

# Get Ready: Preparation Guide

Getting ready to lead an International Essentials session is simple. Each one-page outline can be used as both the leader's guide and as the students' worksheet. It includes directions and guided discussion questions. Print one sheet for each person in your group. Work through the discussion from left hand column to right.

Before you begin: *Pray*

Only God can empower you to have a successful session.

Pray that God will help each person in your group to:

1. Attend the session.
2. Understand what is discussed.
3. Apply the main lesson in a specific way.
4. Share what they learn with someone else.

## Four Phases of the Group Discussion Flow

### CONNECT with Each Other

**Begin with Prayer:** Start by finding out how everyone is doing, checking on how their application went from last week, and praying together. Students value connection time, so take time to build friendships through love and trust (both for you with them, and for them with each other). End this time with a prayer to begin the lesson.

**Discussion:**

*Our Lives* – Use these questions to draw out personal experiences, to create an authentic atmosphere, and to help group members see the relevance of this lesson to their lives. Encourage them to share experiences from their time in this country and from their home cultures.

*Deeper Perspectives* – Use these questions to move them from their personal feelings and experiences into foundational values and beliefs.

**Lesson Summary:** Brief summary to tie the lesson together as a whole. Use the statement to direct you as you lead the students in what they should take away from this time.

**Transition:** This statement is to help transition into reading God's Word.

**Notes:**

*Use Examples* - Be ready to use examples from your life as the group discussion proceeds.

*Use Discernment* - Use the connection time to assess everyone's spiritual condition. If there are a number of non-Christians present, your session may contain more basic explanations and you may need to be sensitive about prayer times, etc.

### HEAR God's Word

**Background:** There will usually be a paragraph which you can read aloud that will give some good context to the Bible passage.

**Passage:** Have one or more of the group members read the Bible passage(s) aloud.

**Discussion:** The Bible discussion questions are designed to be open-ended and thought-provoking. They are also usually ordered to guide the group through the passage and from the theoretical to the practical. However, feel free to come up with your own questions, based on the spiritual interest and maturity of your group. Since your group consists of internationals, you may need to ask questions which clarify or ensure proper understanding.

*Each Unit (group of five lessons) includes a Leader's Guide, and that guide may include some alternative Bible discussion questions that you can use if you feel the need.*

### UNDERSTAND it

This section has two parts: Summary and Clarification

**Summary:** This part helps the group members to summarize the most important truths and principles in the lesson. Encourage the group to write down summary statements in the space provided. Give examples if they need help to think of good summary statements.

**Clarification:** This part offers a chance to ask questions if anything remains confusing and to vocalize what has made the deepest impression. Be patient. Encourage them to share, giving examples if they have a hard time getting started talking about these issues.

**New Terms:** In this section encourage everyone to list any terms or vocabulary they discovered along with a brief definition.

### APPLY it to Life

This section also has two parts: Act and Tell. Both give them the chance to think and plan about how to apply what they've learned in the lesson

**Act:** Give everyone time to think and write, then discuss and pray about what God may be telling them to do in the following week. We want to encourage the group to act upon what they have discussed and learned. Space is given to write these applications down. Occasionally, homework may be included to help them process the lesson's content or to prepare for the following week's lesson.

**Tell:** One great way to imprint the lesson in their hearts and minds in the following week is to challenge them to share what they have learned with someone who is not in the group (believer or preferably, a non-believer). Lead them and give them time to consider who that person might be and to pray together for him/her. Space is given for them to write that person's name down so that they will remember him/her later in the week.

After several weeks, see if some members of your group might like to lead their own groups. Look for people who are particularly faithful to attend and are excited about the discussion, application and sharing. (People they have been telling week-to-week may be willing to join their new groups.) Talk to them about how important it is for group leaders to be growing in their walk with the Lord. Inconsistency in their walk can undermine a person's credibility with group members. It is a privilege to teach people about God, but it is also an important responsibility.

If they are willing to accept that responsibility, give them a copy of this Preparation Guide and walk with them through it and answer any questions they might have. You might want to help them prepare a lesson. If possible, have them teach a part (or all) of one during one of your group sessions. Give suggestions afterwards to help them get ready to start a new group. Now you are getting seriously involved in spiritual multiplication. Before long, there may be several groups meeting because of how God used you in starting your original group. You will begin to identify with the Apostle John when he said in 1 John 1:4, "We want you to enjoy this, too. Your joy will double our joy!"

