

***CHOSEN  
FOR  
CHARLIE  
LEADER GUIDE***

## **T A B L E O F C O N T E N T**

Chosen For Charlie: Small Group Experience

**LEADER PREPARATION 4-6**

**WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE (8 WEEKS) 8-41**

**WEEK 1- “OUR STORY” AND “CHOSEN FOR CHARLIE”  
8-11**

**WEEK 2- “FOR YOUR GLORY”  
12-15**

**WEEK 3- “LIFE TO THE FULL”  
16-19**

**WEEK 4- “BETTER TOGETHER” AND “POWER OF  
PRAYER”  
22-25**

**WEEK 5- “DIGGING DITCHES”  
26-29**

**WEEK 6- “GOD ENCOUNTERS”  
30-33**

**WEEK 7- “THEN AND NOW” AND “CHARLIE’S ANGELS”  
34-37**

**WEEK 8- CONCLUSION TO SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE  
38-46**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (PRINT OFF AND GIVE TO  
EACH MEMBER PRIOR TO FIRST GATHERING)  
PLEASE REFER TO DISCUSSION DOCUMENT**

**SALVATION CONVERSATION  
42-44**

## Chosen For Charlie: Small Group Experience

### Welcome and Thank You

Welcome to the Chosen For Charlie Small Group experience! Thank you for choosing to lead this study and provide an opportunity for families to engage in all God has called them to be. As a leader, you are providing a safe and supportive environment in which families raising children with special needs can heal, connect, and grow in their relationship with God and one another. How wonderful that you want to reach out to families who are hurting and help connect them with Jesus! When my daughter was born and diagnosed with Down syndrome, I would have loved to have a group like the one you are about to lead help me process and walk through everything I was experiencing.

Families can find organizations and various resources that will teach them information and help them parent their child with special needs. These resources can offer some support and encouragement. However, based on my experience, the best support is a community of people collectively looking to Jesus as the answer for each new challenge. He is our hope. He is our healer. He is our victory. In leading this small group experience, you are creating a place where families can feel safe, God's spirit can be at work, prayers and intercessions can be made, and true joy can be experienced. This group will connect individuals, families, and communities desperately seeking support as they walk in hope or defeat and fight to thrive amidst their child's diagnosis.

### Chosen for Charlie Study Design

This curriculum is designed for various settings, at church or in someone's home. Each lesson is written in such a way that leaders can easily follow the explanations and even read portions of the lessons word for word. You may also choose to use the lesson as a guide to help you facilitate the group's weekly meetings. Each lesson is intended to last around 45 minutes and the entire study spans 8 weeks. These lessons can be used within

- Sunday School settings for adults,
- Home group studies, or
- Adjusted to meet the needs of your particular group.

Take a few moments to review the Weekly Lesson Layout description. This basic layout will guide each 45-minute lesson during the 8-week study. Once you have a clear understanding of the lessons' basic layout, consult the Leader Guide. This guide was created to support you in conducting weekly meetings and developing a safe atmosphere filled with rich relationships among members. Please review the lessons before the meetings and familiarize yourself with the material. The subject matter of this study requires sensitivity and openness. Leaders are encouraged to take time with the content of each weekly lesson and prepare before weekly meetings in order to provide an authentic and genuine experience for the members of the group.

Weekly Lesson Layout

**Opener- (5 minutes)** This first five minutes is designed to encourage the group to warm up to another by talking and interacting in a relaxed way. The Opener prepares them to engage with one another and the lesson.

**Victory Testimonies- (5 minutes)** Take a few minutes to reflect positively on the past week. Create a culture of celebrating each child/family's victories. Encourage the group to respond to one another's testimonies with positive feedback and support. As the leader, you can ask each member to share or you can choose a few volunteers to share. Ask them to respond to one of the following prompts:

- A praise report about your child's progress
- A personal breakthrough in regards to your child's diagnosis
- A special moment shared with your child

**Chapter Summary- (10 minutes)** This weekly summary provides an overview of the main ideas in the chapter or chapters read along with selections from the book. In addition to the chapter summary, there are "Personal Experience" prompts with directions for you to share personal experiences related to the various topics discussed in the chapter. Please share honestly and openly within the time frame. You are setting the stage and creating the atmosphere for the rest of the lesson. The more organic and comfortable you can be the more effective the overall lesson will be.

**Discussion Questions (15 minutes)-** This discussion time is driven by the questions each group answered in preparation for the small group experience. Each week's discussion questions are listed in the Leader Guide, along with occasional directions or considerations in italics to help you lead the discussion. Allow the group members time and space to share their responses. As the leader, you can ask each member to answer every question or choose volunteers for each question. Be an active listener. Ask follow-up questions and encourage others to add their perspective. Be vigilant in engaging the group members with one another, giving them time to communicate their responses and with one another in light of the topics in the chapter. Creating

a safe environment is vital. Set clear boundaries early and remind the group regularly that whatever is shared within the group stays within the group.

Group members need to know they can share freely and honestly, be vulnerable about their experiences, and feel safe and secure.

**Scripture (5 minutes)**- This part of the lesson reviews Scriptures from the chapter. Read the scriptures then allow the group an opportunity to discuss their responses.

**Conclusion (1 minutes)**- These final statements and/or scriptures are intended to encourage your group. This is also a good opportunity to ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss.

**Prayer (5-10 minutes)**- In this study, the time set aside for prayer is intended for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own and fellow group members' children, and build deeper relationships. Prayer is so important! Before breaking into this time, give a specific topic that everyone will pray for based on the topics from the chapter or the week's discussion or allow members to share prayer requests with one another.

