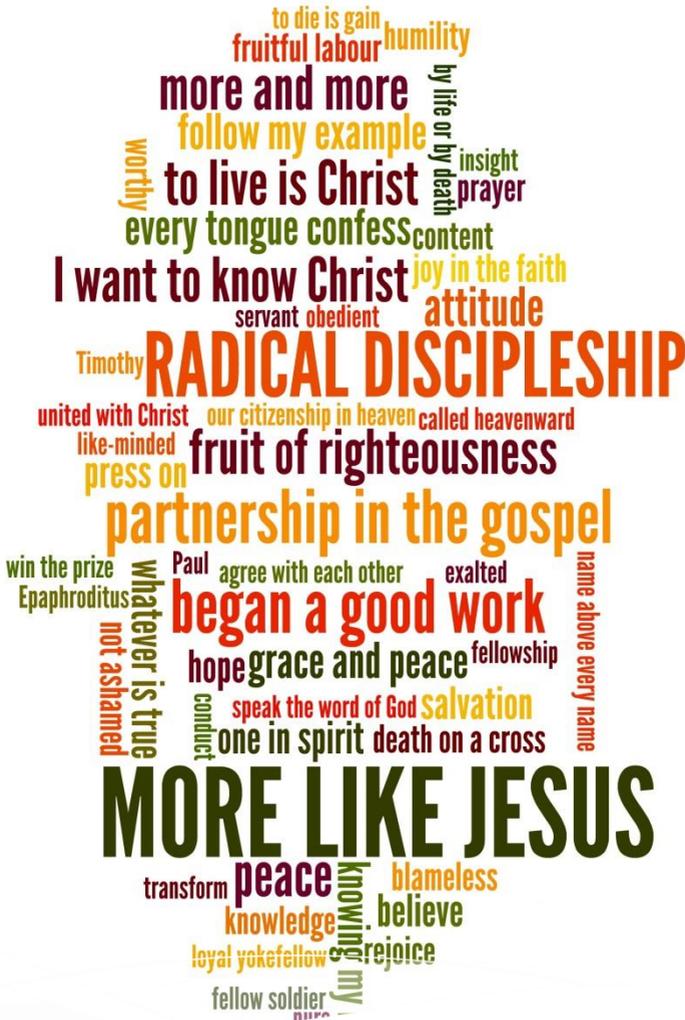


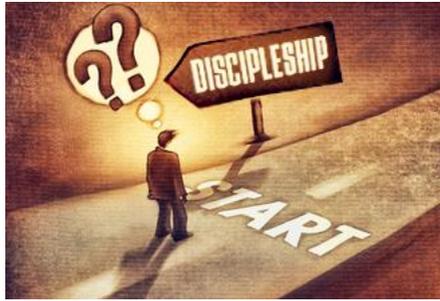
# Nurture Courses

“Therefore go and make disciples” Mt 28:19



Diocese of  
Liverpool

# Discipleship



## Being a disciple means being a Learner, trainee, follower - a follower of Jesus.

"Come follow me, Jesus said" Matthew 4:19

"I am the way, the truth and the life" John 14:6

"Who belonged to the Way" Acts 9:2

NT Wright says: 'The question of Jesus – who he really was, what he really did, what it means, and why it matters – remains hugely important in every area, not only in personal life, but also in political life, not only in 'religion' or 'spirituality', but also in....culture, justice, beauty, ecology, friendship, scholarship, and sex.'

Discipleship is following, walking with, the one we trust. It is centred on this one whom we follow, who we allow to shape our life, whose own life begins to transform our lives, in whom we find our eternal destiny. For Christians this is Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God.

Discipleship is about BELONGING – becoming part of the community of those who follow Jesus. Discipleship is about BEHAVING – adopting a life-style which reflects the reign of God on earth. Discipleship is about BELIEVING – accepting the teaching of Jesus and putting all our trust in Him.

Discipleship is not a course, or a stage in becoming a Christian – it is a continuous, life-long, process of allowing God to shape every aspect of our lives – and that will only be completed when we see Him face to face, but meantime this resource is for you to see a selection of resources that are available for you to use in your community.

