



## **Small Group DVD Study Leader's Guide**

These notes are designed to be used specifically as a companion to the Delicious Small Group DVD Study by Ed Young. They are a combination of elements especially created to help you prepare for each week of that six week DVD curriculum.

Some elements are examples of answers you could expect for each question. Other elements are tips for how to maximize a particular question. Finally, there are creative ideas to enhance the experience of your small group.

Each week, watch the video portion of your study prior to your meeting. Also, read through that week's Leader's Guide prior to your meeting. This will prepare you to facilitate discussion.

## Week 1—Foodie Part 1

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### 1. Describe a situation where you were the new person and the people already there made you feel welcome?

*Creative Idea:* Think about experiences like the first day of school, first day of work, moving to a new neighborhood, etc. You may try to recreate one of those experiences, so your group can better remember what it is like to be the new person.

### 2. What do you think the person who has limited or no experience in church expects when they decide to try out church?

*Tip:* If you grew up with limited or no church experience, you could share what you expected when you first attended your church.

The expectations of what church is can vary greatly depending on each person's experience. One person might have encountered someone who claimed to be a Christ-follower but was extremely judgmental or hypocritical so they expect everyone at church to be judgmental or hypocritical. Another person might have been served in a time of need by a Christ-follower so they expect the church to be a caring place.

As you are thinking about what someone might expect when they come to church for the first time, make sure to consider the bad and the good they might expect. You may also discuss how our actions as Christ-followers influence their expectations.

### 3. If you were new to a church, what experiences would make you want to come back? What experiences would make you want to leave?

Hospitality plays a huge role in the experiences of those coming to church. If we as a church serve those who attend through hospitable acts like greeting them, helping them find a seat, etc. they will know we are glad they attended.

These things set the stage for what happens in the worship center. When guests experience that kind of hospitality they are more likely to be open to what the pastor has to say. And if they hear a message from the Bible that they can understand and apply to their lives, they are likely to want to come back.

*Creative Idea:* Ask your group about their best and worst experiences at restaurants. Discuss what the restaurant did to make the experience memorably good or memorably bad. You could compare your experiences at the restaurants to experiences at a church.

## Week 1—Foodie Part 1

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4. **Read Psalm 34:8. If the church is the place where people can taste and see that the Lord is good, what could you do to make sure as many people as possible have the opportunity to taste and see?**

By volunteering, we create the opportunity for others to come to the church and hear a compelling message that could change their life.

We also have to make sure that we are developing relationships with people who are far from God. In those relationships we need to show them that God loves them and invite them to experience God's love through attending our church.

5. **What could you do as a small group to make sure you are giving people the opportunity to taste and see that the Lord is good?**

We can do a lot on our own to help others experience God, but we can also work as a group. It could be that you begin to pray for particular individuals as a group. You could invite them to come over to your home when other members of your small group are there so your guests can meet other Christ-followers and get a picture of what your church is like.

There are many ways your group can work together when you take the time to get creative and figure out how you could support, encourage and work together to change lives.

*Tip:* Write down these answers and save them until week four. You will have a chance to review these answers in that lesson.

## Week 2—Foodie Part 2

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1. **What are some of the things you do differently when you are preparing to have a guest over compared to your normal preparation?**

*Creative Idea:* Recruit a few people to help you create an over-the-top experience in your small group for the night. You could have people parking cars out front, others waiting with refreshments as soon as anyone enters your home and others waiting on your small group's every need. Through this experience, you can show how anticipating the needs of your guests can go a long way to make them feel welcome.

2. **Describe how the experience of bringing someone new to church is different than when you go alone or with close friends or family?**

Many times, we can get comfortable in our church and ignore some of the things that make people feel either welcome or unwelcome. We may not notice how hospitable our church is until we bring someone who has not experienced that before. We are also more likely to hear the message and music through the ears of our guest instead of just basing our opinion of the message and music on how it affects us.

3. **What are some of the things you have noticed your church doing that indicates they are keeping “the chair” at the forefront?**

When you think about your church, imagine a table with multiple chairs around that table. Each chair represents a different group of people. One chair (the chair) represents those who are new. One chair represents those who are newly connected to your church and another chair represents those who have been connected to the church for a long time.

If you were hosting a dinner party at that table, you would want to plan an experience that engaged each group of people represented by the chairs. You would want to make sure you didn't exclude the new people with “inside” jokes. You would take extra care to introduce the new people to the people who had been there before. You would hold conversations that engaged everyone at the table and serve food that did not exclude anyone.

