

THE 49-DAY JOURNEY

A Higher Perspective To Living A Biblically Based Life



SMALL GROUP FACILITATOR'S DISCUSSION GUIDE
(UPDATED 2025)



Welcome to Periscope, a comprehensive experience addressing the cultural captivity which so easily engulfs us. This experience consists of sermons, videos, daily devotional reading, daily emails and more with the intent of immersing your people in a common theme: *God has called you view things through His periscope providing an eternal perspective on life. This perspective enables you to live as citizens of heaven who are temporarily on this earth for His purpose.* Our prayer is that this experience will be instrumental in helping your people live fuller and more purposeful lives for God in the days ahead.

This **Facilitator's Discussion Guide (FG)** is designed to help you lead a home group, Sunday school class, or some other group structure as they go through this experience. As the facilitator of a group, your first task will be to sign up everyone in your group with their name and email address. Provide your group with the web address for the course material and the password received when you registered for the experience. You will encourage your group to discuss the material provided each week. This material needs to be personalized by each person participating. You can help this process by creating a good discussion environment, understanding the goals of each session, and avoiding the temptation to do a lot of lecture type teaching.

This Discussion Guide provides step-by-step help in facilitating this group study. All the study resources are described below. The facilitator should study these resources so that you know what your group members have been learning prior to the small group meeting.

PERISCOPE STUDY RESOURCES:

SERMON SERIES - For Churches

Churches who have their church do the video-driven small group series may want to incorporate related material into the sermon of the week. The available material includes detailed outlines for seven sermons which introduce the seven weeks of topics covered in the daily devotional and the small group study times. The sermon series is designed to lead your small group members into an initial consideration of the topics covered by small groups later that week. *If you are only doing the small group portion, you will not hear these sermons. Conversely, the sermons are not intended to replace the small group videos and discussion time.*

PERISCOPE - Daily Devotional Book

The book, *Periscope: A 49-day Journey to Living a Transformed Life*, consists of 49 chapters divided into 7 segments. One chapter is to be read each day for 7 weeks. Chapter One is read the day the first sermon in the series is preached OR seven days before the first small group meeting OR immediately after the first small group meeting. Each seven-chapter segment addresses the primary topic for discussion at the following (or preceding) small group session. The devotional book may be downloaded in its entirety or accessed one chapter at a time through your group page at upPeriscope.com.

PERISCOPE - Facilitator's Guide

The Facilitator's Guide can be accessed by the group leader facilitator's page on upPeriscope.com. The Facilitator's Guide will help you lead your small group in discussion each week. It will provide you with a layout of the material for each week, e.g. when to play the video segments associated with each lesson. It provides a list of questions to discuss in each session. Note a simplified list of these questions is displayed on the screen. The guide provides more information and includes the scripture texts referenced in the questions. You may print out the Facilitator's Guide for each session or use it on-line.

PERISCOPE - Video Lessons

These videos can be accessed through the hyperlinks included in your Periscope Facilitator's Guide or purchased on a set of two DVDs. For each week, the videos contain warm-up questions and two or three distinct video segments with discussion questions at the end of each segment. The teaching video segment also includes discussion questions within the segment.

PERISCOPE - Email / Voice Message

When a small group facilitator sets up their group, he/she will have the opportunity to sign up their group members for a daily email message. The facilitator should have the name, phone number, and email address for each of their small group members. Members will receive a short email capturing the essence of the chapter in *Periscope*. Typically, the members will receive an email each morning. We have found that many people prefer to listen to the email rather than reading it. Each email will have a voice recording attached for that purpose.

Church Assessment Tool

If you are doing this study as a church and choose to use this tool, prior to your first week of study, your group will be asked to respond to an on-line Church Assessment Tool. Assure them that any answers given are strictly confidential and no names or other personal information is requested. The results of this assessment will be provided to the leaders before the end of this seven-week experience.

PROBE 2020 SURVEY - Understanding a Post-Christian America in 2020

This report on our analysis results from our 2020 survey of over 3,000 Americans under the age of 55 is available to you free of charge on the Probe website at <https://probe.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Post-Christian-America.pdf>. You will find highlights of the information from this survey in your Facilitators Guide.



