

Building a Vibrant Health Ministry

4 Bible Study Outlines

BIBLE STUDY OUTLINES

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How can the Bible inspire us to do the hard work of laying a solid foundation and raising strong walls for enduring health ministry?

Use these brief outlines to develop and lead small-group Bible study sessions adaptable to your congregation's ministries. Read the suggested articles and expand on the points to emphasize with your own thoughts. You also might like to choose some excerpts from the highlighted articles to read aloud with your group. Craft additional discussion questions based on your group's interest and needs.

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BIBLE STUDY OUTLINES

SESSION 1: Jesus' Gospel of Health

In advance, read "Empowering Is Healing: What?" on page 16 and Mark 1:1-12 and John 1:9-10. This session explores Jesus' intertwining of caring both for the body and the spirit because he saw people as whole persons. (For expanded study you may want to explore Genesis 1:7 and John 4:13-14.) As you lead, emphasize these points:

- Jesus prepared his disciples to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick. His ministry stressed healing the whole person.
- Every congregation has the potential to make each person's days become full of life and love.
- Health issues enable congregations to act stably and effectively to address wellness issues and support whole-person health as Jesus did.

Discussion questions

1. Read Mark 1:1-12 together. Name the ways we see the four friends coming together to for the well-being of the man who could not walk. How do we see Jesus caring for both the body and spirit of the man?
2. Look at John 1:9-10 together. Jesus came to bring us abundant life. In what ways can living in this fullness seem to be stolen from us and undercut our health?
3. Share examples of how you have been caring for both the body and spirit of an individual, make a difference in overall wellness and experience of the abundant life.

Close with prayer.

SESSION 2: A Vision of Health Ministry

In advance, read "The Cure Method" on page 20 and Isaiah 58:6-12. This session explores a picture of a healing community and becoming dedicated to bringing this vision about in practical ways. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore Luke 4:18-20 and Matthew 23:16-23.) As you lead, emphasize these points:

- Congregational health ministry is not the specialized work of a few but an invitation for many people to share a vision that finds its roots in the Bible.
- Congregational health ministry translates a vision into actions that change people's lives for the better.
- Congregational health ministry is an opportunity for faithful stewardship of the gifts and resources that reside within the local faith community.

Discussion questions

1. Read Isaiah 58:6-12 together. The author has been talking about false and true fasting or worship. How do these verses show us how a health ministry that improves lives in service serves or worships of God?
2. Read Isaiah 58:9-12 together. How do these verses show us a picture of community health restored—not just the individuals but the community as a whole?
3. Share experiences of health and wellness that have come out of community experience of faith and service.

Close with prayer.

SESSION 3: Our Obedience in Health Ministry

In advance, read "Obedience to Practitioners" on page 24 along with Matthew 4:18-22 and Luke 9:1-6. This session explores practical ways to live out the healing work of the gospel. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore 2 John 3, Matthew 11:28-30, Isaiah 40:1-31 as they apply to health ministry.) As you lead, emphasize these points:

- Churches starting or strengthening health ministries are reclaiming a call not only to preach and teach but also to heal, which is equally part of the gospel, and practical actions.
- Health ministry is a ministry of the congregation, for the work of healing in the church, that invites people to in shared obedience.

Discussion questions

1. Read Matthew 4:18-22 together. What do we see in the way Jesus called his first disciples that we can identify with? What example do the first disciples' response give us that we can apply to health ministry?
2. Read Luke 9:1-6 together. How does this passage demonstrate the way healing ministry proclaims the kingdom of God?
3. Share personal experiences that illustrate understanding of how a structured approach to caring for one another's well-being bears fruit in deeper understanding of the gospel.

Close with prayer.

SESSION 4: Health in Community

In advance, read "Opportunities in the Pew" along with Ecclesiastes 4:8-12, Acts 2:6-10. The session explores one specific model for a congregation to address a contemporary health crisis. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore Acts 3:1-6, Acts 9:32-42, Acts 18:8-9.) As you lead, emphasize these points:

- Communities of faith, statistically, are not exempt from mental and behavioral health issues. We just don't do a good job of talking about them.
- Faith-based organizations understandably saw important players in the public health system out, including in addressing the opioid crisis.
- Choosing to become involved with the community on a specific issue is a viable form of health ministry that will change lives.


Discussion questions

1. Read Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 together. How do these verses about the strength of friendship speak into the challenges of congregations facing issues as fierce as the opioid crisis?
2. Read Acts 2:6-10. How does Peter's example of giving what he had, when it seemed he did not have what was needed, help us face challenges in health ministry?
3. Exchange stories of how lives in the group have been touched by addition, whether personally or among your social circles.

Close with prayer.

Prayers of the People

God of Healing,
You call us to your gospel.
Give us hearts to
hear your voice
see your hand
feel your Spirit.
Send us into the world with
your message of peace
your words of wholeness
your love for all. Amen.



