



THE 'HOW-TO' GUIDE

WELCOME

We're so glad you've downloaded the Built on the Rock course. This resource is designed to help you build strong in Jesus and especially in helping you to understand the Bible in a simple and applicable way.

This 'how-to' guide will help you to get the most out of this material and make it as accessible for you and your friends as possible. Inviting Jesus into our lives really is the first step of a life-long adventure of being transformed more into His likeness. This is a steady process of growing and building Godly character. Our prayer is that these sessions will help you to lay firm foundations that go deep into your core, keeping you faithful and focussed through the highs and lows of life that are ahead.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."

Jesus (Matthew 7:24-25)

The Naujavan Team

WHAT IS THIS?

The Built on the Rock course is a total of 15 sessions aimed at helping new or young believers understand more of the Bible and the application of it in our lives. Each session is based on four or five central Bible passages (including a memory verse), discussion questions, helpful analogies and short videos which showcase the stories of young people and act as a launch-pad for deeper conversation. The course provides a safe space to answer questions and misconceptions in a relaxed and informal environment.

The course originally began as a series of teaching sessions developed by Clive Thorne (Pastor at Southampton Lighthouse International Church) to help disciple new believers. The material later went on to be published into the *Built on the Rock* book and is now, in its newest format, available as a more interactive discussion-based resource with video.

THEMES, LEVELS AND SESSIONS

There are five main *themes* that are explored within this course. These are: Assurance, Love, Spirit-Led, Purity and Prayer.

Each theme is covered at three different *levels* – each new level going slightly deeper than the last.

Each *session* aims to answer a specific question in relation to the theme. These can be seen more clearly on the Course Overview Chart on the next page.

BOTR COURSE OVERVIEW CHART

	ASSURANCE	LOVE	SPIRIT-LED	PURITY	PRAYER
LEVEL 1	How do we understand the Bible?	How should we relate to God?	How do we receive the Holy Spirit?	What are the rules in the Christian life?	How should we pray?
LEVEL 2	Can we be lost again?	How should we relate to the church?	What about the gifts and fruit of the Spirit?	How do we overcome temptation?	What makes prayer work?
LEVEL 3	How can we maintain the Christian life?	How should we relate to others?	How can we know God's guidance?	What happens when we sin as Christians?	How can we spend extended time in prayer?

The most systematic way to work through the course is by covering all five themes in one level at a time. This is useful because as you come around to a theme again in level two or three you've had space to explore other areas too.

It is possible to use any of the 15 sessions as 'stand-alone' sessions (e.g. if wanting to tackle a particular question one-to-one with a friend) or can be used to look more intensely at one particular theme (e.g. looking at all three levels of prayer one after the other).

WHO IS THIS FOR?

The BOTR Course is designed specifically for new or young Christians. There is an introductory session which can be used before launching into the main sessions which aims to answer the question: What makes someone a Christian?

Those who wouldn't yet identify themselves as Christians might be better suited to other courses that explore life and the Christian faith (e.g. [Discovering Jesus Through Asian Eyes](#) or [Alpha](#)). That being said, these sessions can very easily be adapted to explore the Scriptures and look at the truth of the Bible with anyone seeking God. If you're the Leader for your group, you will be able to make an assessment as to whether the friends you have in mind would be suitable for this or not. If you're not the Leader of your group, we'd suggest chatting it over with those who are leading.

This resource is designed to be used in a small group or youth group setting. It can be used as a personal tool or in a one-to-one setting but for that we'd suggest getting hold of the 'Built on the Rock' book (request a copy via www.naujavan.com). With this course you're likely to get more out of it if you go through it together with a group of friends.

The following 'how-to' material is geared towards helping you run the course in a group setting.

HOW TO RUN THE COURSE WELL

1. PLAN

- Gather a team
- Set the dates
- Set the venue
- Download & Register the course

2. PREPARE

- Spiritually
- Practically
- Technically

3. RUN

- What does a session look like?
- Memory verses
- Being a good Session Leader

4. EVALUATE & FEEDBACK

- Build a culture of improvement
- Keep in touch

PLAN

GATHER A TEAM

It's best to get a few people together to help organise and oversee the course. Working in a team is always more effective and helps to spread the weight of responsibility. In running the course you will want to assign the following roles to different people:

- Session Leader (can be different for each session) – this person will be responsible for leading the teaching and discussion elements of the session. It is best to have someone who has been a Christian for a good length of time and is gifted in communicating and guiding conversation. It will require them to prepare ahead of time.
- Catering/Refreshments – this person will need to organise drinks, snacks and food according to the setup you decide to go for. This is an important role which helps to set the right tone and atmosphere as your group gathers.
- Administrator – this person is responsible for ensuring people know where and when the sessions are happening and also has an idea of who is coming (helpful to know if catering!). They will also be responsible for ensuring the leader has the course material they need and that the video material is available for easy display.

