

THE 49-DAY JOURNEY

A Higher Perspective To Living A Biblically Based Life



SESSION 5 - Embracing a True Vision



As we enter the fifth week of our study, we begin focusing on the solution to this problem of cultural captivity; of aligning our thoughts to the thinking of the world. ..

FAST FACTS

Consider several statistical results reported in our book, *Understanding a Post-Christian America in 2020*.

- We found that born-again Protestants under the age of 40 who had a regular set of religious practices and professed biblically sound cultural beliefs (e.g. beliefs regarding sex outside of marriage, pornography, homosexuality, and scientism) make up less than one in one hundred (< 1%) of born-again Protestants.
- The composite beliefs of born-again Protestant young adults are significantly different from those held by the rest of Americans (including other Protestants). But they still think in ways much closer to the current cultural standard than to any biblically defined standard. In other words, born-again Protestant young adults tend to have beliefs following closer to the beliefs of the population as a whole than to a set of beliefs consistent with New Testament teaching.



PRIOR TO THIS WEEK'S SESSION

- Participate in the experience by reading a chapter a day in your Periscope book. This week the assignment is Chapters 29 through 35.
- Read/Listen to the daily email messages you will receive from Periscope this week.
- Read this week's Facilitator's Guide Session 5 in preparation for leading the session. Mark the time you want to start each major part of the outline. Within each activity, mark the questions that you want to have your group discuss.

LEADING THE SMALL GROUP SESSION

Begin with whatever fellowship time (if any) you normally include in your small group time. Begin the session by asking one member of the group to lead in a prayer specifically asking for God's presence and leadership during this time. As we begin to look at some positive actions to regain our spiritual freedom, be sure and pray that God will speak to each heart the truth they need to take away from today's experience.



Press **Play** on this Teaser Video – *Paddling to the Big Prize*. Once it starts press **Pause** when you reach the questions at the beginning.

The Questions below in **Blue** appear exactly as they do in the videos. The Material in brackets are additional information to help you lead the discussions.

Opening Warm Up Questions - Session 5

1. When someone is held captive as a POW or as a political prisoner, how do they normally gain their freedom?
2. Ask someone to share a specific story they know about a POW or political prisoner gaining their freedom.

Press **Play** to continue the video. At the end the Discussion Questions will appear.

Group Teaser Questions

3. Ever tried to win a worthwhile prize at the State Fair or Chuck E. Cheese?
 - How much did the prize end up costing you?
4. What things in life seemed to be worth striving for, but turned out to be less than satisfying when you achieved them?
5. In *Lost in Transition*, Christian Smith writes, “What we found is that few emerging adults expressed concerns about the potential limits or dilemmas involved in a lifestyle devoted to boundless material consumption.”
[Most are either positive or neutral about mass consumer materialism.]
6. How do you think boundless material consumption ranks on the objectives God has for citizens of heaven temporarily living on this earth?

Close the Video Window

BODY OF SESSION - Teaching TRUE VISION

35 - 55 minutes



Press this **Play Button** to start the Teaching Video for Session 5
It is called *Embracing True Reality*.

WARNING: Be prepared to Press Pause when the First Set of Discussion Questions appear before the 6 minute mark. Rewind if necessary.

Group Discussion Questions

1. In Hebrews 4:12-13. • Are we going to put anything past God? • Will anything we do be good enough? [*“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”* Will we be able to skate along captive to the thoughts of the world and then tell God a wild story about how we were scouting out the territory for His chosen storm troopers? Should we then live in fear that nothing we do will be good enough for Him?]

2. Let's go on to Hebrews 4:14-16. • How does this passage inform our previous question? • What is the key to living a life pleasing to God? [*"Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* How can you reconcile these verses with what was said in the verses immediately preceding these? What is the key thought in these verses to living an eternal life that brings glory to God?
3. Look at 1 Peter 1:6-9: In Chapter 31 of Periscope Once Captive Devotional, Kerby writes, "Peter says that the trials in our lives are similar to gold being refined in order to remove all of its impurities." [*"you may have to suffer for a short time in various trials. Such trials show the proven character of your faith, which is much more valuable than gold—gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away—and will bring praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. You have not seen him, but you love him. You do not see him now but you believe in him, and so you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, because you are attaining the goal of your faith—the salvation of your souls."* Is living with an eternal perspective going to ensure you live a life without trials? Why live a life with trials, if we can find a way to avoid them?]
- Should we try to avoid all trials?
 - What type of trials are the result of living for Christ on this earth?

Press Play on the Video to continue to the questions at the end.

Discuss the Group Questions.

Group Discussion Questions

4. Look at 2 Cor. 10:3-5. • Have you experienced these weapons at work in your life destroying strongholds? • Have you found God's Word helpful in taking thoughts captive? [*"For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against*

the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.” Where must we fight the battle for freedom from cultural captivity? What type of weapons are these that “destroy arguments” and “take every thought captive”?]

5. Consider 1 Cor 10:12-14. • Have someone share a situation where God provided a way of escape from temptation. • How about a situation when it seemed hard to find His way of escape? *[Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry? If we are in Christ, why do we need to flee from idolatry, the worship of things which are not God? If we are captive, it is not because God abandoned us but rather because we did not look for His provision to help us.]*
6. Look at 1 Peter 1:3-5. How does a wise person live differently from an unwise person? How do we take advantage of every opportunity? *[Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Now Peter was writing to people who were undergoing persecution for their faith. Why was it important for them to understand that their inheritance was secure and held ready for them? We are probably not facing the same type of persecution they faced. Does that make it any less important to understand that we are living for an inheritance in heaven? Are there some ways that make it more important for us to understand this concept?*
7. Read Hebrews 12:1b-3. How does considering Christ's sacrifice help us in not growing weary or fainthearted?? *["Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted."] Going to the*

cross was not easy. How would you describe the joy that gave Him the strength and perspective to go to the cross? How does considering what motivated Him, help us not to grow weary or fainthearted?]

- Is this verse concerned with us growing weary in chasing after the things of this world?
- What should we not grow weary of doing or become too frightened to continue?

Close the Video Window

CLOSING THOUGHTS 8 - 15 minutes

Let's pray that we will view each episode in our lives through God's eternal lenses weighing our actions and reactions based on their eternal significance. Understanding that we do not understand the full eternal significance of our actions, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and direct your actions for God's glory, even in the mundane things of life.

FOLLOW UP TO SMALL GROUP SESSION

Pray for any prayer requests or concerns brought up in your group.

Think about the session. What went well? What seemed to fall flat?

NEXT WEEK - RENEWING IN THE TRUTH

Next week, your group is going to be talking about renewing your minds in the truth. The Bible teaches us that we are renewed and we are being renewed as we walk through this life.

Pray the weekly readings and voice mails will speak to their hearts this week.

