

SIYAKHULA DISCIPLESHIP

ADVANCE



**IF ANYONE WANTS TO COME
AFTER ME, HE MUST DENY
HIMSELF, TAKE UP HIS
CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME**

The Siyakhula (We are growing) Discipleship Material is designed to facilitate the spiritual growth of individuals and groups in their connection with the Lord. Comprising four six-week sessions, this Discipleship series guides participants through a transformative journey, progressing from the internal to the external. The initial six weeks delve into the Basics, followed by an exploration of our Identity in Christ Jesus during the next six weeks. The third phase spans six weeks dedicated to an extreme makeover journey reflecting on the attitude of the heart and right priorities, while the final segment, also lasting six weeks, directs attention towards others and mission.

How does the Siyakhula Discipleship material work?

Think about farmers who grow crops. They have a simple way to ensure a good harvest. First, they get the soil ready by ploughing it. Then, they plant seeds in the prepared soil. After that, they water the ground, and with careful attention, the seeds grow into plants. Finally, after taking care of the plants, a harvest is there!

In a similar way, there's a simple plan for people who believe in God. If we desire a deeper and stronger relationship with God, we can follow a similar formula. First, we need to get our hearts ready, like farmers preparing the soil. We do this by learning about God's teachings, which is like planting seeds in our hearts. Then, we need to really think about and understand what God has said. It's like watering the seeds. Finally, we should live our lives in a way that shows the good things we've learned from God. This is how we get a "harvest" of Christlikeness in our lives. It's like taking care of the plants to get a good crop. So, by preparing our hearts, learning from God, and living what we learn, we can have an incredible "harvest" in our lives.

Each session has the following 4 easy to follow components to it. Plough, Sow, Water, and Harvest.

PLOUGH

This introductory part of the session is meant to make people feel comfortable and help everyone start engaging freely. The easy questions help to get things going, and they are designed to make everyone feel relaxed. This is a light and friendly way to begin, while preparing the ground for the topic that will be discussed. Encourage people to participate without adding pressure.





SOW

In the second part of the session, we plant or sow the seeds of God's Word by reading a specific passage together. It is recommended that each person in the group reads a verse if they are willing, encouraging everyone to participate.

WATER

During the 'Water' section there are some questions for discussion with the group encouraging them to think a little more deeply on what has been read from the Bible. These questions are not complicated but are designed to encourage people to meditate and think about what God could be communicating to them through His Word.



HARVEST



In the closing part of our session, the Harvest, we encourage what has been discussed to become more personal by giving everyone a chance for individual application. While there is no pressure to share personal thoughts or feelings, space is created for those who wish to do so. This time is crucial as individuals reflect on what God has communicated and consider how it might impact their journey with Him.

The material in this resource has been adapted from the questions in the Serendipity Bible.¹

¹ Coleman, Lyman, ed. *Serendipity Bible: For Personal and Small Group Study*. Revised & Enlarged edition. Grand Rapids, MI : Littleton, CO: Zondervan, 1996.

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Week 1: Heart Attitudes (1 Samuel 16:1-13)



PLOUGH

1. Have you ever bought something or judged someone by their first impression, only to realize later that it wasn't what you expected?
2. If you were preparing for a job interview, what would you do to look your best? Would you go to extra effort for the interview? Why?



SOW

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 as a group. Invite each person to read one verse to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. What is Samuel feeling sad about? Why does God correct him?
2. Why did God reject Saul in favour of David (see 1 Samuel 15:11)? What do you think is the difference between them?
3. Samuel was afraid to go to Bethlehem, what does that tell you about Saul?
4. What do you think the significance is of the people consecrating themselves for worship? (v5) How does this impact or influence our attitude?
5. Why did Samuel think Eliab was the chosen one at first? How does Eliab compare to Saul (see 10:23-24)?
6. What was Samuel looking for in a king? What was God looking for in a king? (v 6,7)
7. If you were part of David's family, how would you feel about being passed over for David? Can you think of other times when God didn't follow tradition but chose someone who loved Him to keep His promises?



HARVEST

1. Our outward appearance is not always a good indicator of what is happening internally (i.e. spiritually). Does your outward appearance truly reflect what is happening in your heart currently?
2. What is God asking you to do even if others don't agree with it?
3. God is looking for people that are committed to Him (2 Chronicles 16:9). What does He see in your heart right now?

Week 2: Clear Conscience (1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1)



PLOUGH

1. Did you grow up in a family where the rules were loose, or was it strict but forgiving? Can you give an example?
2. When dealing with your boss (or parents), do you find it easier to ask for permission in advance or seek forgiveness later if things don't go well? Can you share an example?



SOW

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1 as a group. Invite each person to read one verse to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. What does verse 24 tell us about how we should make decisions?
2. What do you think Paul means when he says “without question of conscience” (v25)?
3. What is the priority and motivation for everything we do as believers according to verse 31?
4. What do you think Paul means when he says ‘I do not seek my own benefit’ (v33)? What could be Paul’s reason for saying this?
5. Why do you think Paul tells the church to be imitators of him as he is of Christ? How might this help us in our decision making?