# International Essentials Leader's Guide

UNIT  
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## Lesson A: Power

**Bible Passages:** Romans 8:1-17

**Session Objective:** Live in a more intimate and dependent relationship with the Holy Spirit, thus walking in His power for a more Christ-like life.

- Make sure to bring enough Satisfied booklets for everyone in your group. In preparation for this lesson, familiarize yourself again with the Satisfied booklet.
- In the **Connect** section, build motivation for this lesson by focusing on how difficult it is to live a godly life despite our deep desires to do so.
- The Greek terms for “flesh/sinful nature” have many shades of meaning in different contexts, so they are difficult to translate in Romans 8. In this passage, the NIV probably captures the most accurate meaning, so try to use that translation for this study.

Look for the students to capture several of the following principles:

- Recognize that the Holy Spirit is God (in Romans 8:9-11 He is equated with God the Father and with Jesus Christ), and thus in Him is both power and personality.
- Realize, from studying Romans 8 and the Satisfied booklet, that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not a “technique” like getting a soft drink from a vending machine. Instead, realize that it is a transformation from within caused by an increasingly intimate relationship with God Almighty.

## Lesson B: Truth

**Bible Passages:** John 14:16-17, 14:26, 16:13-14, John 18:37, John 17:17

**Session Objective:** Build habits of seeking and living in God's truth as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Bible.

Look for the students to come away with a couple of the following principles:

- We are living in a ‘postmodern age’ where the notion of absolute truth is currently unpopular. This lesson challenges students to stand against this trend and live by God's absolute truth. In the **Connect** section, guide them to see the futility of life in a totally relativistic world.
- In the **Hear** section, guide them to see the fruitful lives they will have by accepting God's Word as their standard of truth. The Holy Spirit will use the Word to lead them in the truth.

Depending on the Bible version that you use, be prepared to explain the word “sanctify” (to make pure and holy) in John 17:17.

- During the **Understand** and **Apply** sections, encourage discussion of examples (including some from your life) of how God's Word has proven itself to be superior to other sources of truth.

## Lesson C: Peace

**Bible Passages:** Isaiah 26:3-4, Psalm 23, Philippians 4:6-7, John 14:27

**Session Objective:** Trust God in order to experience peace amid life's difficulties.

Look for the students to come away with a couple of the following principles:

- Peace comes through trusting God and His character. He cares for us, and He overcame the things we fear most on earth (including death).
- An intimate, dependent relationship with God will bring inner peace no matter how difficult our circumstances and trials.

• At the end of the **Bible discussion** people are asked to share about what troubles them or makes them afraid right now. Lead the way by sharing about anything in your own life. Be real about where you are in experiencing God's peace. Also be sensitive to people who may not be comfortable sharing as openly. During the prayer time at the end make sure to pray for all concerns that were shared.

- Suggestions for the **Apply** section: To experience more peace amid stressful circumstances, encourage them to build habits of regular time with God. They should be in His Word (including memorization) and in prayer (especially sharing their stresses and praying with other believers).

## Lesson D: Words

**Bible Passage:** Matthew 16:21-23; Luke 12:11-12, Acts 2:1-14, 2:36-41, Acts 4:1-13

**Session Objective:** Learn to rely upon the Holy Spirit in order to speak the right words at the right time.

- In the **Connect** section, build hunger in students' hearts by exposing the reality that we all struggle to know what to say in certain contexts.

If the students are having a hard time grasping the principles of this lesson, remind them:

- Choosing the right words at the right time—especially in difficult situations—is much more likely when our lives are controlled by the Holy Spirit. The impact of the Holy Spirit on your students' lives will be more evident as they spend time with Jesus (Acts 4:13), especially letting His peace rule and His word dwell richly within them (Col. 3:15-16).

- Suggestions for the **Apply** section: For this coming week, ask the students to wait to do the **Tell** portion until after they have spent some good time with the Lord. Ask them to see if their communication with their friend(s) improves.

## Lesson E: Integrity

**Bible Passage:** 1 Peter 1:14-19

**Session Objective:** Develop a greater hunger to live a life of godly character.

Look for the students to come away with a couple of the following principles:

- We should desire to live holy lives because God Himself is holy, and since we're being made in His image we are challenged to reflect His character.

- We should desire to live holy lives because God is our Father. Many international students should appreciate this especially if they come from patriarchal cultures.

- We should desire to live holy lives because God impartially judges according to each one's work.

