

TRANSFORMED!

Learning Christian Attitudes



Timothy Leadership Training Program

www.tlti.org

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Introduction



◆ General Introduction

Timothy Leadership Training Program (TLT) provides training for Christian leaders around the world in many languages. (see www.tlti.org)

The theme of the manual *Transformed!* is based on the Bible text in [Romans 12:2](#): “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This text contrasts transformed attitudes to common attitudes we often find in ourselves and others.

Attitudes affect our lives in many ways. They especially affect our relationships with others. Some attitudes help build good relationships. Other attitudes harm our relationships with others. For example, an inner attitude of anger can harm relationships between people. On the other hand, a transformed attitude of respect will help build good relationships in the family and in society.

The lessons of this manual present seven harmful attitudes in contrast to seven transformed constructive Christian attitudes.

Through the lessons and plans you make at the end of each lesson you will learn to:

- Identify and overcome seven harmful personal attitudes,
- Identify and develop seven constructive attitudes,
- Contribute to the well-being and development of your family, church and community.

◆ Introduction to Interactive Group Learning

What is interactive group learning?

TLT interactive group learning takes place as people come together in small groups to learn from each other. Together they go through the lessons in the manual and, between lessons accomplish related assignments.

Interactive group learning is different from learning through preaching and lecturing. When preaching or lecturing, one person stands up in front of the group and does all or most of the talking. Preaching and lecturing are valued ways to teach and to learn, but they are not the only ways!

What is the value of interactive group learning in the church?

- The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit was sent so that **all** Christians could edify and build each other up: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...” ([Colossians 3:16](#)). See also [John 16:13](#) and [Acts 2:18](#).
- Studies in education show that we forget most of what others tell us, but that we remember most of what we say ourselves. This means that good training will enable learners to formulate in their own words what they discover and learn.
- Christian fellowship is strengthened through interactive groups. Deep relationships and friendships are formed as participants learn from each other and share their joys and disappointments.



◆ Introduction to Learning with TLT

What happens during a TLT lesson?

Bible texts and related questions are read aloud. Participants then respond by answering and discussing the questions. Often, added questions are raised. The group facilitator encourages discussion and, at the same time, keeps the group moving through the lesson in order to complete it in the scheduled time.

Participants are expected to listen attentively and respectfully to each other, even when they have different points of view. All participants are invited to actively participate in group discussion. Some will find it a challenge to speak up and share their ideas and experiences in the group. For others, it will be a challenge to stay silent, to listen attentively and to give others the opportunity to speak!

What happens at the end of each lesson?

At the end of each lesson, participants write out two assignments called Personal Plans to put into practice what was learned during the lesson.

- **1st Plan:** A personal activity which each participant decides to accomplish before the next lesson. At the beginning of the following lesson, reports are made on these assignments.
- **2nd Plan:** Memorization of a Bible text relating to the lesson studied. Bible memorization enables participants to remember what was learned during the lesson, to develop constructive attitudes and to accomplish their 1st assignment.

1

2

The lesson then concludes with prayer.

Evaluation after the lesson

After the lesson the facilitator meets for a few moments with one or two other participants. They briefly answer these questions:

1. *Was every participant made to feel welcome in the group?*
2. *What went well during the lesson? Did everyone listen attentively to the others and contribute to the discussion?*
3. *What could be improved for the next lesson?*

These very brief moments of evaluation help the facilitator and the whole group to progress well together.



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the first lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to carefully read the story of David, Bathsheba and Uriah in 2 Samuel 11:1–12:14. During the lesson, one participant will briefly tell this story in about 5 minutes.

During the days before the lesson, the facilitator reads through the lesson attentively. He or she reflects on the Bible texts and on the related questions, thinks about how the participants will react, and prepares the lesson in prayer.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

Participants introduce themselves briefly to the group..

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. The designated person tells the story of King David, Bathsheba and Uriah in 2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:14. Then the group discusses these questions:

- a. Read Exodus 20:13–17. *What were the limits set by God that David didn't obey?*
- b. *In your opinion, why did David hide his sins?*
- c. *What did David destroy in order to avoid being shamed?*

2. Before Nathan's visit, David maintained his honor in the eyes of others. He was the great king admired by his people. But he was unhappy.

