

LifeGroup Curriculum Guide

Beta Period

NOOMA

NOOMA, named after the Greek word for spirit, presents a fresh and innovative approach to communicate biblical truth. Like Jesus' parables, each 10- to 14-minute *NOOMA* film (DVD) uses common daily experiences to explore topics like forgiveness, discipleship, and unconditional love.

<http://www.nooma.com/>

1-2 copies of each one in the set are available for check out just outside Jenny Rogers' office.



Crosspointe Message-Based Discussion Guide

Unique to Crosspointe. Discussion Guides for each Sunday message is written and posted by Steve Daugherty on the Life Group Leader blog. General questions that can be used for any message are also available.

<http://crosspointelifegroups.blogspot.com/>



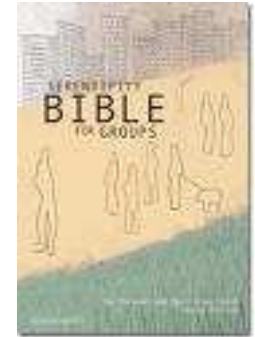
Bible

Serendipity Bible

Over 30,000 discussion questions that cover every passage of Scripture. Along with lessons on every page of Bible text, 60 small-group courses are provided, as well as 16 topical courses and 200 Bible stories with boxed questionnaires.

<http://christian1stopshopping.com/NIV/5911.htm>

Several copies are available in the library.



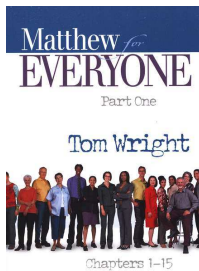
Six Week Crash Course

This 6-part study will prove

helpful for Life Groups that just don't feel like they have a general grasp of the scriptures. It serves as either an intro or a refresher to the big themes of the Bible: Adam & Eve, Abraham & Sarah, Moses, David, Jesus and Us. It's a good resource itself, and good for spinning off more study and reflection well beyond the 6 weeks. This Document can be printed out, and includes participant study guides as well.

<http://www.crosspointe.org/files/crashcourse.doc>

(Downloadable with study guide)



For Everyone Series of the New Testament

The *For Everyone Series* was created by Tom Wright to provide guides to all the books of the New Testament, and to include in them his own translation of the entire text. Each short passage is followed by a highly readable discussion, with background information,

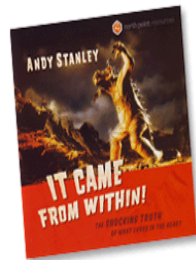
useful explanations and suggestions, and thoughts as to how the text can be relevant to our lives today. A glossary is included at the back of the book. The series is suitable for group study, personal study, or daily devotions.

http://www.amazon.com/NEW-TESTAMENT-EVERYONE-GOSPEL-SET/dp/0664228518/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1233671698&sr=1-1

Character

It Came from Within, Andy Stanley

Where did that come from? You know that horrible, sinking feeling you have when something comes out of your mouth that you didn't expect - that is just so unlike you. Did you know those words are a reflection of a bigger problem lurking beneath the surface? "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks," states Matthew 12:33. The scary truth is that the words you "accidentally" speak and the actions you later regret are actually in keeping with what's hiding in your heart.

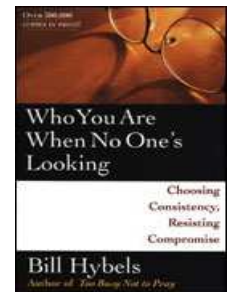


The *It Came From Within* DVD is enhanced with curriculum study sessions that can be used for small groups or individual study. (5 sessions)

<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?cID=44&pID=957>

Who You are When No One's Looking, Bill Hybels

We are all at our best when it counts. But what are we like when no one's looking? That's where character comes in --- being consistent even when it doesn't seem to matter. Courage. Discipline. Vision. Endurance. Love. These character qualities are quickly becoming endangered. All too often we hear of marriages falling apart, governments lying, businesses cheating, and scandals rocking the church. But with God's guidance and strength, we can maintain character that lasts despite temptations and troubles.



