



GOALS

As students experience this session in Faith Basics, they will:

- Learn about the promises given to us when we commit to study and intently search God's Word.
- See the Bible as a foundation to the basics of faith.
- Evaluate their own lives and determine whether their current relationship with God is able to withstand the temptations and pitfalls of sin.

MATERIALS: Group

- Whiteboard or large Post-it pad (the 25" x 30" variety)
- Copy the Faith Basics sharable image below or the image in the header of this guide to your phone (see Putting Into Practice)
- Extra Bibles for those who may need a Bible

MATERIALS: Each Student

- Student journal pages and Scripture sheets
- Colored highlighters or marker (two per student of two different colors)
- Bible and pen or phone with a Bible app for highlighting and referencing Scripture

One Week Out (for first session)

It's a good idea to text the students coming to this study. Consider encouraging them as they are taking time out of their chaotic and sometimes overwhelming sport and activity schedules. Affirm to them your commitment to walk with them through this journey of the basics of faith. Ask a few dedicated prayer partners to pray for your students by name as they go through this study. Consider creating a group text to keep students up to date and communicating with you and one another through the week.

OPEN

To set the tone for these sessions, share the following with the group in your own words:

This study is designed so that you can teach yourself from Scripture. The best learning comes from finding things on your own!

Answers to the questions referenced in the session will be found on the pages of the Bible, not pulled out of the air.

The goal of each session will be to better understand a specific element of the Christian faith. As each element is presented, a shareable weekly image will be sent by text, creating a full set of Faith Basic images to keep and reference throughout the week. By the end of these sessions, you will gain a deeper confidence in your relationship with God and will have a powerful perspective of why we need Jesus Christ.

You will be learning tools of Bible study that you can carry for the rest of your journey with Christ!

DIGGING IN

Begin your discussion by referencing the nature of if/then statements — *if this is true (the action or condition), then this is true (the promise or the consequence)*. You may want to ask if anyone has been introduced to if/then statements through proofs in Geometry. Then have your students mark on their Scripture sheets the if/then statements in Proverbs 2:1-6. Let each student choose two colors of highlighter or marker — have them mark the "ifs" with one color and the "thens" with another.

Once students are finished, work as a group to list what they've learned on your whiteboard, noting the "if" conditions and the "then" conclusions. Invite students to list responses on their journal pages as you note responses on the board. Your list will look similar to below:

IF

- you accept my words
- and store up my commands within you
- turn your ear to wisdom
- apply your heart to understanding
- you call out for insight
- you cry aloud for understanding
- look for it like silver
- search for it like hidden treasure

THEN

- you will understand the fear of the Lord
- and find the knowledge of God (God's will!)

TAKING IT INWARD

Ask your students to look over their "if" list and circle with a pen any verbs or action words. Once students begin to see the relationship between action and Scripture, discuss how we are to approach our Bibles. Ask students to consider the difference between casually reading the Bible a few minutes a day versus pursuing it in more engaging ways. Offer a few suggestions for more productive Bible study (clearing out time in our schedules with no interruptions, slowing down your pace to truly "meditate" on Scripture, partnering with a trusted friend for more "iron sharpening iron" type conversation, etc.) Challenge students to take a look at the "then" statements as promises we can count on when we get serious about God's Word. You may want to take time to offer thoughts from your Prep It during this part of the conversation.

DIGGING DEEPER

Invite students to move to a place of solitude if possible (a corner of the room, an empty room nearby). Have them take their Bibles and journal pages. Ask them to read the verses noted on their journal pages and list in the space provided everything they learn about the Word of God. Ask them to also jot down thoughts that God brings to mind concerning the Bible and the role it plays in their lives. This can be a time of real connecting with God. You may want to pray again before the group disperses.

After an appropriate amount of time, bring the group back together to process what they've discovered in the Word. In the discussion, you may want to bring out some of the points noted below. As students share, ask them to share their observations in their own words (we've given a few examples below).