- a. Read Psalms 32:3–4. *What words does David use in this text to describe his inner unhappiness?*
- b. *David experienced an inner struggle. Why didn't he want to tell the truth?*
- c. *Why don't we always tell the truth, even though this causes us inner unhappiness?*

3. To hide his sin, David became violent. Even today, people in authority do not always respect the limits set by God. Then they hide what they've done wrong. Sometimes they even use violence to hide the truth. *Does this happen where you live? If so, in what ways?*

4. Read Psalms 32:5, 8. *What did David do? What did God do?*

5. Read 1 John 1:8–10. *What does this text invite us to do? What does God do? What does God do to help us overcome our hesitation to tell the truth about ourselves?*

6. Read Psalms 103:8–13. *Together, make a list of good reasons to confess our sins to God.*



7. We confess our sins to God in different ways. For example:

a. When we are together as a family or in church and we pray: Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. *How do we confess our sins in a group?*

b. *We also confess our sins through personal prayer. Why is it good to confess our sin every day?*

◆ REFLECT

Like King David, we tend to hide what we've done wrong. We fear the punishment and shame that will come if we are found out. The story of King David shows how harmful this attitude can be. God's love frees us from this fear and gives us courage to acknowledge what we've done wrong and to confess it. We learn not to hide our faults from God.

God's Spirit also teaches us to admit our mistakes to others and to show respect and forgiveness to those who do wrong to us (James 5:16, Colossians 3:13). These attitudes of honesty, respect and forgiveness enable us to develop constructive relationships in our home, in our church and in our community.

◆ PLAN AND PRAY

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

1 The **1st Plan** describes something you will do before the next lesson to put into practice what you learned.

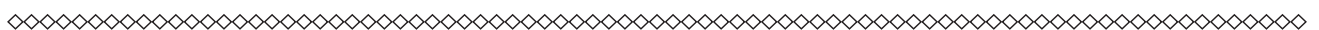
For example:

- ✓ I will confess what I've done wrong to God every evening before going to bed.
- ✓ I will show respect to someone who offends me and I will forgive him or her.
- ✓ I will ask forgiveness of a friend or a family member who I offended.
- ✓ Another plan that you write yourself.

What will you do before the next lesson?

When will you do it?:

2 The **2nd Plan** is a Bible text that everyone in the group will memorize before the next lesson. For the next lesson, everyone will memorize 1 John 1:9-10. *Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:*



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together 1 John 1:9-10.

◆ EVALUATE

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the second lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to carefully read the story of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37:1–36. During the lesson, one participant will tell this story in about 5 minutes.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory 1 John 1:9–10. Then, report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 1. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a problem? Did anything surprise you? Did anything change because of what you did?* By sharing we all learn together.

ooooo

Remember an incident of envy that you experienced or observed. Perhaps you were jealous of someone. Maybe you felt someone was jealous of you. Share your experiences together.

Note: In this lesson, the words “envy” and “jealousy” have the same meaning.

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. One participant briefly tells the story of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37:1–36. The brothers compared themselves to their younger brother Joseph and were jealous of him. They felt hurt. *What did the brothers do to get rid of their hurt feelings?*

2. Read Matthew 27:18. *What did religious leaders in Jesus’ day do to get rid of their hurt feelings?*

3. We become envious when we compare ourselves to others. We see that others have more than us: better health, greater intelligence, better employment, greater physical beauty. This makes us unhappy. We feel hurt and sometimes angry. *Give other examples of jealousy.*

4. When someone we envy loses what they had and what we envied, we feel relieved and even happy. We tend to hide this happiness and are ashamed of our attitude. *Can you give an example of this?*

5. Read Proverbs 14:30 and James 3:14–16.

a. *What happens when we don’t control our jealous attitudes?*

b. *In what ways does a jealous leader hinder the good development of a country?*

6. These are three ways to combat and overcome jealous thoughts and actions:

- **Confess** to God our jealous thoughts. *Take a few moments in silence to reflect personally on the jealous thoughts you may have. Pray silently that God would help you overcome jealousy.*

- **Appreciate** all that God has given us.

a. Read Psalms 103:1–2 and 139:14. *Together make a list of at least 10 things that God has given you. Begin your list with the words “Life” and “God’s love”.*



b. In your opinion, what was Paul trying to say in 1 Timothy 6:6?

