



Equipping...

with Every
Good Thing

■ ADULT BIBLE STUDIES



OFFERING FOR
GLOBAL MISSIONS

BECAUSE **PRESENCE** MATTERS

Equipping... with Every Good Thing

Equipping with Every Good Thing . . .

OGM SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 13:20-21 (CEV)

OGM Verse:

*“May the God of peace . . . equip you with every good thing to do his will,
by developing in us what pleases him through Jesus Christ.
To God be the glory forever and always. Amen.”*

■ ■ ■ FORMAT

These Bible study sessions invite the community to wonder. Each session will introduce a Bible story and focus on an impact story provided through the videos of the Offering for Global Missions. There will be questions to encourage participants to engage with the biblical text, and following questions to prompt a conversation and reflection among the class.

As the leader of a session, you are encouraged to read the biblical text and watch the impact story ahead of time. You are also encouraged to read through the provided commentary and questions. Within the classroom, your role will be as a facilitator of the conversation. You are invited to present the commentary available in your own words and to make additional connections for your class. Then, you can use the questions to engage participants and to allow them to answer authentically. This may mean there are times of silence as participants consider their answers. That is okay and is not a judgment on your role or their response. Allow for this space and encourage people to answer.

The questions are central to these studies. There may be questions that remain unanswered and instead are left there with the participants. This is not failing, but instead a way to continue the practice of wonder as participants leave the space.

Each session has “Questions for the Text” and “Questions for the Community.” The “Questions for the Text” provide an opportunity for participants to connect with the text. The questions are based on the idea of wonder and encourage emotional connection to the characters or communities in the Bible. The “Questions for the Community” are meant for the participants to imagine a way forward together. They take the ideas of the text and the testimonies from the video and encourage the class to express their strengths and their needs. In this expression, the participants can better support one another.

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THEME

To equip and develop. These words are related but separate. One is to give or add to what is already possessed, and the other is the cultivation and growth of what is already present. Both are necessary and a part of what it means to grow in Christ, and both are a part of the work of the Gospel.

God is equipping us with what we need and will continue to do so. In Hebrews, the writer is praying that God may continue to equip the readers with “every good thing.” This means there are new resources, skills, gifts and relationships to come. An obstacle or a challenge that we have not encountered before may present itself. The problem in front of us may be so complex that we cannot imagine the solution.

And in that moment, we pray that the God of peace may equip us with every good thing. We pray that God will provide the means, the resources and the relationships to move through the trial.

God is developing in us what pleases God through Jesus Christ. There are parts of who you are that are essential for the work of the Gospel. There are relationships that you have tended to that may prove to be what you need.

This blessing is the conclusion to the book of Hebrews. In this closing, the idea of what the “good things” are is left unknown. It is left unfinished because even the author and the readers may not know what these things are. They are not gifts to be received in and of themselves, but tools to be used toward the will of God.

The stories and testimonies of the field personnel that accompany this Offering for Global Missions exemplify this reality over and over. The field personnel are a part of a community and make work as the hands and feet of Jesus to equip the community with what they need. And in the same way, the community and fellowship of believers equip these field personnel in the times of their own needs.

The work of God is not done in isolation but in collaboration. The equipping and developing of every good will is the way that we partner together to do the will of God. The evergreen question is what is the will of God. This question can and has filled innumerable volumes. But we can approach an answer by heeding the words of Jesus in Luke 4:18-19:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

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Matt and Michelle Norman, Spain

1 KINGS 17:8-16 EQUIPPED TO RESPOND

READ

1 Kings 17: 8-16

WATCH

Spain: Eli Impact Story at www.cbf.net/ogm.

STUDY

The story of Elijah and the widow is one of mutual aid and community. Elijah comes to this woman because he is hungry. He is instructed by God to ask food of her, and she responds that she simply does not have enough. Not only does she not have enough for Elijah, she does not have enough for herself and her son.

Elijah responds by immediately “speaking” the miracle. He tells her to go make him some food, but to be assured because they will not run out. There will be enough for all of them.

