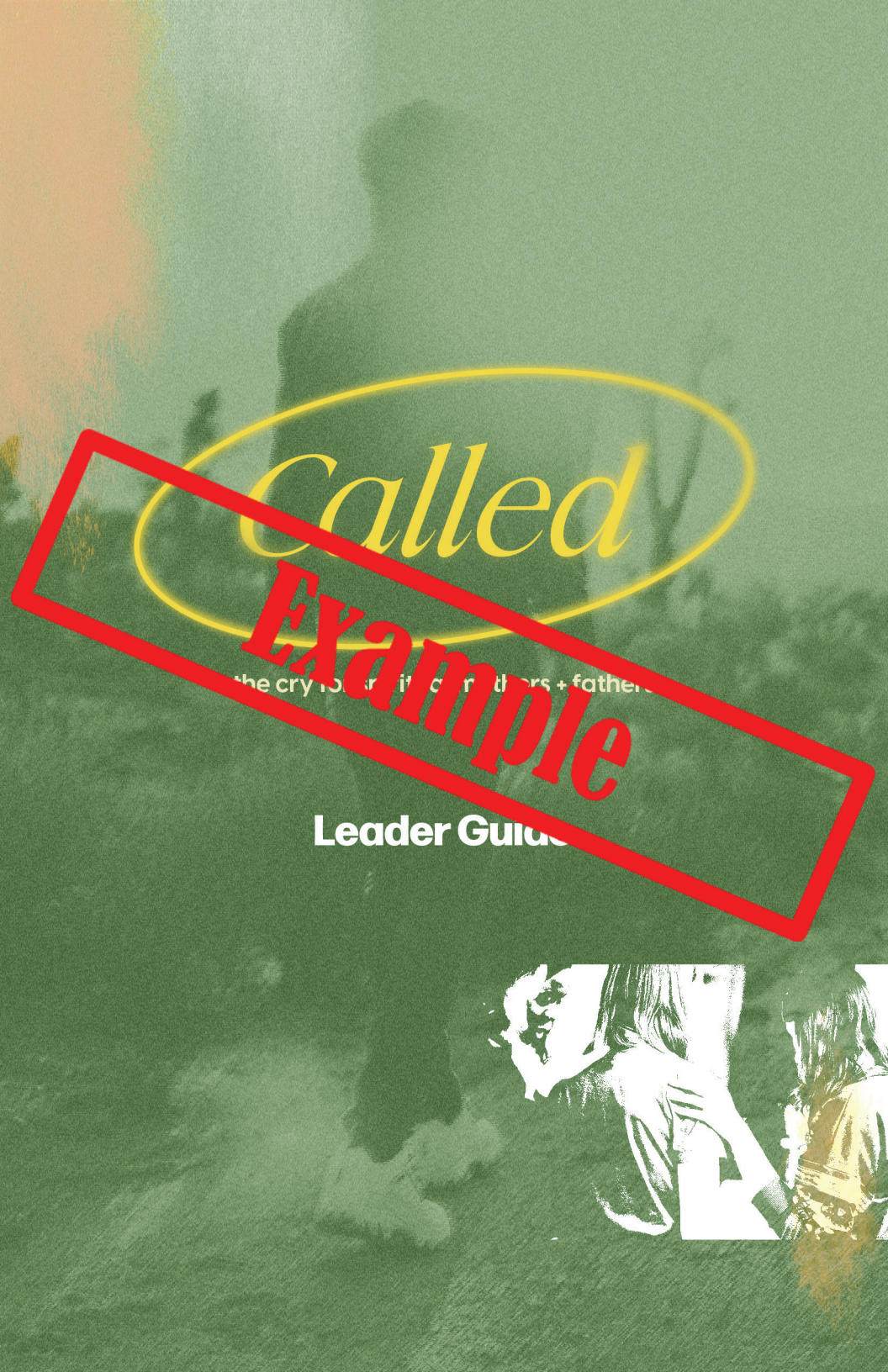




Called

Example

the cry is for all our mothers + fathers

Leader Guide



Spiritual motherhood and fatherhood is every believer's calling. More than ever people today don't trust religious institutions or church services but long for loving, seasoned spiritual mothers and fathers. As a church, we want to go beyond managing crowds and classrooms to identify those in need and nurture spiritual daughters and sons to grow in their relationship with God. Join us in

*raising a generation
that follows Jesus
one person at a time.*



*you are needed.
you are chosen.
you are empowered.
you are*

Called

week 1

an invitation to relationships

ICE BREAKER | 15 min

- What was the most relaxing—or most meaningful—moment of your summer?
- What are you most looking forward to about this fall season?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 60 min

Christianity is an important blend of being connected to a healthy community (crowd), living transparently in relationships (1-on-1), and growing in your personal relationship with Jesus. What has been your experience with these three areas:

1. Have you been connected to healthy communities or unhealthy communities?
2. Have you had any healthy spiritual mothers or fathers, or is that something that's been missing?
3. How difficult has it been to maintain a personal routine of abiding in Jesus?