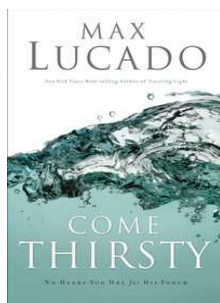
http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR05713

Come Thirsty, Max Lucado

Max Lucado, pastor and bestselling author extends hope to those whose souls are “dehydrated” from neglect, fear and guilt. Lucado teaches that salvation is God’s work, not ours, and that we should “drink deeply from his well of grace.” He encourages readers to look to God for spiritual energy, to rest in his authority or “lordship” and to wholeheartedly accept his never-ending love. He encourages readers to look to God for spiritual energy, to rest in his authority or “lordship” and to wholeheartedly accept his never-ending love.

<http://www.maxlucado.net/shopping6.00/shopexd.asp?id=25551>

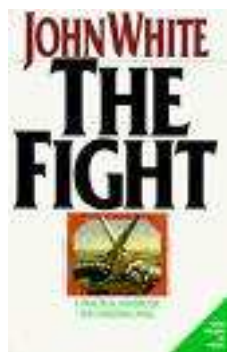
(DVD, 1-Leader's Guide, 10 Participant's Guides and a hardcopy of the book in the library)



The Fight, John White

"As you enter the Christian life, you may have periods of darkness or of doubt. You may encounter painful struggle and discouragement. But there will also be moments of exultation and glory. And most important of all, you will become free."

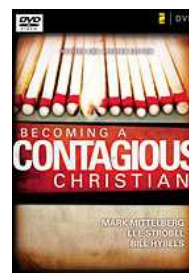
There is joy and triumph in the Christian life. But the victory can come through struggle. John White knows this balance and gives us the encouragement to persevere. Here is John White's classic guide to the basic areas of Christian living we wrestle with throughout our lives: faith, prayer, temptation, evangelism, guidance, Bible study, fellowship and work.



White offers new Christians sound first steps and older Christians refreshing insights into the struggles and joys of freedom in Christ.

<http://www.ivpress.com/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/code=777>

Evangelism



Becoming a Contagious Christian

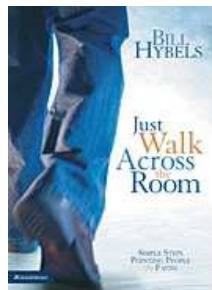
Becoming a Contagious Christian is a proven course designed to equip believers for effective evangelism in today's world. It avoids stereotyped approaches that feel intimidating to many Christians. Instead, it shows ordinary believers how they can share

the gospel in a natural and powerful way while being the person God made them to be. Each session's exercises, discussions, self-assessments, and video vignettes give step-by-step guidance to help participants become effective communicators for Christ to those around them. Sessions include: Demonstrate a contagious Christian character; Build spiritually strategic relationships; Direct conversations toward matters of faith; Communicate their faith in a style that's personal and natural; Explain biblical truths in a style that's personal and natural; Explain biblical truths in everyday language; Respond to the most common objections to Christianity.

http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR29529

Walk Across the Room

Empower your members to be salt and light in today's complex culture. Ignite this shared and powerful outreach vision in your small groups and Bible studies with the four-week *Just Walk* DVD. Led by Bill Hybels, the DVD includes icebreakers, true stories, and time-tested illustrations to jump-start spirited discussions. Sessions include: • The Single Greatest Gift • Living in 3D: Developing friendship - Discover stories - Discern next steps • The Power of Story • Grander-Vision Living



http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR28711

Sharing Your Life Mission

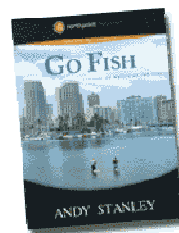
A 6-week small group study on the purpose of evangelism; equipping you to extend love to seekers around you and talk about your experience with God in ways that people will understand. Sessions include: God's Heart for People, Looking beneath the Surface, Building Bridges through Relationships, Making the Most of Opportunities, Explaining the Gospel, The Parting Words of Jesus



<http://shopping.lifetogether.com/ProductInfo.aspx?productid=BOOK-DLT-05A>

(DVD and one study guide in the library)

Go Fish, Andy Stanley



Fishing stories. We've all heard them. "It was this big." "You should have seen the one that got away." People love to tell stories of their fishing adventures. When it comes to faith, however, most people clam up. Why is it we can't talk about what God has done in our lives as naturally as we can spin fishing tales? Includes 6 sessions, entitled: We Were All Fish Once, Why Fish?, Fish Guts, Fishing Buddies, Muddy Water, and The One That Got Away. Each session includes fifteen to twenty minutes of teaching followed by several discussion questions.

