

# Soul Care

Featuring Jason Perkins

# How to Use This Guide

This Study Guide is a tool to help you combine the video and Bible study into a dynamic experience. As the leader, take some time in advance to consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

With that in mind, let's preview the guide. The main body of the Study Guide is written as a conversation you would have with your group. When there's a specific question to ask, it appears in bold type and the paragraphs that follow might include thoughts you could add to the discussion.

Each session has particular sections:

## **SESSION GOALS**

This is the point of each session—the big idea and what we hope participants walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of studying the material. All the teaching, questions, and reflections ultimately point back to these goals.

## **CONNECT**

This is an icebreaker. Adjust it to the character of your group, but don't skip it, for a few reasons. (1) Every group needs some transition time. (2) Everyone gets to know each other. (3) The introductory questions draw out practical connections between the subject matter and their lives.

## **LEARN**

Before watching the video, take a moment or two to walk through the "things to look for" questions. They'll help concentrate attention on the most important parts of the video teaching. Then, when you watch the video, make sure the audio is at a comfortable level and everyone can see the screen. You don't want your group to miss anything.

## **REVIEW**

People can forget what they see unless they review it right away. The discussion questions in this section help your group remember what they just viewed from the teaching and real-life stories. But other questions try to connect the video to their emotions or experience. How did you feel when the teacher said that? Is it true in your life? Do you have the same issue?

You, as the leader, will set the tone. If you offer a comment that's authentic, vulnerable, or a bit challenging, then others will feel that they have permission to do the same—and you will have meaningful discussion and growth.

## **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

This is a Bible study, so each session is grounded in Scripture. Within your group, you may find different levels of faith. This is a time to open up the Bible and help your group members take their next right step of faith.

## **REFLECT**

This is an opportunity for your group to be challenged to do something with what they've learned. This section will direct the group to reflect on how they live out their faith in their daily lives.

## **BEFORE NEXT TIME**

Additional suggestions are given, for individual reflection during the week. Encourage your group to dive deeper, but don't demand it.

# Soul Care

## SESSION #1:

## The Master and the Apprentice

### SESSION GOALS

*The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing our knowing, feeling, and doing.*

**MAIN IDEA:** We can learn to live the way Jesus did.

**HEAD CHANGE:** To know that if we want to live out the lessons Jesus taught, we must adopt the lifestyle Jesus lived.

**HEART CHANGE:** To feel grateful that Jesus is in us, and we can learn to be attentive to Him.

**LIFE CHANGE:** To build the keystone habit of being with Jesus.

### CONNECT

Have you ever job shadowed someone? Have you ever had someone job shadowing you? What did you learn from either of those experiences? What have you learned through watching someone work that you could never have learned from a textbook?

Perhaps you're familiar with job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships in your career space, but you've never considered them applicable to your spiritual life. In this session, Jason Perkins explains that knowing and believing the teachings of Jesus doesn't make it easy to live them out. Rather, personal transformation happens only through apprenticeship: learning to take on the lifestyle of our Master.

## LEARN

As you watch, write down how Jason answers these questions.

1. Has Jason struggled to believe the teachings of Jesus?
2. If you're a Christian, why would it make sense for your lifestyle to look like Jesus' lifestyle?
3. What is a keystone habit?
4. What did apprenticeship involve in the ancient world?
5. What kind of people did Jesus invite to apprentice under Him?

**Show SESSION #1: The Master and the Apprentice (12 minutes)**

## REVIEW

Jason begins by sharing that, while he has never doubted who Jesus is or what He taught, he has struggled to live out His teachings. **Can you relate? Which of Jesus' teachings have you found particularly difficult to implement or obey?**

Jason points out that more knowledge about Jesus and His teachings doesn't help us to apply what He taught in our personal battle against sin. Jason goes on to say, 'I have discovered that the only way I can live out the lessons that Jesus taught is by adapting my lifestyle to live the way that Jesus lived. As a follower of Jesus, He now lives in me. So, if Jesus now lives in me, it makes sense that my lifestyle would look a lot like His.' **What does the word 'lifestyle' mean to you? From whom did you adopt most of your lifestyle habits? What aspects of your lifestyle do you feel are beyond your control?**