Notice here that the miracle is not predicated on her faith or by her taking a leap before a guarantee of sustenance. Elijah promises her the miracle from the moment he hears of her need.

Second, notice that her needs are being filled from her own supplies. This is not a story of manna from heaven or of Elijah arriving with new supplies. Instead, the miracle is that her resources will sustain her and her son.

This is a beautiful illustration of how God can equip us with what we need from what we already have. The miracle comes in the continuation of what we already possess.

That is the work of the Normans in Spain. They did not arrive with new ideas or tools that they are now imparting to the people. Instead, they are hearing what is needed and supporting the women in the community to access their own will and strength.

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In community, we each have skills and resources that are beneficial to one another. There are times when we may feel we are at the end of what we possess, but at that moment we can be reinvigorated and equipped to carry on.

Elijah came to the widow's house in need and was able to speak strength and a miracle into her life. The widow was at the end, but through a miracle and the connection with Elijah, she was able to have what she needed. Even though they were both in need, they were able to give each other the ability to survive and carry on.

In the same way, the community gathered in church can equip one another to carry on. This is done through sharing what we have and speaking our needs to one another.

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE TEXT

- How do you think the widow felt as she was gathering sticks for her last meal and then was approached by Elijah? What was going through her mind as this unknown man approached her?
- Why do you think Elijah told her to make food for him before her? Why could she not feed her child first?
- What do we learn about God from this miracle?

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- What strengths do you see in yourself?
 - Encourage participants to respond to this. This can be a challenging task for some people, but it can be reframed not as an act of bragging, but instead a way to further connect and provide for one another.
- What strengths do you see in one another?
 - Again, take time on this step to make sure the group can speak strength into one another. Point out those things at which each member of the class excels and how those things bring life.
- When you are in an emergency or in need, whom do you call?
- Who calls you when they are in need or in an emergency?
- What does it look like to rely on one another in community?
 - The goal of this question is to bring the class back to the idea that we are equipped and empowered both in what we have and what we do not have. There are times when we need someone to see the abilities we already have and encourage us, and there are other times when we need someone to bring us something new.
- What do you need to feel equipped to care for your community?



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Lita and Rick Sample,
San Francisco Bay Area

I PETER 4:7-11

EQUIPPED WITH HOSPITALITY

■ ■ ■ READ

1 Peter 4:7-11

■ ■ ■ WATCH

California: Kyaw Soe impact Story at www.cbf.net/ogm.

■ ■ ■ STUDY

1 Peter is written to Christ-followers in Asia Minor who are persecuted by the Roman Empire. They are being ostracized and harmed because of their faith.

The letter of 1 Peter is written to encourage them and equip them with the strength they need to persevere. Peter reminds them that Christ will return and that their actions are not in vain. He tells the people that what they are doing is important.

The people are being persecuted, and they could choose to renounce their faith or keep it quiet to avoid attention. Instead, the letter tells them to allow their love, the hallmark of a Christ-follower, to be known. The people are to be hospitable and to not hide their faith.

Hospitality is what the people are known for. Peter does not encourage them to gain power in the land or to grow the Kingdom. Instead, he encourages them to welcome people into their homes and to care for the community around them. Their hospitality is how they can be stewards of God's love.

In the same way, this is how the Samples' ministry in California is showing the love of God. The field personnel there are welcoming the people from Burma and equipping them to thrive in their new homes.

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To this end, the hospitality shown to the Karen people arriving in San Francisco is a hospitality that seeks to equip the people without attempting to assimilate them. A false hospitality may seek to bring the people into the dominant culture of the area, but a true hospitality equips them to continue their culture and language in their new home.

For it to be a true representation of the love of God, the hospitality must be genuine and allow for the other person to maintain their own agency. In the letter to the people of Asia Minor, Peter sees hospitality rather than domination as the trademark of the Kingdom of God. Peter does not instruct the people to control the area in the name of Christ, but instead to allow love to be their primary calling.

