



MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

GROUP STUDIES

LEADER'S GUIDE

MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

GROUP STUDIES

LEADER'S GUIDE

Edited by
ANDREW ROBERTS



The Bible Reading Fellowship

15 The Chambers, Vineyard
Abingdon OX14 3FE
brf.org.uk

The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) is a Registered Charity (233280)

ISBN 978 0 85746 852 9

First published 2019

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

All rights reserved

Text © individual authors 2019

This edition © The Bible Reading Fellowship 2019

Original design by morsebrowndesign.co.uk & penguinboy.net

The authors assert the moral right to be identified as the authors of this work

Acknowledgements

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version (Anglicised edition) copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica. Used by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Publishers, a Hachette UK company. All rights reserved. 'NIV' is a registered trademark of Biblica. UK trademark number 1448790.

Scripture quotations marked NRSV are taken from The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Anglicised edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked GNT are taken from the Good News Bible published by The Bible Societies/HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, UK © American Bible Society 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992, used with permission.

Every effort has been made to trace and contact copyright owners for material used in this resource. We apologise for any inadvertent omissions or errors, and would ask those concerned to contact us so that full acknowledgement can be made in the future.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed and bound in the UK by Zenith Media NP4 0DQ



Contents

5 About the writers

6 Introduction

8 Session outline

— Lucy Moore

11 **Week 1**
Shocking generosity

17 **Week 2**
Apprentices

— Andrew Roberts

23 **Week 3**
The call of Jesus to follow

29 **Week 4**
A divine commission

— Nick Shepherd

35 **Week 5**
Kingdom disciples: T&Cs apply

41 **Week 6**
Honesty is the best prayer
policy

— Linda Rayner

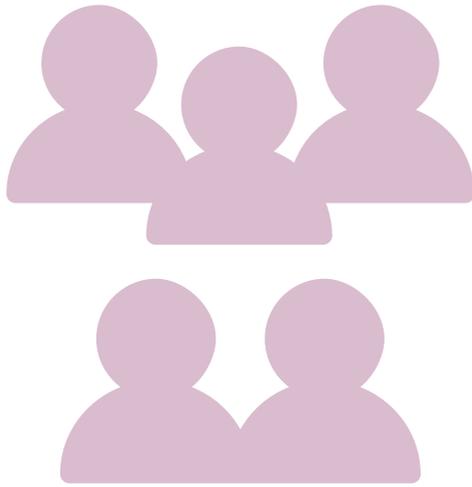
47 **Week 7**
Start making more disciples

53 **Week 8**
Which idols do we worship?

58 For your notes

59 Prayers

61 Creative media ideas





About the writers

Lucy Moore is founder and team leader of Messy Church at BRF and has possibly the best job in the world, given the joys of working with the Messy Church network. She has a supportive husband, two quirky adult children and a son-in-law plus a small ginger dog.

Andrew Roberts is a husband, father, minister, writer and speaker. He is the author of the book *Holy Habits* (Malcolm Down Publishing, 2016) and co-editor of the BRF Holy Habits resource booklets. Previously he was Director of Training for Fresh Expressions. He loves all sport and, despite that, supports Aston Villa.

Nick Shepherd is programme director for Setting God's People Free, an initiative across the Church of England to encourage confident faith in everyday life and to affirm the calling of the whole people of God to serve God's mission in God's world. A keen tweeter, Nick can be followed [@theonographer](#) but warns that more than half of these will be about Crystal Palace FC.

Linda Rayner is coordinator for Fresh Expressions in the United Reformed Church, and Fresh Expressions missionary for Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church in Stockport, Cheshire. She is passionate about encouraging local churches to step out in mission, sharing the love of Jesus by engaging with their communities, being immersed in local culture and through new expressions of church.

Introduction

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. ACTS 2:42-47 (NRSV)

Holy Habits is a way of life to be lived by disciples of Jesus individually and collectively. As Alison Morgan points out in the subtitle of her book *Following Jesus*, the plural of disciple is church. When Jesus calls us to follow, he gifts us others to journey with us, just as he gifted his first disciples – others who will help to teach us and who will learn from us; others who will pray with us and check how we are; others who will watch over us in love and keep us accountable in our discipleship. In the light of this, these Group Studies and the complementary daily Bible Reflections have been written for both group and personal usage. In this booklet, you will find material to help you as a church or a small group reflect together on the particular holy habit being explored.

