

**Curriculum Evaluation:** Please rate the following materials with a star rating: 1=poor & 5=great. When making comments consider timing of the study, how well it promoted discussion, contributed to unity, how well it stuck weeks later, did it help form vocabulary your group could use later, and did your group members grow in their faith.

NOOMA	Stars	Comments
<p>Rain: Where's God when life isn't going like we want it to?</p> 		<p>3: Loved it! But there are people in my group who do not like these Nooma products. I wonder if this is generational – younger people like Rob Bell – but my group – 50+ age group – not so much.</p>
<p>Corner: Why is it that often when we get what we want, we still feel empty?</p> 		
<p>Tomato: Do we try so hard to live the perfect life that we miss out on how to truly live?</p> 		
<p>Shells: Are we so busy that we miss out on what we're supposed to be doing?</p> 		
<p>She: Why do we overlook God's feminine characteristics?</p> 		

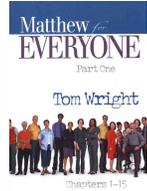
 <p>Open: Does prayer really help?</p>	
 <p>Store: Is anger the issue, or is the real problem what you get angry about?</p>	<p><b>5: This is very good. Everyone can relate to this. When you get angry, how do you use it?</b></p>
<p>You: Do we get so hung up on debating and defending our faith that we miss out on the point of it?</p> 	<p><b>3:</b></p>
<p>Breathe: Is our physical breath actually a picture of a deeper spiritual reality?</p> 	<p><b>5: I really enjoyed this one . What if spending God's name was the same thing as breathing, what would it sound like if we took a deep breath?</b></p> <p><b>5: This one will stick with you – profound.</b></p> <p><b>5: This Nooma was AWESOME for our group. It generated fantastic discussion and we continued to refer to the message from this video even weeks after we watched it. Many in the group had never thought about how our very breath is God-given and we need to use it to the best of our ability to convey His message.</b></p>
<p>Rich: Is it possible that God has blessed us so that we can be a blessing to others?</p> 	<p><b>5: This was a great discussion for our new group. It gave us all time to think of how we can be a blessing to others, created a context to discuss how our group might serve others in the future and gave us the opportunity to have a good discussion even without knowing each other very well yet.</b></p>

 <p>Matthew: How do we deal with the pain we suffer when we lose someone we love?</p>	
<p>Rhythm: Are our lives in tune with God's plan for the world?</p> 	<p><b>3: We really liked the analogy of God's presence in the world being like a song. However, our group ended up getting derailed into a discussion about how we see God in everyday moments and then how we see him in big moments like death. So this discussion took a surprising turn.</b></p>
 <p>Lung: What do we do when our past catches up with us?</p>	
 <p>Bullhorn: What do we do when our past catches up with us?</p>	<p><b>5: Very good use to start with. I told the group that this is not what our group is going to be. There's no pamphlet to follow and I won't bring a bullhorn!!</b></p> <p><b>5: I've used Bullhorn in both of the groups I've lead- it always has a HUGE impact on our group members, especially due to the fact that many of our group members attend colleges or universities where there is some sort of "Bullhorn guy" present. This Nooma resonates most strongly with that group of people because they can see the tangible example of the "Bullhorn guy" in their life.</b></p>
<p>Dust: What does God see in us?</p> 	<p><b>4: We should be following so close to God that the dust that He kicks up gets all over us.</b></p>
 <p>Luggage: Why is it sometimes so hard to forgive?</p>	<p><b>5: Very good. Ends very abrupt and gets people thinking.</b></p> <p><b>5: Wow – what a powerful video!</b></p> <p><b>4: This was one of my first few NOOMAs and one I will never forget. It has a really amazing surprise in it that really puts forgiveness in perspective. It shows why it's important to take every opportunity to make peace with family and friends (or</b></p>