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-17

In verse 15, Paul says, *“Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers.”* The word guardian means “tutor or instructor.” Paul is contrasting a tutor to a father.

- How would you describe some of the differences between the two?
- What are the benefits of having instructors, learning in crowds, and being rooted within a broader community?
- What are the limits? What can't a tutor do that only a spiritual mother or father can do?
- Can you think of a season of your life when you really needed a spiritual father or mother to help you?
- In verse 16, Paul urges them to *“imitate me.”* Why is it essential to have real-life models who 'live it out' in front of you, not just explain it? For example: watching someone walk through grief or suffering well.

- In verse 14, Paul was not afraid to give the community a difficult word of correction in order to “*warn them.*” And he clarifies his intentions, not to shame them. He considers them as his “dear children.” What do we learn about spiritual fathering and mothering from his example in this verse?
- In verse 17, notice that Paul describes his “*way of life*” and that his way of life is separate from but agrees with “what I teach everywhere in every church.” There’s a difference between living it and teaching it. Who is someone in your life right now that you can begin to be more intentional about living your faith alongside? In what specific ways?
- What are the obstacles preventing you from becoming a more intentional mentor with one or two other people in your life? i.e., That person could be your own children, a student in your classroom, or someone in your accountability group.

PERSONAL PRAYER | 20 min

Break into prayer groups of 3-4 people. Share with each other one prayer request or a challenge you are facing in life. It could be spiritual, vocational, relational, financial, etc. Take a few minutes to pray over each person.

Notes

week 2

habits of spiritual parents

WORSHIP | 15 min

Start your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group knows how to lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Or you could use a couple of videos from YouTube such as these:

- *How Great is Your Love* by Phil Wickham
- *Holy Forever* by Chris Tomlin

End your time of worship with a short time of thanksgiving prayer. Provide a couple of minutes for people to pray out loud and thank the Lord for who he is or what he's done.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 45 min

1. Was there one particular point or theme that really stood out to you from Pastor Brian's message on Sunday?

Read Matthew 9:35-10:10 & Matthew 12:46-50

2. Based on these scriptures (or any scriptures you want to include), how do you see Jesus modeling each habit of spiritual parenthood?
 - Parents model
 - Parents build relationships
 - Parents invest selflessly
 - Parents pray
 - Parents train up
 - Parents encourage
 - Parents send
3. What areas do you feel you do well at? What areas do you want to improve in?
4. What specifically can you do to improve in that area?
5. Have you observed a spiritual mentor in your life who did one or all of these things really well? How so?
6. Is there someone in your life you are already practicing these with? Or is there anyone you'd feel capable of reaching backward to and saying, "imitate me?"



PERSONAL PRACTICE | 30 min

Simply learning to share with others what we are learning from the Lord is one way we can practice the habits of spiritual parenting. For this exercise, break into groups of 3-4 people. We are going to practice two things.

First—Sharing in Relationships

We are practicing how to share with others what we are learning.

Take time to finish the following statement:

“The Lord has been teaching me...”

Second— Asking Good Questions

We are practicing how to listen to others and ask good questions. Asking good questions is a crucial life skill. As you’re listening to the person share what they are learning, practice by asking the person a follow-up question. Good questions can help the person clarify what they mean, clarify how it is impacting their life, or how to apply what they are learning to their life context.

Here are a few examples of some follow-up questions:

- What do you mean when you say...
- How does that make you feel?
- How does that change the way you’ve thought about...
- How did your family react to...
- How does this affect your relationships?
- How does this affect the way you relate to God?

Notes

week 3

helping others mature

ICE BREAKER | 5 min

Finish this sentence: *This week, I'm thankful for...*

SHARING LIFE | 30 min

Part of relationship building with people, including spiritual daughters and sons, requires vulnerability and opening up your life on a deeper level. Break into groups of 4-6 people and have everyone answer the first statement. Then the second. Etc.

Success in life to me is _____

I believe others view me as _____

I become quiet when _____

I worry when _____

I feel accepted when _____

I tend to get defensive when _____

I get great satisfaction from _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 60 min

So much of last week's message was designed to help you nurture relationships: modeling, encouragement, prayer, investing, and sending. This week's core idea is focused on how to help people 'grow up.' Spiritual parenting is about training children to follow the Lord.

In habits such as prayer or Bible study, we must learn how to do it ourselves before we help others know too. When studying the Bible, we can ask other people questions about the truths they observe in the text and how to apply those to their lives. Let's practice.

