



rebuilt  
FAITH

*Small-Group  
Discussion Guide*

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# Getting Started

Welcome! This discussion guide is designed for use in seven or eight small-group meetings of one to two-hour duration, but this schedule can be adjusted to meet the needs of your particular group. Please note that the questions offered here for use in a small group are the same as those offered in the book for private reflection.

## **Guidelines for Group Members:**

Use the following guidelines to help gatherings and conversations go smoothly.

1. Respect for each person is, of course, paramount.
2. Have a copy of *Rebuilt Faith: A Handbook for Skeptical Catholics* and a copy of the *Rebuilt Faith Small-Group Discussion Guide* (optional).
3. Read this as a guide to fruitful conversations at [learninginnovation.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ITF-H1-discussionguide-17h5iob.pdf](http://learninginnovation.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ITF-H1-discussionguide-17h5iob.pdf).

# FIRST SESSION

## MEET AND GREET

### Opening Prayer:

*Let us pray. Lord God, Creator of all that is good, bless this gathering of your people, and guide our search to know and love you more fully. Help us open our hearts and minds to learn from and love one another. Teach us kindness, patience, and gentleness of spirit.*

*In Jesus's name, we pray.*

*Amen.*

### Introductions:

Get to know the members in your group.

### READING FOR THE NEXT SESSION:

Read the Introduction and Week One: Get to Know Jesus p. 1-43

### NOTES:

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# SECOND SESSION

## WEEK ONE: GET TO KNOW JESUS

### Opening Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, reveal to us the truth about your Son who he is and who he can be in our lives. We want to get to know him better. We desire a closer relationship with him. During these forty days, strengthen our resolve, and give us courage to believe.*

*We pray through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY ONE:

1. How do you know someone is wise?
2. Who are people you respect for their wisdom?
3. Why does Jesus's wisdom stand out in human history?

#### DAY TWO:

1. What have you pursued over and over again, thinking that it would fill the ache in your heart for happiness but instead has consistently left you unfulfilled?
2. What have you invested in heavily—an opportunity, a relationship, or an ongoing activity—that ultimately disappointed?
3. If you say that Jesus is Lord, how can you show in your actions, pursuits, or decisions that he really can fulfill your longing for more?

# SECOND SESSION

## WEEK ONE: GET TO KNOW JESUS

### DAY THREE:

1. What were you taught about Jesus and what it means to follow him?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a Christ follower? What might the Lord be asking you to give up in order to follow him more closely?
3. Do you believe in Jesus's promise of rewards? Why or why not?

### DAY FOUR:

1. Do you like Jesus? Why or why not?
2. What are your thoughts on having a friendship with Jesus?
3. What are the character traits of people you like? Do you think Jesus shares these same traits?

### DAY FIVE:

1. When have you been bored in church? When have you been distracted in prayer?
2. What about church or prayer do you find boring? Why?
3. Growing up, what images did you have of Jesus of Nazareth?

### DAY SIX:

1. In what areas of your life do you have trouble "seeing" things clearly or knowing the way forward that's right for you?
2. Who are the voices in your life discouraging you, and who are the voices encouraging you?
3. What do you want Jesus to do for you today? How confident are you that he cares and really can help?

### DAY SEVEN:

1. Do you agree that following Jesus is simple but not easy? Why or why not?
2. Rank in order which of the STEPS interest you most.
3. What STEPS are present in your life right now? Which would be the most challenging step for you?

# SECOND SESSION

## WEEK ONE: GET TO KNOW JESUS

### NOTES:

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### Reading for the Next Session:

Week Two: Give pp. 46–86

### Concluding Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father,  
thank you for the clear instruction your Son, Jesus, gave  
so that I might grow in my love for you and others.  
May I honor you today by loving the people around me.*

*In Jesus's name.*

*Amen.*

# THIRD SESSION

## WEEK TWO: SERVE

### Opening Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, through your Son's life and death on the Cross, you have taught us that the path to greatness comes through service. In the course of this week, allow me to grow to be more like your Son, who came not to be served but to serve.*

*I pray through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY EIGHT:

1. Whom do you admire because they use their influence or position in service to others?
2. As you look at your day-to-day life, who are the people you have an opportunity to serve?  
How can you serve them?
3. Rank on a scale of one to five how well you serve and add value to others. Why do you give yourself this number?