I pray that your small group experience is a catalyst for breakthrough, healing, lasting relationships, and thriving relationships with Jesus! For more information or questions regarding this curriculum, please contact me.

[jen@jenforsthoff.com](mailto:jen@jenforsthoff.com)

[jenforsthoff.com](http://jenforsthoff.com)

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 1

## “OUR STORY” AND “CHOSEN FOR CHARLIE”

### OPENER

With this being your first week, begin with brief introductions. Ask each group member to share their name, their child’s name and age, how long they have been attending your church, or how they came to know about this small group experience. Tailor this initial introduction in a way that best fits your group. Be intentional with the way you set the tone of your study during this first week together!

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child’s progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child’s diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

Jen opens the book by sharing her story and how she and her husband, Luke, came to discover that Charlie has Down syndrome.

*“I will never forget when my husband took the call on his cell phone in our bedroom two days later. The results were in. I had followed him up the stairs with Charlie in my arms. He was listening intently to the pediatrician, and then his face fell. I knew the answer, but I had to ask, “Does she have it?” I whispered. He nodded.*

*My mind went blank. My heart sank. I felt as if the life had been sucked out of me. A heaviness overtook me in a way I had never experienced before. My legs gave way and I fell into my husband’s arms. He led me to the bed and gently cradled Charlie and me in his lap.*

*I needed only one thing—for God to speak.”*

When Jen first heard the diagnosis of her daughter, she was overwhelmed. We all have different responses to challenging news in our lives. Sometimes we experience grief other times anger or bitterness. We want to blame someone or something.

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Take this opportunity to share a personal story of a time in your life when you received bad news and how you responded; this will help your small group connect with you in a deeper way.

I believe that all of you are here not because you want to relive the past, but because you are looking ahead and want to walk in your calling to parent your child as best as you can.

*“When God speaks to us, it is our responsibility to hold onto what He has said; to commit it to memory and treasure it in our hearts. Just as Mary treasured in her heart what the angel spoke to her about being the mother of Jesus, it’s important for us to ponder, and treasure what God speaks to us (Luke 2:19).*

*We can “stand” on His word, relying on it as a firm foundation! Some days, I feel like I am failing as a mom because I can’t keep up with Charlie’s therapy exercises or spend the hours she needs to develop her speech. Some days I don’t know what is best in disciplining her to help her understand boundaries. Some days our finances and what Charlie needs from doctors and specialists don’t add up. On those days, I go back to one thing. I go back to when God spoke. You are chosen for Charlie.*

*In spite of my weaknesses as a parent, I have been entrusted with this precious gift. Because Christ is strong when I am weak, I can push forward in His strength. But he said to me,*

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. —2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV)”*

As we walk through this book together and grow throughout these next several weeks, hold tightly to what God speaks to you. Allow your entire life to be affected by what you read in this book and what God speaks to your heart. The conversations we will have over the next several weeks will affect your life, your parenting, and your child in the best way possible.

Also, as we share our lives with one another and discuss our weaknesses and struggles, know this is a safe place for you to be honest and real. As we bring our weaknesses to each other and ultimately before God, we will pray for one another, encourage each other, and look to God for strength and wisdom. He will turn our weaknesses into strengths for His glory.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What is your story? What brings you to this small group? Be as general or specific as you like.
- 2 Have you had a “shower moment”? If you have had a moment/encounter/conversation that shifted your perspective on your situation, please consider sharing it with the group.  
(Be sensitive with this question. Ask who is willing to share.)
- 3 You have been chosen for your child. Reflect on your life (past and present). Think of the ways God has already equipped you to raise your child based on His work in your life and list them below.  
(**For example:** you have a strong church family, you are a person of prayer, you are patient, you have a strong marriage, you have friends and family who will support you)
- 4 What word or truth are you holding on to each day that is a source of strength for you?

## SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*“... And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this.” (Esther 4:14, NIV)*

*“However, Mary continues to treasure all these things in her heart and ponder them.” (Luke 2:19, ISV)*

*“Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good and his gracious loves is eternal!”  
(1 Chronicles 16:34)*

## CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. Your story is precious to God. Your life and your child’s life are in His hands. Your story isn’t over yet. Let God work deeply in your life as you surrender and open your heart up to Him. Be encouraged! You are not alone; we get to encounter this journey with each other and with the Lord.

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss.

## PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer:* God’s Equipping

We are now going to pray that God will equip you with everything you need to raise your child to become the person God wants him or her to be. Allow parents time to pray for the “*Topic of Prayer*” and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members’ children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 2

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, Jen encourages us to not focus on the why behind our child's diagnosis, but rather to focus on how God will show his glory through it. This reorientation of perspective challenges us to make God's glory the priority of our lives.

*“When it comes to raising our children, our questions can be endless. We have questions about the future, about their role in society, about their potential. But beyond these, I have wrestled with a few questions that opened the door for God to work deeply in my heart; questions that I was afraid to ask myself and even more afraid to answer.*

*Is God's glory the most important thing to me?  
Is my life's happiness determined by met expectations, or God's glory being fulfilled?  
Would I rather live a comfortable, successful life (in the world's eyes) or allow God to work in and through my family as He sees fit?  
Is this life about my hopes and dreams being fulfilled or God's hopes and dreams being fulfilled?*

*Do I want my life spent so that God can be known?*

*Dig deeply into your own soul. Asking these questions for yourself may make you a bit squeamish, just as they did me when I first began to really reflect on a passage of scripture that shook the core of who I am. I never thought it wrong to want good things for my family—and it's not. But to desire what makes us happy and comfortable over that which brings God the most glory, is.”*

Facing the difficult reality of unmet expectations is a great challenge and looks different at various moments in our lives. Sometimes we face moments asking us to choose between our own happiness and God's will. Our decisions in these moments reveal to us what we value most. Jen outlines yet another kind of moment we can face in which something is chosen for us. She explains how she faced something chosen for her, and how she intentionally responded by digging deeply into her own soul and asked tough questions about the role of God's glory in the her life and the life of her family. In our relationship with Jesus, we face all types of moments that invite us to ask ourselves if we will truly accept God's will over our own happiness.