The authors (who also wrote the complementary Holy Habits Bible Reflections; see page 62) have formed questions for reflection and discussion. Each author has selected two of the readings from the ten they wrote about and provided six questions on each for discussion. Some have a more personal focus, while others relate more to the church or group as whole. With questions of a more personal nature, you may wish to invite people to discuss these in the confidence of pairs and then make time for anyone to share a response with the whole group if they would like to. This





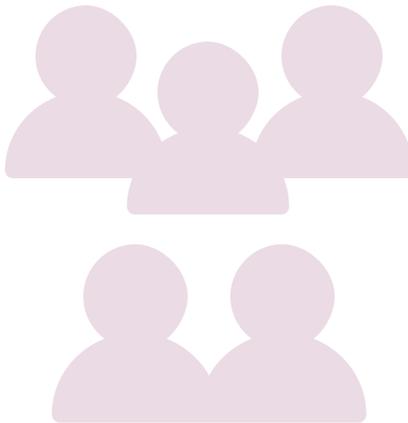
approach can also be a good way of making sure everyone has a chance to share if your group has newcomers or people who are shy or dominant.

You will then find a series of take-home questions about the habit. These have been collated from questions submitted by the authors, which mean they vary in style, tone and focus. As such, you may find some more helpful than others, so feel free to add or amend questions. As you work together, you might like to see what emerges in the responses and see if some of the questions should be revisited regularly (perhaps annually or every six months) as a way of reviewing the life of your small group or church as a discipleship community against the picture Luke offers us in Acts 2. Similarly, individuals could be invited to keep a journal to regularly reflect on their living of the holy habits.

In Acts 2:47, Luke says the believers enjoyed ‘the goodwill of all the people’, so there are also some creative ideas for ways in which your church or group could collectively practise the habit being explored in the local or wider community. These are thought-starter ideas, so be open to other ideas that emerge in your conversations.

You will also find some prayers and creative media ideas for this habit at the back of the book.

In all of this, keep your hearts and minds open to the Holy Spirit and be alert to the wonders of God’s grace and the signs of God’s love that emerge as, individually and collectively, you live this down-to-earth, holy way of life that Luke invites us to imitate.



Session outline

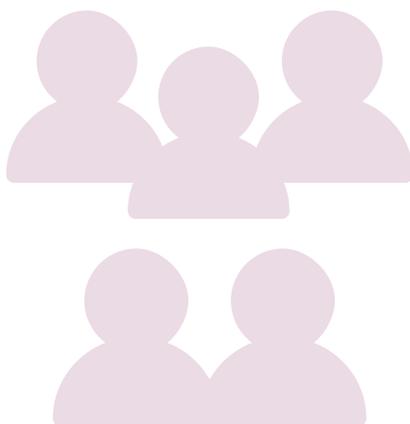
One way your group time could be structured:

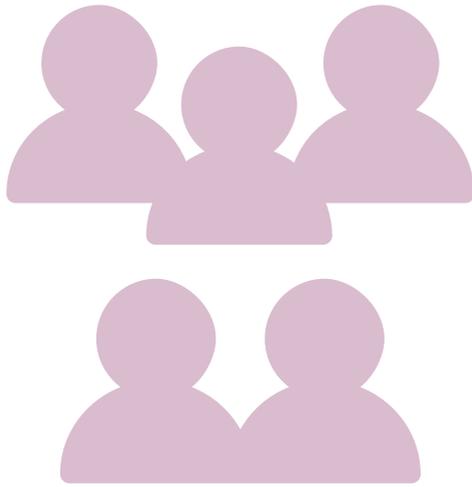
- **Opening prayer**
(for example, the Holy Habits prayer on page 59)
- **Music moment**
(see 'Listen', page 61)
- **Bible reading**
- **Reflection**
- **Discussion questions**