<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?plD=779>

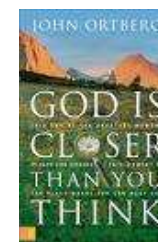
Faith/Trust

God is Closer than You Think, John Ortberg

Every moment of your life is like a page in a "Where's Waldo? Book. God is there...the scriptures tell us on every page. But the ease with which he may be found varies from one page to the next. In this, curriculum, John Ortberg serves as a guide for experiencing the presence of God in everyday life.

http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR26205#

(DVD, Leader's & Participant's Guide, & Book in the library)





The Beautiful Fight, Gary Thomas

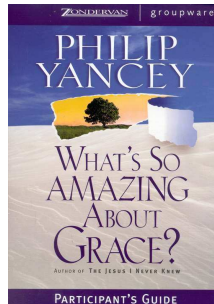
Gary Thomas issues a passionate manifesto of faith fully alive. The Beautiful Fight calls us beyond mere sin-avoidance to a robust holiness that radiates Christ through every aspect of our being. To see with Christ's eyes, feel with Christ's heart, and serve with Christ's hands—this is what Christianity is truly about.

<http://www.garythomas.com/html/bookstore/beautifulfight.html>

What's So Amazing about Grace?

It's one thing to talk about grace; it's another to taste its power. This study takes your group for interactive, gut-level encounters with radical, life-changing grace. Through candid video interviews, Philip Yancey integrates true-life faces and experiences with *10 Powerful Sessions* that will rock your pre-conceptions, get you thinking and talking, and help you discover why grace is more amazing than you ever dreamed. It will help you not only gain a better understanding of what grace is and why it is so precious, but also integrate it into your life.

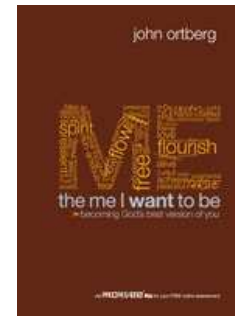
http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=33263&netp_id=195877&event=ESRCN&item_code=WW&view=covers#curr



The Me I Want to Be, John Ortberg

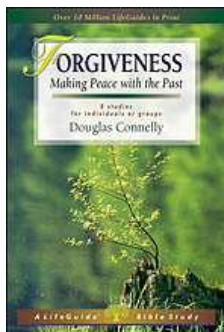
If God has a perfect vision for your life, why does spiritual growth seem so difficult?

This book will show how God's perfect vision for you starts with a powerful promise. All those who trust in God "will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Jeremiah 17:7-8).



Ortberg urges you to recognize your brokenness, understand that God is the project manager, and follow His directions. The author first helps gauge your spiritual health and measure the gap between where you are now and where God intends you to be. Then he provides detailed tasks and exercises to help you live in the flow of the Spirit, circumventing real-world barriers—pain and sorrow, temptations, self-doubt, sin—to flourish even in a dark and broken world.

<http://www.christianbook.com/me-want-to-be/john-ortberg/9780310275923/pd/275923>



Forgiveness

Forgiveness, Making Peace with the Past; LifeGuide Bible Studies

Forgiveness is a door. It's the way to peace and joy. But it's a small door, and it can't be entered without stooping--or kneeling. And sometimes it is very hard to find. When we hurt the people we love, how do we go

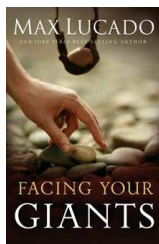
about restoring the relationship? When we suffer the pain of betrayal or injury or rejection from someone else, how do we deal with the anger and resentment we feel? In eight studies, Douglas Connelly leads the way to help you discover, understand and practice what the Bible says about forgiveness. This LifeGuide Bible Study features questions for starting group discussions and for meeting God in personal reflection, together with leader's notes and a "Now or Later" section in each study.

<http://www.ivpress.com/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/code=3094>

Grief

Facing Your Giants, Max Lucado

Do your inner "Goliaths" seem to be growing bigger and bigger? Exploring the life of David, Lucado's companion study guide to *Facing Your Giants* shows you how to overcome your spiritual behemoths---by looking past your problem and toward your solution. Learn to conquer divorce, grief, addiction, and other tragedies in godly victory! Ideal for personal or group study.



http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR26205#

Jesus



Jesus 101 Series, Willow Creek

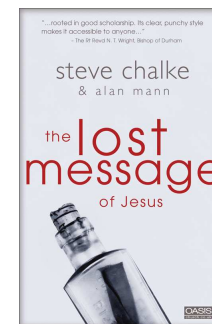
These 8 study guides expand on eight different ways we encounter Christ in the Gospels: Authentic Leader, Compassionate Healer, Extreme Forgiver, Provocative Teacher, Relentless Lover, Sacred Friend, Supreme Conqueror, Truthful Revealer. Each study guide stands alone and provides all you need to lead 6 small group meetings.

