss your action plans based on the missionary process you learned in this book. Which one is the easiest? The most difficult? Why?
4. How does what you have learned in *Life on Mission* impact your community/church/group, etc.?

WEEK 6'S PRACTICAL CHALLENGE:

1. Pick one person from your prayer list from Week 5 and intentionally invest in him or her (for instance, invite them to lunch, a dinner party, a local sporting event, a concert, or to coffee). Whatever you do, be sure to ask a lot of questions about their life and show genuine interest. Also, try to involve other Christians from your community.

Tip: During this step, a helpful question to ask people is: "This may sound weird to you, but I'm a Christian and like to pray for people, so is there anything I can pray about for you?"

Many times this simple step opens the door for more intentional conversation as you follow up with prayer requests.

2. Write down the person(s) from your group who need to start new groups of gospel influence and have a conversation with them about moving toward next steps.

3. Share your *Life on Mission* plan with the group and how you have begun the journey of an everyday missionary.