Hospitality is an expression of the love of Christ and continues to be a way to equip and empower others. Spend time together thinking of how you are welcomed and how you can welcome others.

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE TEXT

- Verse 7 says “*the end of all things is near.*” How do you think the readers understood “near”? Do you think they were expecting the end in their lifetime? How do you understand “near”?
- How do you think the readers, who were persecuted for their faith, felt reading this letter that encouraged them to love?
- What teachings or stories from Jesus can you think of or find in the Gospels that would support this encouragement from the author?

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- What makes you feel welcome when you visit someone?
 - Begin with this practical question. People can relay stories or anecdotes of visiting people. They can speak of specifics, or general practices that make them feel welcome.
- What is your favorite way to make someone else feel welcome in your home?
 - For some people they may pride themselves in hospitality. If your community has a practice of gathering in homes, allow people to speak of one another and the hospitality they have noticed at the homes they have visited.

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- How do we make people feel welcome in our church?
 - Imagine the experience of visiting your church community for the first time. What would it be like to pull into the parking lot and navigate the space? What does your church do to intentionally welcome people? Are there ways that you think your community could be more hospitable? What can your group do to improve those areas?
- How do we make people feel welcome in our nation?
 - Think again about the work of the ministries in California. What are they doing to welcome people into the community? What can it look like to welcome people without insisting on assimilation?
- How can we equip people to feel at home in our church and our nation?



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Dianne and Shane McNary, Slovakia

ACTS 8:26-40

EQUIPPED WITH COMPASSION

■ ■ ■ READ

Acts 8:26-40

■ ■ ■ WATCH

Slovakia: Rene Impact Story at www.cbf.net/ogm.

■ ■ ■ STUDY

In the book of Acts, the Church is attempting to continue the ministry of Jesus after he has left. Jesus changed everything. The people, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are continuing this work. But it is not easy.

They have generations of understandings of who God is and what the Law requires, but Jesus offered new interpretations that invited more people into a New Covenant. The resurrection of Christ was the final stamp of a new era of life that does not fit into the previous frameworks.

It is in this time that Peter and Paul are the leaders in a new understanding of invitation to the Gentiles. Neither is perfect in this endeavor, but they are following the guidance of the Spirit to understand how the Kingdom of God reaches beyond the boundaries of the people of Israel.

In this era of the Church, we see Phillip encounter the eunuch from Ethiopia. This moment is not by chance, but at the direct guidance of the Spirit. Phillip is guided to this moment and opportunity.

The eunuch is returning from Jerusalem where he had gone to worship. But in accordance with the Law in Deuteronomy 23:1-2, he was probably not allowed to enter. He is on the way home, continuing to study when Phillip approaches.

In this moment, prompted by the Spirit, Phillip reaches out across the previous boundary of the Law and shares the Gospel. They reach the water and Phillip baptizes the eunuch.



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Phillip reaches out in compassion to a community that is discriminated against and extends the love of Christ in an active way.

The ministry in Slovakia is working against discrimination through compassion. Those working there are seeking ways to care for and equip the Roma people.

This is compassion: love in action.

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE TEXT

- If the eunuch was denied entrance to the Temple, how do you think he felt returning to his home? If you were in his shoes, would you still be reading the Scriptures after being denied entrance into the Temple?
- What do you think it was like for Phillip to meet this traveler and suddenly have a conversation with him about biblical text? How comfortable would you have been to have this conversation?
- If someone were reading this passage from Isaiah 53:7-8 and asked you what it meant, how would you answer them?

■ ■ ■ QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- What do you think of when you hear “compassion”? What image, words or memories does it bring up?
- How do we initiate care?
 - Phillip began (with the prompting of the Spirit) the conversation with the eunuch. What does it look like for us to care for others in the way that Phillip did?
- What do you need now, to be equipped with compassion when the time comes?
 - There may be times when we are not equipped to care for the people around us. What do you need to be ready to offer care? What would make you feel equipped to care for the needs of people you encounter?
- What are you doing now to seek out those who need care? What can you do to seek out people who are in need?