A downloadable version of this Bible study outline is available for purchase on www.churchhealth.org

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Use these brief outlines to develop and lead small-group Bible study sessions adaptable to your congregation's ministries. Read the suggested articles and expand on the points to emphasize with your own thoughts. You also might like to choose some excerpts from the highlighted articles to read aloud with your group. Craft additional discussion questions based on your group's interest and needs.



SESSION 1: *Jesus' Gospel of Health*

In advance, read "Empowering to Healing Work" on page 16 and Mark 12:1-12 and John 10:9-10. This session explores Jesus' intertwining of caring both for the body and the spirit because he saw people as whole persons. (For expanded study, you may want to explore Genesis 2:7 and John 4:13-14). As you lead, emphasize these points.

- Jesus prepared his disciples to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick. His ministry stressed healing the whole person.
- Every congregation has the potential to make each person's days become full of life and love.
- Health teams enable congregations to act nimbly and effectively to address wellness issues and support whole-person health as Jesus did.

Discussion questions

1. Read Mark 2:1-12 together. Name the ways we see the four friends coming together to for the well-being of the man who could not walk. How do we see Jesus caring for both the body and spirit of the man?
2. Look at John 10:9-10 together. Jesus came to bring us abundant life. In what ways can living in this fullness seem to be stolen from us and undercut our health?
3. Share examples of how you have seen caring for both the body and spirit of an individual make a difference in overall wellness and experience of the abundant life.

Close with prayer.



SESSION 2: *A Vision of Health Ministry*

In advance, read "The Cure Method" on page 20 and Isaiah 58:6-12. This session explores a picture of a healing community and becoming dedicated to bringing this vision about in practical terms. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore Luke 4:16-20 and Matthew 25:34-40). As you lead, emphasize these points.

- Congregational health ministry is not the specialized work of a few but an invitation for many people to share a vision that finds its roots in the Bible.
- Congregational health ministry translates a vision into actions that change people's lives for the better.
- Congregational health ministry is an opportunity for faithful stewardship of the gifts and resources that reside within the local faith community.

Discussion questions

1. Read Isaiah 58:6-8 together. The author has been talking about false and true fasting or worship. How do these verses show us how a health ministry that improves lives is sincere service or worship of God?
2. Read Isaiah 58:9-12 together. How do these verses show us a picture of community health restored—not just the individuals but the community as a whole?
3. Share experiences of health and wellness that have come out of community experience of faith and service.

Close with prayer.



SESSION 3: *Our Obedience in Health Ministry*

In advance, read “Down to Practicalities” on page 24 along with Matthew 4:18–22 and Luke 9:1–6. This session explores practical ways to live out the healing work of the gospel. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore 3 John 2, Matthew 11:28–29, Isaiah 40:29–31 as they apply to health ministry). As you lead, emphasize these points.

- Churches starting or strengthening health ministries are reclaiming a call not only to preach and teach but also to heal, which is equally part of the gospel.
- Answering the call to care relies on theological underpinnings, good information, and practical actions.
- Health ministry is a ministry of the congregation, for the work of healing in the church, that invites people in to shared obedience.

Discussion questions

1. Read Matthew 4:18–22 together. What do we see in the way Jesus called his first disciples that we can identify with? What example do the first disciples’ response give us that we can apply to health ministry?
2. Read Luke 9:1–6 together. How does this passage demonstrate the way healing ministry proclaims the kingdom of God?
3. Share personal experiences that illustrate understanding of how a structured approach to caring for one another’s well-being bears fruit in deeper understanding of the gospel.

Close with prayer.



SESSION 4: *Health in Community*

In advance, read “Opioid Crisis in the Pew” along with Ecclesiastes 4:8–12, Acts 3:6–10. The session explores one specific model for a congregation to address a contemporary health crisis. (For expanded study, you may also want to explore Acts 9:32–35, Acts 9:39–42, Acts 28:8–9). As you lead, emphasize these points.

- Communities of faith, statistically, are not exempt from mental and behavioral health issues. We just don’t do a good job of talking about them.
- Faith-based organizations undeniably are important players in the public health safety net, including in addressing the opioid crisis.
- Choosing to become involved with the community on a specific issue is a viable form of health ministry that will change lives.

Discussion questions

1. Read Ecclesiastes 4:8–12 together. How do these verses about the strength of friendship speak into the challenges of congregations facing issues as fierce as the opioid crisis?
2. Read Acts 3:6–10. How does Peter’s example of giving what he had, when it seemed he did not have what was needed, help us face challenges in health ministry?
3. Exchange stories of how lives in the group have been touched by addiction, whether personally or among your social circles.

Close with prayer.

Prayers of the People

God of Healing,
You call us to your gospel.

Give us hearts to

hear your voice

see your hand

feel your Spirit.

Send us into the world with
your message of peace
your words of wholeness
your love for all. Amen.



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