



And so, it begins. We pray that by downloading this resource you will be able to run an amazing retreat for your teenagers. Our goal is that by providing you with this tool, you can spend most of your time investing into the lives of students rather than chasing down volunteers or writing sermons 15 minutes before you're supposed to preach. (We all know you've done it.) This comprehensive handbook is your guide through every stage of planning an awesome retreat including themes, schedules, material lists, sermon transcripts, small group discussions, graphics, and more!

Where to Begin:

Included in this resource are many different folders filled with tools and resources. However, knowing which tool to use and when is important.

- 1) Spend some time in prayer.

This is a big undertaking, and one that we pray will make huge impact in the lives of your students. We encourage you to start this process in prayer, truly committing this process and weekend to the Lord.

- 2) Begin the process.

As you take the next steps in creating a life-changing weekend for your students, here's how to proceed:

- A) Review the "Into the Deep Retreat Leader's Guide." This guide will serve as your roadmap, pointing you to the various resource folders and files you'll use as you customize the retreat to suit your group's experience.
- B) Pick and choose from the resource folders and find what you need for your retreat and then use it. Maybe you have a graphics guy or dynamite games leader. Pick and choose what will help make your life easier and your students' experience exceptional.

Thanks again for choosing our resource for your next retreat! We look forward to hearing your feedback! 😊



[Author Note: Welcome everyone to the first session and be sure to hand out small group guides and schedule if you allow students to have a copy of the schedule.]

This weekend, we are going to be talking about reading the Bible:
How to read it,
How to understand it,
How to apply it, and
How to keep up with the habit.

Hopefully you brought a paper Bible with you; if you didn't, we have one you can use for the weekend. Normally, I'd say electronic is just as good, but for this weekend, you are going to want the print version, so you can write, underline, take notes, and mark things up a little.

The Bible is powerful. More than other books.

MAIN POINT - The Bible has the power to change lives, and to reveal to us who God is.

Hebrews 4:12 NIV

12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Scripture is powerful. It is alive. And God tells us this power is at work in our lives and in the world. There is nothing special about the paper or the ink. Those things are the same as so many other books on the shelf. But the Word itself, the Bible, has power. It connects us to God. It reveals who He is. The Bible is a resource for those who believe. It is God's voice. It is His encouragement, His correction, His teaching for us.

Psalms 119:105 NIV

105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Romans 15:4 NIV

4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So, why do we seem to have trouble reading it then? Why do we seem to have trouble studying it and putting it into practice in our lives? Often, as believers, it seems like we have a difficult time actually sitting down to read and study the Scripture on our own, and that includes me.

[Author Note: If you have found it difficult at times to read the Bible for yourself and not just for work and preparing messages, share some thoughts on that or a specific example.]

Studying the Bible can be difficult. Usually, when we get serious about reading the Bible, we decide we are going to read it through like a normal book. When I get a book to read, I start at the beginning and read to the end. I might sneak a peek at the end sometimes, but for the most part, I am guessing that is how we all read. So, why wouldn't we approach the Bible the same way? It just makes sense to start in Genesis and read through to Revelation. And so, we open and start reading, and we get through Genesis and Exodus just fine, but then comes Leviticus, which is all about the Law and has a lot of "the tent shall be this many cubits by this many," and "the colors of the priest robe shall be this." Suddenly, I'm wondering what's on TV. Or maybe you power through Leviticus only to be confronted by Numbers. The entire second chapter is just how to arrange the Israelites' camp. We begin to lose our enthusiasm and might just skip a day here and there until it stops being a habit. Or maybe, you've read the Bible through and are like, now what?

POINT - The Bible isn't like a normal book, and so we shouldn't read it like a normal book.

The goal of reading the Bible is to grow — to grow as a disciple of Jesus and to grow in our faith. The way we do that is by applying what it is we read to our lives. But to actually apply what you read to your life, you have

to actually understand what it is you are reading, and the first step to understanding what you are reading is to actually ask yourself, “What did I just read?” It may seem obvious, but this is a crucially important step.

I want to challenge us to stop and think about the things we think we know; to actually look at what we read. We shouldn’t just assume we know what we read. It can be easy to look at passages we have seen a bunch or that seems familiar and not learn anything from them, because we miss what is most obvious.

POINT - We can easily miss the application when we don’t observe what the text actually says.

For instance, how many of you know the story of Jesus’ being tempted by the devil? What are the temptations, in order?

Let’s look at it really quickly. Turn with me to Luke 4:1.

Luke 4:1-13 NIV

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”

5 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. 7 If you worship me, it will all be yours.”

8 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

9 The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. 10 For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;

11 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

12 Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

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