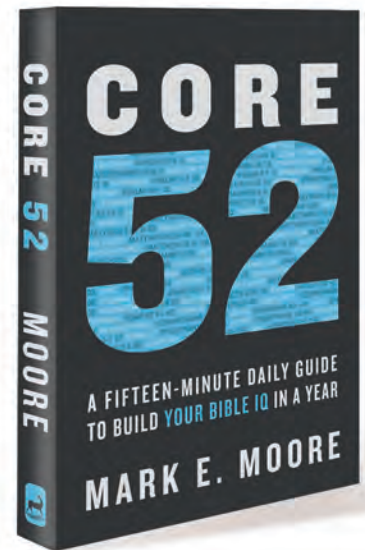


CORE 52 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. Gen 1:1, Creation:

- What do you enjoy doing to connect with creation?
- What is the consequence of ignoring God, the Spirit, and or Jesus as creator? How have you seen this play out?
- Share something you created and how you feel about it?
- Share what you will do to carry out the action step above.



2. Gen 1:26, Identity

- Answer the question “who are you?” How much of your answer is about you as an individual, and how much is about the relationships that form you.

- What are some *imago dei* actions we could recognize and live out through our Christian community? How could that change our experience with each other and with God?

- What are some “normal” activities that reveal God’s nature in us? Choose one that you will intentionally recognize as a spiritual activity for at least one day.

- What one simple act could you practice this week to “rule” God’s creation as his steward in this world.

4. Gen 15:5-6, Covenant

- How is Abraham a model of faith? What did he do to demonstrate his faith?

- Is this idea of covenant new to you? Does it change how you look at your relationship with Christ? Does it change how you view your connection to the church?

- Read the following passages and discuss how Jesus ultimately fulfilled each of the previous Biblical covenants: Genesis 3:15; I Peter 3:21; Genesis 22:12-14; Matthew 22:44; Matthew 26:27-28.

- Share an area of your life you feel like God would want you to increase your faith—not how much you believe but your fidelity to obey.

5. Lev 11:44-45, Holiness

- Is there anything you refuse to share with someone closest to you?

- In your experience, why does someone's attempt to be holy by behavior modification lead to hypocrisy, secrets, guilt, judgment, and pride? (Answer one topic at a time).

- Are there things you assume Pastors can do with or for God that you are not as capable of?

- Do you have an area of life where your actions don't reflect your appreciation toward God or his presence in your life?

6. Deut 18:18, Moses

- Who is the most famous person you ever met? What was it like to be in the presence of “greatness”?

- Do you think this comparison of Moses and Jesus could be used to show God’s design in Jewish history?

- Why do you suppose it was so important and so consistent in the New Testament to show Jesus as superior to Moses?

- Given this study, do you think we have underestimated or undervalued Jesus?

8. 2 Sam 7:12, David

- Did you have any childhood heroes (real or imagined)?
- Brainstorm in the group all the attributes and experiences of David's life that reflect or foreshadow Jesus' life and ministry.
- What can we learn from Jesus' and David's use of power as a model for our own lives?
- If Jesus really is a king over the church, what difference would that make for us as citizens of his kingdom? Do we see our lives and choices as an important part of God's Kingdom purpose?

II. Psalm 23, Shepherd

- What images come to mind when you read the 23rd Psalm? What life events come to mind?

- How many leaders can you remember in the Bible who were shepherds? Who in your own life served you as a shepherd?

- Can you think of any examples of shepherds of our own society (police, politicians, preachers, teachers, etc.) who use their power against those they should protect? What are the consequences of these bad shepherds?

- First, identify the leadership position you hold. Second, share one idea in one of these roles where you could lead like a good shepherd.

13. Psalm 118:22, Rejection

- Share the last time you lost an argument. What went wrong or how were you wrong?

- Brainstorm a bit about anyone else in history whose suffering made their life-work successful.

- Can you think of people in your life whose humility actually increased their influence and effectiveness?

- Go around the circle and allow each person to share (who is willing) where they are convicted to increase their humility in order to increase their influence and effectiveness.

14. Prov 1:7, Wisdom

- Share a story of some extraordinary length you went to pursue your current spouse/significant other. The Bible compares pursuing wisdom to pursuing a woman. What does that mean to you?

- Who is the wisest person you have ever met? How did they acquire their wisdom?

- Have you ever feared and loved the same person? What did that look like?

- If we are to fear only God and nothing else, what fear are you holding onto and thus needlessly sacrificing energy, time, and attention?