• **Appreciate** what God has given to others, without jealousy.

c. *Do you know someone who has talents and abilities that you don't have, but that you could develop if you imitate that person without being jealous of him or her?*

d. Read 1 Corinthians 12:14–21. *What image in this text helps us learn to honor those who have more than we do, and also honor those who have less than we do?*

◆ REFLECT

We are all born with the tendency to be jealous. We become jealous of those who have more than we do. Often we are ashamed of our jealous feelings and hide them. The story of Joseph and his brothers shows the harm that jealous attitudes can cause.

The Holy Spirit leads us to recognize our jealousy and to confess it. Then the Holy Spirit transforms our attitudes and teaches us to appreciate and honor others, whether they have more than us or less. This new attitude enables us to build constructive relationships that strengthen our family, our church and our community.

◆ PLAN AND PRAY

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

1

The **1st Plan** describes something you will do before the next lesson to put into practice what you learned.

For example:

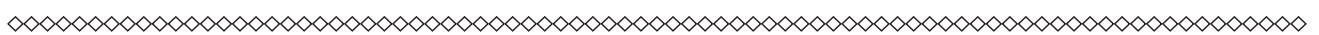
- ✓ In my daily prayers, I will ask God to help me overcome my jealousy of others.
- ✓ I will show my sincere appreciation to someone who has more than I have.
- ✓ I will show respect to someone who is in need and provide them with assistance in some way.
- ✓ Another plan that you write yourself.

What will you do before the next lesson?

When will you do it?

2

2nd Plan: Everyone will memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4. *Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:*



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together 1 Corinthians 13:4.

◆ EVALUATE

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.

TO DEVALUE OR TO VALUE



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the third lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to read the story of Herod in Matthew 2:1–18. During the lesson, one participant will briefly tell this story.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory 1 Corinthians 13:4. Then, report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 2. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a problem? Did anything surprise you? Did anything change because of what you did?* By sharing we all learn together.

ooooo

Think of someone who made an effort to guide you as you were growing up. Share your stories together.

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. One participant briefly tells the story of Herod in Matthew 2:1–18.
 - a. *King Herod was worried. Why?*
 - b. *Herod didn't value his people. How did Herod show that he devalued his people?*
2. *When government leaders don't value those they lead, what happens to the country? Give examples of leaders who devalue those they lead.*
3. Read Psalms 23:1–3. God is called Shepherd.
 - a. *This Shepherd values the lives of those he leads. How do we know?*
 - b. *In what ways does the Shepherd ensure the good development of those he leads?*
 - c. *Compare the attitude and actions of the Shepherd to the attitude and actions of Herod.*
4. Read Isaiah 40:10–11. Long before Jesus was born, God promised to send a Great Shepherd to lead his people.
 - a. *How would this Shepherd lead his people?*
 - b. *What is the other name that God gave this Shepherd in Isaiah 42:1–4?*
5. Read John 10:11–16. Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd".
 - a. *What did Jesus do to show that he was the Shepherd promised by Isaiah?*
 - b. *Jesus valued even those who were devalued by others. What are some of the things that Jesus did to show unimportant people were valued by him?*
6. Read Luke 22:24–26 and Romans 15:1–3. Jesus calls his disciples to be his assistant-shepherds. He calls us to work for the restoration and the development of those who are devalued by others.

What can you do this week to:

 - a. *show that a child has value by contributing to his or her good development?*



- b. *show that someone sick or suffering has value to you by doing something to help them?*
- c. *show respect for people with disabilities?*

◆ **REFLECT**

Many leaders have little concern about the well-being of those they lead. They are mostly concerned about keeping their own advantages and power. They put down those they lead to keep their own power.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd leads in another way. Instead of putting down those he leads, Jesus **values** them and **builds them up**. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are valued by him.

The Holy Spirit teaches us to see others through the eyes of Jesus and to value them. This attitude enables us to build constructive relationships that strengthen our family, our church and our community.

◆ **PLAN AND PRAY**

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

① The **1st Plan** describes something you will do before the next lesson to put into practice what you learned.

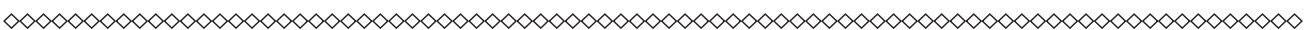
For example:

- ✓ Take time to help a child do homework.
- ✓ Visit, alone or with others, someone who is sick or elderly.
- ✓ Do something to show someone who has a disability that they are of great value.
- ✓ Other plan that God has placed on your heart.

What will you do before the next lesson?