Psalm 19:7-11

- God's Word is perfect, refreshes the soul (brightens my day)
- God's Word is trustworthy, makes wise the simple (I don't have to be smart to trust)
- God's precepts are right, giving joy to the heart (makes me a happier person)
- God's commands are radiant, giving light to the eyes (people enjoy being around me)
- God's decrees are firm and righteous
- They are more precious than gold
- They are sweeter than honey

Psalm 119:98-106

- His commands make me wiser than my enemies (good for apologetics discussions)
- they are always with me
- I have more insight than my teachers if I meditate on God's statutes
- I have more understanding than my elders if I obey God's Word (smarter than you!)
- the understanding I gain from God's precepts helps me to hate every wrong path (and keeps me from temptation!)
- God's laws are righteous

Matthew 22:29

- Sadducees were in error because they did not know the Scripture or the power of God (let's hope Jesus never has to say this to us!)

Hebrews 4:12

- Word of God is living, active (it's not a crusty, ancient book)
- it is sharper than a double-edged sword
- it penetrates, dividing soul, spirit
- it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart

Hebrews 5:12-6:2

- God's Word is solid food (this is where my soul finds its best nourishment)
- it's for the mature
- if we constantly use the Word, we train ourselves to distinguish good from evil

James 1:22-25

- do what the Word says!
- don't just listen to it! (obedience shows I get it)
- we'll be blessed if we do what the Word says
- the Law gives freedom

1 John 2:14

- the Word of God is able to live in us (this is a big "Wow!")
- and we can overcome the evil one

Isaiah 55:10-11

- God's Word will not return to Him empty (I am NEVER wasting time in God's Word)
- it will accomplish God's purpose for which He sent it

TAKING IT INWARD

Remind students that they are more than capable of blowing your mind when it comes to knowing and understanding Scripture (Psalm 119:99!) Use this as a springboard to discuss the best ways to find out about God. Point out that the very best way to find out about Him is directly from His Word, not from other people such as friends, parents or even pastors. Ensure them that no matter how helpful and biblical these sources are, the Bible says the best source is directly from the Word!

- Ask your students to highlight (on the Digging Deeper section above) three traits of God's Word that are most meaningful or convicting to them. Allow a couple minutes for them to look over the lists. Then have them share one or two and why they marked them.
- Give students a quiet moment to rate themselves on the following questions found on their journal pages:

Would you label yourself as someone who knows God through His Word or knows God through other people's experiences and descriptions of God?

Others									God's Word	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1 John 2:14 states that God's Word is able to live in us and we can overcome the evil one! Is God's Word living in you enough to give you the power to overcome the evil one? Rate your power level on the following fuel gauge.

Empty									Full	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Using the analogy from Proverbs 2 (searching for hidden treasure), how does your engagement in God's Word compare to the intensity asked for in Proverbs 2?

There's a treasure out there?							Map and shovel in hand			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Spend a few minutes allowing students to reflect on these scales. Ask what may be preventing them from moving higher on the scales. Take a few moments to brainstorm active ways they could pursue God better through His Word (students will see some ideas under Putting Into Practice on their journal pages). Share a few of the methods you came up with in your Prep It that help you study God's Word. Be honest about your own life and the places that trip you up or slow you down in dedicating time to the Word. If you have time to share, allow students to give some examples to the group of pitfalls they face in studying and enjoying God's Word. Brainstorm together ways to remedy those issues.

Faith Basics Review

Close the session by showing students on your phone or a screen, the Faith Basics image for this session (Bible below or the image used in the header of this guide). Point out that you'll be sending them a different image for each session. Tell them you will be sending it to them via text throughout the week. Encourage them to create a Faith Basics album on their phones and save the texted image there. This can serve as a reminder of their discussion and commitment to move forward on the scale of putting God's Word into practice.

Encourage them to post or share the image to Instagram with the hashtag #FaithBasics, tagging friends and leaders along with a statement of what they are learning.