Your Role as a Small Group Facilitator

If God has led you to lead a small group session, you can trust Him to equip and enable you to accomplish the task. Your role is to facilitate the group learning process, i.e. to introduce the material and keep the discussion focused on the topic. It is the Holy Spirit's role to lead the participants into the truth and convict them of changes needed in their own lives. Some general guidelines for facilitators are listed below.ⁱ

1. **Create an atmosphere of acceptance and sharing.** Make sure your meeting place is set up to encourage everyone to feel an equal part of the group expected to participate and share their thoughts. Set your chairs in a circle with no second row.
2. **Model the attitude of a servant.** As the group facilitator, members will take their cues from you as to how they are expected to act. Set the attitude of wanting to hear from others and valuing their thoughts.
3. **Participate as a group member.** You are part of the process like the other members. God is the leader of the group. As the discussion gets under way, feel free to share your thoughts with the group. **Be sure not to share much more than other members.**
4. **Involve all group members in the discussion.** Look for ways to involve all members in the discussion, even those who are hesitant to participate. Don't force them but rather encourage them knowing that the group will benefit from their perspective. Try to keep any one individual from dominating the discussion, even if they have good things to contribute.
5. **Keep the group moving toward its goals.** Keeping the group on track and moving toward achieving the learning goal is important. There will be times when you will have to encourage the group to get back on track or to move on in their discussion.

Using Your Facilitator's Guide and Video Elements

This guide presents lessons designed to be covered in 45 – 80 minute sessions. Each session will include video segments interspersed with discussion topics. If you have less than 80 minutes for your small group, you will need to select some of the discussion questions to skip over. It is important for the group to have time to discuss each week's topic to the extent needed to penetrate their thought process.

ⁱ Taken from MasterBuilder: Multiplying Leaders

Make it a priority to schedule time for preparation before each small group session. Your preparation will help the group better grasp the truths presented in the session material and apply it to their lives. Each session plan includes four parts: Fast Facts, Prior to the Session, Conducting the Session, and Follow Up.

The **Fast Facts** section provides you with some relevant facts drawn from our 2020 Survey entitled *Understanding a Post-Christian America in 2020*.

Prior to the Session includes actions for you to complete prior to the small group meeting. Most of those actions are to remind you to participate fully as a member of your small group.

Conducting the Session provides an outline for your time together. It indicates when to watch the video components and provides discussion questions leading into as well as following each video segment. Most of the questions will relate directly to the video you are watching. Some of the questions may refer to material in the *Periscope* book.

Follow Up guides you in evaluating the group session, your performance as a facilitator, and the needs of group members. Thinking about how the session went will aid you in improving the process as you go through the material. Be sure and remember to pray for your group members each week.

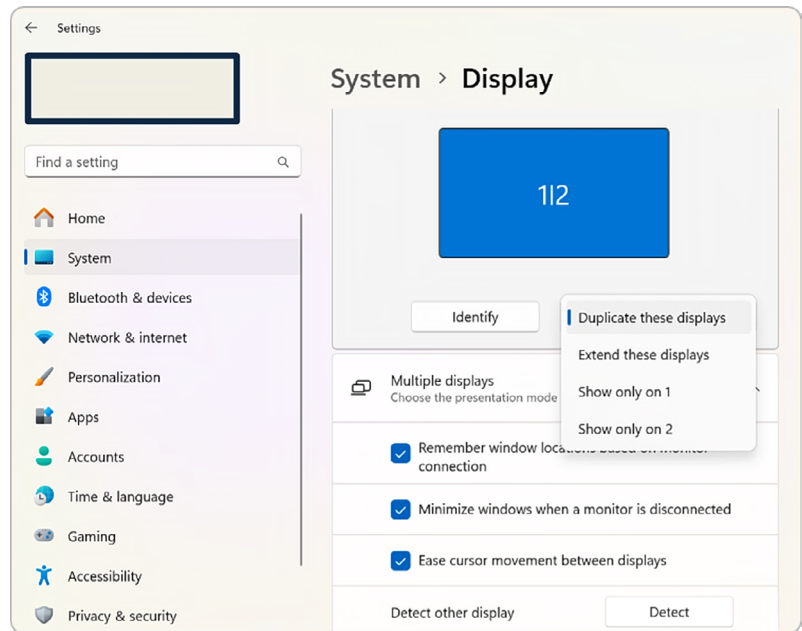
Some general ideas to make each session as useful as possible include:

