



Course Summaries

Membership

Membership – Our purpose at The Ridge Church is to glorify to God. We seek to do that by being and making disciples. Our focus as a church is Disciple: Be One, Make One. We believe that there is no greater mission in life than that. We also believe that in this great journey you will find your greatest joy and satisfaction, as you walk with Christ. Scripture has much to say about church membership and over the course of our gatherings; we will walk through the following topics: Membership, Stories - God's, The Ridge, Yours, Beliefs, Community, and Serving. Once the membership gatherings are finished, our joy will be to introduce you to your fellow bond servants during a worship service and to take a few moments to pray God's blessings over you.

Basics

Fear of Man – This seven week course deals with our fears that extends to every facet of our lives, every level of interaction with other people. With our struggles with a desire for respectability in the eyes of the world. Maybe you've had the experience of doing a Christian "activity" in public and felt some embarrassment, like when you bow your head to give thanks for a meal in a restaurant.

Two Ways to Live – Over this six week course, we are seeking to unpack, understand, and articulate the Gospel message. We will spend one week looking at each point of the Two Ways to Live Tract. Basically, Two Ways to Live is a class designed for two purposes. 1) to help solidify the content of the gospel in our own minds and 2) so that we might go out and share it with others (1 Peter 3:15).

Guidance – This is a seven week course, "Guidance and Decision Making" that will attempt to answer any of the possible variations of the basic question: "How can I know God's plan for my life?" Maybe you have wondered, "How can I tell when God is leading me, or guiding me, to do this or that, or make this or that particular decision?" Or maybe you've wondered how God communicates with us, "How does He speak to us?" Or maybe you've asked "What if I miss God's will?" This class is designed to answer all those questions, which are all ways of asking the same general question "How can I know God's plan for my life?"

Meeting with God – This six week course with the goal of giving you a Biblical understanding of why we should meet with God on a daily basis and to equip you with practical tools that will help you do just that.

How to Study the Bible – The goal of this twelve week course is to give you a greater love for God and his son by teaching you how to fruitfully read and understand the bible. Over these weeks we'll consider: 1) The most important methods of understanding how the bible fits together, 2) The bible's structure and literary genres, and 3) And some specific study tools and methods to allow us to better understand the bible.

Explaining Christianity – This six week course teaches Christians one clear way to share the gospel with others. If you are not a Christian or if you are not sure, this course teaches you the good news of Jesus Christ and the salvation that is only found in his sacrifice for our sins.

Jump Start – This seven week course teaches: A Christian is someone who has been saved by God. We’re going to be using this simple definition of a Christian (as someone saved by God) for three important reasons. Understanding that we’ve been saved by God is: 1) Foundational for understanding the Christian life – understanding that we’ve been saved by grace and not by works, 2) Has huge implications for how we live as Christians and view the world, and 3) A proper understanding of grace in salvation should provide us with right motivations and confidence as we live a godly life to His glory

Bible Overview

Old Testament Part 1 & Part 2 – These are two, thirteen week courses that help us see the Old Testament revealing the character of God in a way that the New Testament does not. The Old Testament spans thousands of years. And as we see God’s character manifest through history in the Old Testament, there is a certain depth and richness that we take away. The Old Testament offers a different lens with which to view the character of God. And as we see His character displayed across so much history, there is a depth and richness that we just can’t experience in the New Testament. That’s our first purpose for this study. The second: the Old Testament tell us about Jesus. It does that in three ways: 1) It is the context for the events of the New Testament. Historically, to be sure. But also thematically. From Abraham’s sacrifice on, for example, God spent 2000 years getting us ready for the idea of a substitute sacrifice on our behalf. That’s how we understand what Jesus did on the cross. 2) The Old Testament is the source of, by one count, 295 references and 600 allusions in the New Testament that help us understand who Jesus is. The New Testament writers clearly expect a working knowledge of the Old Testament. And 3) More than just an aid for knowing the New Testament better, Jesus Himself says that the Old Testament teaches about Him. (Luke 24:44) This was the Jesus who made the astonishing claim that he came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (5:17). The Bible, in its entirety, is a book about Jesus.

New Testament Part 1 & Part 2 – These are two, thirteen week courses that help us understand: 1) The big picture of each book of the New Testament. [More like a flight across the country than a family cross-country road trip]. We will avoid getting caught up in the minor details, but we’ll see the scenery change as we fly over different books. 2) To understand the continuity between the books in the NT, 3) To realize the Promises God has kept to His People from the OT, and 4) To hear God speak to us today through His Word and so to be challenged in our lives.