http://www.willowcreek.com/wca_prod.asp?invtid=PR28220#

The Lost Message of Jesus, Steve Chalke

This book was written to stir thoughtful debate and pose fresh questions that will help create a deeper understanding of Jesus and his message. It is an encounter with the real Jesus of his world—not the Jesus we try to mold to ours. Themes include: •The Kingdom of God—shalom—is available to everyone now, through Jesus •The world outside your own church needs to hear of the depth of God's love and suffering •Jesus was a radical and a revolutionary! •Jesus offers immediate forgiveness, without cost, to anyone •Jesus shows us repentance isn't a guilt-laden list of dos and don'ts, but an inspirational vision of a new way to live.

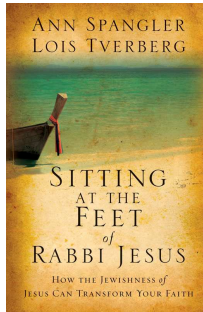
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Sitting at the Feet of the Rabbi Jesus

Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus takes readers on a fascinating journey, helping them discover how learning about the Jewish world of Jesus can enrich their own faith. By exploring the land, culture, customs, prayers, and feasts, the authors help readers to perceive Jesus through the eyes and ears of first-century Jews.

<http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310284222&QueryStringSite=Zondervan>

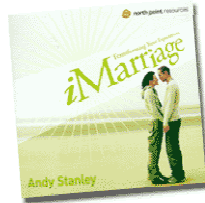


Marriage

iMarriage, Andy Stanley

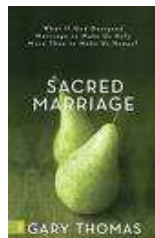
Imagine what would happen if you and your spouse focused on fulfilling one another's dreams rather than piling on expectations. Possible? Absolutely! In this six-part study, Andy Stanley reveals the secret of removing the big "I" from marriage.

<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?cID=44&pID=657> (DVD available in library)

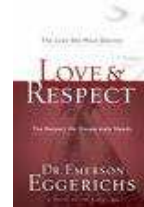


Sacred Marriage, Gary Thomas

What If God Designed Marriage To Make Us Holy More Than To Make Us Happy



<http://www.garythomas.com/html/bookstore/sacredmarriedvd.html> Study Guide for the book is downloadable on the website.



Love & Respect

Crack the communication code between you and your spouse---and reap the benefits of marriage as God intended! Eggerichs cites extensive biblical and psychological research to clarify that harmony in relationships is achieved by building on *both* parts of the Ephesians 5:33 equation. Includes a DVD with over 60 minutes of marriage-building resources. http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=89624&netp_id=521221&event=ESRCN&item_code=WW&view=details

Fireproof

Fireproof Your Marriage will challenge you to love better, to love first and to love for a lifetime! Founded on Biblical principles, this six session in-home study is great for couple's small groups and Sunday school classes. The Fireproof Your Marriage study integrates movie clips from FIREPROOF, along with key Scriptures, thought-provoking questions and devotionals. (Leader's Kit is in the library.)



Money/finances

Financial Peace University



Financial Peace University is a life-changing program that teaches you how to make the right decisions with your money. You'll be empowered with the practical skills and confidence

needed to achieve your financial goals and experience true financial peace!

<http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/home/>

Parenting/Family



Essentials of Discipline

Essentials of Discipline tackles the subject of discipline in a way that only Dr. James Dobson can. Based on his time-tested best sellers, you know the content has substance, but this video seminar also includes animation and man-on-the-street interviews.