- We should desire to live holy lives because God redeemed us from sin and death with Christ's precious blood.

- Suggestions for the **Understand** and **Apply** sections: Some of the students' home cultures will have different notions of what “good character” means than we do in here. Be sure to emphasize that the standard of godly character is that of God Himself—not the moral standards of any culture.

# Power

Living each day with power from the Holy Spirit

## CONNECT with Each Other

## HEAR God's Word

## UNDERSTAND it

## APPLY it to Life

### Begin with Prayer

*How did your Application go from last week's lesson?  
Let's pray together for wisdom from God for today's session.*

### Discussion Questions

#### Our Lives

• Behaving in a godly, righteous way can be very difficult sometimes. Can you give any examples from your own life?

#### Deeper Perspectives

• The traditions, laws, and religious books of our cultures often tell us clearly how we ought to act, and yet we sometimes have great difficulty finding the power to do what we know we should do. Why is it often so hard to do what is right and so easy to do what is wrong?

• Does your home culture or your own personal experience offer any solutions to this problem?

### Lesson Theme

Many people struggle do to do what is right, but God gives us power to live in a godly way.

### Bible Passage: Romans 8:1-17

*Supplemental Reading: Satisfied booklet*

### Bible Discussion Questions

*Please read Romans 8:1-8*

• What is "the Law"? What do we learn about the sinful nature and the Law in this passage?

• What do we learn about the Spirit in verses 1-8?

*Please read Romans 8:9-12*

• In Romans 8:9-12 what do we learn about the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians?

• Notice that in Romans 8:9 the Spirit is called both "the Spirit of God" and "the Spirit of Christ". That is because the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son are all equally God. Since He is God, what are some of the Holy Spirit's characteristics?

### Continue questions

• In Romans 8:13-17, how is our relationship to God described? What are some of the rights and privileges we have because of this relationship?

*Now let's look at part of the Satisfied booklet. Please open the booklet to page 10. Someone please read page 10 through the end of the verses Ephesians 3:16-17.*

• What are some situations where we need to "experience God's power through the Holy Spirit"?

• Devout followers of other religions (e.g. monks or holy men) often strive to become more "holy" through strict self-discipline techniques (whether physical or mental). How is God's provision for holiness different from these techniques?

### Summary

How would you summarize what we learned today about how the Holy Spirit helps us live more godly lives? Write important points down:

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### Clarification

• Was there anything confusing that you still have questions about?

• What made the deepest impression on you?

### New Terms

List new vocabulary words that you would like to remember:

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### Act

• In the coming week, what practical steps can you take to deepen your relationship with God the Holy Spirit in order to live a more Christ-like life?

Write down actions to take below and share what action you plan to take. Then, let's pray for one another.

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*Homework:  
Read through all of the Satisfied booklet and apply it to your life this week.*

### Tell

Who might be interested in hearing what we are learning? Write down the name of that **person to tell**.

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*Let's pray for each other that we would apply God's Word to our life and tell our friends. Who will pray for us?*

# Truth

Discerning what is true

## CONNECT with Each Other

## HEAR God's Word

## UNDERSTAND it

## APPLY it to Life

### Begin with Prayer

*How are you doing?  
How did Application go from last week's lesson about the Holy Spirit and power for godly living?  
Let's pray together for wisdom from God for today's session.*

### Discussion Questions Our Lives

- Are there any aspects in your life right now where you are really struggling to know what is true? How does that make you feel?

### Deeper Perspectives

- In your home culture, what are some of the ways that people determine what is true and what is false?
- Comparing this country to your home country, what are some similarities and some differences in how people determine truth?
- Is knowing the truth important for people's spiritual lives? Why or why not?

### Lesson Theme

The truth can be hard to find in this world. But God desires for us to discover the truth, and He is active in giving us ways to find it.

**Bible Passages:** John 14:16-17, 14:26, 16:13-14, John 18:37, John 17:17

*John 14:16-17, 14:26, 16:13-14  
Background: On the night before He was crucified, Jesus gave a long series of teachings to His followers. This set of passages focuses on some very important concepts that Jesus taught them about the Holy Spirit and truth.*

*Please read aloud John 14:16-17; 14:26; 16:13-14.*

### Bible Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Jesus calls the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth"? Why is "the Spirit of truth" our "Helper"?
- In 14:17, Jesus says that the world cannot receive, nor see, nor know the Holy Spirit. What does this tell you about what the World knows of truth? How should we respond differently to truth?
- From 16:13-14, list the things Jesus says the Holy Spirit will do for us, especially regarding truth. Why is each of these functions important?