## “FOR YOUR GLORY”

### OPENER

Hopefully as you head into week two, your group is more familiar with one another and relationships are starting to form. Feel free to do brief introductions again if you feel it might be beneficial to the group or, for something different, perhaps ask group members to share their favorite pastime with their child and why. Tailor this to best fit your group so that you continue to build community.

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child's progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child's diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Share a time when something happened in your life that maybe made you mad at God or made you question His nature/love; this will better connect and open your heart up to your small group. Choose a story in which you can share something good that came out of it. (For example, if a family member died, the loss was difficult and painful, but it brought your family closer together and God worked amidst your pain.)

*“God will glorify Himself through your child with special needs. There will be countless opportunities for God to show Himself faithful, powerful, and near. For in our weakness, His power is made perfect (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

*God often uses our children to show His love, His goodness, and His grace in the most beautiful way. As we love our children, our testimony is clear to others, pointing them to God Almighty. Although our “normal” has its moments of difficulty, it is that very “normal” that displays the glory of God for all to see! ...If God totally heals our children, He will be glorified! And if God does miracles along the way, He will be glorified! Just remember that there is no such thing as a small miracle. All miracles are worth celebrating, and God is glorified through our testimony of these miracles. When my soul can rest in the will and goodness of the Father, I can trust that He will use our family, and our precious Charlie, for His glory.”*  
*God will glorify Himself through our children. Our stories will look different, but they will all point to the same Almighty God who is at work in our lives and the lives of our children.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Share about an experience when you faced a challenge that eventually brought about positive results.
- 2 Of the 5 questions listed in the chapter under “Ask the Hard Questions,” which one is most challenging for you to answer? Explain.
- 3 What could God do in your child that would show His glory?
- 4 What could God do in your family that would show His glory?

## SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*“...this happened so the works of God might be displayed in him.”  
(John 9:3, NIV)*

*“Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.” (James 5:17, NIV)*

*“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” (Habakkuk 2:14, NIV)*

## CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. God will show His glory through your child and your whole family. God has a good plan for your child and He loves him or her. Whether He chooses to miraculously heal your child in a moment, like the blind man, or do miracles along the way, keep your eyes open to see how God is working and rejoice in His goodness.

## PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer:* God’s Glory in My Child

We are now going to pray that God would show his glory through our children. Allow parents time to pray for the “*Topic of Prayer*” and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members’ children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 3

---

## “LIFE TO THE FULL”

### SPECIAL NOTE TO LEADERS

Welcome to week three of the *Chosen for Charlie: Small Group Experience*. God is using you to lead and love this small group in a way that will mark them in an eternal way for His glory! In addition to the connection, reflection, discussion, and prayer already taking place in your group, this week presents a life transformation opportunity for group members to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. I encourage you to be intentional with this week’s preparations and carefully consider the Special Note to Leaders found in the Chapter Summary section of this week’s lesson. As much as it applies to the individuals of your group, be diligent in creating an opportunity for group members to open their lives to Jesus for the first time or as a recommitment. Please, be in prayer and prepare your heart to be sensitive to the Lord’s leading!

### OPENER

Start this week’s lesson with “shout outs.” This is an opportunity for group members to encourage each other by “shouting out” a compliment to another member of the group. Whoever receives a “shout out” responds by giving a “shout out” to another person. You can have fun with this by having the group respond to the “shout outs” by snapping or a single clap. Explain the process to the group then begin the “shout out” by complimenting a group member.

(For example, you can shout out a mother who has been really honest and encouraging the past few weeks during your small group experience.) Tailor this to best fit your group so that you continue to encourage one another and create unity!

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child’s progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child’s diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, Jen shares how she wrestled with realizing that her daughter may not get to have the precious life experiences she so valued when growing up.

*“Jesus says, “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.” (John 10:10, NIV)*

*t is through Jesus and our salvation in Him, that we have life in the safe, green, lush pasture. Full life comes through knowing Jesus!  
The truth in this scripture transformed my understanding of what a full life truly is. It is not the camps, travels, friendships, and career that will give Charlie a full and satisfying life; it’s Jesus who can do that! Jesus has a full life planned for my daughter, as she knows Him more fully. To know Christ is to know life! When she accepts Christ into her life, she will be flooded with love, joy and strength that will lead her to have a fulfilling life. Beyond this, maybe she will have similar experiences to mine, but those are simply a bonus. Being in Christ is all she needs. Being in Christ is all I need (Philippians 4:19). Whether she accomplishes much or little, her value and joy will be found in Christ and the salvation He offers. Even if she never graduates high school or gets married, if she loves Jesus and knows His intimate and unfailing love for her, she has everything she needs to live life to the full.”*

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Share what Jesus means to you. Share how having a personal relationship with Jesus affects your life. Use your experience to show how the best things in life come from God.

*“So rather than putting my energy into pushing Charlie to have life experiences that I have enjoyed, I pray and strive to lead her to knowing Jesus better. The greatest experience I can dream for my daughter is to be saved by grace through faith in Jesus and what He did on the cross. I can imagine nothing better than her having a thriving relationship with Him. He will satisfy her deepest desires and lead her in His perfect way. He will order her steps into what He desires for her life. Psalm 37:23 (NIV) says, “The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him.”*

*The best thing I can hope for Charlie is that she fulfills not my plans for her life, but the Lord’s. More than anything else, I need to want Jesus for Charlie. Nothing else will satisfy her. I praise God for this truth, and I hope you do, too!”*  
Wanting Jesus for our children starts with wanting Jesus for ourselves.