When will you do this?

② **2nd Plan:** Everyone will memorize Romans 15:1-2. Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together Romans 15:1-2.

◆ **EVALUATE**

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.

TO COMPETE OR TO COLLABORATE



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the fourth lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to read the Gospel stories in Mark 9:2–10 and Mark 10:35–45. During the lesson one participant will briefly tell these stories.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory Romans 15:1–2. Report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 3. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a surprise or an obstacle? Did anything change because of what you did?* Share your observations so we can all learn together.

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Sometimes teachers encourage their students to compete with each other for the best test scores. Students with the best scores receive special prizes or honors. It is thought that if the best students are honored, all the students will be motivated to work hard and to get the best possible results.

Has this been your experience? If so, share your stories?

Competitive learning may have some value, especially in sports. However, educators show the limits, and even disadvantages, of competitive attitudes for learning and for life.

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. One participant briefly tells the Gospel stories in Mark 9 and 10.
 - a. *What did James and John want from Jesus? What happened in Mark 9 that may have given them the idea that they deserved special privileges and honor?*
 - b. *How did the other disciples react? What is false honor according to Mark 10:42?*
 - c. *Can you give examples of people who try to receive false honor?*
2. Read Isaiah 43:1–5. *According to this text, how do we receive **true honor**?*
3. Read Mark 10:43–45 and Acts 20:34–35.
 - a. *How did Jesus live a life of true honor according to Mark 10:43–45?*
 - b. *How did Paul live a life of true honor according to Acts 20:34–35?*
4. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24–25, and 2 Timothy 2:3–7.
 - a. *Why do you think Paul compares the Christian life to a sports race?*
 - b. *Give examples of athletes, soldiers and farmers who lead disciplined lives in order to achieve a goal.*



- c. Give examples of how athletes, soldiers, or farmers can be **distracted** from achieving their goal.
- d. What can distract us from growing in our faith?

5. Read Philippians 3:14 and 2 Timothy 4:7–8. According to these texts, how is the race of the Christian life **different** from a sports race?

6. Read Hebrews 12:1 and 13:15–16. According to these texts, what three things can we do to live a life of true honor while here on earth? Give examples.

7. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–20.

- a. What image does Paul use to describe God's people?
- b. Imagine that your right leg tried to compete with your left leg by running faster. What would happen?

8. Read 1 Corinthians 12:21–23. According to this text, why should everyone in the church be valued and honored, and not just a few leaders?

9. Read Ephesians 4:11–16.

- a. What happens when there is cooperation and teamwork instead of competition among God's people?
- b. Give examples of teamwork in a group that builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (v. 16).

◆ REFLECT

We live in world that honors people who show that they are better than others. This is demonstrated in competitive sports events. Competition has its place in sporting events. However, competitive attitudes and practices are not always helpful for learning and for life together.

Through God's great love for us we experience true honor. Jesus discouraged his disciples from seeking false honor by competing with each other. According to Jesus, we live a life of **true honor** when we serve those in need, **value** those who are different from ourselves and **cooperate** with others as a team to advance Christ's honor and Kingdom.

◆ PLAN AND PRAY

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

1

1st Plan: What will you do before the next lesson to live a life of true honor?

When will you do this?



2

2nd Plan: Everyone will memorize Mark 10:43-45. Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together Mark 10:43-45.

◆ **EVALUATE**

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the fifth lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to read the story of the three servants in Matthew 25:14–30. During the lesson one participant will briefly tell this story.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory Mark 10:33–35. Then, report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 4. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a problem? Did anything surprise you? Did anything change because of what you did?* By sharing we all learn together.

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Together, make a list of the plants and animals in your area that are useful to you. What would happen if those plants and animals stopped developing?

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. Read Genesis 1:11 and 20–24. *What did God create so that it would multiply and develop well?*

2. Read Psalms 104:24–31. *What is God's attitude toward the creation that is developing well? See especially verse 31.*

3. Read Genesis 3:18–19. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, the development of God's creation is hindered and limited.

Examples of how the development of God's creation can be hindered and limited:

- A field is full of weeds. It produces no useful harvest.
- A field is fertile. The field is planted, but there is no harvest because no one waters the seeds or pulls out the weeds.
- A fertile field is planted and produces a good harvest. But the field is not cared for year after year. After a few years it is no longer fertile and the topsoil is washed away by erosion.
- A fertile field is planted and produces a good harvest. But the chemical fertilizers used in the field contaminate a nearby lake and kill the fish in it.
- A fertile field is planted and produces a good harvest. But the owner of the field does not pay his workers an honest wage, so their families cannot prosper.