History & Theology

Church History – This is a thirteen week course that help us see to be a Christian is to be a part of history. And to grow as a Christian is to be a student of history. This does not mean that every Christian enjoys researching old documents in musty archives, or reading the latest historical best-seller. Rather, it means that Christianity isn't a religion of abstraction or of speculative philosophies, but is a religion of historical fact. It is, among other things, a message about events that took place in time and space. Christianity also teaches some eternal truths (the existence of God, his attributes, and Trinitarian nature, etc.) but is focused on the historical events of Jesus' incarnation, death and resurrection. Therefore, the Christian is personally involved with history.

Systematic Theology – This thirteen week course seeks to arrange the whole of Biblical teaching into logical, topical divisions. This, then, allows for the formulation of doctrine and helps us to construct an overall view of the nature of God, as He has revealed Himself in Scripture, and the manner in which He interacts with His creation.

Living as a Church – The goal of this thirteen week course is to explore a practical blueprint of what makes a church healthy—where sound doctrine expresses itself in love that glorifies God. Our prayer is that each of us will leave this class with a better understanding of what the Bible says about being a healthy church, and with some very clear ideas of what we can each do to build a healthy church.

Biblical Theology – This thirteen week course seeks to look at theology that tries to understand not only what the Bible teaches, but to do so in the context of the Bible’s own progressively revealed and progressively developing story-line. Faithful biblical theology attempts to demonstrate what systematic theology assumes: that the Scriptures are not an eclectic, chaotic, and seemingly contradictory collection of religious writings, but rather a single story, a unified narrative that conveys a coherent and consistent message. Thus Biblical Theology is concerned not just with the moral of the story, but the telling of the story, and how the very nature of its telling, its unfolding, shapes our understanding of it point.

Christian Roles

Biblical Manhood & Womanhood – This thirteen week course will look at questions about masculinity and femininity through a biblical lens. This class is taught through a complementarian view which believes male and female were created by God as equal in dignity, value, essence and human nature, but also distinct in roles.

Marriage – During this is a twelve week course we will talk about God being at the center of your marriage. We talked about how trust in God matters for your marriage. A right relationship with God; a vibrant faith; a deep love for Jesus – will transform the way you live with your spouse. Our sanctification, how we work things out in marriage, is rooted in our justification, our right relationship with God.

Singleness & Courtship – During this is a five week course we are covering: 1) A basic theology of singleness, 2) Dealing with dating & courtship (topics like: dating those outside the congregation, how to break up well, and “Things that go wrong in our courtship culture”).

Parenthood – During this is a thirteen week course we will see that God made “be fruitful and multiply” his first command at least in part because children and families are no afterthought to Him; nor are they to be used as tools, worshiped as idols, or viewed as obstacles. They are instead one of God’s primary ways in which God communicates something of who He is, what He is like, how He plans to relate to us, and us to relate to each other. And we want to focus on a key implication of this truth that the family is a primary way we gain an accurate understanding of God and His purposes in the world, building families is a vital Christian ministry. We will see this in three areas: building families is a vital ministry to the church, it is a vital ministry to the world, and it is a vital ministry to the members of the family themselves. We will cover the first two topics this morning and next week, and the rest of the course will focus on the third topic.

Christian Discipleship

Suffering – This thirteen week course will look at suffering. We will: 1) Establish a Biblical framework for suffering, 2) We’ll apply that framework, and 3) Show suffering as witness. This is not just a class on surviving, but a class to prepare us to use suffering to joyfully bring honor and glory to our king in a way that is dramatically compelling to those around us. A Christian, suffering within the control of a sovereign God, desiring to conduct himself in such a way as to bring glory to the excellence of that same God? That is the miracle produced by faith.

Biblical Counseling – This thirteen week course helps prepare Christians for their fundamental responsibility of biblically discipling and counseling one another with God’s Word. Counseling is the opportunity to give advice to someone who asks for it that is centered on God’s wisdom, and not our own. We want to turn to our pastors at the appropriate time for help, but we also want to stay involved and not pass the problem off to elders.

Discipling – During this thirteen week course we will consider a lot of the specifics of what discipling looks like in practice, i.e. how to discuss a book with someone else, how to study the bible together, and many other specific topics. As a reminder, Discipling is: 1) Intentional and deliberate, 2) Relational, 3) Loving, and 4) Training in God’s Word.

