

SESSION 10: THE WAY FORWARD (PART 3)



(For this session have men read pp. 149-165.)

1. The book says, 'In Christ, we are liberated, equipped, and authorized to take leadership for our lives and direct ourselves and our families along courses that bring praise and glory to His name' (p. 149). We live in a culture that is stripping men of their calling to be spiritual leaders. Why is it important for men to feel authorized to direct the course of their families?
 - a. What are the dangers of this call to be spiritual leaders?
 - b. What difference does it make to view ourselves as under-shepherds rather than chief executives?
2. Life planning is a common 'secular' practice. What are the benefits of having a clear vision in life?
 - a. What are the dangers that arise from trying to draft a life plan?
 - b. How can the image of standing before the judgment seat of Christ protect us from drafting a self-centered life plan?
3. We often think of a Christian worldview as something that children need to develop. However, how important is it for adult men to develop a Christian worldview? What are the practical benefits of being able to see the modern world through the lens of God's revealed truth?
4. The book claims that men need to 'audit their attention' (pp. 153-4). In other words, they need to keep tabs on how much of their focused attention is wasted on trivial topics. Read Phil. 4:8 and Psalm 1. How do these texts provide useful guidelines for thinking about how to invest our attention?
5. As an adult, how do you feel about the idea of memorizing Scripture? What scares you about the idea? What excites you?
6. The book claims that, if we want to simplify life, we need to cut the fat (p. 158). What commitments could you let go of in life in order to prioritize 'the one thing needed' (Lk. 10:42).
7. Read Lk. 9:23. What excessive baggage is keeping you from being able to take up your cross *daily* to follow Jesus?

A TWELVE MONTH ACTION PLAN FOR SMALL GROUPS AND MEN'S MINISTRIES



MONTH 1 – MEMORIZE THE HYMN 'WHEN I SURVEY'

Your assignment each week (for four weeks) is to memorize a stanza of the hymn and reflect on its meaning. The prayerful objective of the assignment is that the Holy Spirit would use this hymn to reignite your passion to know and serve Jesus. Have each man recite the memorized stanza at the start of the group meeting.