Give other examples of how the development of God's creation can be hindered.

4. One participant briefly tells the story of the three servants in Matthew 25:14–30.

- a. *What did the first two servants do that the third didn't do? What did the third servant do that the first two didn't do?*
- b. *The attitude of the third servant was not the same as the attitude of the first two. What was different? How did the attitude of the third servant prevent him from multiplying his talent?*



c. *In what ways can we develop what God has entrusted to us? Give examples.*

5. Read 2 Corinthians 9:8.

a. *According to this text, what does God develop and multiply in us?*

b. *God's grace is unlimited. When God loves and blesses us, it doesn't mean that he loves and blesses others less!*

c. *According to this text, what happens when God's love develops in us?*

d. *Do you remember having received God's love through someone in whose life God's love was developing well? Share your experiences.*

◆ REFLECT

God created plants, animals and human communities so they would develop well. God loves the bountiful world he created and entrusts it to us so that we manage it well. God calls us to value the resources he has entrusted to us and to overcome whatever hinders their good development.

As God's love grows and develops in our hearts, he also calls us to share his love with others. In this way, our families and communities are strengthened and can develop well.

◆ PLAN AND PRAY

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

1

1st Plan: *What will you do before the next lesson to develop something of value that God has entrusted to you?*

When will you do this?

2

2nd Plan: *Everyone will memorize 2 Corinthians 9:8. Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:*



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together 2 Corinthians 9:8.

◆ EVALUATE

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.



◆ PREPARE

Several days before the sixth lesson, the group facilitator asks all participants to carefully read the story of Zacchaeus in [Luke 19:1–10](#). During the lesson, one participant will briefly tell this story.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory [2 Corinthians 9:8](#). Then, report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 5. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a problem? Did anything surprise you? Did anything change because of what you did?* By sharing we all learn together.

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Think of a generous person that you know or have known in the past. Describe that person. What is your feeling toward him or her? Share your stories together.

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. Read [Luke 12:16–21](#). Jesus calls the man in this story a fool. *Why is that? Have you ever known or heard about a person like that?*
2. One participant briefly tells the story of Zacchaeus in [Luke 19:1–10](#). *What changed when Zacchaeus met Jesus?*
3. *Imagine that you lived in Jesus' time in the city of Jericho. What do you think may have changed in your life and the life of your friends because of the change in Zacchaeus?*
4. Read [Ephesians 4:28](#). What are our **three responsibilities** according to this text?
 - Stop stealing
 - a. *What are some of the ways that people steal in your area?*
 - b. *How can employers steal from their employees?*
 - c. *How can employees steal from their employer?*
 - Engage in productive work
 - d. *What is the productive work of a farmer?*
 - e. *What is the productive work of a child in school?*
 - f. *Someone is looking for work. How can he or she be productive even before finding regular employment?*
 - Share
 - g. Read [Ephesians 4:31–32](#). *What are the signs of a generous heart?*
 - h. Read [2 Corinthians 9:7–11](#). *Generosity causes happiness. Who is made happy according to this text?*



- i. *Does someone have a story to tell about this kind of happiness?*
- j. *How do we learn to be generous according to this text?*
- k. *Generous people are generally happy people. Why is that, in your opinion?*

◆ **REFLECT**

We have a tendency to keep what we have for ourselves. We can even be tempted to take what belongs to others so that we can have more for ourselves.

God changes these attitudes. Through Christ’s presence in our lives, we learn to see the value of others and to be concerned about their well-being. We learn, through our attitudes and actions, to be generous to others as God has been generous with us. God uses our generosity to contribute to the well-being of our families, churches and communities.

◆ **PLAN AND PRAY**

Now take a few minutes to write two Personal Plans.

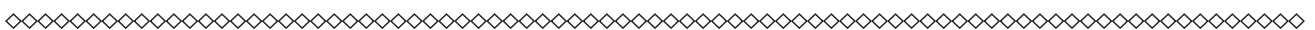
- ① The **1st Plan** describes something you will do before the next lesson to put into practice what you learned.
For example:

- ✓ I will finish my work every day before watching videos.
- ✓ I will speak in a positive way about someone who I find unpleasant.
- ✓ I will visit a lonely person and listen attentively to them during our conversation.
- ✓ I will share some of my time and my material things with someone in need.
- ✓ Another plan that you write yourself.