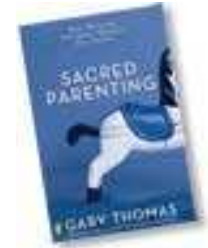
Sessions include: Why Your Child Needs Discipline, Irresponsibility vs. Defiance, Anger vs. Action, Finding Balance in Discipline, To Spank or Not to Spank, Compliant vs. Defiant, Changing Discipline as Your Child Grows, Part I & Part II, Protecting the Spirit, The Strong Willed Adolescent, Part I and Part II, The Ultimate Priority

<http://resources.family.org/product/f00347v.do>

(Curriculum set in the library)

Sacred Parenting, Gary Thomas

Sacred Parenting is unlike any parenting book you have ever read. This is not a "how to" book that teaches you how to discipline your kids or help them achieve their full potential. Rather than discuss how parents can change their kids, Sacred Parenting turns the tables and discusses how God uses our kids to change us, the parents! Gary Thomas will make you laugh and make you cry as he demonstrates how family life tries us as perhaps nothing else does, while also pointing out that this is all part of God's plan to perfect us. Once we realize that we are sinners, and that the children God has given us are sinners, and that together, as a family, we are to grow toward God, family life takes on an entirely new purpose and context. It becomes a sacred enterprise when we finally understand that God can baptize dirty diapers, toddlers' tantrums, and teenagers' silence in order to transform us into people who more closely resemble Jesus Christ.



<http://www.garythomas.com/html/bookstore/sacredparenting.html>

The Three Big Questions for a Frantic Family: A Leadership Fable About Restoring Sanity To The Most Important Organization In Your Life, Patrick Lencioni

Lencioni applies his organizational research to the most important organization in society: the family.

The Three Big Questions is written in the style of an extended fable, like the *One Minute Manager* books by Ken Blanchard. In the fable, Theresa and Jude Cousins, frustrated by the many demands on their family, pursue a journey trying to find a better way of family life. Theresa is a teacher who now is a

stay at home mom raising her children. Jude has a successful freelance business consulting practice. As they move through this process of redefining family success, Jude applies some of his business consulting experience to the most important organization in his life—his family.

http://www.amazon.com/Three-Big-Questions-Frantic-Family/dp/0787995320/ref=sr_1_fkmr1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1272462649&sr=1-1-fkmr1

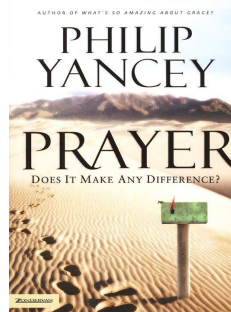
Prayer

Prayer, Does It Make Any Difference?

Yancey probes the most fundamental, challenging, perplexing, and deeply rewarding aspect---the very heartbeat---of your relationship with God: prayer. In theory, prayer is the essential human act, a priceless point of contact between you and the God of the universe. In practice however, prayer is often frustrating, confusing, and fraught with mystery.

Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference? explores the mysterious intersection where you and God meet and relate. Yancey explores the questions surrounding prayer that you may wonder about but not know how to express. He shows you how to pray to a God who sees what lies ahead of you, knows what lies within you, and who invites you into an eternal partnership with Him---through prayer.

<http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?itemno=271053&event=1010SBF|48232|1010#curr>

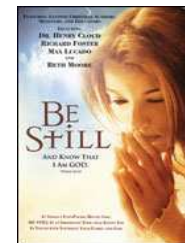


Be Still, Willow Creek

Be Still is an extraordinary DVD that demonstrates how contemplative, or "listening", prayer can be a vital way to experience God's guidance and peace in the midst of frenzied, fast-paced lives.

Originally released in 2006 by Fox Faith, the DVD features interviews with some of today's most highly respected Christian leaders, including Max Lucado, Beth Moore, Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Priscilla Shirer, Henry Cloud, and more.

<http://www.willowcreek.com/product.asp?invtid=PR30639>



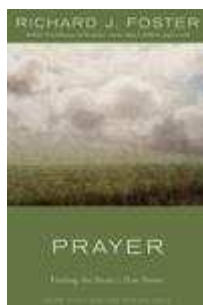
Permission to Speak Freely, Andy Stanley

Two thousand years ago, Jesus pulled His disciples aside and taught them to pray. In examining His instructions, we find a disconnect between His teaching and the way we typically approach prayer. We discover that there are some things about prayer we think are important but aren't, and there are some things we don't think are important that are. (3 sessions)

<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?cID=44&pID=768>

Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home, Richard Foster

Best-selling author Richard Foster offers a warm, compelling, and sensitive primer on prayer, helping you to understand, experience, and practice it in its many forms. He clarifies the prayer process, answers common misconceptions, and shows the way into prayers of contemplation, healing, blessing, forgiveness, and rest.