Jason recounts working part-time as a labourer and watching various tradespeople apprenticing under masters in their chosen field. Their goal was to become like the person from whom they were learning the trade. Apprentices wouldn't just learn the practical skills being demonstrated; they would take on the lifestyle habits of the teacher too – resting and eating and talking like them. **If you have kids, have you caught them mimicking your gestures or the phrases you use often? Have you found yourself taking on the cooking, reading, Instagramming, leadership, holidaying, spending, or speaking habits of people you admire? For better or worse, does the rhythm of your life take on a different cadence when you're around certain people?**

Apprenticeship was common practice in the first century. Jewish spiritual leaders, called rabbis, would invite the best students they could find to work with them and learn from them. Jesus was likely the most famous rabbi of His day. **How was He radically different from other rabbis? Whom did He invite to apprentice under Him? Where did He find these guys? Whom does He invite today? Did you find Jesus' invitation to follow Him complicated or difficult to grasp?**

When a first-century rabbi invited an apprentice to follow him, the apprentice would pretty much move in and live every moment in the rabbi's presence – eating, resting, working, and travelling with the rabbi. **If you've ever spent most of your time with a particular person, what kind of ripple effects did that have on your life – for example, on your habits or preferences?**

Charles Duhigg suggests that keystone habits are the fundamental, strategic routines by which we operate. Each keystone habit has a ripple effect on every part of our life. It figures that if we build the keystone habit of spending all our time with Jesus, we'll become like Him, and behave as He behaved. **Have there been times in your life when you followed Jesus more closely, and times when you felt distant from Him? How did more (and less) time spent with Jesus affect the rhythms of your life?**

Jason reminds us that if we want to live out the lessons Jesus taught, we must adopt the lifestyle Jesus lived. The good news is that Jesus lives in us, so it's not about finding Him. Rather, it's about being attentive to Him. **What difference would it make in your relationships or your work life, for example, if you not only understood and believed Jesus' teachings, but also lived them out? What do you understand by the word 'attentive'? In this series, we'll study the habits and rhythms of Jesus' life and learn what it means to follow Him, but from where you find yourself today, how would you apply attentiveness to your relationship with Jesus?**

The keystone habit of being with Jesus is not about your external life. It's about tending to the garden of your inner life by adopting the habits of the master gardener, Jesus. **Why is this keystone habit so countercultural, even in many churches today?**

## **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

Read John 15:1-11. Jesus says if we abide in Him – another way of expressing the keystone habit of being with Jesus – we'll bear much fruit. In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul describes the fruit we bear if we walk with God. **What would the ripple effect of this kind of fruit look like in your interactions at home, at work, at church, or in the wider community?**

In Romans 8:10, Galatians 2:20, and Colossians 1:27, Paul talks about Christ living in us. **How would you explain this supernatural reality to someone who has recently come to faith? What does it mean to you personally? How might you use these verses to encourage a Christian friend who tells you she feels far from God?**

In his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul also writes, 'And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ' (1 Corinthians 11:1). **When you think about a Christ-like life you could imitate, who comes to mind? Which of their rhythms or habits could you emulate? Who might be imitating your life?**

## **REFLECT**

Before delving into the next session, consider the words of Dallas Willard, who lived with a profound understanding of what it means to be an apprentice of Jesus: 'My central claim is that we become like Christ by doing one thing – by following Him in the overall style of life He chose for Himself. If we have faith in Christ, we must believe that He knew how to live. We can, through faith and grace, become like Christ by practising the types of activities He engaged in, by arranging our whole lives around the activities He Himself practiced, in order to remain constantly at home in the fellowship of the Father.'

## **BEFORE NEXT TIME**

*Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.*

**READ:** Meditate on 1 John 2:6. Read it in a few different Bible translations. Read it out loud. Allow God's Spirit to show you an area of your life where you need to listen for the rhythm of Jesus' footfalls and walk as He walked.

**WRITE:** Spend some time writing down anything and everything you know about the way Jesus lived – how He travelled, ate, rested, worked, made friends, ministered to people, and worshiped. Write down the names and habits of people you know who seem to do things in a similar way. What's your next step?

**PRAY:** As an apprentice, write out a prayer of application to the Master, Jesus, explaining why you long to be like Him, and asking for His guidance, training, instruction, and help.