What will you do before the next lesson?

When will you do this?

- ② The **2nd Plan**: Everyone will memorize Ephesians 4:28. Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:



To conclude this lesson, pray together or in smaller groups for your plans. Begin your prayer by reciting together Ephesians 4:28.

◆ **EVALUATE**

The facilitator meets briefly with one or two participants. See p. 4.

TO LIVE WITH A CLOSED OR AN OPEN HEART



◆ PREPARE

Before the seventh lesson the facilitator asks all participants to review the first 6 lessons of the manual.

LESSON PLAN

◆ SHARE

In the larger group or in smaller groups, recite from memory Ephesians 4:28. Then, report on your 1st Plan from Lesson 6. *Did you accomplish it? Did you encounter a problem? Did anything surprise you? Did anything change because of what you did?* By sharing we all learn together.

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When you become old, how do you want people to remember you? What words do you hope they will use to describe you? Complete the following sentence. He/she is:

◆ DISCOVER AND DISCUSS

1. Remember the story of David the king (Lesson 1), Joseph's brothers (Lesson 2), Herod (Lesson 3), James and John (Lesson 4) and Zacchaeus (Lesson 6).

- When were they living with their hearts **closed**, focusing just on their own desires?*
- Which of them had their heart **opened** to something beyond themselves?*
- Whose heart was never opened?*

2. We all have the tendency to think too much about ourselves, what we have, our reputation, etc. We focus on ourselves. When that happens, we can say that our heart closes in upon ourselves.

We lose sight of God's love for us and his plan for our lives. Have you observed this in your own life? Does someone in the group have a story to tell about this?

3. *How were the hearts of these persons opened to God love and his plan for their lives?*

- Moses before: Exodus 3:10-11. Moses after: Exodus 15:1-2.
- Mary before: John 20:11-13. Mary after: John 20:17-18.
- The disciples going to Emmaus before: Luke 24:17-18. The disciples after: Luke 24:31-32.
- The apostle Paul before: Acts 26:9-11. Paul after: Acts 26:20.

4. Like David, God opens our heart to his forgiveness and his plan for our lives.

- Read Colossians 3:15-16. *What is a sign that God opens our hearts to his love, his forgiveness and his plan for our lives?*



- b. Read Ephesians 4:31–32. *What is a sign that God is opening our heart to develop good relationships with others?*
- c. *What did Moses, Mary and Paul do that showed that their hearts were opened to God's mission in the world?*
- d. Like Moses, Mary and Paul, God opens our heart to Christ's mission in the world. *What are the signs that God is opening our hearts to his great mission? Give examples.*

◆ **REFLECT**

We naturally center our attention on ourselves. As we focus on ourselves, we become closed in on ourselves. That prevents us from appreciating our own value and the value of others.

God frees us by opening our hearts to his love and goodness. As we experience God's forgiveness and generous love, we learn to respond in love to him. We begin to see the world in a different way. We see it as a place where God is at work in his goodness and power. God opens our hearts to his great mission of love in the world. We learn to not close in on ourselves but to give more attention to the needs and to the value of others.

We learn to love God with all our heart and to love others as ourselves (Matthew 22:36–40).

God's Spirit creates an attitude of openness in us so that we can build constructive relationships in our family, our church and our country.

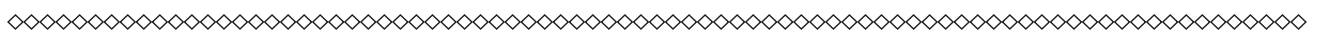
◆ **PLAN AND PRAY**

- 1 **1st Plan:** Review the 6 Personal Plans you accomplished after the first 6 lessons. Choose one of them to continue and develop during the next month. Write down your Personal Plan for next month.

What will you do during the next month?

When will you do this?

- 2 **2nd Plan:** Memorize Matthew 6:33 during the coming week. *Write down when you will recite this text daily with your family or friends:*



To conclude the lesson, pray together. Thank the Lord for what you learned during these lessons and what was accomplished through your Personal Plans. Pray that God will bless the Plan to accomplish during the next month. Begin your prayer by reciting together Matthew 6:33.

◆ **CELEBRATE!**

Share a meal together.