#### DAY NINE:

1. What obstacles keep you from embracing a servant's heart?
2. What are the mundane tasks around you that no one else wants to do that you can do?
3. Who is an example of someone you know who does not mind serving in mundane ways?  
How do you think they grew into such maturity?



# THIRD SESSION

## WEEK TWO: SERVE

### DAY TEN:

1. How do you think serving in your parish will draw you closer to Christ?
2. Why does Paul connect serving and spiritual maturity?
3. What opportunities do you see for volunteering in your parish?

### DAY ELEVEN:

1. Does serving people in need because of faith in Jesus inspire you, or do you find serving others to be more challenging?
2. Are you more inclined to serve people directly or eliminate the larger issues that cause poverty? Why is it important to keep both approaches in mind when serving people in need?
3. What are the opportunities around you to serve those in need right now?

### DAY TWELVE:

1. What problems in the world bother you that you would like to solve?
2. Have you ever made excuses for not addressing issues you care deeply about? What are they?
3. What intimidates you about God calling you to serve?

### DAY THIRTEEN:

1. How do you view your work and day-to-day responsibilities — as a job, a career, or a calling?
2. What's on your heart? What and who is at hand to help? What can you do today to pursue God's call on your life?
3. What excuses are you using to keep you from serving God and pursuing his mission for your life?

### DAY FOURTEEN:

1. Considering today's challenge, what one action step do you need to take to strengthen your commitment to serving others?
2. In what ways do you need to guard your heart against poor attitudes about service?
3. After spending a week on the first of our STEPS, serve, why would you say it is a privilege to serve God and his purposes?

# THIRD SESSION

## WEEK TWO: SERVE

**NOTES:**

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**Reading for the Next Session:**

Week Three: Tithe and Give, pp. 88-125

**Concluding Prayer:**

*God, our heavenly Father, you have made me for ministry and to serve the Church through my parish. May my service bring unity to our community, help me grow in knowledge of your Son, and develop maturity in my faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.*

*Amen.*

# FOURTH SESSION

## WEEK THREE: TITHE AND GIVE

### Opening Prayer:

God, our heavenly Father, through your Son's life and death on the Cross, you have taught us that the path to greatness comes through service. In the course of this week, allow me to grow to be more like your Son, who came not to be served but to serve.

I pray through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY FIFTEEN:

1. Do you find it easy to believe that God is generous? Why or why not?
2. What gifts has God given you recently?
3. What do you have in abundance that you could share with others?

#### DAY SIXTEEN:

1. On a scale of one to five, how much do you worry about money? (Five means you worry all the time and one means barely ever.) Why did you place yourself where you did on the scale?
2. What, specifically, are you worrying about currently? What do you worry about consistently?
3. How can you seek God and his will in the situations that cause you worry? How might God want to provide a solution for you?

# FOURTH SESSION

## WEEK THREE: TITHE AND GIVE

### DAY SEVENTEEN:

1. What is your natural attitude toward money? What did your family teach you about money? What lessons have you learned from the culture?
2. When has your heart been moved because of how you spent your money?
3. In what ways can you use your money to serve God and grow closer to him?

### DAY EIGHTEEN:

1. What reaction do you have to the idea that you are a steward and not an owner of money and possessions?
2. What do you think Jesus means by true riches?
3. How can you remind yourself that your money and possessions are temporary and not eternal?

### DAY NINETEEN:

1. Have you ever felt prompted by God to give? How did you react? What was the result?
2. How does the concept of giving as worship change your approach to worship?
3. What is your reaction to the four Ps of giving? Does it make sense? Are you likely to implement it?

### DAY TWENTY:

1. Who are some people around you in need? Who is the Lazarus outside your door?
2. Who are the people in need you naturally feel a tug on your heart to help?
3. What charities do you currently support? Why do you support them?

### DAY TWENTY-ONE:

1. Do you tend to have an abundance mindset or a scarcity mindset? Why do you think you lean toward one mindset or the other?
2. Who has provided for you? Whom do you need to thank God for because they have given generously in your life?
3. When have you given cheerfully and found yourself grateful for the opportunity to give to others? How has this week's focus on tithing and giving affected your attitude toward giving?