The same concept should go in to your church's weekend experience. You have different groups of people and everyone deserves to feel welcome.

4. **What could be the dangers of being a church that only focuses on feeding but doesn't include the exercise portion of their faith?**

When we only focus on eating, but don't do the exercise portion of our faith, we can become spiritually obese Christians. We can become people who know a tremendous amount, but become prideful or judgmental about what we know because we do not do the hard work of trying to live out what we have learned.

## Week 2—Foodie Part 2

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5. When left to our own desires, do we gravitate more to the diet or exercise part of our faith?

**Explain your answer.**

In general, it is much easier to come to church and hear the message then leave without applying what we learned. We can feel content to know what we should be doing, even if we are not actually doing it.

6. What are some of the spiritual “exercises” you have done that have helped you grow the most in your faith?

*Creative Idea:* Give your group the opportunity to experience some of the exercises that have benefitted you the most. For example, if serving in your church has helped you grow in your faith, set up an opportunity for your group to serve together. If meeting the needs of someone else has helped you grow, come to the group with a need of someone you know and develop a plan for how your group can help that person in need.

## Week 3—My Food

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### 1. What are some of the things that stand out to you about your life before knowing Christ?

*Tip:* The goal of this discussion is to help each person who is a Christ-follower develop their testimony so that they can share it with others. Also, you want to help those who are not Christ-followers hear what God has done in the lives of the Christ-followers in your group.

As you go through your discussion, be very sensitive to those who have not accepted Christ.

*Creative Idea:* Give each person a sheet of paper and something to write with. Have them write down their answers to the questions in the form of map. They may write down words and blurbs that describe their answers or they can draw images that represent their answers. The goal is to finish with a visual of how Christ has impacted their life.

### 2. If you have accepted Christ, describe your encounter with God and what led to you accepting him?

Think about the people and experiences that God used to lead you to accept him. For example, there could have been a person you watched and saw the difference in their life. Or, you could have been in the midst of a difficult situation that God used to bring your attention to him.

*Tip:* Keep those who have not accepted Christ in mind during this discussion. You may adjust the question so that those who are not Christ-followers can describe what they believe to be encounters with God they are having even though they have not accepted Christ.

### 3. What is different about your life since your encounter with Christ?

Jesus never promises to fix all our problems. While you are highlighting the way Jesus has improved your life, you can also express the things you are still struggling through. Sometimes, the way God helps you through your struggles can be a great encouragement to those who are also going through struggles.

*Tip:* For those who are not Christ-followers, their answers might be based on how their lives have changed since they became involved with church, became friends with Christ-followers or started trying to live out God's plan for their lives.

### 4. Based on your answers to the previous three questions, try to develop your testimony that you could share in under a minute. Practice sharing it with the group.

*Tip:* Again being sensitive to those who have yet to make this decision, encourage them to concentrate on the current journey portion of their story.

## Week 4—Moving on to Maturity Part 1

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- 1. Growing up, what were some of the things that showed that you were moving from one stage of maturity to another? (i.e.: going to school, dating, etc.)**

*Creative Idea:* Email your group and encourage them to bring something that represents moving on to a new stage of maturity for them. It could be their first driver's license, a letter jacket, wedding certificate, first paycheck, picture, etc. Then, have the group show what they brought and describe why that represents moving on to maturity.

- 2. When it comes to spiritual maturity, what are the characteristics that you think display someone's spiritual maturity?**

*Tip:* As your group shares their answers, try to figure out what made them identify that characteristic as spiritually mature. Maybe they knew people growing up in church who knew large portions of the Bible so they identify that as maturity. Maybe they knew someone they really liked who displayed great generosity so they associate that with spiritual maturity. Whatever it is, try to find out how that characteristic became a symbol of spiritual maturity in their mind.

- 3. How has sharing your faith with someone else helped you mature spiritually?**

When we have the chance to share our faith with others, many things happen. We become aware of our lifestyle and begin to evaluate more carefully aspects in our lives that can point others to Christ. As we share our faith, we will encounter questions that force us to look for answers and learn more. Also, sharing our faith is being obedient to God and there are blessings when we share our faith.

- 4. What keeps you from sharing your faith more, and what could you do to overcome that obstacle?**

*Creative Idea:* Bring blocks, bricks or something that can represent obstacles. Write what keeps you from sharing your faith on those objects then stack them up building a wall that represents the obstacles that keep us from those who need to hear about Jesus.

