

First Meeting

WEEK ONE

WELCOME

- 6:30pm** ½ hr. before . . . Pray. Then make sure coffee and the room is ready.
- 7:00** Start of Meeting. . . Welcome and Mingling w/ beverages.
- 7:15** 15 min. after start . . . Have everyone sit down.
Welcome them again.
Watch video of Knute Larson and Paul Sartarelli

Get to Know You

- Have everyone go around the room and share their name, where they grew up, and how they got here tonight.
- Then share your answers to those questions.
- Continue with a one-minute description of your best experience in community.
- Encourage others to share a good experience in a past small group.
- Tell them “We want this Home ABF to be a highlight of Christian life.”
- Pass around the Student hand-outs and ask everyone to fill in their contact information on the blanks provided.

Covenant

- Ask everyone to turn to the page that says “Home ABF Covenant.”
- Say, “Here are some strong suggestions or a Covenant that will help us.”
- Read through each of the points.
- Tell them you’ll have a copy near the treats for them to sign at the end of the meeting.

Growing

- Ask, “Is there anyone else you know who might be interested in attending this Home ABF?”
(Possibilities: Those not in an ABF, neighbors, friends, seekers. Probably not people from other churches. We don’t want to steal folks away.)

Bible

- Have a volunteer read Hebrews 10:24-25
- Ask, “Is there something from this verse God would want us to do?”
(Possible answers: *Push others. Love and good deeds. Meet together [don't skip]. Encourage each other.*)
- Ask, “What would happen if this group applied those things?”

Close and Connect

- Tell them how good it has been to be together. You close in prayer.
- Go eat and connect. Many times the most significant conversations happen after the official meeting ends.
- Remember to pick up the Covenant sheet everyone signed to turn in to your Coach.

GREAT JOB!

How God Reveals God

WEEK TWO

The Big Idea: How we find and know God.

Lesson Objective: At the end of this lesson we should be able to list the three ways God reveals Himself. This study should also increase our awareness and worship of God as found in creation, Scripture and Christ.

Teacher's note:

Review and study this lesson before your Home ABF meets. You will want to practice using the DVD so you are acquainted with how the lesson as a whole works together. Have your TV and DVD set up so that you only need to press "play" when you're ready to start. Remember the lesson's objective and "big idea" as you are leading your group through it. You're going to do a great job!

LESSON

Seat everyone and open in prayer.

Ask everyone to introduce themselves and tell what is their favorite topping on pizza.

Scene One: Introduction

Once everyone is done, tell them Knute Larson is going to teach tonight and start the DVD.

When Knute's first scene is over, questions will appear on the screen. These will stay on the screen until you press "play" for the next part of the lesson. Discuss the questions.

Question #1: What are the different ways people learn about God?

Question #2: What is the most offbeat fact you learned?

Scene Two: Creation

Press "play" and watch the next video clip. Ask the questions.

Question #1: What do you love most about creation?

Question #2: What are some truths you learn about God by looking at creation?

(Possible answers: He's creative. He loves variety. He is smart. He is consistent—like the laws of nature. He's immense, etc.)

Question #3: Why is this source of truth not enough by itself to help us with life?

(Possible answers: We don't know for certain who He is or what we should do. We might think He's distant or harsh. We might worship creation instead of the Creator.)

These two passages can be read for further highlighting:

Ps. 19:1-3 *“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.”*

Rom. 1:20 *“For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”*

Scene Three: The Bible

Watch the next part and dig into these questions.

Question #1: How is Scripture different from our first source?

Question #2: Why is this source so important when it comes to right and wrong?

Question #3: Why are some truths in the Bible so hard to embrace or do?

These passages will help make it clear.

2Tim. 3:16-17 *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Ps. 89:1-2 *“I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.”*

Ex. 34:6-7 *“And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”*”

Heb. 4:12 *“For the word of God is living 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.”*

Scene Four: Christ

View the next portion of the DVD on Christ.

Question #1: Share what you like about God, as revealed in Jesus.

Question #2: What does the cross tell us about God?

(Possible answers: He cares, He’s holy, creative, just, self-sacrificing)

Helpful texts

John 1:1-3 *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”*

John 1:14 *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

John 1:18 *“No one has ever seen God, but that One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.”*

John 14:8-9 *Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

Heb. 1:1-3 *“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his*

powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

Final Scene: **Summary**

Play the next clip and work through these questions.

Question #1: Which one of these sources do you rely on most? Why?

Question #2: How will you seek to know God better this week through creation, scripture and Christ?

I will

What Is Salvation?

WEEK THREE

The Big Idea: How we are saved.

Lesson Objective: Upon completion of this lesson you should be able to explain the four terms that explain salvation. You should also be able to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior.