# FOURTH SESSION

## WEEK THREE: TITHE AND GIVE

### NOTES:

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### Reading for the Next Session:

Week Four: Engage in Christian Community, pp. 126–166

### Concluding Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, I praise and thank you that you have called me to be a cheerful giver, embracing an abundance mentality. Heal me of my scarcity mindset that believes I have to compete with others for resources. Allow me to see you as my Provider, and help me to be a provider for others.*

*Amen.*

# FIFTH SESSION

## WEEK FOUR: ENGAGE IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

### Opening Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, you have designed me and formed me, and I give thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made. In your wonderful design you have created me for connections and community, which I need to grow in faith. Bring people of faith into my life to help me grow in faith.*

*All these things I pray through Christ, our Lord.*

*Amen.*

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY TWENTY-TWO:

1. On a scale of one to five, how much of a problem is loneliness for you? Why did you assign the number you did?
2. When have you experienced relief that someone understood you and your point of view?
3. Do you tend to see faith as a solitary exercise, or are you more open to community?

#### DAY TWENTY-THREE:

1. Who were the people who were helpful in your faith formation when growing up?
2. When have you seen the benefit of gathering with other Christ followers? How have such gatherings nourished your soul and built up your faith?
3. Are you part of a faith community? If so, what do you love about it? If not, what makes you resist being part of a faith community?

# FIFTH SESSION

## WEEK FOUR: ENGAGE IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

### DAY TWENTY-FOUR:

1. Who are the people who sharpen you and help you grow? Are they people who help you grow in faith?
2. Do you have close friends with whom you can share both the Gospel and what is happening in your life?
3. Of the three reasons given for joining a small group (friends in faith, encouragement from others' faith, and conversion), which one most appeals to you?

### DAY TWENTY-FIVE:

1. Is there someone you are struggling to get along with right now? What would it look like to apply the Golden Rule to that relationship?
2. Who are the people helping you to process struggles with others? Whom do you help?
3. How would having a small Christian community help you grow to be a better person in the roles you play?

### DAY TWENTY-SIX:

1. What is your reaction to the idea that God can use others' faith to bring his grace into your life? How do you feel about that?
2. Who are the people you could ask for faith-based support when you are struggling to believe?
3. Whom can you encourage to lean on your faith when they are weak?

### DAY TWENTY-SEVEN:

1. What's the difference between sharing our pain and problems and complaining?
2. What burdens are you carrying right now? How would sharing them with others lessen their weight?
3. After reflecting on Christian community this week, what action step do you need to take?

### DAY TWENTY-EIGHT:

1. Why do you think it is helpful to see ourselves as enjoying fellowship with the saints?
2. Is there a biblical hero or saint whom you admire or whose story has resonated with you? What can you do to know their story better?
3. How has this week, focused on engaging in Christian community, changed how you view its importance in our faith life?

# FIFTH SESSION

## WEEK FOUR: ENGAGE IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

### NOTES:

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### Reading for the Next Session:

Week Five: Practice Prayer and the Sacraments, pp. 168–205

### Concluding Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, your Son has taught me that I don't have to have faith all on my own. My friends in faith can walk with me and sometimes even carry me when I am struggling to believe in you. Show me the people you want to be a part of my faith journey, and help me to share honestly with them when I need them to believe for me. At the same time, may I be someone who can believe for others.*

*In Jesus's name.*

*Amen.*



# SIXTH SESSION

## WEEK FIVE: PRACTICE PRAYER AND THE SACRAMENTS

### Opening Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, thank you for the great gift of prayer and the opportunity to enter into conversation with you. Setting aside a time and a place to connect with you on a daily basis, may I open my heart to your heart and grow closer to you.*

*In Jesus's name.*

*Amen.*

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY THIRTY:

1. Why is it important to have adoration as part of our prayer practice?
2. Do you regularly turn to worship and adoration? When and how?
3. As a result of this reflection, what is one action you can take to add more praise and adoration into your prayer practice?

#### DAY THIRTY-ONE:

1. What prayers of contrition do you pray now? What is a prayer of contrition you could add to your prayer routine?
2. Prayers of contrition help us to course correct and get rid of guilt. Which of those two benefits appeals most to you?
3. When was the last time you went to Confession? Should you make plans to go? What prevents you from going to Confession?

