

Thank you for downloading one of the eight, five-session small group studies from *Be Disciples*.

Be Disciples is a 40-week, video-driven small group study for men. Each session features a video from best-selling author, Rick Burgess, and a small group leader guide. You can purchase all 40 weeks, or purchase the eight, five-week sessions independently.

If we can help answer any questions about ***Be Disciples*** or any other of the Iron Hill Men resources, please don't hesitate to email (customercare@ironhillpress.com) or call (800) 307-9366



PURSUING HOLINESS

A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR MEN

**PURSUING HOLINESS: A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR MEN**

Leader Guides

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Videos

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A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR MEN

BY RICK BURGESS



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DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS

DISCIPLE MEN, CHANGE EVERYTHING.

There is a discipleship problem affecting Christian men today. Too often, men are absent from both the church pews and from the vital work the church is doing in the world. These men are not engaged spiritually in their homes and aren't making a Kingdom impact in their workplace. And it all points back to one major issue:

Many men aren't being disciplined.

But when men ARE being disciplined, powerful things happen as a result. They impact the church, their family, and culture. We have seen the influence godly men can have. The purpose of The Pursuit curriculum is to equip and empower men to become the man God has called them to be.

WHAT IS BE DISCIPLES ?

Be Disciples is a 40-week, video-driven curriculum designed to help men discover what it means to be a disciple. Be Disciples takes eight traits of disciples from Scripture and unpacks them through video and small group Bible Study.

Rick Burgess, best-selling author and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio show The Rick & Bubba Show, starts off each session with a 10-15 minute video introducing the session's focus. Then, for each small group session, there is a leader guide to help facilitate a meaningful time of discussion and Bible study.

The reason men aren't living a more authentic faith is simple: they have yet to embrace the call to real discipleship. By leading a group through Be Disciples, you're a part of the growing tide of leaders who are looking to awaken men to embrace their calling as Christ-followers.

START HERE

As a man who desires to live as an authentic disciple of Christ, we must be committed to pursuing holiness. Yes, if we are in Christ, we are holy in God's eyes. But as Christ-followers, we must contend with our sin, fighting it. Yes, we are covered by God's grace. But Scripture makes it clear that as children of God, our lives are to be lived above reproach. There is no mistaking it. Scripture is clear that we are to pursue holiness in our lives.

If you are serious about being the kind of man who is a credit to the Kingdom, this study is for you. Are you ready to accept the challenge to take pursuing personal holiness seriously?

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET STARTED

FIRST, preview your video. Every Be Disciples session starts with a video. You'll need to preview your video ahead of time and be prepared to show it to your group. You can access your videos through your Iron Hill Press account.

THEN, get ready for your small group discussion and Bible study by preparing your lesson. Use this leader guide to help lead a time of discussion based on the video and Bible study based on the passage Rick covered. Pray that God would lead your preparation and our facilitation of the material.

FINALLY, lead your time of small group Bible study using this leader guide. It's that simple.

If you have any questions or feedback, don't hesitate to let us hear from you at feedback@ironhillpress.com.

EDGE ELEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



RICK BURGESS is the Co-Host of the nationally syndicated *Rick and Bubba Show*. He has co-authored multiple New York Times Bestselling Books covering topics such as politics, marriage, business, comedy, and what it looks like to be a follower of Christ in secular entertainment. Rick has appeared on the Fox News programs *Hannity's America*, *Your World with Neil Cavuto*, and *Fox and Friends*.

Rick speaks regularly at men's events and marriage conferences across the country, all while teaching youth and men's Bible studies on a weekly basis. Rick is married to the former Sherri Bodine, and they have five children: Brandi, Blake, Brooks, Brody, and Bronner. Rick's wife Sherri is the author of the book "Bronner: A Journey to Understand," a powerful story about what she and Rick learned about God through the earthly death of their youngest son, Bronner. Rick's eulogy for Bronner became the most-viewed video in the world on YouTube the week of the service.

ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO *BE DISCIPLES: PURSUING HOLINESS*

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Main Passage: 1 Peter 1:13-16

Purpose: To embrace the idea that our lives must reflect the holiness of God.

Session Snapshot: It's easy to call yourself a Christian. However, it's much harder to live out the Word of God in your life. In this lesson, we observe God's clear call on every Christian's life to be set apart from the world to reflect His good and glorious nature. The path to holiness can only be accomplished through God's redemptive work in every one of our lives.