LESSON

Gather everyone together and open in prayer.
Ask folks to share about their favorite elementary school teacher.

Scene One:

A. Introduction

Start the DVD and watch Knute's opening sequence.
At the end of the clip the first question to discuss will appear on the screen:

Question #1: What do other people say are the turnoffs about salvation or Christianity?

Scene Two: Atones

Watch the next part of the DVD. The key text throughout this whole lesson is Romans 3:20-26.

Teacher's note: Knute points out here that we are held guilty because of creation, our conscience and the law. None of us will be found innocent before God. The Day of Atonement is found in Leviticus 16.

Question #1: Many would rather God say, "Aw, sin is no big deal." Why can't He?

(Possible answers: because of His love and justice.)

Example: How would a property owner feel if someone burned down their property? Would they just say, "No big deal. Don't worry about it"? No, they

would want justice to be done. Likewise, God can't overlook our sins, because they have offended Him and hurt those He loves. There must be a penalty because of His character and because of His love for the offended party.

Question #2: What is the word Knute described?

(Answer: Atonement)

Question #3: What are some important issues surrounding atonement?

(Possible answers: Our guilt from what we know from Creation, our Conscience and the Law. We are covered by Christ's blood. Christ's blood satisfies God's wrath against our sin.)

Teacher's note: One great illustration Knute uses is the "35mph speed limit." His point is—does a speed limit sign change the way we drive? For many the sign doesn't change anything. They keep speeding. Likewise, the Law does not change our behavior. It simply points out that we are all violators. We are all guilty. Your group may find this illustration helpful.

Scene Three: Justifies and Redeems

Teacher's note: "Justifies" means that we are declared righteous. It is a legal term. "Redeem" is about being released, set free. Slaves were redeemed or freed for a price.

Question #1: What impressed you about these last two words—justifies and redeems?

Question #2: What did you learn about salvation from the locations where the video was filmed?

Question #3: Why is it so hard to see forgiveness as a free gift?

(Possible answer: We are used to earning everything we get.)

Teacher's note: Knute uses another helpful illustration during this clip. He says that if we look at our life and sin as a bank account, we start with a balance of negative \$7,000,000, but the cross gets us up to a zero balance. This is similar to what happens with our Atonement. But there's more good news. The cross also justifies us. It gets us from a zero balance to \$ trillions. That's wonderful! Help your people rest in the finished work of Jesus.

Scene Four: **Believes**

Key verses for this section are John 1:12 and Ephesians 2:8-9. Pray as you watch this portion of the DVD. Some people in your group may be just moments away from making a commitment to Christ.

Question #1: Which one of the following are you? (*answer silently*)

- A) Sure of this. Eternally.
- B) Making sure right now.
- C) Asking God to help me know if this is true.
 - a. See John 7:17

Challenge the group to embrace the truth from this diagram. Memorize Romans 3:21-24.

Scene Five: **Knute's Summary**

You'll need to get a sense from the group whether you should continue to discuss these questions or move on to the final wrap-up from Knute. You may want to forgo watching his summary.

Finish your night with prayer for each other. Be sensitive to those that are still considering the faith. Encourage them to seek, but don't allow them to be pushed. The Holy Spirit will make it evident to them when they need to take the next step.

Great JOB!

How Does A Christ-Follower Grow?

WEEK FOUR

The Big Idea: Maturing as a follower of Christ

Lesson Objective: The end result of this lesson is to be able to articulate and apply the three areas that enable us to grow as believers.

Introduction – The phenomena of growth

Scene One:

- How do little seeds turn into huge plants?
- How did Mrs. Cole become such a godly lady?
- The goal of the Christ-follower's life is to go from spiritual childhood to adulthood.
- But how do you get there? How does a Christ-follower grow in his faith-walk?

1. The Scriptures are the means of growth for the Christ-follower

- Just like these plants need proper watering and good soil – so the Christian believer needs the proper means for spiritual growth.
- Our spiritual growth is directly related to exposure and intake of God's Word.
- Listen to what the Apostle Peter says in I Peter 2:2
 - ✓ To have an enthusiasm for the Word (like a newborn baby)
 - ✓ To have a hunger for the Word (craving spiritual milk)
 - ✓ The aim of the Word (our Spiritual growth)
- **II Tim 3:16-17**
- As we read the Bible and are taught, rebuked, corrected—even trained in righteousness—the Christ-follower is equipped for good works!
- As we listen to the Bible and respond, it will begin to work in

our lives and change us from the inside out (read James 1:22-27)

Question #1: What grew well in your yard this summer?

Question #2: How have you seen the Scriptures speak into others' lives?

Question #3: Has there been a verse that has impacted you recently?

Question #4: Have you craved the Scriptures like a newborn baby craves milk?

