

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

MEETING

3

step **1**

“HIGHS” & “LOWS,” AND PRAYER TIME

A “high” is a positive memory from the day. A “low” is a not-so-good memory or a challenge from the day. Sharing “highs” and “lows” as a daily habit is a simple way of connecting with what is going on in each other’s lives.

step **2**

FOLLOW UP

Evaluate how you did on last meeting’s GO. If you need a reminder of what you pledged to do, turn back to page 9.

NAME

RYG

WHAT YOU DID

WHAT GOD DID

NAME

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WHAT YOU DID

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WHAT GOD DID

step 3

ABIDING EXERCISE

The primary way God speaks to us is through the Scriptures. Scripture is not the only source through which we can learn about God. Romans 1 says creation testifies about who God is. We may also learn about God through interacting with other people and through the prompting of his Spirit. Yet, even though Scripture isn't the only source of truth, it is the final source. This means the Bible has the final say on every issue to which it speaks. If we think we learned something about God from creation, but it contradicts what the Bible says, it is not true. If we think we are being prompted by the Holy Spirit, but that prompting leads us to do something contrary to the commands of Scripture, it isn't the Holy Spirit prompting us. The best way for us to get to know God is to abide in his Word. In the Bible, we not only learn about who God is, but we read of his plan to redeem mankind. This is a story he has invited us to be a part of. Our enemy lies to us every day. The world tempts us constantly with empty pursuits to chase after. Our flesh resists us as we try to follow God. This is why it is so important for us to abide daily in his truth. We need to be a student of this Book. We will not be the mature followers of Christ we want to be if we do not drink deeply from it.

God speaks to us primarily through the Scriptures, but how do we respond to him? The Bible says that prayer is how we talk to God. In prayer, we can do many things: give thanks, ask for healing, ask for physical needs to be met, petition God to work in our life or the lives of others, etc. Yet the most important thing to remember is we are talking to God already inside of a relationship with him. We are his children. He already loves us, and we do not have to earn his approval by saying what we think are the "right things". Matthew 6:8 tells us that God knows what we are going to ask before we ask it. Yet James 4:2 states that we don't have because we don't ask. Even though God knows what we will ask for, he still waits for us to ask. He is after a deeper relationship with us. He isn't a genie in a bottle, nor is he some distant god. He is the King of the universe who has the power to do all things, and he just so happens to be your heavenly Father who loved you enough to send his Son to bring you home.

Finally, we have an enemy who wants nothing more than to destroy this relationship with God. His main strategy is to cut off our communication with God. He does this by distracting us from getting into the Bible and by making us feel like we are talking to a wall when we pray rather than our God who loves us. What will our strategy be to respond to our enemy? What is our plan to establish and maintain constant communication so that we never forget, as Ephesians 1:19 puts it, "the immeasurable greatness of his power" which works towards us who believe? If we are to be a people who live on mission 24/7, we must have this constant communication.



WATCH A QUICK VIDEO - This video can be accessed at www.yourgogroup.org or through FBC Rowlett App. Click on "Meeting Material". To access this video, select **Meeting #3**. It is at the top of the webpage. **DO NOT** go through the discussion questions. Watch the video and move on to "Evaluate Your Communication" below.

EVALUATE YOUR COMMUNICATION

On average, how many days a week would you say you read from your Bible?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

When you read your Bible, would you characterize it as a duty or delight? Mark your answer on the spectrum given below. Share with your group why you chose what you did.

DUTY

DELIGHT

• On average, how many days a week would you say you pray on?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

• When you pray, would you characterize it as a duty or a delight? Mark your answer on the spectrum given below. Share with your group why you chose what you did.

DUTY

DELIGHT

EVALUATE YOUR TIME

Often, the reason why our time with God can be dry is because it is rushed or forced into our schedule. If we are thinking about work, school, or the kids while we are reading or praying, then it is no wonder why these times seem shallow. If we don't give an adequate quantity of time to communicating with God, then we limit the quality of that communication. We don't fit God into our schedule. He must come first. Our schedule is built around spending time with him. This may mean we wake up early or go to bed late, but time with God is something we **MUST** have. This is why you are going to map out consistent times to spend abiding with God through reading the Bible and prayer.

Yet, even doing this does not guarantee amazing and impactful times in word and prayer. Sometimes when we read the Bible or pray, it feels dry. Everyone at your table has felt this before; however, we don't abide daily with God because we expect a rich experience every time. We abide with him because he has so richly loved us and has asked us to draw near to him. In calendaring quantity of time in my relationship with God, I am setting myself up for quality time with him. This is how all relationships work. I do not take my wife on a date expecting to have the most amazing conversation followed by the best laugh we've ever had. I take my wife on dates because I love her and want to spend time with her. If we laugh or have an amazing conversation, then that's just an added bonus. My desire is just to be in her presence. My prayer for us is that we would desire to be in God's presence in this same way.