- **Time for stories, testimonies or questions/issues that arise from the discussion**
- **Prayer**
- **Ideas to do as a group**
Spend a few minutes to agree when this will be carried out or to come up with other ideas
- **Take-home questions/creative media ideas**
- **Closing prayer**







| Lucy Moore

Week 1

Shocking generosity

Read 2 Chronicles 6:32–33

As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm – when they come and pray towards this temple, then hear from heaven, your dwelling-place. Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house that I have built bears your Name.’ (NIV)



Reflection

It's the big day. The long-awaited temple has been built. King Solomon is on his knees by the new altar in front of the whole assembly of Israel and is praying a prayer of dedication that covers many eventualities. Solomon is the first to admit that God doesn't need a temple when even 'the highest heavens' cannot contain him (6:18), but he sets out a purpose for the earthly temple as a focus for reconciliation, forgiveness, intercession, judgement, restoration, healing and everyday concerns like bad weather and mildew. He sets out a vision for a place that reflects these attributes of God's kingdom and character.

The king starts his next plea, 'As for the foreigner who does not belong...' How might the assembled people predict the prayer's ending to run? 'As for the foreigner, smite them!' 'Make them quiver in the presence of a power greater than they are!' 'Show them who's boss!' But Solomon has only blessing on his mind and in his heart. He prays simply: 'Hear them.' He longs for this multifaceted goodness of God to encompass both those already born into the family that follows God and those who aren't yet in God's household of faith. Solomon's vision of the purpose of the temple was as a means of blessing, not just for those who belong but for the whole earth. Perhaps we are put in mind of those like the Magi coming from afar to worship Jesus. Perhaps we are reminded of those far away from Jesus, yet on our own doorsteps. Maybe we are reminded of economic migrants, refugees or asylum seekers.

Lord, make our churches and homes into outward-looking, hospitable assemblies of generosity and grace, that our villages and towns may know your name.



Questions

- 1** Look at the whole of 2 Chronicles 6. What did Solomon expect the purpose(s) of the temple to be?
- 2** Our churches today aren't temples, but which of these purposes does your church fulfil? Which doesn't it fulfil?
- 3** Paul makes the vast claim that, because of Jesus, our bodies are temples (1 Corinthians 6:19). Which of the purposes of Solomon's temple are visible in your life? Which are missing from your group as a whole?
- 4** Who might be the equivalent of 'the foreigner' in your own context?
- 5** How does your church welcome new people to its main gathering and to the different subgroups that meet at other times?
- 6** Would you say your church overall is open to being transformed for the sake of people who do not yet feel they belong to it? Why or why not?





Idea to do as a group

- 1** Host a tea party or supper party to bless your neighbours, get to know them better, demonstrate the hospitality of Jesus and have fun.



Take-home questions

1

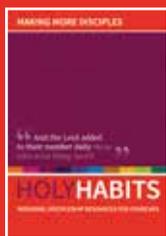
What do you find most challenging about the Christian imperative to make more disciples?

2

How do you feel about the concept that to make more disciples, we simply set out to bless others in Jesus' name?

HOLYHABITS is an adventure in Christian discipleship. Inspired by Luke's model of church found in Acts 2:42–47, it identifies ten habits and encourages the development of a way of life formed by them.

This Bible study group material has been created to help churches explore the habits through prayerful engagement with the Bible and live them out in whole-life, missional discipleship.



Whole-church resource book and Bible reading notes also available

- Provides eight sessions of study material for church groups
- Each session includes a Bible passage, reflection, group questions and community/outreach ideas
- Art and media links and prayers also included

Praise for **HOLYHABITS**:

'A great tool that just gets better with use.'

Olive Fleming-Drane and John Drane

BIBLICAL TEACHING
 FELLOWSHIP
 BREAKING BREAD
 PRAYER
 SHARING RESOURCES
 SERVING
 EATING TOGETHER
 GLADNESS AND GENEROSITY
 WORSHIP
MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

Writers in this issue:

Lucy Moore
 Linda Rayner
 Andrew Roberts
 Nick Shepherd



brf.org.uk