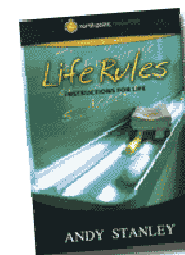
Coming to prayer is like coming home, Foster says. "Nothing feels more right, more like what we are created to be and to do. Yet at the same time we are confronted with great mysteries. Who hasn't struggled with the puzzle of unanswered prayer? Who hasn't wondered how a finite person can commune with the infinite Creator of the universe? ... We do our best, of course, to answer these knotty questions but when all is said and done, there is a sense in which these mysteries remain unanswered and unanswerable ... At such times we must learn to become comfortable with the mystery."

In ***Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*** Foster shows how prayer can move you inward into personal transformation, upward toward intimacy with God, and outward to minister to others. He leads you beyond questions to a deeper understanding and practice of prayer, bringing you closer to God, to yourself, and to your community.

Relationships

Life Rules, Andy Stanley

When we were kids, half the fun was breaking the rules without getting caught. In life though, there's nothing fun about broken promises, broken relationships, or a broken heart. In this six-part series, Andy Stanley explains that God has given us a set of life rules that can improve our current relationships and help restore a damaged or broken one. (Six sessions)



<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?cID=44&pID=618>

(One DVD and 13 study guides in the library)

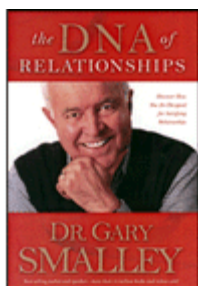


Relationships, Les & Leslie Parrott

Les and Leslie Parrott show how to make bad relationships better and good relationships great. You'll begin cultivating the skills you need to handle tough times and succeed at forging strong rewarding relationships with everyone in your life. Includes strategies for understanding: •who we are and what we

bring to our relationships •how our families of origin shape the way we relate to others •how to bridge the gender gap and learn the language of the opposite sex •building friendships that last •secrets to finding the love we long for and handling sexual issues •what to do when friends fail •how to relate to God without feeling phony

<http://www.realrelationships1.com/store/130.html>



The DNA of Relationships: Discover How You Are Designed for Satisfying Relationships, By: Dr. Gary Smalley, Dr. Greg Smalley, Michael Smalley
Have you discovered the building blocks of lasting bonds? Smalley discloses 17 core fears that can aggravate relationships---and the

secrets to dealing with them; provides practical strategies for stopping unhealthy and damaging patterns; unfolds the road map to love; and helps you to understand that God made you for satisfying relationships.

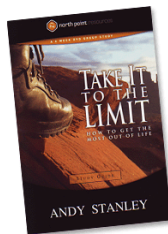
http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=55327&netp_id=401521&event=ESRCN&item_code=WW&view=covers

Stress

Take It to the Limit,

A 6-part series for those whose schedules are too full & whose checking accounts are too empty! Life on the edge means life with no margin. When you reach the limit of your resources, strength, capacity or self-control, you have no margin. The consequences of margin-less living are most apparent in our relationships. Love, intimacy, and friendship happen in the unstructured, unhurried world of margin. Explore God's answer to our self-destructive propensity to live as if we have no limits.

<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?cID=44&pID=620>

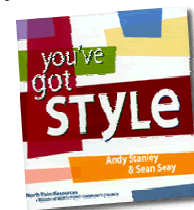


Worship

You've Got Style, Andy Stanley and Sean Seay

Fashion - home decor - accents and attitudes - different ways of expressing ourselves. We call it style and we all have one. Even the way we draw near to God has a style. Quiet - loud - outside - within - in word or deed. Our expressions of worship can be as varied as we are, but which way is the right way? This five-part small group study explores the various styles of drawing near to God.

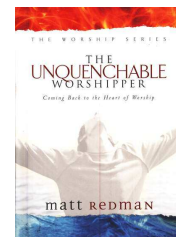
<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?pID=652>



The Unquenchable Worshipper: Matt Redmond

In his first book release, respected worship leader and songwriter Matt Redman writes: "The revelation of God is the fuel for the fire of our worship. And there is always more fuel for the fire. When we open the eyes of our heart, God's revelation comes flying at us from so many different angles." Open the eyes of your heart and let the gut-level message of *The Unquenchable Worshipper* cause you, like martyred missionary Jim Elliot, to say, "Saturate me with the oil of Thy Spirit, that I may be aflame. Make me Thy fuel O flame of God."

http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=72913&event=1010SBF|24493|1010#curr



Spiritual Warfare

Twisted, Andy Stanley

In this five-part series Andy Stanley reveals common ways the truth gets twisted. Each one has the potential to destroy your relationships, cloud your decisions, and distort your perspective of God. Discover how the truth has been twisted, and how it impacts our lives and culture.