GETTING STARTED

Kick off your time together by introducing a new theme.

FIRST, explain to your group that they will be beginning a new video series that continues your look at one of eight different aspects of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. This particular series is called *Pursuing Holiness*, and it will unpack the concept that we cannot truly be disciples of Christ without striving to live holy lives. This 5-week study will guide men to understand exactly how this plays out in their daily lives.

If this is your first session as a group, consider introducing yourself, if necessary, and having the men in your group introduce themselves. If you want to pass around a contact sheet or do any other first-session "housekeeping tasks," this is the time to do it.

FINALLY, if there are no questions or other input, transition into the *Digging In* section of your leader's guide.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

FIRST, if this is your first Bible study time in the *Be Disciples* curriculum, explain to the group how your time together will work. Explain that you will watch a video that is usually about 15 minutes long, followed by a short discussion of the video. Then, you'll spend a few minutes in Bible study, followed by a closing activity. Consider encouraging men to take notes as they watch the video. (Remember, a participant guide is available to you if you would like to distribute it to your group.)

THEN, play the video. You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.

When the video is over, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **Rick said that men tend to dumb down spiritual standards while not compromising in any other areas of their life. Why do you think that is?**
- **How have you viewed the call of holiness? Would you say it's been a burden to you or an invitation into a greater life?**

- In what way do you think becoming holy is something you do while also something that is done to you?
- What first steps would you need to take to grow in personal holiness?
- How is the Word of God instrumental in bringing about this call in our lives?
- Think of someone in your life who exemplifies being a disciple of Christ. What's been their story, and how does their walk inspire you?
- Why is escaping hell only the tip of the iceberg for what God has in store for every believer?

FINALLY, transition into the *Opening the Word* portion of your time together by saying something like the following:

- **God doesn't mince His words with us about what He intends and expects from us. As Rick mentioned in Ephesians 1, we see that God's intention before creating the world would be that we would stand before Him, holy and blameless. It's a good thing that he provides a way for us to do that because we are powerless to accomplish that on our own! Let's dive in.**

OPENING THE WORD

Spend time going deeper into a specific concept Rick introduced in the video.

FIRST, explain that you're going to look at a different passage than Rick dug into because we want to focus on the standard of holiness that God calls us to. In 1 Peter 1:13-16, Peter takes God's words from the Old Testament and calls New Testament believers to pursue the same standard. As Rick stated in the video, holiness is a personal action rooted in the power of the Holy Spirit and the character of God. Instead of dancing around it, let's figure out how we can embrace it with our lives.

We must make sure your people have a good understanding of the context of the passage you'll be studying. Provide the context for the passage using the following bullet points:

- **Author:** 1 Peter was written by Peter, one of Jesus' most trusted disciples and one of the key leaders of the growing movement of Christ-followers.
- **Timeframe:** 1 Peter was likely written between 54-68 AD.
- **Purpose:** 1 Peter was written to a people under persecution, likely under the reign of Nero. Peter calls the Church to persevere under trials because eternal life awaits them. He encourages them that God's promises to His people will endure and should be the basis of their hope.

THEN, read or have a volunteer read 1 Peter 1:13-16. When the volunteer has finished, direct their attention back to vs. 13. Lead the group in a brief discussion. Ask something like:

- **Can you think of an occupation where someone would need to have a sober mind prepared for action while on the job?**
 - Answers will vary but can include: a soldier would need to be physically and mentally prepared when stepping on the battlefield, law enforcement, a chemist, a pharmacist, a surgeon, a construction worker, etc.
- **What's at stake when these professionals aren't sober-minded and prepared?**
 - *Answer:* Perhaps their life and most certainly the lives of others are at stake if they don't take their call seriously.
- **What's at stake when we don't take the call of holiness seriously in our own life?**
 - *Answer:* The Bible tells us that our salvation is secure when we are in Christ, but if we are not following Him, the devil can still sow major seeds of destruction in our lives. Furthermore, the

witness of Christ to a lost world is at stake. D.L. Moody once said, "Out of 100 men, 99 men won't read the Bible, but they will read you." We influence people towards or away from the Kingdom of God.