### Continue questions

*John 18:37 Background: When Jesus was standing before Pontius Pilate (the Roman governor), He made a very powerful claim about truth.*

*Please read aloud John 18:37.*

- If Jesus' claim is accurate, how should we (and the rest of the world) respond to His teachings?

- What is the important relationship between John 18:37 and John 14:26?

*John 17:17  
Background: This passage records a prayer of Jesus on the night before He was crucified.*

- From what Jesus asks here, how does the truth make us pure and holy?

### Summary

How would you summarize what we learned today about how we can better know the truth? Write down important points:

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### Clarification

- Was there anything confusing that you still have questions about?
- What made the deepest impression on you?

### New Terms

List new vocabulary words that you would like to remember:

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### Act

- In the coming week, what practical steps can you take to deepen your knowledge of God's word in order to better know the truth?

Write down actions to take below, and share what action you plan to take. Then, let's pray for one another.

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### Tell

Who might be interested in hearing what we are learning? Write down the name of that **person to tell**.

*Let's pray for each other that we would apply God's Word to our life and tell our friends.*

# Peace

Experiencing peace even in overwhelming situations



## CONNECT with Each Other

## HEAR God's Word

## UNDERSTAND it

## APPLY it to Life

### Begin with Prayer

*How are you doing?  
How did your Application go from last week's lesson about truth?  
Let's pray together for wisdom from God for today's session.*

### Discussion Questions

#### Our Lives

- What kind of situations tend to make you feel worried or anxious?
- Have you ever felt great fear or worry since becoming a Christian? What was the cause?

#### Deeper Perspectives

- What are some common ways in which people, including your friends and family members, try to find peace amid the troubles of life?
- Do the ways that most people seek peace seem effective to you?

### Lesson Theme

God can give us peace, even in the most difficult circumstances.

**Bible Passages:** Isaiah 26:3-4, Psalm 23, Philippians 4:6-7, John 14:27

*Please read Isaiah 26:3-4*

### Bible Discussion Questions

- How does a person obtain the "perfect peace" that God promises to give?

- What are some practical ways that we can grow in trusting God?

*Psalm 23 Background: As a young man David was a shepherd, so in this psalm he reflects on God's character as our shepherd.*

*Please read Psalm 23*

- What do we learn about God's character?

- What has God promised to do for us?

### Continue questions

- How does knowing God's character and His promises give us peace?

*Philippians Background: Note that Paul was writing from captivity in a Roman prison.*

*Please read Philippians 4:6-7*

- What are we commanded to do in these verses?

- What does God promise us?

*John 14 Background: Jesus' was giving his final instructions to His followers on the night before He was put to death on the cross, so they were understandably afraid and anxious.*

*Please read John 14:27*

- Jesus promises to give us His peace, so that we don't need to be afraid. Is there anything that you feel afraid or troubled about right now?

### Summary

How would you summarize what we learned today about how God gives us peace even when circumstances are overwhelming? Write down important points:

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### Clarification

- Was there anything confusing that you still have questions about?

- What made the deepest impression on you?

### New Terms

List new vocabulary words that you would like to remember:

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### Act

- In the coming week, what practical steps can you take to deepen your trust in God and thus find greater peace?

Write down actions to take below, and share what action you plan to take. Then, let's pray for one another.

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### Tell

Is there someone who might be interested in hearing what we are learning? Write down the name of that **person to tell**.

*Let's pray for each other that we would apply God's Word to our life and tell our friends.*

# Words

Expressing Spiritual Truth

CONNECT with Each Other

HEAR God's Word

UNDERSTAND it

APPLY it to Life

**Begin with Prayer**

*How are you doing?  
How did your Application go from last week's lesson about the Holy Spirit and peace?  
Let's pray together for wisdom from God for today's session.*

**Discussion Questions**

**Our Lives**

• What kinds of situations make you nervous about whether you will say the right thing in the right way?

• What are some techniques that you or other people use to solve this problem?

**Deeper Perspectives**

• Do you think a high level of education and fluency in English is good enough for those times when you need to say the right thing in the right way, especially about your faith in Christ? Why or why not?

**Lesson Theme**

God gives people the power to say the right thing at the right time.

**Bible Passages:** Matthew 16:21-23; Luke 12:11-12; Acts 2:1-14, 2:36-41, 4:1-13

*Please read Matthew 16:21-23*

**Bible Discussion Questions**

• What did Peter say that was wrong? Why do you think that Peter said these things to Jesus?