	<p>enemies).</p> <p><b>2: We have not used this with our group yet, because we were a newer group and thought it would be a bit heavy for a group of people that don't know each other very well. I generally liked the video, but I found the ending very distracting ( you would have to watch it to understand, and I don't want to "spoil" it for anyone who hasn't seen it yet ).</b></p>
<p>Kickball: If God really cares about us, why don't we have what we want?</p> 	
<p>Noise: Why are we so afraid of silence?</p> 	<p><b>4: This is a good Nooma, but I'm not sure it resonated as strongly with our group of people. They liked it but it definitely wasn't one that we go back to on a regular basis.</b></p> <p><b>4: We have not used this with our group yet, because we got it for our first week with this group and realized it would be super uncomfortable for a brand new group. It has lots and lots of awkward silence. This would probably be good for an established group, but we just thought it would make the members of our new group very uncomfortable.</b></p>
<p>Sunday: Do we get so wrapped up in religion that we miss out on what's important to God?</p> 	<p><b>3: A good Nooma to get started with, but not one of our groups favorites.</b></p>
 <p>Trees: Do our lives even matter?</p>	<p><b>4: Loved how this one kind of "ties up" the Bible from beginning to the end. Fostered a lot of good discussion about the Bible and living "between the trees."</b></p>
<p>Flame: Could love be the most misunderstood and misused word in our vocabulary?</p> 	<p><b>5: This was a great discussion starter for a college-aged group, what with the social pressure to find "love" and equating love and happiness, etc.</b></p>

<p><b>Bible</b></p>	
 <p><b>Serendipity Bible</b> Over 30,000 discussion questions that cover every passage of Scripture.</p>	<p><b>5: This is an outstanding resource for bible study, as no matter where you turn in the bible, it has group questions already written in the margins. It also has topical “indexes” of scripture that allow you to do personal or group study from a variety of perspectives. It has ice breaker questions pertinent to the topic at hand, as well as “deep’ questions to really help you or your group apply the passage or story.</b></p> <p>5: This is a great resource, not only for the purposes of group study but for individual growth as a leader.</p>
<p><b>Six Week Crash Course</b> 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 &amp; Eve, Abraham &amp; Sarah, Moses, David, Jesus and Us. This document can be printed out, and includes participant study guides as well.</p>	<p><b>5: There is so much more to the Bible then our first glance. It was always about a relationship with God. That oneness we had in the Garden, and after sin entered, we have to get back to that unity.</b></p>

**For Everyone Series of the New Testament**

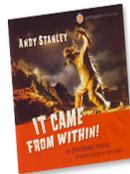


The *For Everyone Series* was created by Tom Wright to provide guides to all the books of the New Testament, and to include in them his own translation of the entire text. Each short passage is followed by a highly readable discussion, with background information, useful explanations and suggestions, and thoughts as to how the text can be relevant to our lives today.

**Character**

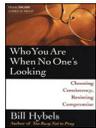
**It Came from Within, Andy Stanley**

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.

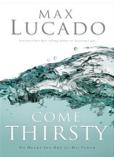


**5: Could be used anytime in the lifecycle. This was the first study we did after Beta. It was a break through study for us. People were vulnerable and shared various family issues relating to hate and anger. Very easy to facilitate. Viewed ahead of time to prep well and pick questions.**

**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.



**Come Thirsty**

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.

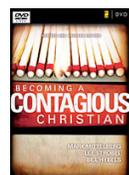
### The Fight

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.



### Evangelism

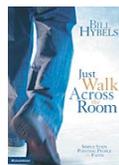
#### Becoming a Contagious Christian



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.

#### 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.



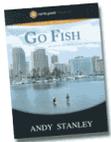
### Sharing Your Life Mission



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

### Go

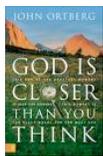


### Fish, Andy Stanley

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?

**5: I been through this outstanding study 2-3 times in various contexts and learn something new each time. This study really helps Christians understand the importance of evangelism, why it's not so intimidating as you might think, and what is the church's role in partnering with you in introducing others to Jesus. It also is surprisingly appropriate for non-believers or skeptics because Andy does a wonderful job explaining why Christians "fish" and it's not to be annoying. At one point in the series, the preaching is so powerful and riveting that the audience at Northpoint actually applauds and cheers.**

### Faith/Trust



### God is Closer than You Think, John Ortberg

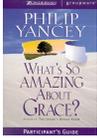
Every moment of your life is like a page in a "Where's Waldo? Book. God is there...the scriptures tell us on every page. But the ease with which he may be found varies from one page to the next. In this, curriculum, John Ortberg serves as a guide for experiencing the presence of God in everyday life.