Scene Two:

The Holy Spirit is the Agent of Growth for the Christ-follower

- Now, you need to know... that invisibly in each of these plants—even in their seeds—is a DNA, a power source that enables growth to take place...
- So also the follower of Christ has been given an internal, invisible power source as the spiritual growth agent.
- The first century Christians were the first to receive the Holy Spirit, and as they did, they received God's power (Acts 1:6)
- Now too, every Christ-follower is called to allow the power and control of the Holy Spirit to dominate his life (Ephesians 5:15-18)

Question #1: Picture someone who is spiritually mature like Howard. How did they get there?

Question #2: How do people behave differently when under the control of alcohol?

Question #3: Read Galatians 5:16-18. Describe the effects of the Spirit's control.

Scene Three:

The partnership of spiritual growth – God and me (Phil 2:12-13)

- We have said....
- The Scriptures and the Holy Spirit – are the means and agency of our growth...

- Now it's not just a sit back and "let go and let God" nor is it all up to me – it's God and me working together (Read Phil 2: 12-13)
- Notice the spiritual life
 - ✓ is internal not external
 - ✓ is not based on knowledge but obedience
 - ✓ and is not automatic (no more than these plants) but must be cultivated
- A partnership between God, me, and others – with His Word and Spirit playing the key roles.
- Spiritual growth – a progressive divinely "wrought" character change from sinful ways to Christ-like virtues and habits.

Question #1: What did Paul Sartarelli say were the ways to grow?

Question #2: How do others contribute to or hinder your growth?

Question #3: How has someone else helped you to grow?

Question #4: Do you feel that you are weak in any of these areas of growth?

Question #5: How can the group provide an environment that enhances spiritual growth?

Uniqueness of Christ

WEEK FIVE

The Big Idea: Christ is different than any other religious figure.

Lesson Objective: A student should be able to articulate the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. He or she should also be moved to worship Christ with one of these aspects.

Scene One:

A. Introduction – A world of many gods

Seven statements about the person and work of Jesus Christ... that declare His uniqueness and call for our worship.

B. Pre-existence – Christ is eternal

Meaning: Christ existed before His birth in Bethlehem. As a matter of fact He existed before time. He always was!

Scripture: “In the beginning was the word...” (John 1:1) At whatever point you call the beginning, Jesus already was.

Implications: Jesus is eternal, divine, creator. “Father of eternity” as Isaiah put it.

Question #1: What are the benefits of being old?
What does eternal mean? Why does it give us hope?
How did Paul explain eternal?

Question #2: In learning about Christ, what do you know better about God?

Scene Two:

A. Birth – Virgin

Meaning: The means of the eternal Son of God becoming a human being was through a virgin conception—an obvious sign of this One’s uniqueness.

Scripture: Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23

Implication: God is His Father. This man is important.

B. Life – Sinless

Meaning: Jesus Christ never did anything contrary to God's moral law and had no sin nature residing in Him.

Scripture: II Cor 5:21; I Peter 1:19

Implications: ✓ He provided an acceptable sacrifice for our sins
✓ He revealed God to us

Question #1: Emmanuel means God with us. Why does that help us today?

Question #2: What would it have been like to be around a sinless person?

Question #3: Since Jesus knew nothing of sin, how can He sympathize with us? (Heb 4:15-16)

Scene Three:

A. Death – Substitutional

Meaning: Christ suffered and died as a substitute for our sins.

Scripture: Romans 5:8

Implications: Our doom, the divine result of our sins, has been taken by Christ. Life, not death, is our gift!

B. Resurrection – Physical

Meaning: Jesus Christ bodily rose from the dead three days after dying from crucifixion wounds.

Scripture: Matthew 28:6 et al

Implications: ✓ He is unique and whom He said He was
✓ We too will be raised someday!

Question #1: What was the greatest sacrifice your parents made for you?
How does that impact you today?

What motivates people to die for something / someone?

Why did Christ's substitutional death make a difference?

Question #2: What is the proof of God's love?

What does the verse *not* say about God's love?
(*doesn't say it's dependent on a perfect life / financial success*)

How did Paul describe what happened at Christ's resurrection?

What is wrong with an understanding of Jesus' resurrection being only a spiritual one?

Question #3: Why is so much emphasis placed on the resurrection?

Scene Four:

A. Indwelling: – Spiritual

Meaning: Either immediately or through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Christ indwells all believers.

Scripture: Ephesians 3:17

Implications: We are not abandoned. Through Christ we can know the depth of God's love for us.

B. Return – Promised

Meaning: Christ will come back to earth to judge the living and the dead

Scripture: I Cor 15:52; I The 4:16

Implications: Regardless of life's difficulties, we can be hopeful. Since He will return, we should consider how we behave!

Question #1: What would it be like to be an orphan? What is it like to be alone?