*Luke 12 Background: Jesus spoke these words to His disciples when the Jewish leaders were starting to oppose Him.*

*Please read Luke 12:11-12*

• What does Jesus promise?

*Please read Acts 2:1-14, & 2:36-41*

• In Acts 2, in what ways was Peter in a challenging speaking situation?

• Contrast Peter's speech in Acts 2 with Matt 16:21-23. Make a list of the ways that Peter's communication ability and effectiveness changed between these two passages.

**Continue questions**

• What can account for the change in Peter's ability to speak the right things in the right way?

*Acts 4 Background: Peter and John had just seen a man healed, and then preached a great message about Jesus, but then they got in trouble.*

*Please read Acts 4:1-13*

• Again, list all the things you notice about Peter's communication ability and effectiveness in this passage.

• In Acts 4, how was Peter in a tough speaking situation?

• What can account here for Peter's ability to speak the right things in the right way?

*Please read Luke 12:11-12 again*

• How does Jesus' promise affect your confidence that you will speak the right words in the right way in tough situations? How will you find those right words and that right way?

**Summary**

• How would you summarize what we learned today about how a deepened walk with the Holy Spirit can enable us to speak the right words in the right way in tough situations?

Write down important points:

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**Clarification**

• Was there anything confusing that you still have questions about?

• What made the deepest impression on you?

**New Terms**

List new vocabulary words that you would like to remember:

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**Act**

• In the coming week, what practical steps can you take to deepen your relationship with the Holy Spirit in order to speak the right words in the right way to the people He leads you to?

Write down your actions to take, and share your plan. Then, let's pray for one another.

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**Tell**

Who might be interested in hearing about what we are learning? Write down the name of that **person to tell**.

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*Let's pray for each other that we would apply God's Word to our life and tell our friends.*

# Integrity

Building Biblical foundations for Godly character



CONNECT with Each Other

HEAR God's Word

UNDERSTAND it

APPLY it to Life

## Begin with Prayer

*How are you doing?*

*How did your Application go from last week's lesson about the Holy Spirit granting us the capacity for good communication?*

*Let's pray together for wisdom from God for today's session.*

## Discussion Questions

### Our Lives

• In Western culture many traditional moral standards are being questioned, changed or abandoned. What are some areas of moral behavior that bother you here on this campus?

• In your home country what are some things people do that you would say are wrong?

### Deeper Perspectives

• How would you define "moral integrity?"

• What standard do you use to determine whether something is right or wrong?

• Whether we realize it or not, we all live by a set of moral standards. What motivates you to live by your standards?

## Lesson Theme

God repeatedly urges us to live in a morally upright way. But He does much more than just give us lists of rules. God also provides us with sound reasons for why living with moral integrity.

## Bible Passages: 1 Peter 1:14-19

*Background: Peter, one of Jesus' closest followers, later became one of the main leaders in the early church. Two letters, written by Peter and inspired by God, are included in the New Testament to encourage believers.*

*Please read 1 Peter 1:14-19*

## Bible Discussion

• What reasons can you draw from this passage for why we should conduct ourselves in a holy, moral way?

• The Word of God clearly declares that God is holy. Why is that such a strong motivation for us to also strive for personal holiness?

• In verses 14 and 18, how does Peter describe the readers' lives before they were Christians?

## Continue questions

• We are often influenced by our sin nature and by worldly temptations. Should these influences prevent us from developing godly character and integrity? Why or why not?

• We cannot earn forgiveness or restore our relationships with God through good works. What role does God's grace play in our development of godly character?

• In previous lessons we have often discussed the role of the Holy Spirit in developing Christ-like character in our lives. Can you share some personal examples that show how depending on the Holy Spirit is helping you make right choices? (Gal 5:22-23)

## Summary

How would you summarize what we learned today about living with godly moral character?

Write important points down:

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## Clarification

• Was there anything confusing that you still have questions about?

• What made the deepest impression on you?

## New Terms

List new vocabulary words that you would like to remember:

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## Act

• In the coming week, what practical steps can you take to live with more moral integrity?

Write down your actions to take, and share your plan. Then, let's pray for one another.

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## Tell

Who might be interested in hearing what we are learning? Write down the name of that **person to tell**.

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*Let's pray for each other that we would apply God's Word to our life and tell our friends. Who will pray for us?*