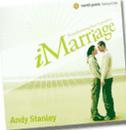
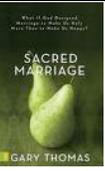
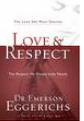
**5: Loved it! The LG loved it. Fits Xpt DNA. Focused on what spiritual development which is a need in my group – living like Him.**

### 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.

<p><b>What's So Amazing about Grace?</b>          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. 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.</p> 	<p><b>5: Just started! The 1<sup>st</sup> session evoked some of the best discussion we've ever had. Again, this type of study is what I think most of my group really need – spiritual development.</b></p>
<p><b>Forgiveness</b></p> <p><b>Forgiveness, Making Peace with the Past; LifeGuide Bible Studies</b></p> <p>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?</p> 	
<p><b>Grief</b></p> <p><b>Facing Your Giants, Max Lucado</b>          Do your inner "Goliaths" seem to be growing bigger and bigger? Exploring the life of David, Lucado's companion study guide to <i>Facing Your Giants</i> 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.</p> 	
<p><b>Jesus</b></p>  <p><b>Jesus 101 Series, Willow Creek</b>          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.</p>	

<p><b>The Lost Message of Jesus, Steve Chalke</b></p>  <p>This book was written to stir thoughtful debate and pose fresh questions that will help create a deeper understanding of Jesus and his message. 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.</p>	<p><b>5: I love this book – but it’s a book. In my group books would not work. They don’t read – don’t have time to. DVD-based studies (no more that 20 minutes of video – preferably no talking heads) work best and promote good discussion. I use leader guide questions.</b></p>
<p><b>Marriage</b></p>  <p><b>iMarriage, Andy Stanley</b> 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.</p>	<p><b>5: This study has some really practical help on how to have that little “I” big “M”arriage... How to put your spouse before your own desires. It’s a very clever series with some great comedy illustrations to begin each sermon.</b></p>
<p><b>Sacred Marriage, Gary Thomas</b> <i>What If God Designed Marriage To Make Us Holy More Than To Make Us Happy</i></p> 	
<p><b>Love &amp; Respect</b></p>  <p>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 <i>both</i> parts of the Ephesians 5:33 equation.</p>	
<p><b>Money/finances</b></p>  <p><b>Financial Peace University</b> 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!</p>	<p><b>4: I love this study and it is very practical. I have always struggled with the fact that Dave Ramsey doesn’t cover “giving” until the VERY LAST topic in the series, and even then, it’s the “bonus session on giving”.... He never says giving is a last priority, nor do I think he believes that, because his session on giving is RIGHT ON... I just wish he did it earlier on, as that is God’s priority. Overall this course is very helpful and practical.</b></p>

## Parenting

### 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



### Sacred Parenting

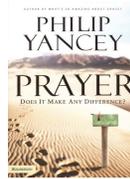
Sacred Parenting is unlike any parenting book you have ever read. This is not a "how to" book that teaches you how to discipline your kids or help them achieve their full potential. Rather than discuss how parents can change their kids, Sacred Parenting turns the tables and discusses how God uses our kids to change us, the parents!



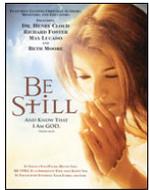
## Prayer

### Prayer, Does It Make Any Difference?

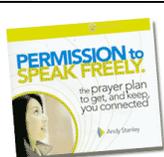
Yancey probes the most fundamental, challenging, perplexing, and deeply rewarding aspect---the very heartbeat---of your relationship with God: prayer. In theory, prayer is the essential human act, a priceless point of contact between you and the God of the universe. In practice however, prayer is often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



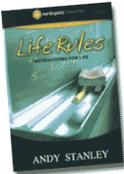
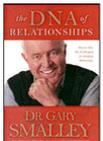
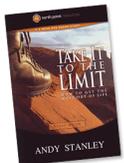
### Be Still, Willow Creek



*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.



