

LEADER'S GUIDE
for
Dismantling the Myths:
The Connection Between Faith and Morality

2008 version
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A Guide for Sunday School Curriculum

Dismantling the Myths has been successfully used in Sunday School classes for high school teens, college-age students, and adults. This study guide is based on a 13-week study to coordinate with the other curriculums of the Sunday School Division. It works best if every family or student owns a copy of the book and reads the chapters before coming to class; this will facilitate discussion and help the material move faster.

Teacher, I pray that the Lord will use you in a special way to help your class members make new connections each day between their faith and morality. You serve in the vital role as facilitator of these important discussions. Many individuals will be making some of these connections for the first time. Help class members do more than give mental ascent to the material; help them find ways to incorporate principles from the book into their daily lives. Pray that the Lord will give you new insights each week that will challenge class members to live out the principles they learn from this study. May the Lord reward you richly for your efforts.

Week 1

Chapter 1—Getting Started

This study is the most successful if individuals receive a copy of the text a week before the study begins. Assign Chapter 1 to be read for the first week of the study.

1. *Who changed the price tags?* Talk about this section. (Pages 10-11 of *Dismantling the Myths*.) Invite class members to share examples of how values have changed in their lifetimes.
2. Talk about the Information Age and its impact on our daily lives. (Use the material on pp. 13-18.) How has the explosion of information affected us and our families?
3. Discuss the *Ethical Choices on the Road of Life* section (pp. 20-22). Emphasize the difference between Abraham and Lot. What does it mean to take the road less traveled? (Pages 21-22.) How does this apply to our lives? What are some illustrations of how this has happened to you?
4. How is culture killing us softly? How must we be aware of this? How should we respond to it? (Pages 22-23.)

Close with prayer, asking God to help the class to be more aware of this cultural problem. Ask for God's guidance as you grow from this study.

Assign Chapter 2 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 2

Chapter 2—Say “Cheese”

1. Bring a copy of a newspaper from this past week highlighting the breakdown of our society through violence, hate crimes, acts of disrespect, prejudice, lying, stealing, etc. Note the fact that culture has change radically in the past thirty years or so.
2. *Think About It.* Discuss these questions found on page 35. Invite students to give examples of how they have seen these values change at work, home, or with neighbors.
3. *Think About It.* Discuss these questions found on page 42. Be prepared to give examples of each of these points. (Note: If time is an issue for today’s session, be sure that numbers 3-6 are covered, as they are especially rich with food for the discussion.)

Close with prayer, asking God to make you aware of what is happening in our culture and to see the emerging problem with new eyes.

Assign Chapter 3 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 3

Chapter 3—A Penny for Your Thoughts

1. Talk about the ways our thinking patterns and worldviews affect the ways we live.
2. Give a brief overview of each of these philosophies. Share your own personal observations of where you see them lived out in your world. An example of each is given with the presentation. Invite class members to give examples as well.
3. *Think About It.* Use these sections (found at the end of each philosophy) for discussion.

This is a lot of material to cover, so watch your time. Keep the conversation moving; don't let this week become a boring lecture.

Close with prayer, asking God to help us see what we believe and how it affects the way we live.

Assign Chapter 4 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 4

Chapter 4—On Guard

1. Talk about value systems. Use the observations about values found on pages 64-66. Discuss the *Think About It* questions on page 67.
2. Briefly name the eight sources of values on pages 67-70. Discuss the *Think About It* questions on page 70.
3. Discuss the issues of culture and culture battles. How do our personal decisions contribute to both? Discuss the *Think About It* questions on pages 74-75.

4. Discuss the entertainment addiction presented on pages 76-79. Use the *Think About It* questions (page 80) to help explain the silent revolution of our culture.
5. “We have lost our grasp as a society on what is objectively right and wrong, or even that there is such a thing as objective truth” (p. 80). This is one of the most important points of the book. Discuss its meaning.
6. Discuss the *Think About It* questions on page 82. Think of illustrations of this issue from the news or your personal life.
7. Discuss what the shift to subjective truth is doing to our society and to individuals in the Church.

Close with prayer, asking God to open our eyes so that we may see what has happened to our culture in recent years.

Assign Chapter 5 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 5

Chapter 5—Here We Stand

1. *Let's Suppose*. Highlighting this material found on page 87. Ask the questions in the *Think About It* section (p. 88).
2. Talk about the different bases of authority found on page 89. What is wrong with using each as a final authority for making ethical decisions?
3. List the five foundation blocks of our faith found on pages 90-92. Why is each important?
4. Discuss the *Think About It* questions on page 93.
5. Discuss the Christian principles found on pages 93-111. Each of them is very important. Make sure to allow enough discussion time for each, as well as for the questions found in each *Think About It* section.