# Alpha



## Alpha

**The Alpha Course** is an eleven week course, including an introductory 'taster' evening, and a weekend or day away in the middle. It was developed at Holy Trinity, Brompton and so comes from the evangelical charismatic tradition. It aims to be an introduction to the Christian faith, open to everyone, but with a particular focus on those who are new to Christianity. Each evening begins with a meal, followed by a 40 minute talk (available on video/DVD), and exploratory small group discussion.

The session topics are:

*Session 1:* Is there more to life than this?

*Session 2:* Who is Jesus?

*Session 3:* Why did Jesus die?

*Session 4:* How can we have faith?

*Session 5:* Why and how do I pray?

*Session 6:* Why and how should I read the bible?

*Session 7:* How does God guide us?

*Weekend Away:*

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What does the Holy Spirit do?
- How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?
- How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

*Session 8:* How can I resist evil?

*Session 9:* Why and how should I tell others?

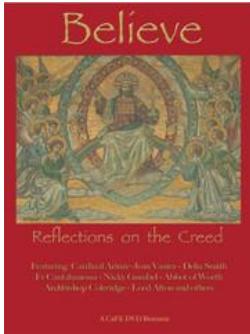
*Session 10:* Does God heal today?

*Session 11:* What about the church?

Alpha is arguably the best-known and widely used of all Christian Nurture courses, and a vast array of materials are available on their website at [www.uk.alpha.org](http://www.uk.alpha.org).

The latest DVD pack of all the relevant talks is available for £25, and an individual coursebook for £1.50

# Believe



**This nurture course** works through a number of reflections on the Nicæan creed. It explores the meaning of the word 'believe' through biblical examples and current believers. While coming from within the Roman Catholic tradition, it creatively draws on input from any number of different traditions. There are however certain specific Catholic points which arise which may need explanation. e.g. 'Magisterium' - the bishops' authority, and references to 'Catechism'.

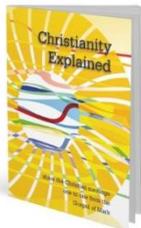
It comprises of Six DVD sessions in which David Payne interviews people and goes on tour to sites in the Holy Land which bring it alive;

- Session 1: Why we believe.
- Session 2: How we believe.
- Session 3: Almighty Father.
- Session 4: The Lord Jesus Christ.
- Session 5: The Holy Spirit and the Church.
- Session 6: Coming Kingdom.

There is a very short leader's guide and are also posters and a member's booklet. Believe is available from Catholic Faith Exploration. [www.faithcafe.org](http://www.faithcafe.org)

It costs £79.95 and each pack includes: 2 DVDs, a Music CD, a Sample Booklet, various Publicity Material plus a 'Knowing the Father's Love' DVD.

# Christianity Explained



**This six session** evangelism course is based on Mark's Gospel. The A4 manual costs £9.99 and includes photocopiable pages for group members.

The course is worked around the four principles of;

## **Assume Nothing**

Many will know little or nothing of the gospel

## **Proceed Slowly**

Just one point each session

## **Limited Time Commitment**

Only 6 sessions to commit to

## **The Three Fears**

Assurances from the beginning that no-one will be asked to read aloud, pray, or sing.

Discussion however is encouraged!

The 6 Sessions are entitled:

Study 1: Jesus - Son of God

Study 2: Jesus - death on the cross

Study 3: Jesus - his resurrection

Study 4: Grace - not works!

Study 5: What is a Christian? 1. Repenting

Study 6: What is a Christian? 2. Believing

Christianity Explained is available from The Good Book Company -  
[www.thegoodbook.co.uk/youth/christianity-explained](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/youth/christianity-explained)

# Christianity Explored



**This is a** ten week course, with a weekend or day away in the middle. It is based on Mark's gospel. It was developed from All Souls, Langham Place and so comes from a conservative evangelical tradition.

The course is targeted to those who are interested in exploring the Christian faith, but it would be just as suitable for those looking for a 'refresher' course. Each evening begins with a meal, followed by a talk (available on DVD), concluding with small group discussion with workbooks also available.

The outline of the course is:

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Jesus – Who was he?

Week 3: Jesus – Why did he come?

Week 4: Jesus – his death

Week 5: What is grace?

Week 6: Jesus – his resurrection

Weekend away: The Church. The Holy Spirit. Prayer. The Bible

Week 7: What is a Christian?