## SPECIAL NOTE TO LEADERS:

If you feel comfortable as a leader, please be intentional with this moment. I encourage you to make no assumptions about the members of your group and be open to creating a safe space in which every group member, no matter how long they have been in or out of church, feels comfortable to acknowledge their need to commit or recommit their lives to Jesus. If you need help walking someone through the steps to receive Jesus as their personal savior, I have attached a document for that at the end of this manual. In order to offer this opportunity please consider saying...

Before we move on with discussing this chapter, I want to ask you something. You don’t have to answer out loud right now. Just answer to yourself. Do you currently have an active personal relationship with Jesus? Are you experiencing life in Christ the way Jen talks about in this chapter? If not, please talk to me after our small group time. I would love to talk with you or pray with you so you can be sure you have surrendered your life to Jesus. If you have surrendered your life in the past, but you sense you need to recommit your life to Jesus because you want to live the full and meaningful life Jen describes in this chapter, I am also available to talk and pray with you. I am confident Jesus will answer our prayers and we can all live the life we are suppose to live. The more we experience and love Jesus, the more our children will see and hopefully want the same for their own lives. They will be drawn to active par

ticipation in the church community and loving God with their whole lives. As parents, our lives serve as models to our children.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What experiences have you had that you want your child to have?
- 2 What experiences are you fearful your child might not experience due to the obstacle or diagnosis in his or her life?
- 3 If you have accepted Jesus personally into your life, how have you experienced “life to the full” through Him? (For example: When you asked Jesus into your life, He gave you security and identity, or you had joy like never before)
- 4 How can you help your child have a full life in Christ?

## SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; but I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

*(John 10:10, NIV)*

*“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”*

*(Philippians 4:19, NIV)*

*“Let them give thanks to the LORD for His loving kindness, And for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, And the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.”*

*(Psalm 107:8-9, NASB)*

## CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. As we pray for, model, and point our children to love and know Christ they will have the opportunity to choose Him as their personal savior. This should be our greatest priority as parents. Don't stop striving to help them overcome the effects of their disability but find peace in knowing they will have a full life in Christ.

## PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer:* The Salvation of Our Children

We are now going to pray that our children would come to know Jesus as their personal Savior.

Allow parents time to pray for the “*Topic of Prayer*” and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members' children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE

## WEEK 4

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

In these two chapters, Jen encourages us as readers to share our journey with our spouses, trusted family and friends, and—most importantly—God.

*“I remember coming to my husband one afternoon after taking Charlie to yet another specialist. We had visited the cardiologist that day. They performed an echocardiogram to monitor the holes that still remained in her heart. I was exhausted—from wrestling with Charlie so the doctor could complete the test and from hearing once again that the results were inconclusive. I sat on the carpet in our family room, legs folded and looking up at Luke as he sat in our big, green chair. With Charlie down for her nap, this was our time, precious time alone. “Honey, can I talk to you?” I started off strong, but soon my facade of strength disintegrated as I began to cry. “I can’t do this by myself.” The word “can’t” was a hard one to throw out there. I hated to even say the word. It made me feel like I wasn’t strong enough, like I was a failure. I still don’t like admitting I can’t do something. I want to be strong for my daughter. I want to be strong for my husband. I want to be strong for myself.”*

Often times, we want to be strong enough to handle life’s difficulties on our own.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Share a personal story of when you were faced with such an overwhelming challenge that you had to ask for help. Include in your explanation why it was so difficult for you to ask for help.

We shouldn’t try to raise our child on our own. The more we can bring others close to support our children and even ourselves, the better everyone will be. Our children benefit from the “togetherness” of our lives. But even more so, they benefit from prayer—passionate, relentless, life altering prayer!

*“I want to be a mother who prays; who sees the wonderful things God does because I asked Him to move forward with the wonderful plans He has for my children. When Charlotte is grown, I want to look back at the years of raising her and know that I prayed relentlessly and passionately. I don’t want to wish I prayed more boldly or fasted more faithfully; I want to see her life woven together and miracles accomplished as a result of the mighty hand of God working in her life in response to prayer. I would hate to wonder what her life could have been if I sought the Lord more on her behalf. I want to exhaust myself in prayer for my children. I want carpet burns on my knees from interceding and crying out to God. I want to run out of tears because I have pleaded and given everything at His feet. I want to be a prayer warrior for my family just like my mother was a prayer warrior for me. Prayer is a powerful tool for parents...”*

## “BETTER TOGETHER” AND “POWER OF PRAYER”

### OPENER

Week four means you are half way through your Small Group Experience! Last week you taught them how to do “shout outs.” Do this again to support the further cultivation of a culture of encouragement! Tailor this to best fit your group so that you continue to encourage one another and create unity!

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child’s progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child’s diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 When you face struggles with your child, do you respond by keeping it to yourself or sharing it with others? Explain.
- 2 Describe the people God has placed in your life who you feel you can trust. What is the nature of the relationship? How do you involve them in your current journey? (For example: You might describe how you ask them to pray with you and regularly check in on you, or how you consistently call them when you feel discouraged or like disengaging and closing yourself off from others)
- 3 How can you intentionally involve others in your journey to avoid isolation or becoming overwhelmed?
- 4 Has having a child with special needs affected your prayer life? Explain.
- 5 Write down two Bible verses you can pray for your children. Write out your prayer and prepare to share it with your group.

## SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”*

*(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, NIV)*

*“How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had given them up?”*

*(Deuteronomy 32:30, ESV)*

*“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*

*(James 5:16, KJV)*

## CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. Pull others close and God even closer. Let others join you on your journey so you can be the best possible parent and caregiver for your child. Be a prayer warrior for your child. Don't lose heart. Commit to the process of prayer and trust God with the your child's future.

## PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer: Vulnerable Hearts and Supporting Relationships*

We are now going to ask God to help us lean on others and on Him. First, let's take a moment to share our answers to Discussion Question #5 from this week's discussion questions. Now, Let's use what we are learning and our answers to this question to pray for one another and stand in faith together for our children.

Allow parents time to pray for the “*Topic of Prayer*” and also share prayer requests with one another. Lead them in taking turns praying for one another and using their answers to Discussion Question #5.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 5

---

## “DIGGING DITCHES”

### OPENER

A fun way to start this week’s lesson might be for group members to share their favorite thing about their child, or something their child has taught them about themselves. Tailor this to best fit your group so that you continue to encourage one another and create unity!

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child’s progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child’s diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter was all about putting in the effort, beyond prayer, and participating in the breakthrough we so desperately want to see for our children.

*“As we so desperately want to see healing for our child—a breakthrough mentally, emotionally, physically—we need to first pray, then grab a shovel! These men who desperately needed water didn’t just sit back and wait for God to do all the work, they took the first step and dug ditches. I am sure they got dirty, got blisters, and got tired.*

*When we seek God for our children, we don’t just sit back and wait for Him to come and fix everything. Now let me say that we serve a God who is totally able. Nothing is impossible for Him (Luke 1:37). He doesn’t need our efforts. Rather, I believe He invites us to put our faith into action and be a part of the miracle that can happen for our child.”*

Share a personal story of a time when you prayed about something and then had to respond with active and intentional participation in order for the prayer to be answered. (For example: Maybe you prayed for a job and then had be intentional by filling out applications and making phone calls to possible employers. You might also describe a time you prayed for a relationship to be restored then you were the first one to initiate communication and apologize.)

feel comfortable accepting the provision in this way. I was just as stubborn as Naaman. My pride was blocking the blessing. Naaman swallowed his pride, dipped in the Jordan seven times, and was healed (2 Kings 5:14). Although it was not the method he imagined, he submitted to God's plan and experienced God's healing power. God corrected me in my pride as well. After telling Luke how I felt we should return the gift to this generous person (trying to disguise my pride), he said that this individual was determined to give and we ought to accept it. And in bringing my wrestling thoughts to the Lord, I felt him soften my heart to receive His provision, even if it came in a way I didn't expect. We gratefully accepted the monetary gift He'd provided. We were able to pay for Charlotte's medical bills and rejoiced over God's faithfulness to fill our valley with water from heaven.

When we ask God to do miracles for our family and for our children, it is not our place to decide how the miracle is accomplished. As part of this faith journey, we submit to His hand in our lives, allowing Him to orchestrate miracles how He sees fit. We need to ask for grace to both surrender our requests and surrender our control of how He answers our requests. This can be difficult, but God is so patient with us.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What prayers has God already answered for your child?
- 2 What do you pray for most frequently for your child?
- 3 What ditches are you digging as you wait for God to answer your prayers?
- 4 Are you praying for something right now that might require you to pick up a shovel? In what areas can you get dirty and start digging?

## SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." (James 2:17, NIV)*

*"What's that in your hand?" the Lord asked him. Moses answered, 'A staff.'" (Exodus 4:2, ISV)*

*"This is an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord; he will also hand Moab over to you." (2 Kings 3:18, NIV)*

## CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. A praying parent is powerful! And a parent who prays and digs is even more so. We are privileged to be a part of the miracles God will do for our children. Let's be mindful of how God might want us to start digging so He can fill our valleys with water and do the impossible!

## PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer: Grace to Obey and Wisdom to Dig for Our Children*

We are now going to ask God to grant us the grace to obey and the wisdom to know where and how to dig for our children.

Allow parents time to pray for the "Topic of Prayer" and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members' children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 6

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

Who do you know now that you would never have known apart from your child? Who are you impacting through your story as you raise your children? Simply because our children are “different” we have more eyes on us than other families. We have their attention, so the question is what are we doing with it?

*“But I also have a mission field before me each and every day—and so do you. Every day we can open our eyes and hearts as our children open another door into someone’s life. Another day with another opportunity to share the love of Christ. The door will be opened time and time again, but it is up to us to walk through it.*

*As you know, parents raising children with special needs often need encouragement. We get tired. We get discouraged. Some days, we just want to give up and call it quits. We need support. We need to know that we are not alone. We need someone to pick us up, dust us off, and tell us to keep going.*

*You and I are exactly the right people for that job!*

*Through the different encounters I’ve had with hurting and confused parents, God has made this mission field clear to me. I have had countless, “random” conversations that I believe God orchestrated. I pray they have made an eternal impact. If it were just me, I could offer very little to a hurting parent raising a special-needs child. But because of God’s truth and presence in my life, my story and hope are able to encourage others. ...*

*I can see my destiny arise as I put my life in His hands. He is the potter and we are the clay. Who are we to say how and when we should be used and for what purpose? (Romans 9:21) I want to be the hands and feet of Christ and I want my words to be the very words He has for those I meet.”*

We don’t get to decide how and when and where God will create a moment for a life to be impacted. He creates those moments, and if we are sensitive and obedient, our encounters with others can mark them by bringing hope, joy, or a hunger for God like never before. Never before has your child existed; they are specially designed and being used by God to show Himself to others.

