

Content Plan 2024-2025

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Growth Group Content Plan!

Each year we provide a list of suggestions meant to provide direction for your group. Each season has at least a primary suggestion, an alternate suggestion, and often a book or study guide option. You have the freedom to use whatever you think will work best for your group. Please try to stick to the content schedule for the church-wide series, but feel free to mix and match all of the rest as you see fit.

Content Suggestions

The Content Suggestions for each season can be found below. There are multiple suggestions for each season. Feel free to choose whatever works best for your group. At the end of the suggestions will be two suggestion ways to calendar your group meetings.

September: Life Application Focus

Primary Suggestion: [The Verbs of God by Margaret Feinberg \(4 Weeks\)](#)

When we look around at the pain, loss and hurt in our world and even in our own lives, we can't help but wonder, "God, don't you see this? Can't you do something about this? Where are you?" In these four Bible study sessions, Margaret Feinberg uses fresh insights and Biblical teaching to study four verbs that Scripture uses in connection with God. When we understand God's active nature, we realize how God is always active and engaged in our lives. Even when we can't see or feel him, God is constantly on the move and working.

Secondary Suggestion: [Facing Anxiety by Jonathan Pokluda \(4 Weeks\)](#)

Anxiety is inescapable in today's world. When stress overpowers us and fear infects our minds, it can feel like the peace the Bible talks about is impossible to find. And no amount of pretending, overworking, or isolating ourselves will offer us the peace we need. In this four-session series, pastor Jonathan Pokluda explores how Christians can face anxiety head-on. With real-life stories from people facing various kinds of anxiety, this series helps us see that peace can be found on this side of eternity.

If your group does not plan to meet for the first few weeks of January, you can easily substitute the content from early January into September to give you more options.

October-November Church Wide Series: Life Application Focus

Our Fall Church Wide Series will begin on Sunday October 6th and will run until the middle of November. The theme for the church wide series is all about how following the ways of Christ make us weird in comparison to culture. We will look at 6 or 7 different ways that our faith in Christ stands countercultural to the world around us and how we can embrace those ways for our good and the good of those around us.

We will be provide teaching videos and study guides for this series that will be available in the middle of September.

December: Advent

Primary Suggestion: Plan a Christmas Party

Plan a Christmas Party with you Group and make that the only meeting you have in December. Earlier in December is probably better.

Alternate Suggestion: The Unexpected by Jason Turner (4 Weeks)

God Gives His best gifts to us in unexpected ways. The Christmas season is a reminder of the gift that God gives to us through his son Jesus. The prophet Micah gives Israel hope while they are under the threat of violence and oppression, sharing God's promise that from the insignificant and inconsequential town of Bethlehem will come the world's greatest blessing, who is Christ the Lord. When the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, comes, his greatness will span the entire world. The unexpected is what God does best.

Alternate Suggestion: The Life of Mary by Margaret Fienberg (4 Weeks)

The Life of Mary is a 4-part Bible study that unfolds Mary's life and transforms it to a 21st century audience with teaching by Margaret Feinberg. In this series, Margaret shares insightful discoveries on Mary's unique situation and brings to life her fears and struggles.

With powerful lessons and excellent teaching, this video Bible study examines Mary's life in a way you would never expect. Each session walks down Mary's road of faith as she journeys through a life of unbelievable events that ushers in Jesus Christ. Perfect for small group Bible studies.

Book to Read: Is Christmas Unbelievable by Rebecca McLaughlin

If your group is looking for a book to read together. Consider Rebecca McLaughlin's "Is Christmas Unbelievable." Many people assume that the story of the baby in the manger at Bethlehem is just another made-up fantasy for kids. In this concise book, respected apologist Rebecca McLaughlin outlines the evidence that Jesus was a real person, explaining the reliability of the Bible's accounts of his life and why believing in a virgin birth is not as ridiculous as it might sound. This book shows that there is a rational basis for the belief that the world's most famous story is fact, not fantasy—and how those events in history can infuse our lives today with meaning and joy.

January: Spiritual Formation Focus

Primary Suggestion: Dinner or Fun Outing

Gather for dinner or a fun outing in the beginning of January then wait until the winter church-wide to start your regular schedule of meetings.

Alternate Suggestion A: The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry by John Mark Comer (3-5 Weeks)

We are all busy. Some of us can't remember the last time we rested or even had free time. Our busyness can feel productive but it is a toxic distraction, sapping our spiritual, physical, and emotional vitality. It may seem like we have no choice but to live at a frantic pace, but God has a better path for us. Join pastor and author John Mark Comer in this five-part series as he addresses one of the greatest threats to our spiritual lives: hurry. Instead of allowing our calendars and screens to control our lives, Jesus offers us a new rhythm of life, overflowing with grace, peace, and beauty.