SET THE DATES

As a team you will want to decide when to run your course and how frequently you will meet. If you're using the material as part of an

already established home, small or youth group then hopefully this should be straightforward enough. If you're setting up a new group then consider the following:

- What's your start date? Worth setting a date at least 6 weeks away – this gives enough time to prepare and communicate.
- How often will you meet? Weekly? Fortnightly? Monthly? Will you run all 15 sessions back-to-back or break it up into 3 separate seasons (one for each level) throughout the year?
- What time is best? Wednesday night at 7.30pm with dinner? Saturday morning at 9am with breakfast? What suits your group?

SET THE VENUE

If you're using the material as part of an already established home, small or youth group then hopefully this should be straightforward enough. If you're setting up a new group then consider the following:

- Will you host the sessions at church, at home, at a café etc.?
- What impact will it have on organisation?
- Where will the mood/atmosphere best suit the informal and relaxed tone of the course?
- Is there access to a large enough screen with decent sound for the video content to be displayed?

DOWNLOAD THE COURSE MATERIAL

If you haven't already log on to: www.naujavan.com/botr and register as a new user, completely free of charge to gain access to the course content. You can download all Leaders Notes and Videos directly from the user area.

Once logged into the user area you can fill in the form to register your course. You will be asked to fill in some of the key information relating to your course (start date, frequency, city etc.). We'd really appreciate you registering here as it helps us to keep track of where and how the course is being used.

PREPARE

SPIRITUALLY

Building firm foundations as a Christian isn't simply a matter of a well organised course but ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives. This will happen not only as we sit and learn but as we go and obey in all areas of our lives. We'd encourage you, along with your team, to spend time to pray and ask God to do the real work in yours and your friend's hearts as you look through these sessions together.

As a Session Leader you will want to spend time looking through the Leaders Notes and watching the associated video for your session ahead of time. We'd suggest doing this at least a week in advance to allow time for the material to make sense as much as possible to you. Take the time to work through the material yourself, taking note of the questions, Scripture references and suggested answers. At points you

will see 'suggested analogies' but you can insert your own stories which make the same point.

PRACTICALLY

As the Session Leader you don't just want to read out the answers given on the Leaders Notes but aim to understand the points being made and put your own language to it. You might want to highlight key bits ahead of time or research a bit further if something doesn't quite make sense to you. Ideally you want the truth of these sessions to have sunk deep into your own life as you share with and lead others.

You can also prepare to break your group down into smaller clusters at different points in the session if suitable. Perhaps you will read a passage out from the Bible and then the question that follows might be better discussed in these smaller clusters than as one whole group. After people have discussed in their smaller clusters you can ask for some quick-fire feedback from the groups themselves. This is a good way to keep it engaging. These kinds of directions are not on the Leaders Notes, so you will need to plan these moments in yourself. We've done this intentionally to allow you as much flexibility as needed so you can tailor the session to your group.

The Administrator needs to ensure that they've communicated the course dates and venue well to all those who are coming and have set the space up appropriately. A little extra effort on the environment here will go a long way to helping people feel like this is a place they want to

be and stay in. It's also worth providing Bibles as all the material in each session is based on four or five key Bible passages.

Tip: For newer believers finding Bible passages can be tricky (and possibly embarrassing if they're the only ones who don't know where to look). Providing exactly the same Bible for everyone allows the group leader to call out page numbers making it easier all round. Alternatively people can use their phones to look up chapters and verses.

TECHNICALLY

As part of the course features short videos it is wise to have pre-set the video to play with the click of a button rather than having to fumble around in the middle of the session plugging in cables! No one likes technical glitches but with a bit of planning it is easily avoided. We'd suggest showing the videos on a screen large enough for all in the group to see easily with a good sound system so it can be heard clearly (TV's/projectors are better than everyone huddling around your smart phone!).

The videos are easily downloadable from the user area of the website and can be loaded onto a USB stick or computer as necessary.

RUN

WHAT DOES A SESSION LOOK LIKE?