MONTH 2 AND 3 – READ *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS* (IN MODERN ENGLISH) BY JOHN BUNYAN

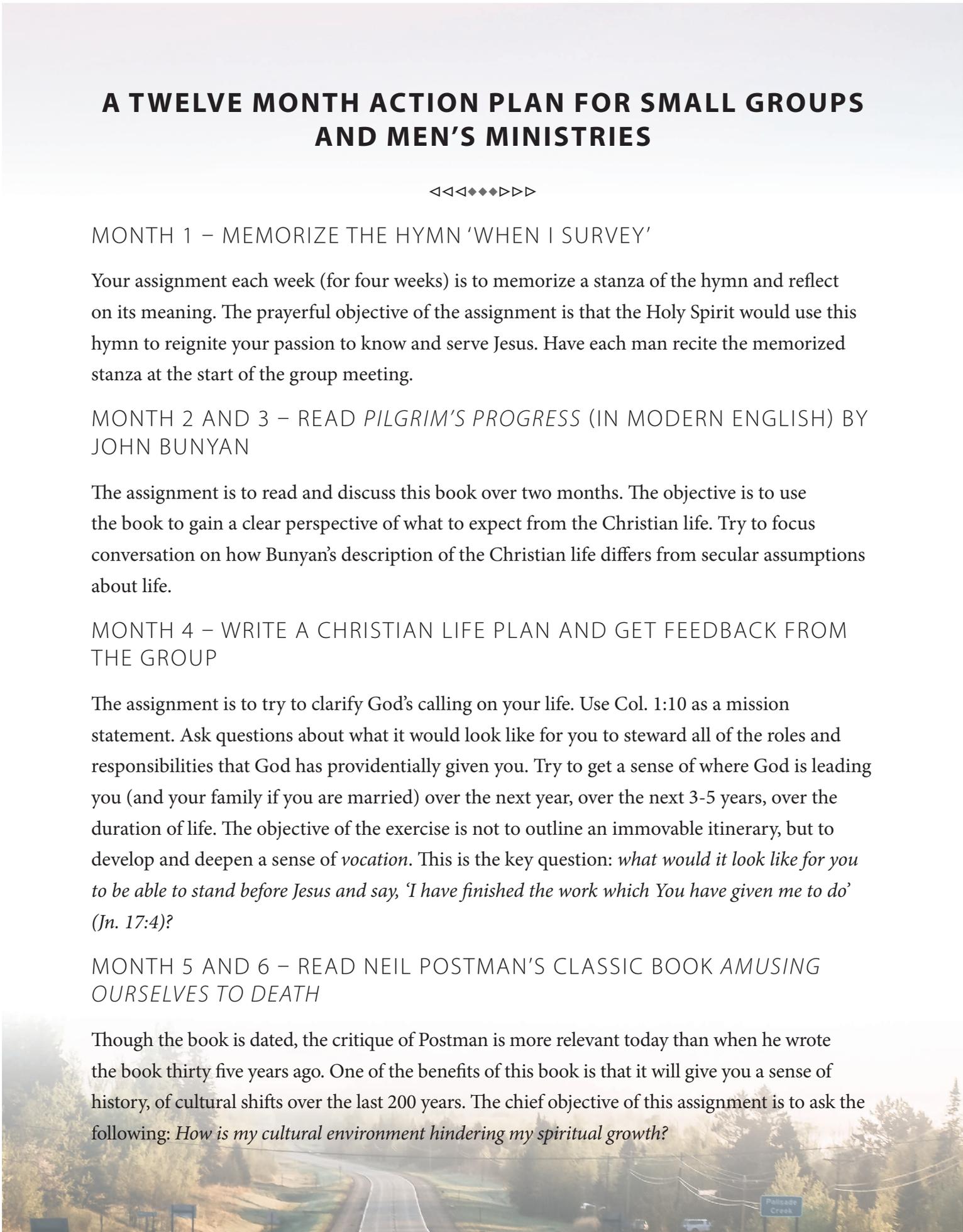
The assignment is to read and discuss this book over two months. The objective is to use the book to gain a clear perspective of what to expect from the Christian life. Try to focus conversation on how Bunyan's description of the Christian life differs from secular assumptions about life.

MONTH 4 – WRITE A CHRISTIAN LIFE PLAN AND GET FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP

The assignment is to try to clarify God's calling on your life. Use Col. 1:10 as a mission statement. Ask questions about what it would look like for you to steward all of the roles and responsibilities that God has providentially given you. Try to get a sense of where God is leading you (and your family if you are married) over the next year, over the next 3-5 years, over the duration of life. The objective of the exercise is not to outline an immovable itinerary, but to develop and deepen a sense of *vocation*. This is the key question: *what would it look like for you to be able to stand before Jesus and say, 'I have finished the work which You have given me to do' (Jn. 17:4)?*

MONTH 5 AND 6 – READ NEIL POSTMAN'S CLASSIC BOOK *AMUSING OURSELVES TO DEATH*

Though the book is dated, the critique of Postman is more relevant today than when he wrote the book thirty five years ago. One of the benefits of this book is that it will give you a sense of history, of cultural shifts over the last 200 years. The chief objective of this assignment is to ask the following: *How is my cultural environment hindering my spiritual growth?*



MONTH 7 – BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY INTO YOUR SMALL GROUP

John Wesley had all of his small groups (which he called 'bands') answer the following five questions:

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
2. What temptations have you met with?
3. How were you delivered?
4. Is there anything that you have thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?
5. Have you nothing you desire to keep secret?

Use these questions in your group to build a culture of confession, support, and accountability.

MONTHS 8-12 – GET CRACKING ON THE TOPICAL MEMORY SYSTEM

The Topical Memory System will do two things for your group. First, it will encourage you to memorize and meditate on Scripture. Second, it will provide you with a holistic framework of discipleship, pushing you not only to practice spiritual disciplines, but also to go out and get involved in the active mission of God. Whether you download the app or use the old-fashioned memory cards, no man will regret having completed the TMS system.