NEXT, direct your group's attention back to 1 Peter 1:13b. Ask something like:

- **What is the "grace" that Peter writes about that will be revealed at Jesus' coming?**
 - *Answer:* This is the future welcoming into God's eternal Kingdom to all who are in Christ.
- **Rick mentioned earlier that we can tend to be grace abusers. Why should the richness of God's grace toward us in Christ not cause us to abuse it?**
 - *Answer:* How could we continue to offend the very one who has set us free from the bondage of sin and slavery? It would be treacherous. Our heart should beat with love for what He's done for us. If we are abusing His grace, it should be a wake-up call to us because God will not be taken advantage of.
- **Verse 14 calls us to forsake the passions of our former ignorance. What were those passions for you?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

Before transitioning to the next question, say something like:

- **We all have pasts, and we all have a sinful nature that still lives within us. In Romans 6-7, the Apostle Paul wrestled with how the Spirit and flesh were at war within us. You're not alone in whatever struggle you're in. To be honest, there will be a battle within us until we see Jesus face to face, but we can take refuge in the fact that Jesus has given us victory over sin. His call to holiness is not impossible. It just takes humility on our end to admit that we can't do it in our strength and a willingness to let the Spirit live through us.**

THEN, re-read 1 Peter 1:14-16. Ask:

- **What does it mean to you that God is holy?**
 - *Answers will vary.* It means that He is completely set apart from us. Isaiah 55:8 tells us, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord." God is not like us, and that is a good thing.

Point out that our holiness is derivative of His holiness. That means the reason we can grow into holiness is because that is who He is. In other words, we are just called to be like Him! If you're a dad in the group, your son or daughter may model your actions (maybe some things you'd prefer them not to do!) There is a desire to be like you because of their love for you. The same holds true for our relationship with Christ. Ask:

- **What are some practical demonstrations of holiness?**
 - *Answers will vary.* Help them to see that the content of their language demonstrates holiness. How they talk about people matters. Their commitment to the church and advancing God's Kingdom is evidence of holiness. How they confront sin demonstrates it. Show them that their life should be modeled after Christ's life.

FINALLY, wrap up by focusing on verse 16. Then, say something like:

- **Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44 in verse 16. We need to know that the call to be holy was not a new concept introduced by Jesus in the Gospels or later in church history. In Genesis 17, God called Abraham to circumcise his descendants because God called this family to be set apart and holy from the rest of the world. As we know, Abraham was the forefather of Israel who was constantly called to walk in holiness. God is holy, and because we're in His family, it's our joy and privilege to embody His holiness.**

Ask if there are any questions and if there are none, transition into *Accepting the Challenge*.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

Focus your group's attention on the takeaways from your time together.

FIRST, explain that you want to challenge the group to focus on the takeaways from this session. Ask for volunteers to share what THEY think the main application is of the passage you've just studied. You may ask something like:

- **How do we apply this call to pursue personal holiness as modern-day men living in the culture we find ourselves in?**

Allow men to share their responses and discuss them as a group. If you choose, supplement their responses with the following takeaways:

- **One key application from our lesson today is to discern the difference between cultural Christianity and biblical Christianity.**
 - Cultural Christianity isn't Christianity at all. It's a work-based religion that focuses on checking a few boxes, and mixes a little Jesus in, but it serves as an escape from living the fruit-filled, sacrificial life God has for you. Biblical Christianity is a call to die to oneself so that one can also live.
- **The second key application from our lesson today is that we need to prepare ourselves for the spiritual battlefield that we walk in.**
 - My guess is that none of us wake up, praising Jesus, shouting, "Let's go kick in the gates of hell today!" It would be awesome if that were our natural inclination, but it normally takes our heart being warmed up by God's Word and time set aside to talk with the Lord before we can adequately face what's in front of us. Temptations are bound to happen, and we can't be unprepared.
- **The third application is to walk with the Lord in a community.**
 - Satan would love to isolate you and distract you from the church. The only real way we can grow in holiness is by locking arms, encouraging one another, calling each other out when needed, and being present. As men, we don't think we need godly male friendships when in actuality, it's what could be holding us back from true life change.

Allow the group to consider where they find themselves on this spectrum of evaluation. If it feels appropriate, allow some discussion about the kind of evaluation they find themselves considering.

FINALLY, encourage men to process these questions in the week to come. Challenge them to listen to what God is trying to tell them and to respond accordingly. If there are no more questions or input, close your time together in prayer.