*“Even when I am at my lowest points, in my deepest valleys, I have found that in the rawness of my pain and all my fears, God has set divine appointments to encourage a fellow mother who might be in a valley that feels an awful lot like mine. I don’t have to put on a strong front to build her up. No—God is in my valley, and God is in hers. I can shine the light of Jesus in her darkness even as it shines into the depths of mine. I can share my struggles, all the while pointing to the One who has pulled me out of every valley that lies behind me and who will reach down once again, pull me out, and set my feet on the Rock.*

## “GOD ENCOUNTERS”

### OPENER

Since we are talking about encounters this week, this might be a great opportunity for you to open the lesson with volunteers sharing a story of a meaningful or funny interaction they have had with their special needs child. Tailor this to best fit your group so that you continue to encourage one another and create unity!

### VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child’s progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child’s diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

*He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (Psalm 40:2, NIV)*

We don't have to be walking in victory or a perfect circumstance to help others walk into victory in theirs. We simply point to the One who leads us out of the valley and into His victory. God will choose when to use us and our children; we don't get to call the shots for when and where that might be. God will order our steps and lead the way. We simply need to be ready and willing to shine His light wherever and on whomever He might direct us." People don't always need a success story to inspire them. Honesty and vulnerability can greatly impact family, friends, and acquaintances. Make an effort to be transparent about where you are or where you have been. This transparency will help others who are raising a child with special needs feel safe and less alone.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Share a personal story of when someone connected with you when you were in a moment of pain. Explain how it brought about your and/or their healing and comfort.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Who is in your life right now that wouldn't be if it weren't for your "doorman"?
- 2 Have you had any God encounters with those individuals? Explain.
- 3 Who, specifically can you shine the light of Jesus to right now? Create a plan for your next interaction. Will you lead the conversation to share your testimony, invite him or her to church, or offer to pray for any requests he or she might have?
- 4 List three people who you can pray for this week. Write a specific prayer for each person below. (Sharing this with your small group is optional)

### SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven."*

*(Matthew 5:16 NIV)*

*"Because I will give you the ability to speak, along with wisdom, that none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."*

*(Luke 21:15, ISV)*

*"As you go into the entire world, proclaim the gospel to everyone."*

*(Mark 16:15, ISV)*

### CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. Let's open our eyes to the God encounters we have and pray for boldness in those moments. Our doorman or doorlady may only open a door once. Sometimes our interactions with people are brief and will never happen again. What will you do? Will we allow the Lord to shine His goodness through us? Or, will we miss these opportunities and forgo the opportunity of impacting a life for eternity? Let's ask for God's help in making the most of these encounters.

### PRAYER

*Topic of Prayer: God's Boldness with Every Opportunity*

Let's ask God to help us be bold and intentional with every open door, no matter how large or small it is.

Allow parents time to pray for the "Topic of Prayer" and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members' children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 7

## VICTORY TESTIMONIES

Ask volunteers or each member to share one of the following:

- 1 A praise report about your child's progress
- 2 A personal breakthrough in regards to your child's diagnosis
- 3 A special moment shared with your child

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

For our final lesson, we will cover the last two chapters of the book.

*"When you have a child with a disability, I believe we have to watch out for the trap of mistaking their condition for their identity. In our attempt to guide and help our children through life, their disability can easily become something much greater than just a part of who they are. If we aren't careful, we can come to see the disability as our child's identity. Rather than seeing our son or our daughter as a whole person who is fearfully and wonderfully made by the Lord, we may begin to focus on and magnify the disability. And in the same way, the disability can become our identity as well. The diagnosis can become our entire universe—if we allow it.*

*The disability can be something our family journeys with and overcomes, or it can become something that defines us entirely. It can consume our every day, our every conversation, our every relationship so much that we can't remember life before we received the diagnosis. I remember a seasoned mother telling me to look past my daughter's almond shaped eyes, and simply see Charlie. Much easier said than done. In those early stages of processing her diagnosis, each time I looked at Charlie, my heart was heavy and saddened by the future ahead. The challenge was to see my daughter, not for what a blood test had labeled her, but for who she was."*

Our children are not defined by their diagnosis.  
Our family is not defined by our child's diagnosis.  
We can't control how others see our children. We can't control whether or not they look past our child's special needs. However, we can graciously help others see past our child's special needs by intentionally guiding our conver-

## "THEN AND NOW" AND "CHARLIE'S ANGELS"

### SPECIAL NOTE TO THE LEADERS

Welcome to week seven! Your group is now finished with the book. This week will be our last formal lesson together.

Please take a moment and review Weekly Leader Guide-Week 8 in order to communicate the slight change in format for next week's lesson and meeting. The final week in the Chosen for Charlie Small Group Experience is designed to be a celebration of the last 8 weeks, encouragement for next steps, and the establishment of future opportunities to stay connected or begin the journey again with another group. Please communicate with your group during this week about next week's meeting.

### OPENER

To begin this lesson, have each group member share his or her favorite part of this small group experience. (For example: They may share about a particular lesson, the time of prayer each week, the opportunity of building relationships, or other parts.)

sations about our children.

Though your motive is love for our children, guard your heart so you don't let their diagnosis consume your thoughts, your marriage, your family, or your friendships.