Read 1 Peter 1:13-25 as a group. Notice that some questions are based on observation, and some are based on application.



1. Make a list of all of the commands you see in this passage.
2. Out of the list you've made, select two of the commands and answer the question: what does this really mean; how do we understand this?
3. Then, using those two commands, answer the question: how do we apply this to our lives?

Part of spiritual parenting is partnering with the Holy Spirit in helping people identify areas of growth in their lives, asking good questions, and giving them opportunities to try—fail—and try again.

Read 1 Peter 1:13-25 a second time.

1. This time, make a list of what we learn about God and what we learn about ourselves.
2. In what ways is God calling you to grow up and become more like him?
3. What are specific steps you can take to apply that this week?

PRAYER OF BLESSING | 5 min

Break into prayer groups of 3-4 people. Take a few minutes to have each person pray this prayer of blessing over the person on their right (so every person receives the prayer, and every person prays the prayer).

You are sought after and desired by God.

He calls you an overcomer.

You are deeply loved, and the scripture says, 'he delights in you.'

May the Lord bless you with his wisdom and his counsel.

May the Lord fill you with his friendship and joy.

May the Lord fill you with his power and strength to overcome habits, lies, temptation, and darkness.

May the Lord give you a new sense of purpose and calling.

May the Lord bless your relationships with depth, peace, and protection.

May the Lord anoint you to build his Kingdom of righteousness and justice and to bless others.

May the Lord make his smile shine upon you and give you peace!

week 4

initiating a relationship

ICE BREAKER | 10 min

Finish this sentence: *My favorite memory from the month of October is...*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 70 min

Out of the pairs below, what style of mentoring do you think would come most naturally to you?

Organic v. Structured

- a. You prefer to be very unstructured, organic, and unplanned and just invite them into sharing life together as you help them discover the lessons along the way.
- b. You prefer to be highly structured and have a specific book, workbook, curriculum, or list of goals to go through together.

Hands-on v. Hands-off

- a. You prefer to be in the trench with them, helping them struggle through their difficulties and giving them practical “how-to’s.”
- b. You prefer to be more of a coach and help guide them towards other people and other resources. You simply touch base once in a while to check on their progress.

Grace-filled v. Results-driven

- a. You are drawn towards messy people who need many reminders, encouragement, and room for lots of mistakes.
- b. You are drawn towards high achievers who take what you offer and immediately implement it and improve from it.

On the next page you will find some steps to the spiritual mothering and fathering process.

- Which of these comes most naturally to you?
- Which of these steps is the hardest for you to practice?
- Under each step, read the texts and make any observations about what you learn from the scriptures that are relevant to that step in spiritual mothering and fathering.

Step 1 | Pray

- Luke 6:12-16; 1 Kings 19:15-18; Acts 6:3-6

Step 2 | Identify a need you could help meet or a calling in their life

- 1 Timothy 1:18-20; Matthew 9:35-38; 2 Timothy 1:6-9

Step 3 | Initiate a relationship

- Acts 16:13-15; John 3:1-3; 1 Kings 19:19-21

Step 4 | Spend time together

- Philippians 2:19-23; Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Acts 5:42

Step 5 | Be available and vulnerable

- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-7; 2 Timothy 1:15-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:11-12

WORSHIP | 10 min

End your time together with a few songs of worship and praise. Here are a few suggestions:

- *Shout to the Lord* by Hillsong Worship
- *Endless Praise* by Charity Gayle

Notes

week 5

healing from unhealthy leaders

WORSHIP | 10 min

Open your evening in a posture of worship. It's important for us to take our attention off ourselves and refocus our hearts on God. Use these psalms below to recite out loud the praises of God. Add your own prayers, praises, and thanksgiving for who he is.

*I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips...*

*Glorify the Lord with me;
let us exalt his name together.*

Psalms 34:1,3

*Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to praise him...*

*Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully, and shout for joy.*

Psalms 33:1,3

*Who among the gods
is like you O Lord?*

*Who is like you—
majestic in holiness,
awesome in glory,*

Exodus 15:11

*Lord, you are my God;
I will exalt you and praise your name,
for in perfect faithfulness
you have done wonderful things,
things planned long ago.*

Isaiah 25:1



*How great is your goodness
which you have stored up for those who fear you...
Praise be to the Lord,
for he has shown me the wonders of his unfailing love.*

Psalms 31:19, 21 (NLT)

*He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.*

Isaiah 40:11

*He is the Rock, his works are perfect,
and all his ways are just.
A faithful God who does no wrong,
upright and just is he.*

Deuteronomy 32:4

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever.

Psalms 89:1

Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise,

Psalms 48:1

All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful.