- If you were to suddenly fear only God, what would you do differently in life?

15. Isaiah 53:5, Atonement

- What is the most expensive thing you've ever had to pay for? Try adding up all the expenses of a child. Is that more than you spent on your home?

- What in your estimation is the costliest national sin in our nation? What causes the most damage to families and communities and what costs the most to fix?

- Read Isaiah 53 aloud. Stop at each verse and ask how this was fulfilled by Jesus' death and resurrection.

- How would you explain "substitutionary atonement" in simple terms to a colleague at work or a friend?

16. Jer 31:33-34, New Covenant

- Share a time in your life when you were in the deepest despair you have experienced.
(If anyone is there now, have the group stop and pray for them.)

- During that time, what gave you the greatest hope or strength to get through it?

- Share your experience of the Spirit comforting you internally. Share your experience of him changing your desires and dreams?

- If you were to share the advantages of being a Christian with a neighbor or colleague, what would you list? How would you brag about Jesus or the Spirit?

17. Dan 7:13, Son of Man

- Did you have any nicknames growing up? Was it a compliment or kind of a put down?

- If you could have any earthly title, what would you want to attain?

- It is a hard and fast principle in Scripture that God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. How have you seen that rule of life play out today?

- Have you ever had a hard time believing that Jesus could be fully God and fully human at the same time? How would you explain this courteously and intelligently to a Muslim or Jewish friend? How would you explain this to a child?

18. Matt 5:11-12, Blessed

- Describe your perfect day.
- What do people chase after for happiness that you have observed seldom brings happiness?
- How have you seen it played out: “Happiness is in significance, not success?”
- Is there a specific step you need to take to align more closely with Jesus’ teachings?

20. Matt 6:9-15, Prayer

- What is (or was) your communication like with your father? Does that affect how you pray?
- What could you ask for that you are pretty sure God would say “yes” to?
- Are you able to identify any barriers that keep you from getting to “yes” with God?
- Are there things God asks of you that you have said “no” to? Are there things he has asked you to let go of that you have refused?

23. Matt 16:24-25, Cross

- Have you seen anyone approach Jesus as their “Savior”, but not “Lord”?
- Why is Jesus’ call to serve and sacrifice so difficult or even offensive?
- What advice would you give to someone on how to crucify a particular habit, action, or attitude for Christ? Give specific examples.
- Would you be willing to share an area of your life you would like to submit to the Lordship of Jesus?

24. Matt 22:14, Election

- Share a time when you were chosen for a special honor. What was it and how did that make you feel?
- What has God done in your life to make sure you had an opportunity to responded to him?
- What can you uniquely do to bring God glory through your life? What were you called to do?
- Sometimes God's divine call can come through human messengers. With that in mind, who are you uniquely positioned to invite to church so God can call them to heaven?

26. Matt 28:18-20, Commission

- Share a time when you become a convert to something other than Jesus—Apple, Sports team, a diet or exercise program. What was it that convinced you to jump on board?

- What rights and responsibilities do you feel you have as a “ambassador” of Christ?

- What is the last “next step” you took toward God and the last “next step” you took toward another person? How would you coach another person to take those same steps?

- Write on a 3x5 card the name of three people you would like to escort one step closer to God. Pray for God to give you opportunities to do that in simple and practical ways.

27. Mark 1:1, Gospel

- Share with the group that last bit of good news you received as well as the last “good news” you couldn’t wait to share

- Were you uncomfortable giving Jesus the title Emperor? Why or why not? What difference would it make in the church if we actually treated Jesus as an Emperor and not merely a savior.

- What practical things could we do as individuals or as a group to submit to Jesus as our King?

- What is one area of your life currently that you do not allow Jesus Christ to rule and reign in? What can you do differently this week to allow him to?

29. Mark 2:27-28, Rest

- Take out a piece of paper. On each of the four margins write one of these words: Work, family, finances, emotions/stress. Ask each person to fold each edge to represent how much margin they have in each of these four areas of their lives.

- What kind of rest recharges you?

- How do you need to “come to Jesus” to find rest (Matthew 11:28)?

- Share some ways you have made rest a rhythm. Be specific with habits and behaviors that turn your attention toward God and family.

30. Mark 10:45, Leadership

- Have you ever gone after a promotion or a starting position? What did you do and were you successful?

- In the Bible: “Those who present themselves as rulers are ruled by their desire to be seen as rulers.” How do you see this playing out today in politics, athletics, and business?