This chapter contains a lot of material; be selective in highlighting the material that your class needs most.

Close with prayer, thanking God for His plan of salvation and His revelation of himself to us.

Assign Chapter 6 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 6

Chapter 6—A Lamp and a Light

1. Discuss the seven observations about the Bible as it relates to ethics. Note that each is important to our understanding of Scripture's application to our daily lives. Spend plenty of time discussing each one.
2. As time allows, discuss each of the biblical themes for ethics presented on pages 117-35. Use the *Think About It* section at the end of each theme for discussion. You may have to select the most important themes for your particular class.

At the conclusion of this class session, point out that you have reached the end of the biblical and philosophical theory of this entire study. For the remainder of 13-week study, you will be

discussing practical strategies for putting this material to work for you in daily life. You may want to quickly review everything you have covered so far in this study before moving on to the next section.

Close with prayer, thanking God for His Word and its direction for life.

Assign Chapter 7 to be read for next week's discussion.

Each of the next three chapters contains 15 strategies for applying our faith to our lives. A single group session does not allow enough time to adequately discuss each chapter. So, it will probably work better to designate two weeks of study to each. You can either do seven strategies one week and eight the next or divide the topics up in a manner that works best for your group.

Weeks 7 & 8

Chapter 7—Line ‘Em Up: Part 1

Plan to cover about half of the strategies each week. Allow plenty of time for discussion. Include illustrations from your life and the lives of your class members. Urge class members to watch the news for examples of these truths illustrated in public life.

Note: Plan to spend extra time on Strategies 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 15.

1. Point out the importance of Strategies 1 and 2. Discuss the *Try This* questions presented with each section.
2. Make a chart like the one described on page 150. (The chart is described in the *Try This* discussion point number 1.) Photocopy it and give a copy to each class member. Encourage your class to fill in their charts this week and be prepared to discuss their findings at the next group meeting.
3. If you have time, type up the two lists found on pages 157-59 (“Guidelines for Making Ethical Decisions” and “Steps to Making an Ethical Decision”). Copy them for the class members to place in their Bibles or carry with them throughout the week.

In your closing prayer, ask God to make you sensitive to the issues discussed each week.

At the end of week 8, assign chapter 8 to be read for next week's discussion.

Weeks 9 & 10

Chapter 8—Line ‘Em Up: Part 2

The two weeks spent on this chapter will highlight strategies for lining up your community life with your faith. Again, discuss about half of the strategies each week. Spend time with each of them but, for the longest group discussions, select the ones that relate best to your group.

Note: Plan to spend extra time on Strategies 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, and 30.

1. Discuss the *Try This* questions that are given with each strategy. Be sure to pay particular attention to the Scripture references which go along with each strategy.

In your closing prayer, ask God to make you sensitive to the issues discussed each week.

At the end of Week 10, assign chapter 9 to be read for next week's discussion.

Weeks 11 & 12

Chapter 9—Line ‘Em Up: Part 3

The two weeks spent on this chapter will highlight strategies for your relationship with the world. This is one of the most important chapters of the entire book. Again, discuss about half of the strategies each week. Use the ones that work best for your group.

1. Plan to spend a lot of time at the beginning of Week 11 discussing Strategy 31; this is a vital one.
2. Strategy 34 should be a fun one to discuss. Give your class the test on page 188 and see how they do.
3. Strategies 35-37 should be discussed together. Remember to discuss the concept of being in the world but not of it. How does this play out in daily life?
4. Strategy 38 (pp. 192-94) is another key passage of the entire book. We live in a very postmodern world. How does postmodernist thinking affect the way people live? How should Christians respond to this new world?
5. Let God speak to your class as you talk about Strategy 39. Be sure to discuss how culture can corrupt us.
6. Spend extra time talking about Strategy 42. This is important for instructing our children in the Church.
7. At the close of week 12, discuss the importance of showing love in all we do.

In your closing prayer, ask God to make you sensitive to the issues discussed each week.

At the end of Week 12, assign chapter 10 to be read for next week's discussion.

Week 13

Chapter 10—Wrapping Up

This week will conclude your study of *Dismantling The Myths*.

1. Review where you have been. Ask students to discuss what the study has meant to their personal lives. How has it changed their thinking? How has it changed their patterns of living?
2. Discuss each of the eight reasons for hope in this chapter. Emphasize the positive nature and message of the Christian faith.

In your closing prayer, request that God will help class members remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit as they make daily connections between their faith and morality.