Week 8: Continuing as a Christian

Week 9: Choices – King Herod

Week 10: Choices – James, John and Bartimaeus

Materials are available from The Good Book Company at;

[www.thegoodbook.co.uk/Christianity-Explored/](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/Christianity-Explored/)

The DVD Set costs £25, Leader's Manual £10, and Participants Study Guide £3. A Starter pack with the essentials is available for £82.

# DiscipleKit



DiscipleKit  
discipleship · resources · reviewed

**DiscipleKit provides in-depth** reviews and ratings

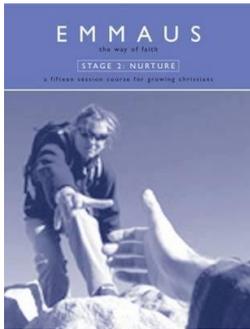
of discipleship resources, covering areas such as ease of use, approach to learning, use of Biblical material and mission focus. There are over 130 resources on the site so far, including online, DVD and print-based resources.

Visitors to the site are able to browse by theme, audience, media type and age group in order to find suitable resources for their church or group. In addition to the information and ratings provided by CPAS, users can leave their own reviews, see comments from others and create a shortlist.

As well as favourites such as Alpha and Christianity Explored, the site includes lesser known group resources which meet the discipleship needs of children, young people and adults across a wide range of ministry contexts which are seen as a journey in different stages.

DiscipleKit can be found at [www.disciplekit.org](http://www.disciplekit.org)

# Emmaus



**Emmaus is a** series of course materials which are seen as a journey in different stages.

Stages 1 and 3 serve different needs, but it is Stage 2 (The Way of Faith), a 15 week nurture course, that is most relevant here.

## **Part 1: What Christians Believe**

- God is there and he matters
- We need God in our lives
- Jesus – his ministry and death
- The resurrection of Jesus
- The Holy Spirit
- Becoming a Christian

## **Part 2: How Christians Grow**

- Learning to pray
- Reading the bible
- Belonging to the church
- Sharing holy communion

## **Part 3: Living the Christian Life**

- Living God's way
- Serving the Lord
- Your money and your life
- Learning to love
- Sharing the faith.

Each session includes Bible study, input and discussion, group exercises, meditations, ways to put faith into practice, and prayers. Each leader's book costs £25, but comes complete with a photocopiable section and a CD with all the member's materials necessary to run the course. More details are available at; [www.chpublishing.co.uk](http://www.chpublishing.co.uk)

# Essence

## Exploring Spirituality



This course attempts to tap into popular current spirituality. Its style is laid back and unthreatening, but active and creative. Each session should last one and a half to two hours –

including chatting and chilling out. The venue should be as ambient and relaxed as possible.

The 6-session course is made up of 6 'journeys';

### **Journey 1: so far**

bonding, belonging, community, touch, spiritual highs and lows

### **Journey 2: within**

identity, image, perception, affirmation

### **Journey 3: to a better world**

a perfect creation, the eco-system, destruction, creator, stewardship, partnership

### **Journey 4: to wholeness**

body, mind, spirit, emotions, physical and mental pain

### **Journey 5: to spirituality**

spirituality, religious experience, seeking God, types of prayer, coming into God's presence

### **Journey 6: to the future**

hopes and dreams, the future, eternity

Essence is available as a free download from the 'Share Jesus International' site; <http://www.sharejesusinternational.com/resources-home/>

# Glad You Asked



**This is an** evangelistic tool designed to introduce the Christian faith to seekers with a post-modern worldview.

The first 7 sessions cover today's spiritual questions:

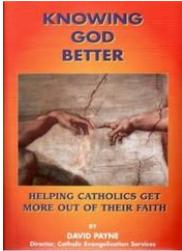
- Does God matter?
- Does God exist?
- How can God allow pain?
- Do the differences in religions matter?
- Can the Bible be trusted?
- Why is religion full of hypocrites?
- What was Jesus really like?

The order of these questions is decided by the group concerned, and can be returned to as is appropriate. The remaining 5 sessions explore the life of Jesus. Featuring Interview clips with experts, interspersed with questions that appear on screen, facilitating group discussion.

Groups can emerge from a number of sources: an event where people with spiritual questions are invited to join a group, an existing small group structure in your church, or a group of friends who find themselves discussing spiritual matters over coffee or dinner.