This is actually a five week series, but you can easily choose 2-3 sessions and use them as stand alone sessions. Our suggestion would be to use sessions 1, 2, and 4.

Alternate Suggestion B: The Deeply Formed Life by Rich Villodas (3-5 Weeks)

Following Jesus in our world can be a challenge. Our pace can be too frenetic to be in union with God, and we often don't know how to quiet our hearts and minds to be present with him. But God calls us into a life of purpose in communion with him. Join pastor and author Rich Villodas in this five-session series as he teaches us five practices that will take us from simply "being Christians" to being deeply formed by Christ.

This is actually a five week series, but you can easily choose 2-3 sessions and use them as stand alone lessons. Our suggestion would be to use sessions 1, 4, and 5.

Late January-Early March: Winter Church Wide (Book of the Bible Focus: Daniel)

Our Winter Church Wide is a study of the book of Daniel.

Primary Suggestion: Use Provided Sermon Discussion Guide

The easiest way for your group to participate in the winter church-wide series is to have each come to your meeting having heard the sermon from the previous Sunday. Use the study guide we provide each week to discuss the passage and the sermon that went with it. We will email you the study guide questions each week.

The Daniel Dilemma-How to Stand firm and Love Well in a Culture of Compromise by Chris Hodges (Book and/or 6 Week Video Series)

Christians today face a dilemma: In a world that seems to reject everything we believe, how do we walk closely with God without caving to pressure or alienating those we hope to reach? In this series, Chris Hodges provides a solution by examining the life of the prophet Daniel, who persevered in a corrupt culture that closely resembles our own — and emerged as an influential force in God's redemptive plan. The Daniel Dilemma shows us that standing for truth isn't about

winning the argument; it's about winning hearts. When we learn the secret of connecting before correcting, we discover that we can hold firmly to biblical beliefs without becoming obnoxious, insulting, or mad; stand strong while loving others well; and respond to today's hard questions without compromising grace or truth.

The video series for this is not on RightNow Media. If you wish to use it, let Pastor James know so he can order you a copy.

Study Guide Option: The Good Book Guide on Daniel-Staying Strong in a Hostile World (7 Weeks)

If your group is hoping to dig into the scriptures more directly, you can use The Good Book Guide on Daniel. This option provides a study guide format to help your group work through the book of Daniel. The easiest way to use this guide is for you to choose what questions in the guide you would like your group to discuss. When you meet, have your group read the passage together and then work through the questions you have chosen.

March - April: Relationships

Primary Suggestion: Grace/Truth by Preston Sprinkle (10 Weeks)

The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender presents "Grace/Truth", a ten-week small group learning experience that introduces Christians to LGBT + people. Throughout the experience viewers will learn the language to use and avoid, better understand the theologically faithful view of marriage and sexuality, and receive practical guidance on how to embody the love of Christ toward sexual and gender minorities.

This is a great series and provides a lot useful guidance for Christians. The RightNow Media series gives you access to teaching videos and leader guides. There are two books that accompany. If you would like those, please let Pastor James know so that he can purchase them for you.

Alternate Suggestion: Find Your People by Jennie Allen (7 Sessions)

Never in the history of civilization have we been more connected and felt more alone. We are all so lonely. What if the ways we have set up our lives are fundamentally broken? In the Find Your People video Bible study, bestselling author Jennie Allen looks at the original community in Genesis, the Trinity, and the creation of people to see what God had planned for us all along. Jennie offers practical solutions for creating true community in a world that's both more connected and more isolating than ever before.

Drawing on fascinating insights from science and history, timeless biblical truth, and vulnerable stories from her own life, Jennie helps us discover exactly how to dive into the deep end and experience the full wonder of community. Along the way, we'll discover the five life patterns required to build deep, connected relationships. You were created to play, engage, adventure, and explore—with others. Because while the ache of loneliness is real, it doesn't have to be your reality.

The RightNow Media series does not come with a leader guide. If you choose to do this series, let Pastor James Know so that he can purchase one for you.

Book Option: Why Does God Care Who I Sleep With (11 weeks)

Christians are increasingly seen as outdated, restrictive and judgmental when it comes to sex before marriage, cohabitation and homosexuality. In fact for many people, this issue is one of the biggest barriers for them considering Christianity.

Sam Allberry, author of many books including *Is God Anti-gay* sets out God's good design for the expression of human sexuality. Readers will be shown that God himself is love and his blueprint for sex is designed to help us to flourish and live out our full humanity.

It is a great reminder of the Bible's teaching on love, sex and marriage and ideal for giving away to people who may see it as a stumbling block for belief.