How to Grow – During this thirteen week course we will consider the broader topic of biblical spirituality and we want to place the spiritual disciplines in an understanding of a Christian’s progressive sanctification. We will be looking at the practice of a number of personal spiritual disciplines such as Bible intake, prayer, confession of sin, fasting, evangelism, serving, and stewardship. We will also think about how we can cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Engaging the World

Missions – This thirteen week course will look at Missions through the lens of existing to increase the worship of God through the praise of His glory in the hearts of His people. That the Biblical message, God’s passion for His own glory is His central motive for world evangelism in missions. We will start at the fountainhead, the source ...in the excellence of the nature and character of God. As in the book of Genesis, so in our passion for missions, “in the beginning – God!”

Evangelism – During this thirteen week course, as we approach the subject of evangelism, there are countless areas we could discuss, but in this class we have selected eleven lessons we feel are the most important: 1) Are You Into What God’s Up To? Evangelism and God’s Purpose in History, 2) What is our Role in Evangelism? God’s Sovereignty and Man’s Responsibility, 3) What is the Gospel? Defining the Truth that Saves Sinners, 4) So What Happened To You? Learning How to Share the Gospel Through Your Testimony, 5) They Believe this Too? The Local Church and the Power of Corporate Witness, 6) How Do I Share the Gospel? Learning and Applying Biblical Strategies, 7) How Do I Become All Things To All People? Learning How to Contextualize the Gospel, 8) How Do I Get Started? Exploring Ways to Be Intentional and Strategic in Evangelism, 9) How Do I Talk With My Family and Co-Workers About Christ? 10) But What if They Reject Me? Thinking Through Rejection, Follow-up and the Fear of Man, 11) But What if They Ask...? Learning How to Answer Objections to the Gospel.

Apologetics – This seven week course explains what Christian apologetics is and communicate why Christian apologetics matters to you. That the discipline of apologetics is integral to evangelism and necessary for all Christians. The material helps you to think about how to connect the “what” of a Christian worldview with the “how” of evangelism. Hint: it’s the “why” of apologetics

Christians in the Workplace – This seven week course will begin with the broader doctrine of “vocation” or “calling.” Many of our difficulties with our jobs stem from the fact that we have confused them with callings—and haven’t understood how they fit with all the callings God has given to us. Then we’ll focus specifically on one specific calling: paid employment, or the work we do in the workplace. We’ll consider the purpose and danger of employment. Then how redemption impacts our employment. We’ll talk about how the Bible calls you to choose a job, and how we can live as Christians in the workplace. Then , we’ll circle back around and consider how all of our vocations fit together, answering the question you might have thought of in terms of finding “balance”—really by turning that idea on its head. Christians are not balanced people.

Saturday Night Courses

Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University “FPU” – This nine week course helps us put a plan together for our money. It teaches God’s ways of handling money. Through video teaching, class discussions and interactive small group activities, FPU presents biblical, practical steps to get from where you are to where you’ve dreamed you could be. This plan will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, and much more!

Re|Engage – This eleven week course is a marriage enrichment program. Marriages in any condition can benefit, whether you are struggling to get along, your marriage is broken, or you simply want to grow closer together as a couple. Re|Engage examines God’s design for marriage and applies principles from the Bible to guide couples towards growth in their relationship with each other. You can expect: 1) To receive encouragement by hearing stories from other couples that have experienced victory in the midst of hard times and 2) To be placed in a small group with a facilitator couple and other couples to work through a 16-lesson curriculum

Parenting – This six week course will provide an overview of Tedd Tripp’s *Shepherding a Child's Heart* – 1995. Written for parents with children of any age, this insightful book provides perspectives and procedures for shepherding your child's heart into the paths of life. *Shepherding a Child's Heart* gives fresh biblical approaches to child rearing.

Griefshare – This thirteen week experience includes three key elements that work together to help you recover from the deep hurt of loss: 1) video seminar: helpful information on grief related topics, 2) group discussion: facilitated small group discussion time and 3) personal workbook: individual study and application of concepts.

Discipleship: Being One 101 – This six week course will provide an overview of The Ridge's mission of Being One by looking at the practice of a number of personal spiritual disciplines such as Bible intake, prayer, evangelism, serving, and stewardship. We will also think about how we can cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.