Typically one session of the course will look like this:

ITEM	SUGGESTED TIMING	INFO
Arrive/Connect/Food/Drink	30 mins	An opportunity to build relationships with each other and catch up before the session begins. This time helps to set a relaxed and open environment, creating the right mood to learn and engage.
Session Begins	5 mins	Here the whole group comes together. The Leader might begin with a short prayer and then set the topic and begin by asking the opening questions from the Leaders Notes.
Play Session Video	5 mins	These videos showcase the story of young person's journey of faith and tie into the main thread of the session. These are launch-pad videos to help bring the content of the session to life and are not designed to give perfect or complete answers.
Session Teaching/Discussion	40 mins	The Leader will then lead using the Leaders Notes, asking questions, steering discussion and providing answers/teaching as needed. All sessions are based on 4 or 5 key Bible passages.
Memory Verse	10 mins	A short game of associating each word of the verse with a person in the room can be used to help memorise the verse (more below).
Prayer	10 mins	At the end of the session the Leader can ask for any prayer requests, either related to the topic or not, and allow space for different group members to pray out.

MEMORY VERSE

Each session includes a memory verse. Memorising Bible verses is a good and helpful habit to get into and is a healthy principle in growing in relationship with God.

Human memory works by association so here's a simple game that can be played at the end of each session to help memorise the verse.

1. The Session Leader will divide the verse between the group with a word or a few words each in order around the room, with the last person having the Bible reference. People can't look at the Bible but must just remember the few words they are given.
2. Starting with the first person, each person says their word(s) and then the next person says theirs going around the group until the whole verse has been said along with the reference.
3. Next, go back to the first person saying their words again followed by the second person saying the first person's words and adding their own. This progresses around the group slowly building up the whole verse until the last person says the whole verse with the reference.
4. Finally it goes back to the first person who then has to say the whole verse and reference and each one around the group follows. In three rounds like this most people are able to memorise a verse with its reference!

BEING A GOOD SESSION LEADER

Part of the success of the course will rely on the ability of the Session Leader. It's important to realise that part of this material requires fairly direct *teaching* and part of it requires leading *discussion*. The Session Leader will skilfully know how to keep the group on track, correcting misconceptions and answering questions without squeezing out the freedom of exploring ideas. Much of what is being taught within this course is based on unchanging and timeless truth. It's important that the Session Leader knows when to offer teaching to keep in line with the Scripture and at other times allow people to find their own conclusions.

It's easy as the leader to either be overbearing or too vague. Striking the balance will probably take a bit of practice but here are the big *dos* and *don'ts* as a Session Leader.

Don't:

- Speak too often
- Feel you have to fill the silence
- Use lots of Christian jargon
- Force people to read or pray out loud
- Let one or two dominate the session
- Assume everyone in the room is at the same point
- React negatively, harshly or embarrass anyone
- Try and preach at people
- Let discussion veer off-topic
- Answer your own questions
- Treat people's questions as awkward interruptions

- Lose track of time
- Leave it all until the last minute assuming you can wing it!

Do:

- Speak clearly, setting the topic simply
- Read the questions on the Leaders Notes, keeping an eye on the suggested answers
- Treat 'silence' as a member of the group (often silence allows people to think and consider)
- Use simple language, especially if there are those in the room who have English as a second language
- Invite people to read and pray but respect if they'd rather not
- Help people to find Bible passages by reading out page numbers/using mobile devices
- Aim to involve quieter members of the group by asking them questions
- Remain aware of those who are disengaging and find ways to re-include them
- React positively to all contributions (even if they're totally off-topic) as it will create a more relaxed and encouraging environment
- Teach when conversation or conclusions are incorrect
- Help people to think for themselves
- Share your own stories when appropriate
- Invite people to ask their own questions throughout
- Keep the session to time as much as possible
- Allow plenty of time to prepare spiritually and practically (see the 'prepare' section for more info).

EVALUATE & FEEDBACK

BUILD A CULTURE OF IMPROVEMENT

Once you've run the course, in full or even in part, you and your team will want to assess how it has worked. It's worth recognising that the first few times you run the course it's unlikely to be at its utmost best. As with anything it takes time to get good, so stick with it!

It's good to have a culture of improvement in your team, where you can evaluate what worked really well and what didn't. As you debrief and review you will inevitably want to make adjustments for the next time you run the course. Perhaps the venue needs to be changed or instead of organising a full meal you'll only provide snacks and drinks. Whatever you decide, a team that is willing to learn and improve is one that God can use.

It is actually a great joy and privilege to be involved in helping to build others up in their walk with God and you can be sure that there is a rich reward in heaven for all such efforts

“And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Jesus (Matthew 10:42)



KEEP IN TOUCH

We'd love to hear how you're finding the course as you lead it in your local area. As you evaluate what's working and what isn't please do send us your feedback. As we develop this resource we want to make it sharper and more suitable to help you as you serve those around you.

Please get in touch using: info@naujavan.com