



Hi there! Thanks for choosing to use this series *Deeper* with your students!

I began writing this program over 10 years ago, when I first started in youth ministry, as a small group lesson for new believers. However, I quickly learned that it would be beneficial not just for new believers, but for all of our students. So over the years, I have been able to use it and adapt in to different settings and opportunities. I have used this series for:

- New Believer Courses
- Retreat Weekends
- Week-Long Discipleship Camps
- Small Groups

I hope it will be as beneficial for you and your students as it has been for ours!

How to Use:

1. *Determine your setting and schedule.*

This is the most important question you have to answer up front. Is this a small group? A Sunday school class? A retreat weekend? Each setting is going to bring a different group of students. I did provide a file called “DEEPER SCHEDULE” in the folder “Leadership Journal.” In the Deeper Schedule file, I provided three different schedules for three different settings (Discipleship Camp, Small Group, and Retreat) that will help you get started.

2. *Finalize your budget.*

Your setting will determine your budget. For example, a discipleship camp or retreat might require a worship team, lodging, food, etc. But for a Sunday school class or small group, your expenses would be much smaller.

During this step, I also encourage you to consider a “graduation ceremony,” especially if you are using this as an eight-week small group or week-long discipleship camp. *Deeper* is a big commitment for any student to go through all eight sessions. This ceremony is a great way to

honor their commitment and growth. I have provided a list of ideas in the “Leadership” folder for how you can set up your graduation ceremony.

3. *Promote.*

I have provided various sizes of graphics in the “Graphics” folder.

Have a list of students that you specifically want to see go deeper in their walk with Jesus. Personally invite them to attend *Deeper*. If you are charging for a camp or retreat, consider giving these students a scholarship or financial aid. You can also send a letter or email to the parents of the students from this list. This will not only give them a heads-up, but it will bring them into the process of discipleship.

4. *Print and bind the journals.*

Once your setting has been chosen and budget finalized, it’s time to print and bind the journals. While you can always have it printed and bound professionally, I always chose to print and bind in-house. I have used different ways to bind the material. I have used simple brad folders and regular, 1-inch binders, but my favorite has been the using a “comb bind.” This looks a lot nicer than a folder but, it’s cheaper than a binder for each student. I would print the Cover Page on cardstock, and the notes and teachings on regular paper.

Add an additional cardstock page at the back of the comb bind with a “next step” event for you students to take part in. The additional cardstock will also give the binder a little more substance.

I generally would provide the comb-bound booklets for students and a regular binder for the leader teaching the class. I have also printed week to week for small groups, but students never keep their notes. The booklets make the material feel more important and substantial.

5. *Print the devotion.*

I have also included a devotion that I use to help students go deeper on their own. If using *Deeper* for a discipleship camp, I highly encourage you to use the devotion for “homework” that will involve activities with their family/friends and reinforce what was discussed that day. If you are doing a retreat weekend, you can use this as a next step for the week after the retreat. I formatted the devotion to be printed in landscape, front and back, then folded in half.



- *Share about a time when you got in an argument with a best friend, and how you felt when that friendship was broken.*

Today, we're going to be talking about a broken relationship between God and humans, and how that relationship was renewed.

Could someone read Genesis 3:1–6 for us?

Genesis 3:1–6 (MSG)

The serpent was clever, more clever than any wild animal God had made. He spoke to the Woman: “Do I understand that God told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?”

²⁻³ The Woman said to the serpent, “Not at all. We can eat from the trees in the garden. It’s only about the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, ‘Don’t eat from it; don’t even touch it or you’ll die.’”

⁴⁻⁵ The serpent told the Woman, “You won’t die. God knows that the moment you eat from that tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil.”

⁶ When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she’d know everything!—she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.

- *What happened in this passage?*

Now, let’s read Romans 5:12–14.

Romans 5:12–14 (MSG)

12 You know the story of how Adam landed us in the dilemma we're in — first sin, then death, and no one exempt from either sin or death. 13 That sin disturbed relations with God in everything and everyone, but the extent of the disturbance was not clear until God spelled it out in detail to Moses. So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape from Adam to Moses. 14 Even those who didn't sin precisely as Adam did by disobeying a specific command of God still had to experience

this termination of life, this separation from God. But Adam, who got us into this, also points ahead to the One who will get us out of it.

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree, **they disobeyed God; they sinned; they rebelled against God; they cared more about what they wanted to do instead of what God wanted them to do.** This is sin.

Sin is the act of rebelling against God’s desires in our life, and instead doing our own thing. When Adam and Eve sinned, their action created a HUGE gap between humanity and God. Before they sinned, Adam and Eve were able to freely walk and talk with God. Once they rebelled against His will and disobeyed, they could no longer have the relationship with God that God wanted them to have. Their sin created a HUGE divide.

Have students break into small groups of 2 or 3 and brainstorm ideas of how people have tried to overcome this gap/divide. After a few minutes, have each group share what they came up with (ignore the problem; worship idols; create false gods, etc.).

Let’s read Romans 5:15–17.

Romans 5:15–17 (MSG)

15 Yet the rescuing gift is not exactly parallel to the death-dealing sin. If one man's sin put crowds of people at the dead-end abyss of separation from God, just think what God's gift poured through one man, Jesus Christ, will do! 16 There's no comparison between that death-dealing sin and this generous, life-giving gift. The verdict on that one sin was the death sentence; the verdict on the many sins that followed was this wonderful life sentence. 17 If death got the upper hand through one man's wrongdoing, can you imagine the breathtaking recovery life makes, sovereign life, in those who grasp with both hands this wildly extravagant life-gift, this grand setting-everything-right, that the one man Jesus Christ provides?

Jesus lived, died, and rose from the dead so that we would no longer live life always falling to get across this huge canyon of a problem. Jesus is our bridge from death to life. It is through His death and resurrection alone that humanity has the opportunity for a restored relationship with God. When you give your life to Christ, you go from complete rebellion against God to now serving God with 100 percent of your life.

Pass out **Handout D1.1-a**. Have the students discuss the four pictures and how they relate to the study today.

Let's finish our study by reading Romans 5:18–19.

Romans 5:18–19 (MSG)

18 Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life! 19 One man said no to God and put many people in the wrong; one man said yes to God and put many in the right.