*“As parents, we can't help but be changed by our children. Their very presence in our lives, enables us to better grasp the love of our heavenly Father and to glimpse another facet of His heart and thoughts towards us as we care for our little ones. The late nights and tears cried for our children drive us to understand the love God has for us as His children. Though underserved and surely not earned, we can't help but love our children and want the absolute best for them, as we nurture and discipline them. And when given a child with special needs, God tenderly reveals, I believe, even more. God uses our children to teach us and those around us more than we could learn otherwise.”*

Our children are causing ripples in lives of others. Ripples we may never see or even know about.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

Share either a personal story of how you were consumed by a circumstance in your life or a time when your child or children impacted your life. (For example: explain how they lead you to understand love in a deeper way, the ways they taught you patience or compassion, or how praying for them has showed you how to be more passionate or purposeful in your prayer life.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you remember your initial reaction when you learned of your child's diagnosis? Explain. Was your reaction something you wish you could go back and change, or did something happen that you always want to hold on to? Explain.
- 2 Reflect on your journey with your child, what are you thankful for amidst your child's special needs? List at least five things you can be thankful for with your child's life.
- 3 Outside of yourself, who do you think has been most impacted by your child? Explain.
- 4 How do you see your child affecting your family and friends?

### SCRIPTURE

Which of these scriptures are most meaningful to you right now? Why? Read the scriptures and ask volunteers to share.

*“All things work together for good to them that love God.”*

*(Romans 8:28 KJV)*

*“The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your love, O Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.”*

*(Psalm 138:8, NIV)*

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”*

*(Hebrews 12:1, NIV)*

### CONCLUSION

Ask the group if there is anything else from the chapter they want to discuss. God has a plan for your child's life and your life as well. God will use each of you in one another's life to accomplish His will and show more of Himself. Keep your eyes and heart set on Him. Trust Him as He works deeply in your life.

### PRAYER

Topic of Prayer: God's Glory in My Life and My Child's Life

We are now going to ask God to accomplish all He desires through your child's life. He will work in our children, in us, and in others.

Allow parents time to pray for the “Topic of Prayer” and also share prayer requests with one another. This is an important opportunity for parents to pray for one another, stand in faith for their own children and fellow group members' children, and build deeper relationships connected to their faith.

# WEEKLY LEADER GUIDE WEEK 8

---

## CONCLUSION TO SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

### SPECIAL NOTE TO LEADERS

Please take time this week to reflect on all God has done over the past several weeks. I pray that as you reflect, you will see instances of lives encouraged and strengthened as well as relationships established and enriched. This final week serves as a conclusion of the study, a celebration of what God did in each life, and an opportunity to set each member up to continue growing and sharing this resource with others who might need the same encouragement and support. Consider sharing a meal together, meeting at another location (park, church, another home), or going on a fun outing after this last small group meeting. Below are several different opportunities you can provide for your group during this last meeting. Please select what you think is appropriate and most beneficial for your group.

I encourage you to continue meeting after the Chosen for Charlie Small Group Experience is complete. Please consider the following ideas in order to keep the group members connected to one another.

### KEEPING THE GROUP CONNECTED

Create a group text to stay connected- text weekly to encourage the group and continue your friendships

Create a group text to stay connected- text weekly to encourage the group and continue your friendships

Create a group on Facebook which will allow you to share updates and stay connected

Schedule your first monthly hang out (this can be with or without your children) to get dinner together, come over for coffee, etc. Continue meeting once a month (or more) based on the interest of the group.

Choose another book to read through together that will continue the small group experience.

Encourage parents to choose one or two other parents within the group with whom they will stay connected and continue to develop their friendship and support one another. You could even set basic guidelines for this:

Agree to connect once a week

Schedule a time once a month to get together (if children are the same age this could be a play date)

Pray for each other weekly

### CELEBRATE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

To celebrate each member, you can begin by giving shout outs (as you did in weeks 3 and 4). Give enough time for every person to receive a shout out.

### SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

Briefly outline some overarching lessons you are taking away from the 8-week course. Consider writing out lessons learned or insights gained and reading them to the group. Take time to thank the group for their courage and communicate what you learned from them individually or as a group. Read an excerpt from Chosen for Charlie or selected Scriptures that had significant meaning to the group during the study. Take this opportunity to address the group and provide closure as well as encouragement.

## FINAL DISCUSSION

- 1 What has God taught you through this small group experience and in reading Chosen For Charlie?
- 2 What areas do you want to continue to grow in?

## STAYING CONNECTED

The growing and the relationships don't have to end here. We can continue to support each other and link arms as we raise our children. There is much ahead for us to face; we need each other if we are going to thrive in raising our children.

Well we don't have to end here. We can continue to support each other and encourage each other in the areas in which we want to grow!

Introduce the option you selected from the Keeping the Group Connected list if you want to facilitate next steps in keeping the group connected to one another.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FUTURE

Finally, there may be parents interested in leading their own Chosen For Charlie: Small Group Experience. Please offer this opportunity to the group members and be willing to support them if they want to pursue the opportunity. You can reprint this material or direct them to

[Jenforsthoff.com](http://Jenforsthoff.com)

to print free materials to lead their own 8 week experience with Chosen for Charlie!

## PRAYER

As the leader, decide the best way for your group to end in prayer. Spend time thanking God for all He has done and boldly ask Him to continue His good work in all of you, both individually and collectively.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you for participating in this small group experience and leading others into a better understanding of Christ. He intends a rich life for us as we raise our children and help them find community and support that will create a lasting impact!

God Bless,  
Jen Forsthoff  
[jen@jenforsthoff.com](mailto:jen@jenforsthoff.com)

## Chosen For Charlie: Small Group Experience

If there is someone in your group who wants to surrender his or her life to Jesus, what an incredible opportunity you have to talk and pray with them to receive Christ! Read through the following to prepare or use as a guide during the conversation:

God Is The Creator Of Life

(by Kevin Haag [new-testament-christian.com](http://new-testament-christian.com))

**Romans 1:20-21:** “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.” God reveals himself to us - His divine nature and personal qualities - through creation. We must acknowledge God as the Creator and sustainer of life.

