

Climbing Up 10-Week Study Guide

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This Study Guide is given for either a five-week or ten-week study. If you choose a different time frame, adjust the assignments accordingly.

For friends/family members, have them think through both their preparation for receiving the former prisoner as well as what the prisoner is thinking in preparation for release. For assignments given in the questions, friends/family members should think through how they will prepare for the prisoner's return.

- I. Assignments
 - A. Read the Foreword, Introduction, Chapters 1-2 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - B. Read Chapters 3-5 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - C. Read Chapters 6-8 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - D. Read Chapters 9-11 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - E. Read Chapters 12-14 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - F. Read Chapters 15-17 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - G. Read Chapters 18-20 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - H. Read Chapters 21-24 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - I. Read Chapters 25-27 and answer questions at the end of the chapters.
 - J. Read the Appendices.
 - K. Questions to consider individually
- II. Questions to consider as a group
 - A. Week 1
 - 1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
 - 2. Think about where you grew up and reflect on the unspoken rules of culture you adopted. In other words, what did you learn from your family or community?
 - 3. Study the American sub-culture diagram. Based on where you lived, worked, and were educated, where do you fit and why?
 - 4. Read Acts 15. What do you observe about cultural differences among the people of God that might relate to your prison and re-entry experience?
 - 5. What will you do differently as a result of this section?
 - B. Week 2

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. For each of the eight examples of prison culture (Cp), write down an example where you have seen this at work.
3. For each of the six potential clashes with culture, describe how you felt when you read about each one. Were you surprised by any of them? Did you want to argue that they were not true in your experience?
4. In addition to the fear civilians have about prisoners, what other feelings might people have about you joining their community?
5. In addition to the list of fears prisoners have in this chapter, what other apprehensions do you have about acclimating to civilian culture?
6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?

C. Week 3

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. Think about the 3-3-3-12 Principle and for each time period, list the dangers and opportunities you foresee for yourself upon release.
3. How might the double-culture shift affect your re-entry experience as you adjust to life in Christian community?
4. Describe in your own words the difference between “finding your identity” and “forging your identity.”
5. Read Appendix 4: Bible Verses about your Identity in Christ. In what ways would your thinking and actions change if you could embrace the truth in these verses?
6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?

D. Week 4

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. Of the four areas needed to escape people-pleasing, which one is the most difficult? How will you accept this truth so God can forge your identity to be like Christ?
3. As you think about God as a Venture Capitalist, what resources did He give you so you could live out your identity as a spiritual entrepreneur?
4. Which of the four principles of ROI will take the most effort to apply?
5. What are three strongholds that have been established by forgetting your identity in Christ?

6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?
- E. Week 5
1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
 2. Of the comparisons to con artists and rats, which is the most helpful as you reflect on the enemy's deceptions in your life? Why?
 3. In what ways have you voluntarily given up the blessings of your identity in Christ, based on the devil's schemes.
 4. Why is it important to spend more time and energy controlling your thinking than it is controlling your circumstances?
 5. Try the six steps every day for ten days in a row, using the same slogan (see Appendix 9 for two examples). Do not give up when it gets hard after a few days. Keep going for 10 days straight.
 6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?
- F. Week 6
1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
 2. Study these biblical characters to see how their context motivated them to carry out their assigned work: Gideon (Judg. 6) and Nehemiah (Neh. 1).
 3. What is unique to your context that God might use for His glory upon release from prison?
 4. What would have happened if Lewis did no planning and just launched out on the Expedition, confident everything would work out?
 5. Why is it important for you to make detailed plans now, even though you know that some things will change later?
 6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?
- G. Week 7
1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
 2. List three times where you suffered what seemed like a wasted setback and consider how God may have turned it into an opportunity.
 3. Read Appendices 1- 2 about testimonies and tips from former prisoners. What are some circumstances where you might face setbacks or suffering in your re-entry?
 4. As you anticipate your re-entry, do you think you will have more difficulty submitting to authority or taking personal responsibility? Why?

5. In your re-entry, what are some ways that you might experience dead vision?
6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?

H. Week 8

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. If you find yourself in the middle of dead vision, how might you adapt to win and prepare for renewed vision?
3. Think about three examples where you were daring and bold, and then three other times where you were reckless and impulsive. How can you tell the difference between Spirit-led boldness and human-centered impulsiveness?
4. List events in your life where you had to wait. Did you react by taking matters into your own hands, or were you able to wait patiently, trusting that God was in control?
5. Think about your release. What are some situations where it would be important to seek counsel to revise your plans, even if you are confident about those plans?
6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?

I. Week 9

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. How do you feel when you hear that the journey of re-entry will take 12-18 months or more?
3. Consider the nine principles of learning wisdom listed above. For each one, describe an example where you applied the principle well or ignored it and it turned out badly. (If you cannot find examples for each of the nine, ask a friend or two for examples).
4. Put the principles in order from #1-9 in terms of how much they are already a part of your thinking and decision making.
5. Think through your re-entry plan. For each of the nine principles, imagine a decision you will need to make where that principle would be helpful.
6. What will you do differently as a result of this section?

J. Week 10

1. What were the three most important ideas from your reading and reflection?
2. Which were the three most helpful appendices to you and why?
3. What were the three most helpful ideas in this book and why?
4. What will you do differently as a result of this section?