- All of us have power in one realm or another. Share with the group what power or authority you have. Then brainstorm together how that power could be used for the powerless you serve.

- Let’s bring this lesson home, literally. Share with the group one thing you will start doing to serve at least one person in your home.

31. Mark 12:28-31, Commands

- Can you give an example of what it looks like to love God with all your (answer one at a time): Heart, soul, mind, strength/resources?

- Brainstorm together some of the spiritual dangers of loving God with only one or two parts of our person. For example, what spiritual problems could a person encounter if she loved God with her mind but not her heart? Or if he loved God with resources but not soul? Etc.

- Can you give practical examples of the interplay between fear, obedience, love, and service in one of your relationships (parent/child; friend; husband/wife). If you were asked “Are you neighborly?” how would you prove it?

- Strategize as a group one corporate act of kindness you could do in your community.

32. John 1:14, Incarnation

- Can you share a time when you entered into a child's world in order to connect with them—speak their language, play their game, explain things so they could understand? How does that relate to the incarnation?
- What difference would it make to you (or someone else) in suffering if you knew that God suffered as we did or lived life at our level?
- Brainstorm some practical ways to live incarnationally in these three areas: nearness, love, and sacrifice.
- What is one thing you will try this week to begin living more incarnationally?

33. John 3:16, Love

- Do you remember the first time you “fell in love”? What was that like? How did you know?

- If love is a verb more than a noun, share the most extraordinary act of love you have ever witnessed or received.

- Read together I Corinthians 13 two times. In the first reading, identify the person closest to you (spouse, best friend, sibling), and underline the one attribute of love that you need to improve in your relationship. In the second reading, do the same thing only think about a person you may be at odds with (a colleague, family member, neighbor, business partner, ex).

- Plan a practical community project that this group could do together to practically share the love of Jesus.

34. John 4:24, Worship

- What was your impression of worship growing up? What did you assume it meant?
- What do you think about this idea that worship leads to fear more than joy or peace?
- What difference could it make if you worshiped “inside out” (from your spirit through your body) rather than outside in (from a body posture trying to move your spirit)?
- How have you experienced true worship through service to others?

35. John 6:53, Communion

- If you went to church as a child, how do you remember the celebration of communion?
- How do you prepare yourself spiritually for communion?
- How could we make this private moment in the service more communal?
- What could you do as a group to plan a full meal that would include communion?

36. John 10:28, Eternal Security

- Describe a time when you tried to walk away from something or someone but just couldn't (a lover, friend, family, job, team). What percentage of your decision was predetermined by choices outside your own will?

- Do you have a strong sense of security in your salvation with God? Why or why not?

- When you listen to sermons, do you hear more that you have free will or that you are eternally secure by God's power. What advantages has this messaging given your faith?

- Think for a moment about the opposite side of the argument. What advantages might the other constellation of Scriptures offer you?

37. Acts 1:8, Holy Spirit

- Why is the Holy Spirit such a confusing and challenging topic for people?
- How have you experienced the Holy Spirit in your life?
- If you could lean into the power of the Spirit more, what would you want him to do for you? What would be different about your life if you believed and acted upon that benefit?
- Of all the things the Spirit does for us, which is most important to you right now? Why?
- The Spirit is always communicating in various ways. Brainstorm together ways that we can pay more attention to the various ways the Holy Spirit wants to speak to us.

40. Acts 17:26, Racism

- Did you grow up in a family or community that treated all people the same or was there some level of racism, overt or subtle? These could have been jokes, comments, phrases, what a particular group of people was called, etc.

- In your experience, why is racism so difficult to overcome? What actions or attitudes have you personally implemented to reduce it in your own life?

- What could your church do (or what could you do in your church) to make other ethnic, economic, cultural, and political groups feel more included?

- Share the name of a specific person who is different than you who you could escort to church to make sure they feel included when they come.

41. Rom 8:1, Freedom

- Do you find it easier to extend God's grace to other people or receive it personally?

- We all have voices (some in our heads or from our past) that tell us who we are. How can these negative voices drown out what God wants to affirm about you through his Spirit?

- Which of the following works of the Spirit are most important to you right now to live the life God intended for you: Convicting you of sin, reminding you God is father, groaning for you in God's presence, guiding you toward God's predetermined plan for your life?

- What is one lie that Satan is telling you about yourself that you need to reject? And what is one truth God is telling you about yourself that you need to accept?

