

# Connect 101

*IRON SHARPENS IRON...*



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*Student Workbook*

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# CONNECT AT A GLANCE



Welcome to the CONNECT Discipleship Series! This workbook is designed to guide you as you grow in your walk with God. Whether you are just beginning your discipleship journey or have been walking with God for years, the CONNECT series is created to meet you where you are and help you move toward where God is calling you next.

We encourage you to take your time, be honest in your journaling, and approach this experience with an open heart. You are not just studying, you are becoming.

#### **In this handbook, you'll find:**

- Scripture overviews for context
- Fill-in-the-blank notes to follow along
- Key passages to study and explore
- Journaling and discussion prompts
- Guided prayers and affirmations
- Space to reflect on what God is showing you

#### **Optional but helpful:**

- Sticky notes for page flags
- A quiet space for prayer and study
- A partner or group to share the journey with

Remember, this isn't just a study, it's a transformation. Take your time, be honest, and stay open to what God is doing in you.



## Discipleship Series Lesson 1: Worship as a Lifestyle

**John 4:23–24 (NRSV)** *But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

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### Scriptural Overview:

In John 4, Jesus sits beside a Samaritan woman at a well and engages her in a conversation that breaks racial, social, and religious barriers. The Samaritan woman, marginalized and misunderstood, becomes the first person to whom Jesus reveals Himself as the Messiah. When she brings up the debate about worship locations, Mount Gerizim vs. Jerusalem, Jesus shifts the focus from geography to posture. He teaches that worship is not about place, but presence. Not about ritual, but relationships. Worship must be “in spirit and in truth,” meaning from a sincere heart, guided by the Holy Spirit and grounded in the truth of who God is. This moment teaches us that God desires more than routine; He desires realness. Jesus makes it clear: worship is not limited to a church building or a set of songs, it is a lifestyle. When we recognize who God is and respond to Him with our whole lives, we become true worshipers. This was a revolutionary moment, and it remains a revolutionary invitation for us today.

### Introduction:

In this lesson, we explore worship not as an event, but as a posture, something we live, not just something we do on Sundays. Jesus teaches that worship is done in the Spirit and in truth. True worship is about relationship, obedience, and surrender.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

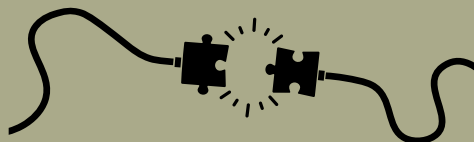
1. Worship is not confined to \_\_\_\_\_ but is a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. According to John 4:24, true worshipers must worship in \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Worship begins with a recognition of God’s \_\_\_\_\_, not just our \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Romans 12:1 teaches that we offer our \_\_\_\_\_ as a living \_\_\_\_\_, holy and pleasing to God.
5. Worship is expressed through \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

1. Psalm 29:2 teaches us to give God the glory due His \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Revelation 4:11 shows that God is worthy because He \_\_\_\_\_ all things.
3. John 14:15 ties worship to \_\_\_\_\_.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. In what ways have you limited worship to a location or a song?
2. How does your daily life reflect your worship?
3. What are some practical ways you can honor God in your ordinary routines?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 2: Prayer as Intimacy

**Luke 11:1–4 (NRSV)** *He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.*

**Spiritual Overview:** In this passage, we see Jesus modeling not just the words of prayer but the heart posture of prayer. The disciples observed that prayer was central to Jesus’ life. He prayed often, in solitude, and with deep connection to the Father. When they asked Him to teach them, Jesus did not give them a formula to recite mindlessly, but an invitation into intimacy with God. The prayer begins with a relationship, “Father.” This is not a distant God, but a loving Parent who desires closeness with His children. To pray is to step into that intimacy, acknowledging God’s holiness and aligning ourselves with His purposes (“your kingdom come”). Jesus also grounds prayer in dependence. We are invited to bring our daily needs before God, “give us each day our daily bread.” This is not just about food but about trusting God to sustain us in every area of life, one day at a time. The prayer continues with a focus on forgiveness and reconciliation. As God extends grace to us, we are called to extend grace to others. Prayer shapes our hearts so that we can live out forgiveness in community, reflecting the mercy we ourselves have received. Finally, the prayer ends with guidance and protection, “do not bring us to the time of trial.” This reminds us that intimacy with God includes trust in His leading, even when we face challenges and temptations. At its core, Jesus’ teaching in Luke 11 is not about perfect words but about perfect communion. Prayer is less about performing for God and more about being with Him, resting in His presence, speaking honestly, and allowing Him to shape our hearts.