Psalms 25:10

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless His holy name.*

Psalms 103:1 (NKJV)

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.*

Psalms 46:1

*Surely it is you who love the people;
all the holy ones are in your hand.
At your feet, they all bow down,
and from you receive instruction.*

Deuteronomy 33:3

*"Hallelujah!
For our Lord God Almighty reigns.*

Revelation 19:6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 70 min

1. Who has been a godly example of a leader in your life? In what ways do you think they have inspired or impacted you?
2. Have you ever experienced an unhealthy leader in your life? i.e., a church leader, a department supervisor, a schoolteacher, a parent, or a public servant? In what ways were they unhealthy towards other people?
3. There are many ways in which leaders can be unhealthy. Make a list of unhealthy attributes that come to your mind and describe those behaviors. For example: controlling, accusatory, dysfunctional, egotistical, etc.
4. When did you first become aware that a leader was unhealthy, and what was the process like to come out from under their leadership?
5. Unhealthy leaders break trust and stamp unhealthy patterns into the people under their leadership. What has the recovery or healing process been like for you to rebuild trust in people? To respond differently to triggers or certain environments.

Read John 10:1-18, 25-30

6. What observations can you make about how the "Good Shepherd" relates to his sheep?
7. What observations can you make about how the "robbers" and the "hired hands" relate to the sheep?
8. What do you observe about how the sheep relate to the "Good Shepherd?"

LECTIO DEVINA (DIVINE READING) | 10 min

Have a person read **John 10:11-18** out loud slowly and in a posture of meditation.

- As that person is reading, the group should be meditating on the presence of Jesus. The goal is to encounter the presence of Jesus in his Word. Is there a word, a phrase, or a truth that feels alive or seems like God is accentuating?
- At the end of the reading, take two minutes of silent reflection. Then share as a group how you felt you encountered Jesus in his Word.

Notes

week 6

movement and next steps

PRAYER | 15 min

In small groups of 3-4, take time to share what's going on in your life: successes, failures, concerns, anxieties, pending changes, etc. Then take the time to pray over one another. Listen to the Holy Spirit and share a word of encouragement, a scripture, or a prophetic mental picture the Lord might be giving to encourage each other.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 45 min

Read Proverbs 1:1-23

1. From this text, why should you desire to be mentored by wisdom? What do you gain from it?
2. From the text, what are the temptations that distract you from wisdom?
3. What is one tangible way you can apply this text to your life this week?
4. What is your next step in the movement toward spiritual maturity?
 - a. Do you sense that you are still a spiritual child who needs help feeding yourself from God's Word and in prayer?
 - a. Or are you, or should you be, capable of doing it on your own and helping others get started?
 - a. Or do you need to start releasing and delegating your spiritual children to become leaders, moms, and mentors—entrusting them with responsibility and opportunities of their own?
5. Thinking practically, who are a few people that could possibly become spiritual children that you could invest in? i.e., your own children, someone you teach in Sunday school, a co-worker?
6. What is stopping you from investing in spiritual children in this season?
7. Take a few minutes to discuss whether this group wants to continue meeting after this week and, if so, what the details will be.



PRAYER FOR NEXT STEPS | 20 min

Take a few minutes as a group to pray together:

- a. Ask God for discernment.
- b. Pray that he would send out 'laborers into the harvest field.'
- c. Pray that he would connect people to spiritual parents and godly mentors.
- d. Pray that he will help you take your next step. What is that step?
- e. Pray that he will lead you to connect to the right people and the right opportunities.
- f. Pray that the testimonies of spiritual mothers and fathers would be full of life and power to set people free and encourage others in their faith.

COMMUNION | 10 min

Wrap up your group with a time of communion.

Suggested Script for Communion

Say: "In the gospel of Luke, Jesus instructed his disciples to '*do this in remembrance of me.*' (Luke 22:19)"

BREAD

Say: In Matthew, it says, "*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.'*" (Matthew 26:26)

The bread represents the body of Christ that was broken so that we could be restored to God.

Action: Hand out the bread.

Pray: Pray out loud on behalf of the group. Pray from your heart as you feel led. (It is usually appropriate to thank God for giving his son Jesus, to thank Jesus for giving himself for us so that we could be healed, and to recognize God's presence in our midst.)

Action: Eat the Bread (Take your time; give people time to pray and reflect).

CUP

Say: Again, in Matthew, it says, *"Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."* (Matthew 26:27-28)

The cup represents the shedding of Jesus' blood so that our sins could be washed away and we could be made new.

Action: Hand out the cups.

Pray: Pray out loud on behalf of the group. (It is usually appropriate to thank Jesus for his blood, the cleansing from our sins, and the freedom we experience through his blood.)

Action: Drink the juice.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray: Pray out loud on behalf of the group or invite others to pray out loud, closing the time of communion.

Notes