The pack costs £29.99 and has everything needed to run a Glad You Asked group. Contains a leader's guide and a DVD. More details and to purchase visit [www.gladyouasked.org](http://www.gladyouasked.org).

# Knowing God Better



**A seven-session** course from David Payne, Director of Catholic Evangelisation Services. The course is available in various audio-visual formats as according to budget.

A relaxed and practical course which includes mime, music, testimonies and opportunities for prayerful reflection. The Leader's Pack is a practical guide to setting up and running Knowing God Better and includes Scripture reflection handouts for the participants, which can be photocopied.

The 7 sessions are;

- Knowing God Better
- Knowing God's Love
- Knowing God's Forgiveness
- Knowing God's Help
- Knowing God's Word
- Knowing God's Spirit
- Knowing God's Hope

A 5-session follow-up course is also available called 'Knowing God Even Better', with the sessions;

- Knowing the Father's Love
- Knowing Jesus as Lord
- Knowing the Spirit as Friend
- Knowing God's Presence
- Knowing the Great Commission
- 

For more details on both courses and to purchase, go to [www.faithcafe.org](http://www.faithcafe.org) and look under 'Knowing God Better'.

The DVD Course with Leader's Pack costs £89.95, but an Audio set costs only £29.95, with a Leader's Pack at £4.95

# Now a Christian



**The Church Army** offer this free email-based course to help you discover the difference having a relationship with Jesus can make to your life.

It involves a daily email for five weeks, with a link to an interactive website on the fourth day of each week.

It gives the following as its 'key themes'

- Making sense of life
- Giving God a chance
- Dealing with crap
- Making the most of faith
- Hoping for the best

Go to the website to find out more - [www.nowachristian.org](http://www.nowachristian.org)

# Pilgrim



**Pilgrim is a** teaching and discipleship resource from the Church of England. It aims to help every local church create a place where people can explore the Christian faith together and see how it can be lived out each day.

Pilgrim is comprised of two stages: the Follow stage for those very new to faith, and the Grow stage for those who want to go further. Each stage contains four short six-session courses which focus on a major theme of Christian life.

## **Follow Stage:**

- What do Christians believe?
- How do Christians worship God?
- How do Christians behave?
- What is the Christian vision for the world?

## **Grow Stage:**

- The Creeds
- The Eucharist
- The Bible
- Church and Kingdom

Each Pilgrim session is accompanied by optional audio and video materials. For each session, there is:

- a video to introduce the session
- an audio version of the session's Reflection in two parts

Books start at £5.99. For details and to purchase visit their website - [www.pilgrimcourse.org](http://www.pilgrimcourse.org).

# Puzzling Questions



## Puzzling Questions

**Puzzling Questions is** a six week course that gives participants an opportunity to explore some of life's deeper questions.

As you journey through the course with others interested in reflecting on life's conundrums, so you will have an opportunity to consider what you think and talk that through with others.

Questions covered on the course include:

- Who am I?
- What is God like?
- What happens after death?
- How can I be happy?
- Why is there suffering in the world?
- What is the spiritual realm and how does it impact my life?

For each of the six big questions there is a 30 minute broadcast quality magazine programme.

Each of the episodes has a host who welcomes people to the programme and leads them through a vox pox, poetry performance (by Liverpoolian Poet and BBC Radio Presenter Stewart Henderson), music video and Parkinson style interview with someone relevant to that show's question.

Starter packs are can be purchased for £99.00. For more details and to purchase visit their website - [www.puzzlingquestions.org.uk](http://www.puzzlingquestions.org.uk)

# Simply Christianity



**This course is** written from the experience of the author, John Dickson, that it is just possible that the version of Christianity many have accepted, rejected or avoided, is not the 'real thing' after all, but an imperfect substitute. In a vaguely Christianised culture like ours it is all too easy to assume that our acceptance or rejection (or perhaps simply avoidance) of the Christian faith is based on a reasonable working knowledge of the topic.

The goal of this course, then, is to provide you with a clear, albeit brief, explanation of 'real' or 'normal' Christianity. It is a five-part course based on the Gospel of Luke. The goal is to surprise and challenge ordinary non-Christian people (whether 'churched' or 'unchurched') with the unique story of Jesus Christ, as told by Luke. Over the five sessions, guests read right through Luke, tracing its main themes.