As you talk about what you could do to overcome those obstacles, remove the objects to tear down the wall. Remind your group that if we are not careful, we will let the obstacles build unnecessary walls that keep us from sharing our faith. But, God has empowered us to overcome those obstacles so we can share Jesus with others.

- 5. How could you work together as a group to reach out to someone who is not a believer?**

Look at your answers from Week 1, question 5. If your group has been doing what you came up with in that first week, use this time as an opportunity to celebrate. If your group has not been doing what you came up with, use this time as a reminder and time of encouragement to step up and work together.

## Week 5—Moving on to Maturity Part 2

1. **Who is someone you think is spiritually mature and what do they do that demonstrates their maturity?**

*Creative Idea:* Brainstorm classic characteristics for other types of people. For example, what do you think are tell-tale signs for a politician, a fashionista, soccer mom, etc.

2. **When it comes to feeding spiritually, we “feed” corporately and privately. What are the obstacles that keep you from “feeding” corporately and privately?**

Many of the obstacles are similar. For example, not making it a priority is a common obstacle. If it is not a priority, you won't go to church on the weekend and you won't open your Bible on your own. Or, if you feel like you don't understand what the Bible teaches, you will not make it a priority in your personal life or in a church setting.

3. **What have you done that has helped make “feeding” a valuable priority in your schedule?**

*Creative Idea:* Listen to what is answered from this question then develop a game plan for your entire group. For example, you might decide to read through a book of the Bible together so that you can encourage each other to keep it up and discuss what you are reading. You might divide your reading into 21 days since habits are said to be formed in 21 days.

4. **What part of being involved in a church has helped you the most with your spiritual walk?**

*Tip:* Based on what you learn from your group, you could put together a “must do” list for your group. It could include the things that seem paramount for having a successful spiritual walk. For example: Regular worship attendance, volunteering, being involved in a small group, tithing.

5. **What parts of prayer happen the most naturally for you and what parts do you struggle with the most?**

Some parts of prayer feel more natural than others. For some, thanksgiving just pours out while others really struggle to find what to be thankful for. Sometimes you are in situations where asking God to help is natural because of how critical the need is, but asking God to help in the smaller things feels unnatural.

There are no right or wrong answer to this question because it is based on what comes naturally to each individual. Use this question to help everyone realize prayer is not always natural and that struggling with an aspect of prayer is okay.

6. **What has helped you improve your times of prayer?**

Writing out your prayers can be a great help to your prayer life. You could keep all of them in a prayer journal so you can go back and see how God has answered your prayers. You might change up the location where you pray so you see new things and have new sparks of creativity when it comes to what to pray for. You could also change up how you pray from time to time. You might take one day and only offer prayers of thanksgiving or praise where other days you might only confess and repent in your prayer.

## Week 6—Paused on Puberty

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**1. What do you think are classic signs of an adult who is immature?**

*Creative Idea:* To add some creativity to this question, you could have each person act out what they think is a classic sign of immaturity. Or, you could divide into groups and develop a short skit with multiple acts of immaturity. Then, act out the skit and let the other group identify the classic signs of immaturity.

**2. Most of us have put on the chef's hat and tried sprinkling God into our lives. What are some of the effects of just sprinkling God into our lives rather than downloading God into every area?**

Sprinkling God into our lives is dangerous. On one hand, we could sprinkle just enough God into our lives that we feel content with what is happening but never get to the full blessing God wants for us. On the other hand, only sprinkling God into our lives is partial obedience. So, we may look at our partial obedience and wonder if God's way really does work when we have not given it a full try.

**3. On a practical, daily basis; what does it look like to submit our autonomy to God's authority?**

Submitting to God's authority is a daily task. For example, when we have the choice at work to do something "questionable" that could really help our career or trust God's principles, we need to submit and obey. In relationships, it can be tempting to use our own set of rules for who we date or how we interact with others but God's principles have to win out if we are going to trust God's authority.

**4. What is an obstacle that has kept you from climbing further up the mountain of maturity?**

*Creative Idea:* This could be a time to let your group spend time alone, individually, and really spend time praying through this question. You may give each person an index card to take with them and write down their answer to the question. When you come back together you could place the cards in a box or on a cross as a way of symbolizing letting go of those obstacles and choosing God.

**5. What is the next step you need to take in your climb of the mountain of maturity?**

*Tip:* This question could be a turning point for some in your group. Help them think through all that you have discussed in this study about spiritual maturity. As they are considering their next step, help them make it specific and attainable. For example: don't accept, "I need to invite more people to church" because it is too general. Push them to identify who they need to invite and how they are going to invite that person to church.