2nd stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Why We Need Salvation – The Fact Of Our Sin

**Romans 3:23:** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We must recognize that we are sinners and that we do not meet God’s perfect standards. Sin is serious in God’s sight and includes thoughts, words and actions. All sin (i.e. hatred and lust) makes us sinners not just the big, obvious sins like murder and adultery (Romans 5:12).

3rd stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Man’s Inability

**Romans 3:10:** “As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one.” No one can earn right standing with God. We must understand that our good deeds or religion are unacceptable to God because our good works cannot cancel out our sin. For a view of man’s sinful condition, read Romans 3:10-18.

4th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

The Penalty Of Sin

**Romans 6:23a:** “For the wages of sin is death.” God’s holiness demands a penalty (consequence) for our sin, which is death. Eternal death is separation from God forever in Hell. God is a just God, and He demands punishment for every sin. Justice is getting what we deserve, because of our sin, we deserve death.

5th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

God’s Plan Of Salvation

**Romans 5:8:** “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” God sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sin by dying on the cross. God is a God of mercy and He sent Jesus to take our sin upon Himself and the punishment we deserve. Mercy is not getting what we deserve, we deserve death, and Jesus took our place.

6th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

God’s Promise Of Eternal Life

**Romans 6:23:** “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Eternal life is a free gift from God, there is nothing we can do to earn eternal life. Grace is getting what we don’t deserve. Because of God’s amazing grace, He has given us eternal life through Jesus Christ!

7th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Man’s Responsibility

**Romans 10:9-10:** “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” We must believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God Who died for us on the cross, rose from the dead, and is Lord. We must put our trust in Jesus alone to make us right with God. Salvation involves believing in our hearts (inward belief) and an outward confession that Jesus is Lord.

**Romans 10:13:** “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” There is no complicated formula to salvation; Jesus paid the price of our sin for us. Our response is to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. If we do, we will be saved from eternal death in Hell to eternal life in Heaven.

Final Stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Results Of Salvation

**Romans 8:1:** “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” By accepting Jesus’ death as a payment for our sins, we will never be condemned for our sins.

**Romans 5:1:** “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peace with God means we have been reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ. We can now have a relationship with the living God because sin no longer separates us from Him.

Are you uncertain that if you were to die today you would go to Heaven? Have you followed the Roman Road to salvation? Will you accept Jesus Christ as

If there is someone in your group who wants to surrender his or her life to Jesus, what an incredible opportunity you have to talk and pray with them to receive Christ! Read through the following to prepare or use as a guide during the conversation:

God Is The Creator Of Life

(by Kevin Haag new-testament-christian.com)

**Romans 1:20-21:** “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.” God reveals himself to us - His divine nature and personal qualities - through creation. We must acknowledge God as the Creator and sustainer of life.

2nd stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Why We Need Salvation – The Fact Of Our Sin

**Romans 3:23:** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We must recognize that we are sinners and that we do not meet God’s perfect standards. Sin is serious in God’s sight and includes thoughts, words and actions. All sin (i.e. hatred and lust) makes us sinners not just the big, obvious sins like murder and adultery (Romans 5:12).

3rd stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Man’s Inability

**Romans 3:10:** “As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one.” No one can earn right standing with God. We must understand that our good deeds or religion are unacceptable to God because our good works cannot cancel out our sin. For a view of man’s sinful condition, read Romans 3:10-18.

4th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

The Penalty Of Sin

**Romans 6:23a:** “For the wages of sin is death.” God’s holiness demands a penalty (consequence) for our sin, which is death. Eternal death is separation from God forever in Hell. God is a just God, and He demands punishment for every sin. Justice is getting what we deserve, because of our sin, we deserve death.

5th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

God’s Plan Of Salvation

**Romans 5:8:** “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” God sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sin by dying on the cross. God is a God of mercy and He sent Jesus to take our sin upon Himself and the punishment we deserve. Mercy is not getting what we deserve, we deserve death, and Jesus took our place.

6th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

God’s Promise Of Eternal Life

**Romans 6:23:** “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Eternal life is a free gift from God, there is nothing we can do to earn eternal life. Grace is getting what we don’t deserve. Because of God’s amazing grace, He has given us eternal life through Jesus Christ!

7th stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Man’s Responsibility

**Romans 10:9-10:** “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” We must believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God Who died for us on the cross, rose from the dead, and is Lord. We must put our trust in Jesus alone to make us right with God. Salvation involves believing in our hearts (inward belief) and an outward confession that Jesus is Lord.

**Romans 10:13:** “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” There is no complicated formula to salvation; Jesus paid the price of our sin for us. Our response is to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. If we do, we will be saved from eternal death in Hell to eternal life in Heaven.

Final Stop on the Roman Road To Salvation...

Results Of Salvation

**Romans 8:1:** “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” By accepting Jesus’ death as a payment for our sins, we will never be condemned for our sins.

**Romans 5:1:** “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peace with God means we have been reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ. We can now have a relationship with the living God because sin no longer separates us from Him. Are you uncertain that if you were to die today you would go to Heaven? Have you followed the Roman Road to salvation? Will you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today? You can pray to God right now and claim the promises of His word as your own.

- Admit that you have sinned against God and ask Him for forgiveness.
- Believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God Who died for you on the cross, rose from the dead, and is Lord.
- Call upon Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior.

If you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior today, we praise God for your decision! We encourage you to grow in your walk with God by praying to Him, reading the Bible, and joining a Bible believing church. Share with others the Roman Road to salvation, so they too may know of God's love and amazing grace.