The 5 sessions are;

- Jesus, Now and Then
- In the presence of Greatness (Luke Ch 1-9)
- Search and Rescue (Luke 10-19)
- Jesus' Death (Luke 20-23)
- Jesus, Here and Now: (Luke 24)

Student Manuals cost £2.50 each, with discounts available for bulk purchases, and Leaders Manuals £10.

They can be ordered from - [www.thegoodbook.co.uk/simply-christianity-leaders-manual](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/simply-christianity-leaders-manual)

# Start



**This is a** six session introduction to the Christian faith, developed by Robin Gamble. It is often used as a pre-nurture course (eg. pre-Alpha or pre-Emmaus), but can be used in its own right.

The sessions are interactive, using a mix of clips from the course DVD, discussion activities, and meditation type activities. It invites questions and discovery.

Each session lasts an hour, and are outlined below:

Life is for living	A general introduction to the course and the concept of journey
Oh my God!	An introduction to God and whether he exists
Jesus who?	Jesus as an authentic, historical person, divine and human
What's gone wrong?	Exploring the concept of sin
Dying to save us	The cross and resurrection
Into the arms of love	Advocating a continuing journey with Jesus.

Start!'s brevity is seen as helpful, both in terms of the total number of sessions and the length of each session. Within a session, each part is never more than 10-12 minutes.

The video is set in Blackpool and interviews people from different backgrounds. The DVD makes use of different images to describe spiritual concepts. It costs £40.00 + p&p and is available from LYCIG (Leading Your Church into Growth) at

<http://www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/start/>

# Table Talk

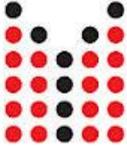


**This is a** Conversation-based enquiry course; with no leader or teacher but rather friends talking with friends about the issues that matter. Table Talk is a six session pre-alpha (or similar) game that enables conversation to happen around some of life's deeper issues.

It comes, so far, in 14 varieties, with a more in the works. Each costs £24.99 and is available at [www.table-talk.org](http://www.table-talk.org)

- Table Talk for Friends
- Table Talk for Uni Students
- Table Talk for Christmas and New Year
- Table Talk for 12-14 year olds
- Table Talk for 14-16 year olds
- Table Talk for 10-11 year olds
- Table Talk for 16-18 year olds
- Table Talk for All Age Messy Moments
- Table Talk for Blokes
- Table Talk for Forces
- Table Talk for Easter
- Table Talk for Scotland
- Table Talk for Women
- Table Talk for Third Agers

# Y Course



**This eight week** evangelism course claims to help people face life's biggest questions and introduces them to Jesus.

It comes in a very different 'chat show' format.

It features;

- 16 chat show style DVD segments (6 minutes each) featuring authors Peter Meadows and Joseph Steinberg with Gemma Hunt
- A guide for Course Leaders
- A guide for small group leaders and over 100 questions to stimulate discussion
- The Book of Y – the core content for the course

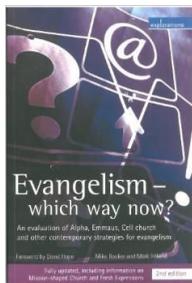
The DVD is available for £19.99. Each (very glossy) coursebook 'The Book of Y' is £7.99; but various bulk orders of the DVD with course books, or course books alone, are also available from their website.

The 8 main topics are;

- Is There More To Life Than This?
- Can Anyone Really Know What God Is Like?
- Are We Expected To Believe What Happened So Long Ago?
- If Jesus Was So Good, Why Was He Executed?
- Why So Much Suffering and So Many Religions?
- Is There Really Life After Death?.
- Can God Make A Difference In My Life?
- Who Wants To Be Stuck With A Bunch Of Boring Old Rules?

Lots more details are available at; [www.ycourse.com](http://www.ycourse.com)

# Producing your own course



**Evangelism – which way now?** by Mike Booker and Mark Ireland (Church House Publishing, 2003; ISBN 0715140752); an excellent introduction to a wide range of issues to do with evangelism and church growth.

The authors emphasise that home-grown courses are sometimes even more effective than those taken 'off the shelf'. Courses almost always need adapting to your situation and some parishes 'mix and match' different materials.

Do please tell us if you are running another nurture course on a local level that you'd like to share...

## Contact Details

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