This book accompanies the sermon series we will be in March and early April. It is an easy read and creates a lot of room for discussion.

April-May: Book of the Bible

Primary Suggestion: The Beatitudes by Matt Chandler (8 Sessions)

What does it mean to be blessed? And, more importantly, how do we become someone who is blessed? The kind of life God is calling us to may not look the way we imagined, but it will be better than we could have hoped. In this eight-session series, pastor Matt Chandler takes us through the Beatitudes and shows us what it means to live in the kingdom of God. Through Jesus's teaching, learn what the blessed life really looks like.

Alternate Suggestion Romans: Live With Clarity by Jada Edwards (8 Sessions)

In this eight-session video Bible study (video streaming included), Bible teacher Jada Edwards explores the Apostle Paul's expression of our faith in his letter to the Christians in Rome and what that gospel-driven faith looks like in practice: how we love people, how we make decisions, how we live in community, and how we foster unity with others.

Sample Group Calendar A

Please use this sample group calendar to help you build what your group plans to do. This calendar was written for a Group meeting on Wednesday nights and starting In September

Series 1: The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry

This Sample Calendar is Using January Options in September because they are choosing not to meet in early January and they like the January content more.

September 11 - The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry Session 1

September 18 - The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry Session 2

September 25 - The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry Session 4

October 2 - The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry Session 5

Series 2: Church-Wide

October 9 - Church-Wide Week 1

October 16 - Church-Wide Week 2

October 23 - Church-Wide Week 3

October 30 - Church-Wide Week 4

November 6 - Church-Wide Week 5

November 13 - Church-Wide Week 6

November 20 - Church-Wide Week 7

November 27 - OFF FOR THANKSGIVING

December 4 - Have a Christmas Party

December 11 - OFF

December 18 - OFF

December 25 - OFF

January 1 - OFF

January 8 - OFF

January 15 - OFF

January 22 - Do Dinner Together To Reconnect before launch of Winter Church-Wide

Series 3: Church-Wide - Daniel

January 29 - Sermon Study Guide Week 1

February 5 - Sermon Study Guide Week 2

February 12 - Sermon Study Guide Week 3

February 19 - OFF FOR MIDWINTER BREAK

February 26 - Sermon Study Guide Week 4

March 5 - Sermon Study Guide Week 5

March 12 - Sermon Study Guide Week 6

Series 4: Grace/Truth

March 19 - Grace/Truth Session 1

March 26 - OFF FOR SPRING BREAK

April 2 - Grace/Truth Session 2

April 9 - Grace/Truth Session 3
April 16 - Grace/Truth Session 4
April 23 - Grace/Truth Session 5
April 30 - Grace/Truth Session 6
May 7 - Grace/Truth Session 7
May 14 - Grace/Truth Session 8
May 21 - Grace/Truth Session 9/10

Sample Group Calendar B

Please use this sample group calendar to help you build what your group plans to do. This calendar was written for a Group meeting on Wednesday nights and starting in September

Series 1: The Verbs of God

September 11 - The Verbs of God Session 1
September 18 - The Verbs of God Session 2
September 25 - The Verbs of God Session 3
October 2 - The Verbs of God Session 4

Series 2: Church-Wide

October 9 - Church-Wide Week 1
October 16 - Church-Wide Week 2
October 23 - Church-Wide Week 3
October 30 - Church-Wide Week 4
November 6 - Church-Wide Week 5
November 13 - Church-Wide Week 6
November 20 - Church-Wide Week 7

November 27 - OFF FOR THANKSGIVING

December 4 - Have a Christmas Party

December 11 - OFF
December 18 - OFF
December 25 - OFF
January 1 - OFF

Series 3: The Deeply Formed Life

January 8 - The Deeply Formed Life Session 1
January 15 - The Deeply Formed Life Session 4
January 22 - The Deeply Formed Life Session 5

Series 3: Church-Wide - Daniel

January 29 - Sermon Study Guide Week 1
February 5 - Sermon Study Guide Week 2

February 12 - Sermon Study Guide Week 3
February 19 - OFF FOR MIDWINTER BREAK
February 26 - Sermon Study Guide Week 4
March 5 - Sermon Study Guide Week 5
March 12 - Sermon Study Guide Week 6

Series 4: The Beatitudes

March 19 - Beatitudes Session 1
March 26 - OFF FOR SPRING BREAK
April 2 - Beatitudes Session 2
April 9 - Beatitudes Session 3
April 16 - Beatitudes Session 4
April 23 - Beatitudes Session 5
April 30 - Beatitudes Session 6
May 7 - Beatitudes Session 7
May 14 - Beatitudes Session 8
May 21 - End of the Year Dinner Party