### Permission to Speak Freely, Andy Stanley

<p><b>Relationships</b></p> <p><b>Life Rules, Andy Stanley</b></p>  <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>Relationships, Les &amp; Leslie Parrott</b></p>  <p>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</p>	
<p><b>The DNA of Relationships: Discover How You Are Designed for Satisfying Relationships, By: Dr. Gary Smalley, Dr. Greg Smalley, Michael Smalley</b></p>  <p>Have you discovered the building blocks of lasting bonds?</p>	
<p><b>Spiritual Disciplines</b></p> <p><b>The Life You've Always Wanted, John Ortberg</b></p> <p>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.</p> 	<p><b>5: Just finished this great discussion.</b></p> <p><b>2: Style is annoying but content is good. Slow – moving but good for structured groups.</b></p> <p><b>3: The content in this study was good, however, Ortberg's delivery is borderline cheezy, and my group lost interest after a few weeks. I got the book on tape and really enjoyed that myself.</b></p>
<p><b>Stress</b></p> <p><b>Take It to the Limit,</b></p>  <p>A 6-part series for those whose schedules are too full &amp; 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</p>	<p><b>5: Life-changing, awesome.</b></p>

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.

### 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.

**4: This is a good study on explaining how not everyone connects with God in the same way. There's no one right way. This really helps people who think that they have to conform to some sort of ritual or guideline to connect to God. This would be good for a group with diverse backgrounds. The comedy illustrations were great.**

#### 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."

### 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.

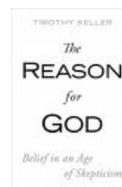


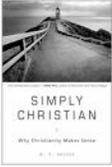
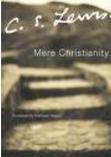
**5: This is an excellent study about spiritual warfare. Even some Christians don't believe that there is an enemy out there who wants to destroy our relationships and lives. Andy does a great job of handling this topic that includes the most skeptical of group members. I had a group member who, before seeing this, was convinced that the devil was not real. He changed his mind. The drama at the front of each sermon was creative and very relevant.**

### 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?



<p><b>Simply Christian, NT Wright</b>  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.</p> 	
<p><b>Mere Christianity, CS Lewis</b></p>  <p>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.</p>	<p><b>5: Before Lee Strobel... there was C.S. Lewis. This is a classic that every Christian, or human, for that matter, should read. Lewis is a brilliant man and if you can get used to his British style of writing, this book is very enjoyable. He is so logical and convincing and has such a talent for identifying and reasoning through the most important foundations of Christianity.</b></p>
<p><b>Exploring Christianity</b></p> <p><b>Blue Like Jazz, Donald Miller</b></p>  <p>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</p>	
<p><b>For Women Only</b></p> <p><b>A Woman God Can Lead, Alice Mathews</b>  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)</p>	
<p><b>Balancing Act: How Women Can Lose their Roles and Find their Callings, Mary Ellen Ashcroft</b>  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.</p>	

<b>Feel free to add other studies that you have done:</b>	
Best Question Ever	4: This is a really good study that helps people or groups who are about to make an important decision in their life. It talks about some biblical ways to make good decisions, in light of past experiences, present circumstances, and future hopes and dreams. This study is very practical.
Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell	5: Since our group tends to be obsessed with Rob Bell and his style of teaching, we thought it would be a great step in a “daily study” direction to have our group read this book. We’re about halfway through and it’s a HUGE hit. We’ve already had some amazing discussions from it, and we’re looking forward to finishing it!
<b>Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis</b>  <b>Study Guides are available at</b> <a href="http://www.glcrlh.org/bible_study/study_resources_pdf/screwtape/Screwtape%20Letter%20Study%20Guide%201.pdf">http://www.glcrlh.org/bible_study/study_resources_pdf/screwtape/Screwtape%20Letter%20Study%20Guide%201.pdf</a>	a) everyone liked the study and thought it was appropriate for new or established Christians b) the questions that we found online were okay, but not great. If someone does this study again, they should plan to invest some time in reworking the questions -- although these were an okay starting point. c) the other problem was a lack of scriptural references in these questions -- although certainly major texts on temptation were included and we added a couple of additional questions/scriptures. There is a balance to strike here as there is a lot to talk about in the book itself.  <b>My general take is that this is a powerful study. The American flavor of christianity tends to downplay spiritual warfare -- we tend to think of a red devil in tights when Satan is mentioned. The active role that Satan plays in our lives is not taken very seriously.</b>