### Introduction:

This lesson explores prayer as a deep, intimate conversation with God, not a performance. Jesus doesn’t teach His disciples a formula, but a relationship. Prayer is how we connect, listen, respond, and rest in the Father’s presence.

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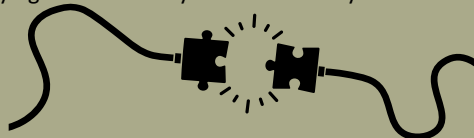
1. Prayer begins with \_\_\_\_\_, not performance.
2. Jesus teaches us to say “\_\_\_\_\_” as a way to approach God relationally.
3. We are invited to pray with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Prayer is not about having the right words, but about having the right \_\_\_\_\_.
5. According to Romans 8:26, the Spirit helps us when we don’t know how to \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

1. 1 Samuel 1:15 shows us Hannah pouring out her \_\_\_\_\_ before the Lord.
2. Philippians 4:6–7 tells us that prayer brings \_\_\_\_\_ that guards our hearts and minds.
3. John 10:27 reminds us that God’s sheep know His \_\_\_\_\_.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. What keeps you from praying more honestly and consistently?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 3: Connecting with God's People

**Acts 2:42–47 (NRSV)** *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.*

**Scriptural Overview:** In Acts 2, we see the early church birthed not just with power but with people. After Peter's sermon at Pentecost, thousands believed and formed a new kind of community. This wasn't about religion, it was about *relationships*. They didn't just go to the temple together. They broke bread in homes, prayed together, shared their possessions, and met each other's needs. It was a Spirit-led, joy-filled, radically generous group of believers. Their devotion to each other was as powerful as their devotion to God. This scripture shows us that Christianity is not a solo journey. When we connect deeply with God's people, we become a visible expression of His love and presence in the world. Real community sharpens us, supports us, and sanctifies us. The church wasn't just a building, it was a movement of hearts and homes. This kind of connection still matters today.

### Introduction:

This lesson helps us reimagine church as more than a place we go. It's a people we grow with. It's a call to invest in community, to share burdens and blessings, and to reflect God's love by showing up for one another.

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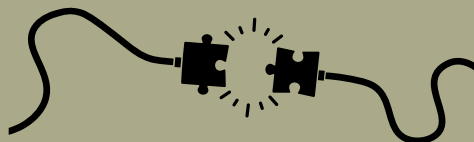
1. In Acts 2:42–47, the early believers devoted themselves to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ of bread, and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Real Christian community involves both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Unity does not mean \_\_\_\_\_—it means \_\_\_\_\_.
4. According to Galatians 6:2, we fulfill the law of Christ by \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Church is not just a \_\_\_\_\_—it's a \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

1. Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 reminds us that two are better than one because they can \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Romans 12:4–5 teaches that we are \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ but belong to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Hebrews 10:24–25 encourages us to not \_\_\_\_\_ meeting together.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. What has community looked like in your life—healthy or unhealthy?
2. Where might God be calling you to connect more intentionally with others?
3. What would it look like for you to carry someone else's burden this week?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 4: Called to More

**Ephesians 2:10 (NRSV)** *For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.*

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### Scriptural Overview:

In Ephesians 2, Paul reminds us that salvation is a gift, given by grace, not by works, so no one can boast. But after reminding the church that they were once far from God, he gives a clear and stunning truth: we are God’s handiwork. That means you were not just saved from something, but saved for something. You are uniquely created in Christ Jesus to do “good works” kingdom-centered actions that God planned long ago. This passage teaches us that calling isn’t reserved for pastors or public figures. Every believer has a calling, a divine purpose rooted in how they were created, where they are placed, and who they’re becoming. You don’t need a stage to walk on purpose. You simply need to say yes to what God puts in your hand. Whether it’s raising kids, mentoring someone, serving your church, or leading quietly behind the scenes, it all matters to God.

### Introduction:

This lesson invites you to embrace the truth that you were made for more. You are God’s masterpiece, not a mistake. Purpose is not just for the future—it’s for *right now*. Let this lesson remind you that God made you with intention and assigned you to this season on purpose.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

1. Ephesians 2:10 says we are God’s \_\_\_\_\_, created to do \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Purpose is not about \_\_\_\_\_—it’s about \_\_\_\_\_.
3. God’s timing in calling is \_\_\_\_\_, not accidental.
4. We are saved by \_\_\_\_\_ and designed for \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Your calling often flows from your \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

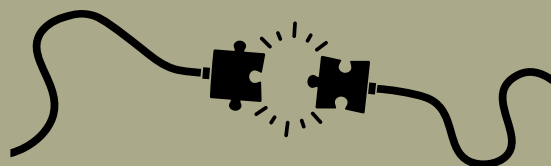
1. Proverbs 3:5–6 tells us to trust God and He will make our \_\_\_\_\_ straight.
2. Isaiah 6:8 shows a willing heart responding to God by saying \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Matthew 28:19–20 commands us to go and make \_\_\_\_\_.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. What gifts or strengths has God already placed in you that point to your calling?
2. How can you use where you are now—work, home, school—as a place of purpose?
3. What’s one area you sense God nudging you to say “yes” to?