It is not a matter of having free time. If you are an American, chances are two things are true. First, you are really busy. Second, your calendar is an idol in your life. This means we do a lot of stuff that feeds our ego but starves our soul. If your car is running on fumes, the solution is not to turn the car off. The solution is to find a gas station. Likewise, if your soul is starving, the solution is not to watch more Netflix. It is to abide with God. Tomorrow you are going to have to turn the car back on, and you are going to want to have gas in the tank. Tomorrow you are going to be lied to. You are going to want to have truth written on your heart. Tomorrow you are going to be prompted to obey God. The only fuel that works is grace, and the only source of grace is God. We cannot effectively walk with God unless our hearts are full of an understanding of how much he loves us and what he did to bring us home. We must gaze at Calvary if we are to be disciple-makers. We need to build a habit of abiding with God daily. For the next two meetings, your GO will be to stick to the plan you are about to make. Since the fuel for obedience comes from our relationship with God, your entire group must abide if you want to succeed. Because of this, a condition is going to be placed on your GO Group. **If everyone is not green light coming into Meeting 5, you are going to repeat this meeting.** This is the only time something like this will happen. You are currently in Meeting 3, so you have one meeting to work out the kinks. The challenge is to find time to be with the Lord. It might mean less sleep or getting creative, but it's worth it.

So, let's respond to this by making time with God a priority. We do this because we want to be in his presence. In the table on the next page, answer when and how you want to abide with God for each day of the week. Schedule at least 30 minutes each day. If you only get 5 or 10 minutes in, we will take it! But try and set aside at least 30 minutes. See the table below for examples of what you might put in certain days. We *always* want to have a plan to communicate **with** God.

| DAY | WHEN | HOW |
|-----------|----------------|--|
| Sunday | 9:15am-12:00pm | At Worship and Connect Group |
| Monday | 6:45-7:15am | Complete my Bible plan assignment and pray for my family |
| Wednesday | 5:00-5:30am | Read 3 chapters, meditate, and journal |
| Saturday | 9:00-9:30pm | Go through marriage devotional with spouse and pray together |

| DAY | WHEN | HOW |
|-----------|------|-----|
| Sunday | | |
| Monday | | |
| Tuesday | | |
| Wednesday | | |
| Thursday | | |
| Friday | | |
| Saturday | | |

SET A GOAL

Now that you have some scheduled time to abide with God daily, let's make a realistic goal for the coming weeks before you meet again. If you have been averaging 2 times a week, strive for 7, but be content if you only get 3. The goal is to take baby steps forward together. You are a green light if you abide with Christ more consistently than you have in the past. If you are already abiding daily, keep up the good work! As you progress in your walk with Christ, my prayer is the quantity of time you have built into your calendar would lead to greater and greater quality of time with God.



GO TIME! & HELPFUL TOOLS

Your GO this week is to stick to the plan you have just developed. Remember, you will not be able to move onto Meeting 5 *unless everyone in your group is green light.*

Previous GO Groups have determined that there are two effective ways to stay green light: assigning roles and removing distractions. As a group, consider trying these suggestions (which are found on the next page) over the next few weeks. This is the only meeting they will be mentioned, but just know you are free to use them any meeting moving forward.

GROUP ROLES

First, communication between meetings has proven to play a vital role in the effectiveness of GO Groups. Since your group may not know each other well right now, assigning a role can help build momentum until this communication happens naturally. Consider choosing roles for each member to assume for the next two weeks. A description of each role is provided. If your group wants to try this, write your name(s) in the space provided. Feel free to double-up on certain roles or create new roles/descriptions. Again, this is an optional tool, not an assignment.

The Morning Person: _____

(This person texts the group as the day gets started to encourage, remind, and focus the group towards abiding with God)

The Friendly Reminderer: _____

(This person texts the group as the workday comes to an end to remind them to abide before the day is done.)

The Gap Filler: _____

(Since life is crazy and we all forget, if by chance the Morning Person or the Friendly Reminderer forget to text the group, the Gap Filler takes over and texts the group.)

The Encourager: _____

(The Encourager sends out group or individual messages to encourage fellow members of the group in their abiding.)

The Prayer Warrior: _____

(The Prayer Warrior's job is to gather prayer requests and to remind the group to be praying for one another. If someone's GO is to bless their neighbor at 2:00pm on Sunday, then the Prayer Warrior sends out a text at 1:45pm, reminding the group to pray for that interaction.)

Eventually, someone besides the leader will facilitate the meeting (see Meeting 17). The Facilitator can become a role sooner if someone desires to facilitate discussion before Meeting 17.

REMOVING DISTRACTIONS

Second, if your issue in the past has been distraction, consider giving up what distracts you for a period of time in between meetings. For this meeting, a member may want to give up all screens (for entertainment purposes) each day until he/she has spent their time with God. Another example may be to delete a time-consuming app from his/her phone. If your group REALLY doesn't want to repeat this meeting, then consider everyone giving up screens (for entertainment purposes) each day until all members have spent time with God. If you read this and see legalism all over it, then just ignore this tool. We aren't trying to become Pharisees, nor are we trying to earn God's approval. Rather, this tool is for the person who realizes that abiding with God is the only fuel that can sustain a life on mission. I am asserting that being in God's presence is better and more important than anything else. To restate, it is more important to build the habit of consistent time with God than it is to watch your favorite TV show. If you want to try this, write in the space below how you intend to remove distractions.



END GROUP WITH PRAYER

NEXT MEETING OBJECTIVES

VERY IMPORTANT!!

Read Step 3 (pg 19-24) and complete Step 4 (pg 25-27) of Meeting 4 **as your first time of abiding with God**. Plan on this taking about 45 min.