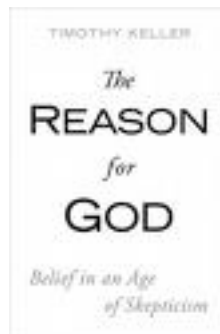
<http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?PID=1168>
(DVD in the library)



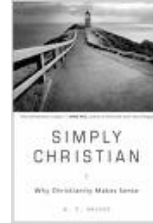
Intellectual

The Reason for God, Tim Keller

Why is there suffering in the world? How could a loving God send people to Hell? Why isn't Christianity more inclusive? Shouldn't the Christian God be a god of love? How can one religion be "right" and the rest "wrong"? Why have so many wars been fought in the name of God? These are just a few of the questions even ardent believers wrestle with today. In this book, Tim Keller uses literature, philosophy, real-life conversations and reasoning, and even pop culture to explain how faith in a Christian God is a soundly rational belief, held by thoughtful people of intellectual integrity with a deep compassion for those who truly want to know the truth. <http://www.amazon.com/Reason-God-Belief-Age-Skepticism/dp/0525950494>



Simply Christian, NT Wright

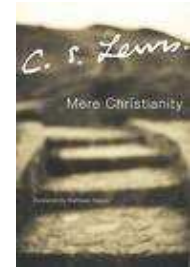


Why do people long for justice? Why do we thirst for spirituality? Why do we long for relationships? Why does beauty not satisfy us fully? It is because we are humans that are made for and by God. We are children that groan for our Father.

These are a few of the questions Bishop NT Wright begins to address, helping us discover Israel, Christ and God Himself.

<http://www.amazon.com/Simply-Christian-Christianity-Makes-Sense/dp/0060507152>

(Three books available for checkout in the library)



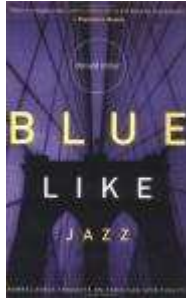
Mere Christianity, CS Lewis

The late Lewis, Oxford professor, scholar, author, and Christian apologist, presents the listener with a case for orthodox Christianity. He covers topics such as original sin, the transcendent Creator God, and the divinity of Jesus as well as his atonement and bodily resurrection. <http://www.amazon.com/Mere-Christianity-C-S-Lewis/dp/0060652926>

Exploring Christianity

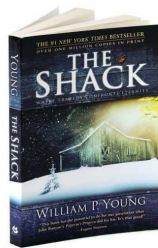
Blue Like Jazz, Donald Miller

"The strange name of this autobiographical tale borrows from Miller's appreciation of the free-spirit characteristic of jazz music. As jazz music is almost impossible to score, being the language of the soul, so Miller sees the Christian life as the meanderings of the soul with few boundaries, rules or restrictions. Christian spirituality is "music birthed out of freedom. Everybody sings their song the way they feel it."— Gary Gilley, Southern View Chapel. *Endorsed by Brian McLaren & John Ortberg, Steve Daugherty.*



The Shack, William P. Young

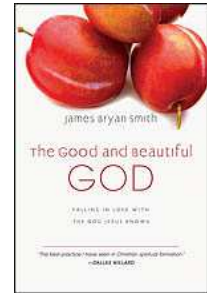
Mackenzie Allen Philips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walk back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant *The Shack* wrestles with the timeless question, where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain? The answers Mack gets will astound you and perhaps transform you as much as it did him. <http://www.theshackbook.com/>



The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love with the God Jesus Knows, James Bryan Smith

What does being Christlike really mean? Smith believes we need a pattern for transformation. He encourages us to re-examine what we think about God (our narratives), how we practice (the spiritual disciplines), and whom we interact with (our social context) to discover the life Jesus lived and grow in the knowledge of a good God.

<http://www.ivpress.com/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/code=3531>



Mudhouse Sabbath, Lauren F. Winner

After her conversion from Orthodox Judaism to Christianity, Lauren Winner found that her life was indelibly marked by the rich traditions and spiritual practices of Judaism. She set out to discover how she could incorporate some of these practices into her new faith.

Winner presents eleven Jewish spiritual practices that can transform the way Christians view the world, and God. Whether discussing attentive eating, marking the days while grieving, the community that supports a marriage, candle-lighting, or the differences between the Jewish Sabbath and a Sunday spent at group. the Mudhouse, her favorite coffee shop, Winner writes with appealing honesty and rare insight.