- Check with your group members before the first session, making sure they have access to a *Periscope* devotional book and are signed up for daily emails. If you add new participants to your group during this experience, be sure to invite them to sign up for the materials.
- Read the material for this week from *Periscope* and read or listen to the emails daily. Make sure you think about what you have heard and read. Let it trigger your mind to explore the concepts introduced in the material.
- Watch the videos for this week prior to your small group time.
- Read through the *Periscope Facilitator's Guide* for the week prior to your small group session. If you have less than 80 minutes for your small group, mark the questions and/or activities you intend to bypass.

- Pray for your group members during the week. Pray that they will be faithful in doing the daily work. Remember that Satan does not want them to actively participate so pray that they will stand firm against the temptations of Satan.

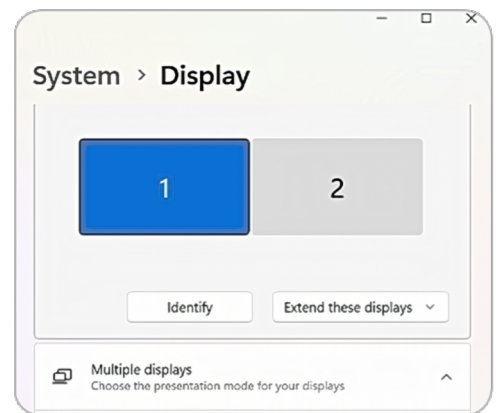
How to Show the Videos:

Each session has either two or three videos to show during your study time. Each video includes some questions to read and discuss (which are expanded in the Facilitators Guide) in addition to the teaching segments. There are two different ways to show the videos and have the FG in front of you as well.



Split Screen Approach – Facilitator's Guide on laptop screen and videos on large screen.

1. Connect your PC to the external television or projector (probably using an HDMI cable). Verify that the image on the large screen is identical to that on the PC display. If the large screen has a different image, e.g. a blue screen, skip to step 6. ((Note this was step 5 but you are adding a new first step))
2. On your PC go to Settings/System and click on Multiple Displays as shown in the figure at right.
3. Click on the box on the right saying “Duplicate these displays”. If the box already says “Extend these displays” you may skip to step 4.
4. Select “Extend these displays” from the drop down menu. The Settings window will now include the graphic shown on the right.
5. Close the Settings window.



6. Go to the facilitators guide and select the video you wish to show. The video will come up in a window in your laptop display.
7. Grab the video window with your mouse and drag it to the right so this is completely out of the laptop display and showing on the large screen.
8. Select the “full screen” button on the bottom right of the video window. Now the video fills the entire large screen. You can control the video using the controls on the bottom of the large screen.
9. You can go back to the Facilitator’s guide which is still showing on the laptop screen.
10. When you are finished with the video, select the “partial screen” button or hit the escape key so the video window does not take up the entire screen. Close the video screen.
11. Repeat steps 5 through 9 for other videos you want to display on the large screen.

Dual Screen Approach – Facilitator’s Guide and videos on both screens

1. Before the session, print out a copy of the Facilitator’s Guide for the upcoming session. You can use this printed version to see the expanded information for your session.
2. Go to the FG online version and select the video you wish to show. The video will come up in a window in your laptop display and on the large screen.
3. Select the “full screen” button on the bottom right of the video window. Now the video fills the entire screen. You can control the video using the controls on the bottom of the screen.
4. When you are finished with the video, select the “partial screen” button or hit the escape key so the video window does not take up the entire screen. Close the video screen.
5. Repeat steps 2 through 4 for other videos you want to display on the large screen.