### Journal Prompt:

Write about a time you felt most alive, useful, or in sync with God’s plan. What were you doing? Who were you helping? How might that moment speak to your calling?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 5: When God Speaks

**John 10:27-28 (NRSV)** *My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.*

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### Scriptural Overview:

In John 10, Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd. His sheep, He says, know His voice, listen to Him, and follow Him. This is not a metaphor for a distant God barking commands. It's a picture of the intimate relationship of a God who speaks, leads, and knows you by name. The image of the shepherd and sheep was familiar to Jesus' audience. Shepherds lived with their flocks, slept near them, and protected them from predators. This closeness meant the sheep could distinguish their shepherd's voice from all others. This passage is both a comfort and a challenge. It assures us that God still speaks, but it also asks us to listen. Hearing God's voice is not reserved for the ultra-spiritual. It's the birthright of every believer. But learning to hear takes time, stillness, and surrender. God is speaking. The question is: are we tuned in?

### Introduction:

This lesson will guide you in recognizing and responding to the voice of God. He speaks through scripture, peace, people, promptings, and when He does, it leads to transformation. It's not about mystical moments; it's about daily relationships.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

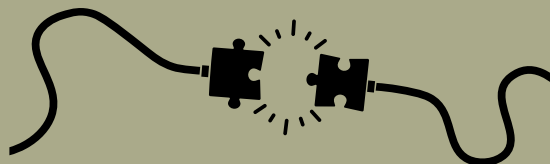
1. John 10:27 says, "My \_\_\_\_\_ listen to my \_\_\_\_\_; I know them, and they \_\_\_\_\_ me."
2. God speaks because He \_\_\_\_\_ you, not just because He wants to \_\_\_\_\_ you.
3. The voice of God is filled with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, not fear or confusion.
4. We can hear God through \_\_\_\_\_, through the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit, and through \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Obedience makes His voice more \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

1. 1 Kings 19:12 reveals that God's voice can be a gentle \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Isaiah 30:21 says you'll hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way; \_\_\_\_\_ in it."
3. Luke 11:28 says those who hear the Word and \_\_\_\_\_ it are blessed.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. What does God's voice sound like to you?
2. Where in your life do you most need to hear Him now?
3. What barriers or noise do you need to silence to hear Him more clearly?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 6: The Right Time

*Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NRSV) For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...*

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### Scriptural Overview:

Ecclesiastes 3 offers one of the most poetic and profound truths in all of Scripture, “There is a time for everything.” In a culture obsessed with speed, success, and immediacy, this chapter teaches us to honor seasons. God works through timing, not just events. What you’re going through may not be what you expected, but it might be right on time in God’s plan. We are invited to trust the divine rhythm of sowing and reaping, silence and speaking, weeping and laughing. Timing in the Kingdom isn’t passive; it’s prophetic. The enemy loves to make us feel behind. However, God doesn’t measure progress in the same way we do. This lesson reminds us that God’s timing is never random. He’s always doing something bigger than we see. The question is not just, “What is God saying?” but also, “Is this the time to move?”

### Introduction:

In this lesson, you’ll learn to trust God’s timing and respond when He says, “Go.” Sometimes obedience looks like waiting. At other times, it appears to be a bold movement. Either way, spiritual maturity learns to move *with* God, not ahead of Him or behind Him.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

1. Ecclesiastes 3:1 teaches us that there is a \_\_\_\_\_ for everything.
2. God is not rushed or \_\_\_\_\_—He works in perfect timing.
3. Delay does not equal \_\_\_\_\_.
4. We are called to discern both God’s \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Exodus 33:15 teaches us not to move without God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

1. Habakkuk 2:3 says the vision awaits an \_\_\_\_\_; though it lingers, \_\_\_\_\_ for it.
2. Joshua 1:9 tells us to be strong and courageous because God is \_\_\_\_\_ us wherever we go.
3. Galatians 6:9 encourages us not to become \_\_\_\_\_, for in the proper time we will \_\_\_\_\_.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

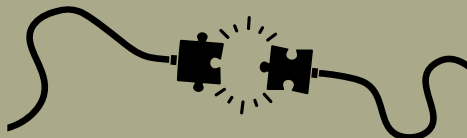
1. What’s one area of your life where you’re tempted to rush ahead of God?
2. What has waiting taught you about who God is?
3. How do you know when it’s time to move and when it’s time to be still?