<http://www.amazon.com/Mudhouse-Sabbath-Lauren-F-Winner/dp/1557253447>

For Women Only

A Woman God Can Lead, Alice Mathews

Sarah, Deborah, Esther, Mary---the women of the Bible lived out their faith in both ordinary and extraordinary ways! In this collection of personal stories, historical backgrounds, and thoughtful study questions, you'll learn to identify with the lives of these unforgettable women, claiming their lessons---and their unshakable faith---for your own spiritual journey! (Includes study questions)

<http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?itemno=30382>

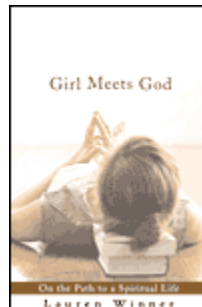
Balancing Act: How Women Can Lose their Roles and Find their Callings, Mary Ellen Ashcroft

North American women, in particular, face the problem of distinguishing between culturally rigid social roles and open callings that will better equip them to flourish personally and serve others more fully.

<http://www.amazon.com/Balancing-Act-Women-Their-Callings/dp/0830819576>

Girl Meets God, Lauren F. Winner

This appealingly honest young woman takes us through a year in her search for a religious identity. Despite her conversion to the Christian faith, she finds that her world is still shaped by her Jewish upbringing. Even as she rejoices in the holy days of the Christian calendar, she mourns the Jewish rituals she still holds dear. Attempting to reconcile the



two sides of her religious self, Winner applies the lessons of Judaism to the teachings of the New Testament, hosts a Christian Seder, and struggles to fit her Orthodox friends into her new religious life. Ultimately she learns that faith takes practice and belief is an ongoing challenge. Like Anne Lamott, Winner's journey to Christendom is bumpy, but it is the rocky path itself that makes her the perfect guide to exploring Christian spirituality in a complicated world.

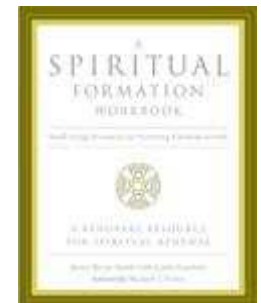
<http://www.amazon.com/Girl-Meets-God-Path-Spiritual/dp/1565123093>

Spiritual Formation

A Spiritual Formation Workbook, James Bryan Smith with Lynda L. Graybeal

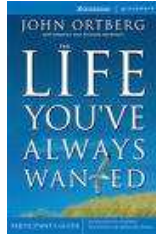
This beginning workbook for Renovaré Spiritual Formation Groups features guidelines for starting a group, study plans for the first nine sessions, and a questionnaire that helps map the way ahead. Based upon six major dimensions of the spiritual life found in the life of Christ and Christian tradition: Contemplative: The Prayer-Filled Life; Holiness: The Virtuous Life ; Charismatic: The Spirit-Empowered Life; Social Justice: The Compassionate Life; Evangelical: The Word-Centered Life; and Incarnational: The Sacramental Life, this workbook program provides all the necessary ingredients to start and maintain a Spiritual Formation Group.

<http://www.renovare.us/buyresources/product/tabid/59/p-5-a-spiritual-formation-workbook.aspx>



The Life You've Always Wanted, John Ortberg

The heart of Christianity is transformation---a relationship with God that impacts not just our "spiritual lives," but every aspect of living. This study calls you back to the dynamic heartbeat of Christianity---God's power to bring change and growth---and reveals both the how and why of transformation. Learn how spiritual disciplines build strength and endurance for your journey towards becoming more like Christ.



<http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?itemno=46952>

(1 DVD, 2 VHS tapes, 3 Leader's Guides and 3 Participants Guides in the library)

<http://www.navpress.com/series/SR1025/Spiritual-Formation-Study-Guides>

Speakers/Authors

In general, books & DVD series by the following are approved:

Andy Stanley
John Ortberg

The SPIRITUAL FORMATION STUDY GUIDES, Richard Peace

These guides explore and explain how the use of disciplines can deepen both our walk with God and our community with other believers. This series allows group members to share together the riches of a deeper walk with God.



Contemplative Bible Reading (10 lessons)

Meditative Prayer (8 lessons)

Spiritual Autobiography (7 lessons)

Spiritual Journaling (8 lessons)