42. Rom 12:2, Change

- In what three-year period of your life did you make the most changes? What was it like?

- Share a time when you saw someone who needed to change but just couldn't. What barriers stood in their way to a better future?

- Which for you has been the most powerful catalyst for change in your life: (1) Being affirmed by God's love, (2) being connected to Christ's body, (3) being empowered by God's Spirit.

- Which of these four resources do you need to increase in your routine to increase your chances to make a positive change: Scripture, Christian Music, Service, Fellowship?

- Bonus: Does anyone need to make a change that you would be willing to share with the group to hold you accountable or support you with practically?

44. I Cor 15, Resurrection

- What are some reasons people do not believe in the resurrection? How would you respond to their objections?

- Which of the reasons to believe in the historical account of Jesus' resurrection do you think are most helpful to those who do not believe? Why?

- What are the results of the resurrection that you think are neglected, but are important to understand and believe?

- What result is most difficult to believe for you and live in light of? How can you begin to believe it and live it out?

45. Eph 2:8, Grace

- Share a time when you were given something (a gift, opportunity, or experience) you absolutely did not deserve. How did that make you feel toward the person who gave it to you?

- Can you give an example of a person who felt they had to earn love in a relationship (parent/child, husband/wife, etc.)? What dangers arise in this kind of relationship?

- What is the difference between the words “faith” and “fidelity”?

- Is there an area of your life that you are not showing God the loyalty that reflects his grace to you? What step could you take to align with God’s grace in that area?

48. Php 4:6, Worry

- How have you seen worry debilitate people's performance?

- What would you say are the things people worry about the most? (List them and then either estimate or actually Google the probability of each).

- How is worry and indication of a lack of faith?

- Which of the steps to reduce worry have been most effective for you? Would you add others?

50. 2 Tim 3:16-17, Scripture

- Share one book of the Bible you have read that you got the most out of. Share one book (or section) of the Bible you think you would benefit from reading.

- Share with the group any tips for reading the Bible you have found helpful.

- Which of the four action steps above is your next step in reading the Bible consistently?

- Share about a time when a verse you've memorized came to the rescue for you.

- Group Leader: Walk your group through the steps of downloading the YouVersion App, choosing a translation to read, choosing a Bible reading plan (individually), and listening to a passage audibly.

51. Heb 12:1-2, Grit

- What is the toughest thing you ever accomplished in your life? What was that experience like?

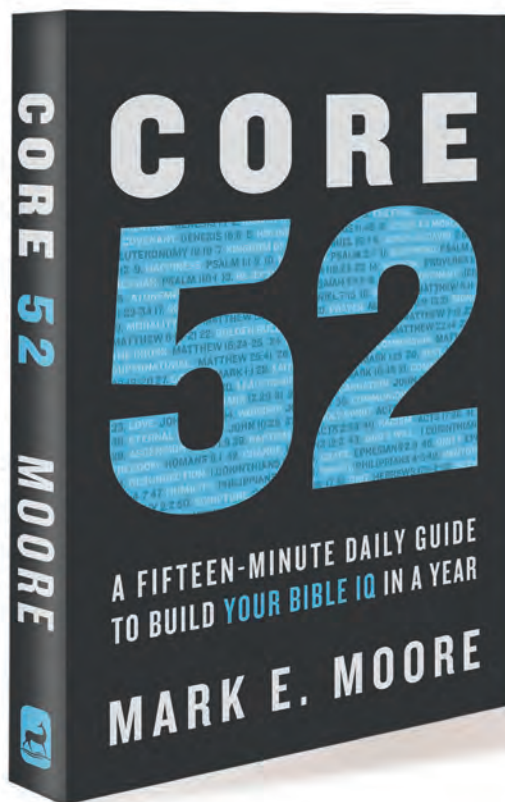
- Define grit and how you think we get it.

- Which of the five steps for gaining grit would be most important for you to implement right now? What spiritual discipline will help you with that step?

- Identify at least one person you are responsible for helping mature. Which of the steps listed above do you need to implement in their lives.

52. Revelation 21:1-3, Heaven

- When you think of heaven, what images come to mind? What will it be like?
- What is one thing you are most looking forward to not having in heaven?
- What are some things you've always wanted to do on earth that you think you might have time for in heaven?
- If you knew you were going to heaven next week, what would you do differently this week?



Check out these added resources on Core52.org to help you go deeper into God's Word!

- **Downloadable Bible Memory Cards**
(they work great on your phone or tablet, too!)
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