HARVEST

1. When it comes to making decisions in areas where it's not clear what's right or wrong, what principles have you found most helpful?
2. When considering the welfare of others, how do we decide whether our decisions will build up or harm those around us?
3. How can we cultivate a conscience that aligns with God's will?

Week 3: Single-Minded (1 Kings 18:16-40)



PLOUGH

1. Have you ever been hurt while playing with fire? How did it happen?
2. If you were a betting person, which soccer team / rugby team /Olympic athlete would bet on winning? Why?



SOW

Read 1 Kings 18:16-40 as a group. Invite each person to read one or two verses to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. Why does King Ahab blame Elijah for causing trouble in Israel? How does Elijah defend himself?
2. Why do you think the people don't respond to Elijah (v. 21)?
3. Why does Elijah let the prophets of Baal go first?
4. Is this a battle about beliefs, reasoning or power? What's the connection between power and beliefs?
5. Considering there was a drought going on, why do you think Elijah uses so much water and even fills a trench? He pours it out as a sacrifice. What does this tell us about his attitude of sacrifice toward God?
6. Is it extreme to have all the priests of Baal killed? Why or why not?
7. Are the people changing their minds easily, following whoever does the most impressive thing? Or are they sincere, wanting to worship the true God? What do you think?
8. Why does Elijah tell King Ahab to eat and drink, but tells his servant to keep looking? What must they be thinking and feeling?



HARVEST

1. Who do you relate to in the story? Are you more like Elijah (single-minded in following God), Ahab (following your own plan) or like the people (indecisive)?
2. Are you unsure about what to do when it comes to following God's plan? What would help you make your choice?
3. Is your dedication to God leading you into any difficult situations? What challenges are you facing?
4. Do skeptics today need logical arguments, emotional appeals, or miracles to believe? Which one convinced you about Christianity?

Week 4: Decision-making (Daniel 1)



PLOUGH

1. What's the story behind the name your parents gave you?
2. Have you picked up any nicknames along the way? Did you get any while you were at home, school, university or work?



SOW

Read Daniel 1 as a group. Invite each person to read one verse to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. How were these Israelites chosen and trained for the king's special service? How did the king try to control their minds, bodies and loyalty?
2. Why do you think the king gives them new names, and teaches them the literature and language of the Babylonians?
3. What does Daniel decide to do (v. 8)?
4. Why does Daniel refuse to go along with the foreign king's plans? Who does Daniel talk to and why does he ask for an exception to the king's rules?
5. Why does Daniel do so well on his first test?
6. How does Daniel show that he is truly loyal to God? And to his three friends?



HARVEST

1. What would be a similar choice to Daniel's between God's way and the fancy food of the world today? What's important about this choice for you?
2. Is there anything in your family, work or culture that is against God's way of doing things?
3. When your loyalty is tested, like Daniel's was, what do you think you'd do?
4. In order to honour God, what do you need to decide (v.8)? What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to start doing?

Week 5: Right Priorities (Matthew 6:24-34)



PLOUGH

1. When you were a teenager, did your parents like your clothes? Did they think they were strange, too revealing, or worn out?
2. What do people worry about today?



SOW

Read Matthew 6:24-34 as a group. Invite each person to read one verse to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. What is the problem with having two masters? (v. 24)
2. How do you think people today serve money rather than God?
3. Why do you think Jesus puts so much emphasis on not worrying?
4. What does Jesus suggest instead of storing up treasures, worrying about your health, or serving money?
5. How are treasures connected to your heart? How is money connected to who you really serve? How do the things you value, who you serve and what you look at affect how you live?
6. What can you learn from how God takes care of birds and flowers? How does working hard fit into this? What about trusting God?



HARVEST

1. What people spend their money on and how they use their time often indicate their priorities. What does your use of money and time say about your priorities?
2. Think about your priorities each week. Are you more focused on earthly things or things that matter in heaven? What can you do to change where you invest your time and energy? Who's been in charge lately? Why?
3. Why should you pray instead of worrying? What worries you the most? What signs show you're worrying too much?
4. What can you do to stop worrying so you can focus on what's important?

Week 6: Strong Foundation (2 Timothy 3:10-4:8)



PLOUGH

1. Who was the best teacher you ever had? What did you like about them? How have you tried to be like them?
2. How do hard times influence you?



SOW

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-4:8 as a group. Invite each person to read one verse to encourage everyone to take part.



WATER

1. Why does Paul talk about his own behavior and the hard times he's been through? What happens to the "evil people"? Why?
2. Does being a good person always lead to being treated badly? Why or why not?
3. What does Paul say about where the Bible comes from and why it's important for Timothy?
4. Why might it be tempting for Timothy to tell people what they want to hear instead of what they need to hear? What's Timothy supposed to do instead? Why?
5. What reasons does Paul give for doing this hard work?
6. The world tries to push us in many directions every day, what does Paul tell Timothy to do (v.5)?
7. What is in store for Paul because he endures hardships? (v. 8)



HARVEST

1. What problems do you face when you try to live a Godly life? How does Paul's example and advice help you in those situations?
2. What wrong ideas about Jesus are people believing these days? How will you correct them?
3. Since the Bible is so important for Christians, how will you make it a bigger part of your life?