# SIXTH SESSION

## WEEK FIVE: PRACTICE PRAYER AND THE SACRAMENTS

### DAY THIRTY-TWO:

1. Over the last twenty-four hours, what is something in creation you witnessed that you can thank God for?
2. When have you felt grateful for Jesus's death on the Cross?
3. What is a struggle you are currently facing? What might God want to grow in your character through this struggle?

### DAY THIRTY-THREE:

1. When have you been disappointed that prayer did not seem to make a difference?
2. Have you ever experienced a clear answer to prayer? If so, what was it?
3. What can you specifically pray for today?

### DAY THIRTY-FOUR:

1. Has there ever been a time you have heard from God?
2. What scripture verses about listening in prayer speak to your heart?
3. When in your day can you cultivate silence so you can hear from God?

### DAY THIRTY-FIVE:

1. Has prayer become a habit for you? What has helped it become habitual? What motivates or encourages you to persevere in prayer?
2. What frustrates you about prayer and makes you tempted to give up? How can you overcome that temptation?
3. How has your understanding of practicing prayer and the sacraments grown through our focus on this STEP this week?

# SIXTH SESSION

## WEEK FIVE: PRACTICE PRAYER AND THE SACRAMENTS

### NOTES:

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### Reading for the Next Session:

Week Six: Share Your Faith, pp. 208–230 (and bonus days if you wish.)

### Concluding Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, thank you for your Son's teaching about prayer. Thank you that he knows when I am tempted to give up and stop praying. Grant me a resilience and perseverance to keep on praying even when it doesn't feel as if it is making a difference. Transform me so that the inclination to pray grows more and more.*

*Amen.*

# SEVENTH SESSION

## WEEK SIX: SHARE YOUR FAITH

### Opening Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, your Son calls me to go deeper in my relationship with him by sharing my faith. May I lay aside any fears or self-centeredness and increasingly become open to seeing how I can share the Good News of the Gospel as did the first apostles.*

*In Jesus's name.*

*Amen.*

**VIDEO:** Write notes or reflections from the video to use in your discussion.

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### Reflection Questions:

#### DAY THIRTY-SEVEN:

1. What good deeds do you do that you can connect to your faith in Jesus?
2. How has a relationship with Jesus healed you? Do you know someone who needs that same healing?
3. Is it a struggle for you to believe that we are only saved through Jesus? What thoughts come to your mind when you hear Peter say there is no other way we can be saved?

#### DAY THIRTY-EIGHT:

1. Do you tend to get annoyed or angry at people who are lost, or do you have compassion for them?
2. Who is one person you know that you would describe as "lost"?
3. What would it look like for you to love the lost? How can you specifically love the one person whom you described as lost?

# SEVENTH SESSION

## WEEK SIX: SHARE YOUR FAITH

### DAY THIRTY-NINE:

1. What have you lost that you have felt responsible for? What did you do when you realized it was missing?
2. How can we increase our sense of responsibility for reaching the “lost,” those people disconnected from Christ?
3. Who is one person disconnected to Christ that you feel responsible for reaching and would rejoice if they came to know Jesus?

### DAY FORTY:

1. Who is someone God is putting on your heart right now to invest in?
2. What is the next step you can take to invest in that person?
3. What church environment would you invite this person into?

### BONUS DAY ONE:

1. When was a time you saw the goodness or mercy of God in your life?
2. Was there ever an experience when you felt the presence and power of God in a palpable way?
3. People are attracted to God in various ways. Which of the ways in today's reflection speak to your heart?

### BONUS DAY TWO:

1. What about Jesus's character needs to increase in you? What needs to decrease in your character?
2. As you reflect on these forty days, where have you seen growth in your faith in Christ? How have you uncovered what matters during this time?
3. Which of the five STEPS—serve, tithe and give, engage in Christian community, practice prayer and the sacraments and share your faith—have you found the most challenging? Which was the easiest for you to embrace? What do you see as the next step in your walk with Christ?

# SEVENTH SESSION

## WEEK SIX: SHARE YOUR FAITH

### NOTES:

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### Concluding Prayer:

*God, our heavenly Father, thank you for my journey of these last forty days. I want my joy to be complete in your Son. May his spirit increase within me as I continue to take steps of faith and so change and transform into the image of Christ.*

*In his most holy name.*

*Amen.*