What can all Christians believe about the future?
(Jesus will return.)

Question #2: What will Jesus do when He returns?
(judge the living and the dead. Acts 1:6)

Question #3: How does the resurrection strengthen our hope?

Closing questions:

We listed seven qualities in Christ. Which is the most powerful to you today?

How will this truth make a difference in your life?

Prayer

WEEK SIX

The Big Idea: Prayer is hard, but necessary.

Lesson Objective: Participant will be encouraged to take new steps in their prayer life by using the acronym P-R-A-Y. They will also understand the ways God answers prayer.

Teacher's Note:

The following are Pastor Larson's notes as he prepared for the video. As you'll see, he has personally dealt with this issue. Pastor Larson's teaching on prayer isn't just theological as he also reveals his own struggles through the Lord's answers to prayer.

Before the video starts ask:

How did your family pray when you were growing up? When did you pray? What was the content of those prayers?

Scene One:

A. Introduction:

- Admission...
 - prayer is hard,
 - but necessary
 - and sometimes we wonder why God doesn't answer.
- Frustrations with prayer
 - Time ...too busy. When can I do it?
 - Ability ... I don't know what I should pray about. I can't pray as well as others.
- Questions we have about prayer
 - Why does He not answer?
- Misconceptions of prayer
 - No is an answer.
- "Let's try to honor our Lord by learning to pray." Knute Larson

Question #1: Why do parents like it when their children talk to them?

Question #2: What are some frustrations about praying?

Scene Two:

B. Biblical Prayers

- Call to prayer... Isaiah 40:28–31
 - “Those who wait upon the Lord”
 - Waiting is a big part of prayer
- Use the Prayer Book Pray from Scripture
 - Psalm 100
 - “Shout for joy to the Lord”
 - Praise and Thanksgiving
 - Psalm 102
 - “Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to you.”
 - Desperate need
 - Every emotion comes out in the Psalms: Joy, Pain, Sadness, Thanksgiving, Adoration, and more.
- P-R-A-Y
 - Praise – God for who He is and what He has done.
 - Repent – We confess our sins. Isaiah 6:5
 - Ask – The Lord wants us to ask Him. John 15:7
 - Yield – “Thy will be done.” Matthew 6:10

Question #1: Which aspect of P-R-A-Y is more natural for you? Which is harder?

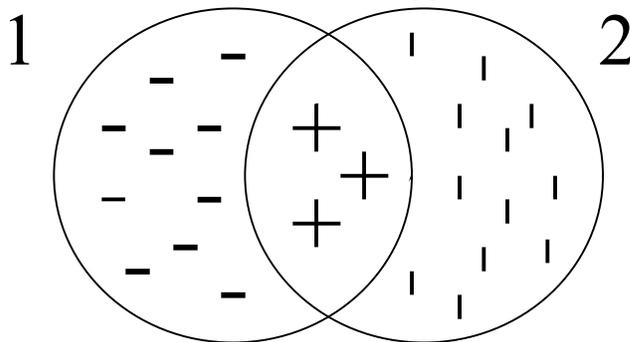
Question #2: Should we focus more on praying for character or for healing of sickness?

Question #3: How honest should we be when praying?

Scene Three:

C. Why prayers are not answered.

Read James 4:1–3 again.



Circle 1: Our desires or needs. The things we want done, our will.
Sometimes we ask with wrong motives. James 4:3

Circle 2: God's will. The actions He is willing to do. His will.
In this part of this circle are the character qualities that God desires to instill
in every believer. James 1:5

The Intersection: Answered prayers. Where our prayers and God's
desires meet. John 14:13

Question #1: Could you explain this diagram to someone?

Question #2: What part of this diagram helps you?

Question #3: What do these prayers have in common?

- Ephesians 3:14–21
- Philippians 1:9,10
- Colossians 1:9–14

Scene Four:

D. Application

- Luke 11:1 “Lord teach us to pray”
- 1Thessalonians 5:17 “Pray continually”
- Develop the habit of prayer in your life.
- Use P-R-A-Y
- Use the Lord's Prayer
- Colossians 1:9–14 is a great example of prayer.

Question #1: In what ways could this group help you with praying?

Question #2: What should you do differently in your prayer life?

Take time now as a group to practice P-R-A-Y. Put bookmarks in each of these passages, so you can quickly turn to them. Or you may ask four people to look them up and read them as you pray.

- **Praise:** Read Psalm 100:1–5 as a prayer.
Encourage your group to praise God for who He is and what He's done.
- **Repent:** Read Psalm 32:1–5
Take some time to silently confess your sin before God.
- **Ask:** Read John 15:7
Pray for the character of the person next you.
Pray also for other specific needs.
- **Yield:** Read Luke 22:42
Have your people pray yielding prayers to God.

