

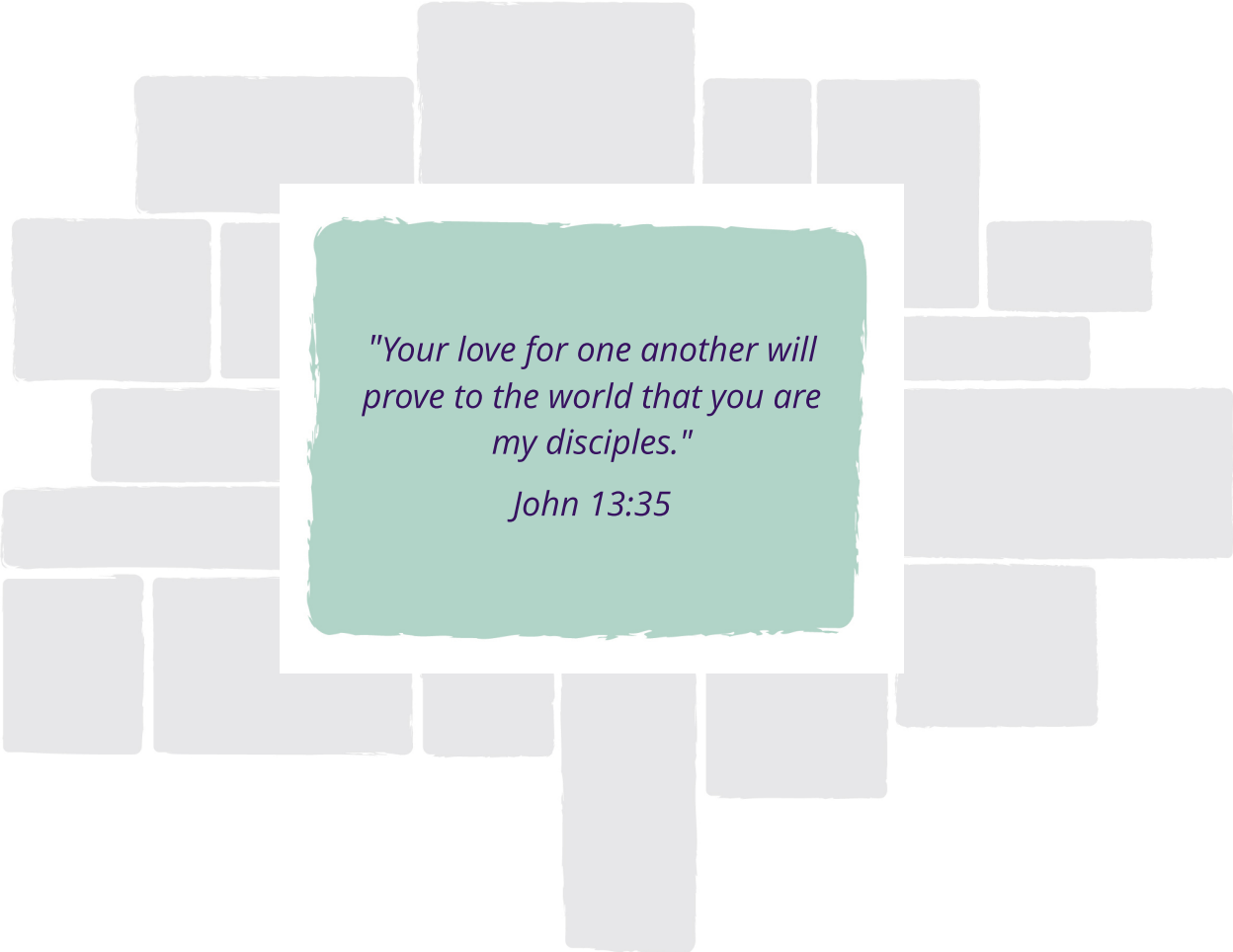


MOVING
FORWARD

2:18

A 40-DAY
DISCERNMENT EXPERIENCE
FOR
CONGREGATIONS

Leader Guide



*"Your love for one another will
prove to the world that you are
my disciples."*

John 13:35

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The New Interpreter's Study Bible, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN 2003.

Other scripture quotations used by permission from:

The Holy Bible, New Living Translation,
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OUR GOAL

Our goal with MOVING FORWARD 2:18 is to create a positive environment for congregation members to seek God's will and leading for the church.

By creating and sustaining a culture of listening and discernment within our church, we can equip our members to better follow the paths God has prepared for us.

By the grace of God, may we, as the unified body of Christ, be led to fulfill the purposes for which God created us.

SESSION 1

follows week 1 homework

Instructions

- Welcome everyone and make introductions.
- Light the candle and remind all of the presence of Christ in your midst.
- Pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your discussions.
- Share the governing scripture for your time together:

