



**OPEN**

**Did you play “Follow the Leader” as a child? Are you someone who would rather follow their instructions or go your own way?**

Even though “Follow the Leader” is a simple children’s game, it teaches an important lesson: we are all following someone. Whether it is a charismatic leader, an ideology, or our own intuition, we are all living in accordance with the one we follow. Many of us may even be unaware of what or who we are following or influenced by. When we don’t know who we are following, we will be led to places we don’t intend to go.

In session 2, Derwin shares how we can be led away from God’s good plan for our lives by cultural and personal influences. However, the holy habit of being shaped by Scripture will help us stay true to our identity in Christ and create a godly transformation in our everyday attitudes and actions.

**VIEW**

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

**What is the relationship between Jesus and Scripture?**

**How do the things or people we follow shape our habits?**

**How does Scripture talk about our spiritual identity? In what ways does it differ from what our culture says?**

Watch Session 2: *Shaped by Scripture* (14 minutes).

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**REVIEW**

Derwin started this session by sharing a moment of crisis in his life. That experience prompted him to literally cling to God’s Word. **Have you ever had a crisis in your life that made you look for comfort or peace? Where did you turn?**

Our circumstances can prompt us to seek guidance, but, whether we seek it out or not, our culture often tries to guide our thoughts and actions. Derwin warned us that our culture can cause us to have a skewed understanding of ourselves, especially when we compare ourselves to others. **Do you ever compare yourself to others? If so, in what ways?**

**What are some problems with comparing ourselves to others? How does comparison typically make you feel about yourself?**

Comparison can lead to idolatry, which is finding our value or meaning in something created rather than in God. **What kinds of things do people in our culture idolize? How do our idols shape our behavior?**

Since our culture and circumstances can give us a false view of ourselves, we need Scripture to remind us of our God-given identity. Instead of turning to the opinion of others, we can hear from God, who loves us and encourages us to find our identity in what he says about us. **Why is it essential that our identity is associated with Jesus rather than something or someone else?**

Derwin shared that engaging with God’s Word is not about collecting information but seeking transformation. **What do you think it looks like to read the Bible for transformation as opposed to gaining information?**

While we have responsibility to foster our spiritual growth, Philippians 1:6 tells us that no matter where we are in our relationship with God, he *will* complete the work he has started in us. Becoming holy is ultimately God’s work in us. While our culture tells us we are solely responsible for changing ourselves, we can rely on God’s loving hand to guide us through certain change. **How do you view your role in your own spiritual growth? How can God’s promise to make us holy give you peace and hope?**

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**BIBLE EXPLORATION**

We become what we consume. Whatever media or influences we take in will affect the way we think, act, and speak. Psalm 1 gives us warnings about the sources we choose to be influenced by and how being rooted in God’s Word brings nourishment to our soul.

Read Psalm 1:1–3.

The psalm starts by telling its readers that happiness comes from not listening to negative influences. If we are not careful, some voices in our lives can sweep us off the path that God intends for us to be on. **How do negative influences drag us away from a godly and life-giving path? What influences have drawn you away from God before?**

Some bad influences or voices are more recognizable than others. Some may seem beneficial on the surface but are not rooted in the truth of Scripture. We have to be discerning of the influences in our lives, judging whether they are true or simply what we want to hear. **How do you know if an influence in your life is healthy for you or not? What influences, if any, need to be ignored or uprooted?**

The psalm continues by explaining that the happy person finds guidance from God. **What makes God’s instruction in Scripture more beneficial than other influences?**

We see that the psalmist encourages us to delight in God’s Word rather than having a begrudging obligation to it. God wants to lead us to himself—the source of joy, peace, and happiness. **Do you see time in Scripture as a chore or a joy? What could you do to find more delight in God’s Word?**

Verse two shows us two benefits of delighting in God’s Word: bearing beneficial fruit and being sustained in difficult seasons. His Word is good today and for whatever tomorrow brings. **What is an example of a fruit that is a result of being rooted in God’s Word? How can others benefit from the fruit God produces in our lives through his Word?**

The picture of a leaf not withering refers to an evergreen life, being sustained regardless of the season and

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especially in difficult seasons of “drought” in our lives.  
**How has God’s Word sustained you in difficult seasons?  
How might our hope in difficult seasons point others  
toward finding strength through God’s Word?**

Psalm 1 also gives us practical instruction on how to engage with Scripture. Whenever you read the Bible, think deeply about what it says, and then meditate or dwell on it throughout your day. **What is the difference between merely reading rather than meditating on something?**

**If you haven’t already, what would it look like to establish a regular habit of meditating on Scripture?**

## **LAST WORD**

The threats of misguided influences linger around every corner. The world is clamoring for us to listen to its advice about love, joy, comfort, and happiness. If we aren’t careful, we can be led away from God to attitudes and actions that hurt ourselves and others.

God has something much better for us. His Word guides and protects us with the truth. It shows us who Jesus is, who we really are, and how to become more like Christ. The Bible is a holy influence that leads us to God. By building a habit of seeking its voice throughout your day, you will be transformed into a steadfast man or woman of God.

## **DEEPER WALK**

**Memorize:** Be reminded of the need to be influenced by God’s Word rather than the world by memorizing Romans 12:1–2.

**Read:** Meditate on Romans 12:1–2 throughout the week. What thought patterns do you need renewed with the voice of Scripture?

**Pray:** Ask God to help you rely on his truth to guide you and to give you the discipline to meditate on it regularly.