### Journal Prompt:

Describe a time when you moved too soon—or waited too long. What did God teach you in that season about trust and obedience?

### Reflection Space:

“Lord, help me to trust Your pace. I don’t want to run ahead or drag behind. Teach me to move when You





## Discipleship Series Lesson 7: Responding in Season

**Esther 4:14 (NRSV)** *For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's family will perish.*

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### Scriptural Overview:

The story of Esther is one of courage, timing, and divine positioning. A young Jewish woman becomes queen in a foreign empire not by chance, but by providence. When her people are threatened, her cousin Mordecai reminds her that perhaps she was placed in her royal position “for such a time as this.” Esther’s story teaches us that God often places us in specific spaces not for our comfort, but for a purpose. Her response, though risky, saved a nation. This moment of decision is one that every believer will face. Will I respond when God calls? Will I recognize that now is the time to stand, speak, act, or move? This scripture reminds us that obedience is time-sensitive. We must learn to identify not only God’s voice but also His timing.

### Introduction:

This lesson is about responding in alignment with God’s divine timing. God has given you gifts, opportunities, and influence not for your sake alone, but for His purpose. Your “yes” in the right season can unlock breakthroughs for others.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

1. Esther 4:14 reminds us we were called for such a \_\_\_\_\_ as this.
2. Divine opportunities often require \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Timing and obedience are both acts of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Luke 19:44 warns of missing the time of God’s \_\_\_\_\_.
5. God doesn’t just call us to notice moments—He calls us to \_\_\_\_\_ in them.

### Scripture Exploration:

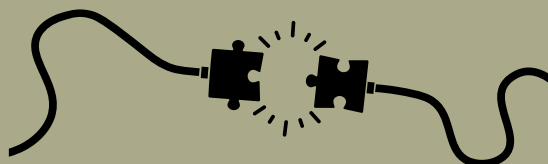
1. Zechariah 4:10 reminds us not to despise small \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Galatians 5:25 calls us to keep in \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.
3. Isaiah 60:1 tells us to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, for our light has come.

### Discussion Prompts (For Journaling or Group Reflection):

1. Have you ever felt like you missed a moment God was calling you to?
2. What helps you recognize when it’s time to act or speak up?
3. Where in your life is God asking you to arise and respond right now?

### Journal Prompt:

Write about a time you knew God was nudging you to do something but you hesitated. What were you afraid of? What do you think would’ve changed if you had responded in the moment?





## Discipleship Series Lesson 8: Celebrating the Connection

*Philippians 1:6 (NRSV) I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

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### Scriptural Overview:

As Paul writes to the Philippians, his message is filled with joy, reflection, and deep encouragement. He reminds them and us that spiritual growth is a journey, not a quick fix. Philippians 1:6 affirms that the same God who began a good work in you is faithful to bring it to completion. This truth celebrates God's consistency even in our inconsistency. It honors the process, including the highs and lows, breakthroughs and delays. We celebrate not just a moment but a movement, a continuous becoming. The journey may not always feel fast or flashy, but it's real, steady, and sacred. This final lesson is a celebration of what God has done, what He is doing, and what He promises to continue doing in and through you.

### Introduction:

This is not just the end of the CONNECT series, it's a holy pause to look back with gratitude and look forward with joy. You've grown. You've shifted. You've deepened. Now, take a moment to celebrate the process and look forward to what's next.

### Fill-in-the-Blank Notes:

Philippians 1:6 says God will \_\_\_\_\_ the good work He \_\_\_\_\_.

Growth in Christ is a \_\_\_\_\_, not a destination.

We don't finish the journey in our own strength—it is the \_\_\_\_\_ who completes it in us.

Celebration is an act of \_\_\_\_\_.

The journey is not over—it's \_\_\_\_\_.

### Scripture Exploration:

Psalms 126:3 – "The Lord has done great things for us, and we are \_\_\_\_\_."

Zephaniah 3:17 – "The Lord your God...will rejoice over you with \_\_\_\_\_."

Matthew 5:14 – "You are the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world."

### Discussion Prompts:

1. What are three ways you've grown since the beginning of this journey?
2. How has your view of God, yourself, or others shifted?
3. What are you committed to carrying forward into your next season of life and faith?

### Journal Prompt:

Reflect on a powerful moment from the CONNECT series.

1. What happened?
2. What did you feel?
3. What did God reveal to you?
4. How will you hold on to it?