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

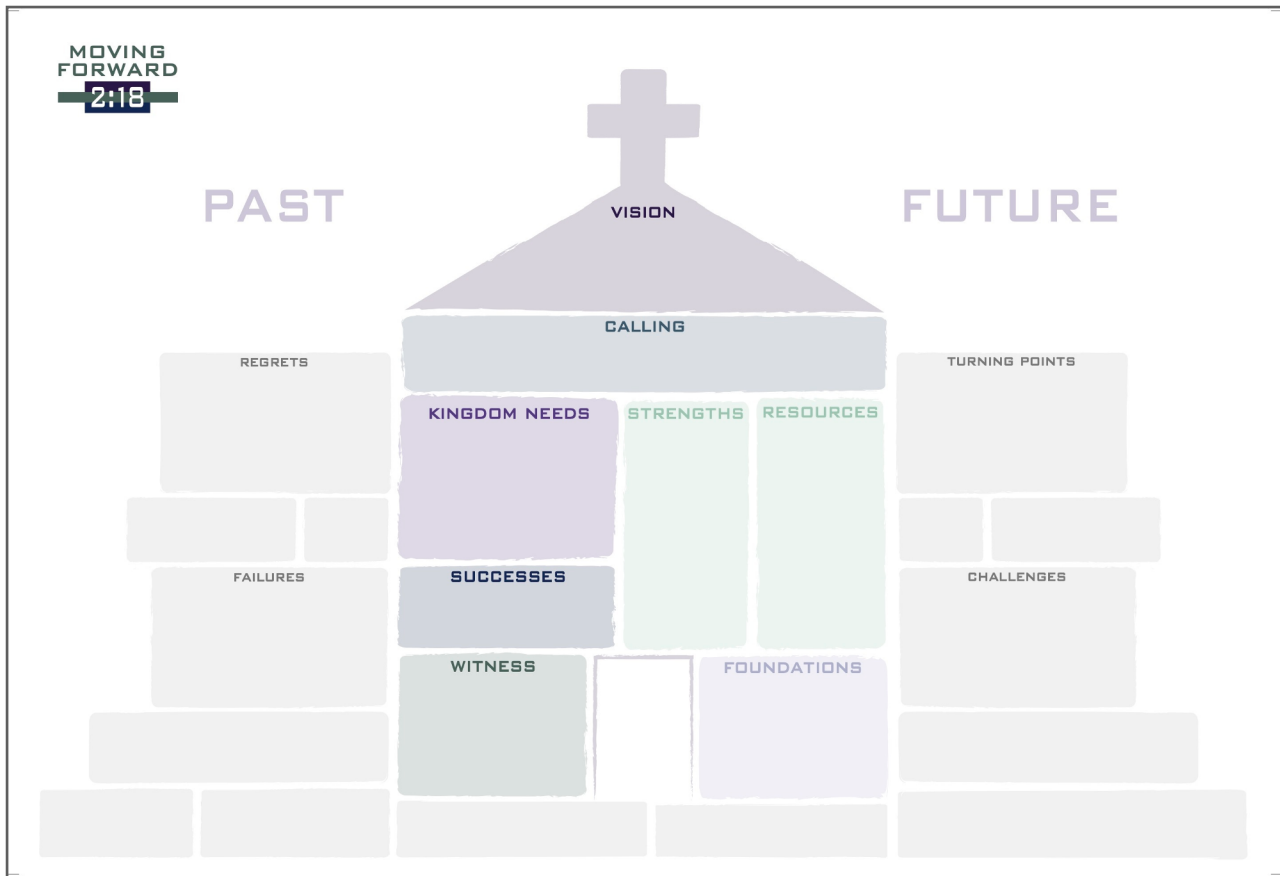
John 13:35

- Share the goals for the study:
 - To work together to discern God's will for our church's future
 - To deepen our spiritual lives through prayer and scriptural reflection
 - To provide useful information to our church leadership for the task of ministry planning
- Explain how will we do this:
 - Daily prayer and scripture reflection
 - Weekly meditation on key focus questions
 - Weekly discussions among our group
 - Assessing our current ministries
 - Considering new opportunities
- Share the ***Class Covenant***, found on page 11 of this guide.
- Explain the ***Church Profile Poster*** and how the group will use it.



THE CHURCH PROFILE

- The **Church Profile Poster** and graphic on page 10 of the workbook is the summary page for all activities undertaken during the course of the study.
- Each week, we will pray through focus questions regarding our church.
- Place your answers to these questions on the **Church Profile** page of your workbook.
- When we meet, we will discuss our answers and record them on our larger poster.
- At the end of our study, our poster will be delivered to the church leadership along with posters from other groups.
- The church leadership will use our responses to create a vision and ministry plan for moving forward.



Discussion Questions

Did everyone understand the prayer method of Lectio Divina for our daily scripture reflection?

If yes, move on to the next question.

If no, then use the prayer exercise at the end of this section to help everyone better understand how to approach the prayers most effectively.

What came from the daily prayers for you? Did you have any thoughts or impressions that you want to share with the rest of us?

What about the questions we were asked. What are your thoughts on those?

Why did God create the church?

What is our witness?

What are the beliefs, values, and message that God has entrusted our congregation to share with the world?

Record all answers to the question, "What is our witness?" on the board or flip chart. Then, engage the group in conversation about commonalities among the answers. What are some of the elements that the group can agree upon? Write these common elements on your ***Church Profile Poster*** in the ***Witness*** block.



If you have differing viewpoints in the room, especially a minority viewpoint (one with which most people do not agree), ask the participant to further explain why he/she sees the issue in this way.

Make sure everyone is heard, even if their views do not align with the majority.

Record differing view points on the ***Points to Consider*** page in this section. Deliver that page to leadership when appropriate.

Conclusion

End the class by asking,

"Does anyone have anything else they would like to share?"

Once the discussion is complete, thank everyone for their participation and end with a prayer for peace.



NOTES



POINTS TO CONSIDER



FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for the time and effort you have invested with your group. May our Lord bless you for the service you have provided His church.

Please collect the following items and deliver them to the church leadership if you have not already done so:

- ***Church Profile Poster***
- ***Ministry Assessment Scorecard***
- ***All Points to Consider Notes***