

SAMPLE



Thank you for downloading the FREE SAMPLE of **DNowStudies** 4-session Bible Study, *Renew*

Renew is an amazing resource for your DNow or Retreat weekend. By leading your student through this study, you'll not only challenge them to live out their faith in a powerful way, you'll equip them to do it long after your event is over.

Before jumping into this sample, make sure you check out all the amazing features that **DNowStudies** puts at your fingertips. There really is nothing else like it anywhere...

What You'll Find In This Sample

- >>A Sample of a Small Group Lesson Plan
- >>A Sample of the Student Book
- >>A short version of the *Renew* Overviews

Of course each of these components, and dozens more, are available to your teachers through their Online Lesson Manager. But this PDF will simply give you an idea of the main content of *Renew*.

If you have questions, email us at dnow@leadertreks.com.
Or, give us a call at 1-877-502-0699

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Did you know that Small Group Content is just one of the many components you have access to with the purchase of a **DNow** study?

DNowStudies gives you the resources you need to create transformational DNow or Retreat Weekends. Take a look at what's included in your purchase of *Renew*.

- Large Group Speaker Outlines
- Large Group Videos
- Large Group Motion Background/Loop
- Large Group PowerPoint Slides
- Promotional Tools: Web Banner/Poster Files
- Promotional Tools: Promo Video
- Parent Resources

Throw in built-in **Tools and Training** for you and ALL your leaders, a streamlined **Teacher Management** tool, and of course your **Small Group Lesson Plans** and you begin to see how **DNowStudies** really can help make your Disciple Now and/or Retreat Weekend exceptional.

Renew: Mark 12:30

As Christ-followers, we are called to love God with everything we have. Every part of our being—heart, mind, strength, and soul—should be intent on loving and glorifying him with everything we do. But to love God like that means we need to breathe new life into the dusty, worn-out places of ourselves. We need to be renewed.

The problem is, people are notorious for having no-fly zones in their lives—a place where any uninvited aircraft that enters may be forced out or even shot down. While no-fly zones are usually meant to keep enemies out, we sometimes use them to keep God out of our lives, too. We say, “Here, God. You can be the Lord of this part of my life, but you’d better stay out of these other parts!”

Jesus wants to connect with you and your student in a deep and personal way, not just hover at the edges of our no-fly zones. As his creation, we are precious to him and he wants to be as close to us as a best friend, He wants to be the kind of friend where there are no secrets and we can trust each other completely.

It can be tough for your student to persevere in their journey as a Christ follower. That’s why this study is not only focusing on the one-time calling on our lives, but on the renewal that last your student’s entire life.

Small Group Outlines

Small Group Session 1

- **Session Title:** Heart
- **Main Scripture Passages:** Matthew 13:15, Matthew 15:18, Philippians 4:6-7
- **Session Overview:** Your students may be really involved in ministry, serving others and attending Bible studies. But as tasks, service projects, and events add up, do you ever challenge them to think about why they do these things? Even the right thing done for the wrong reason can be harmful. It all starts with the heart. What does it mean to love God with the whole heart? How does God transform us from the inside out, starting with our basic motives and desires? What does that renewal look like for your students?

Small Group Session 2

- **Session Title:** Mind
- **Main Scripture Passages:** Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 4:8, Proverbs 3:5-6
- **Session Overview:** This lesson is designed to teach students how to use their minds to love God and love others more wholly. Students often take their minds and thoughts for granted, allowing only feelings or experiences to inform their love of God. But God invites us to love him with our intellects and imaginations, using wisdom and discernment to follow him with our whole beings. When students begin to use their whole minds to love and follow God, it opens up the

possibility to love themselves and others. The objective of this lesson is to equip students with Scripture and tools to use their minds in their pursuit of Christ.

Small Group Session 3

- **Session Title:** Strength
- **Main Scripture Passages:** 1 Peter 4:10-11, Philippians 4:12-13, James 1:9-10
- **Session Overview:** We live in a world that values strength and power above anything else. But Christ-followers are called to be different. God works through the humble and willing, and often uses weaknesses and hardships to remind us of our desperate need for him. As we humbly offer him all of our efforts (both strong and weak), he promises to replace them with his mighty power and strength. This has two major implications for students: First, those who consider themselves successful and strong must be wary of pride so that their efforts will not take away their love for God. Second, those who feel weak and battered can take courage that God wants to display his power through them.

Small Group Session 4

- **Session Title:** Soul
- **Main Scripture Passages:** Luke 12:12-21, Philippians 3:13-14, 1 Timothy 6:11-12
- **Session Overview:** This lesson teaches students to love God with their souls, to change their focus from the temporary treasures of this world to their eternal life with God. There are many things this world clings to: wealth, power, comfort, consistency. As Christ-followers, God calls us to live differently. Christ asks us to give up our tightly held desires, to keep no part of ourselves from him. This is a daily task; it doesn't come easy. When we spend time with God in Scripture, prayer, and fellowship, he renews our souls and his desires become our desires. We may lose those things we thought we wanted, but we end up gaining so much more!

Large Group Outlines

Large Group Session 1: Romans 6:15-18

Large Group Session 2: Ephesians 4:17-24

Large Group Session 3: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Large Group Session 4: Mark 8:34-37

Student Book Devotional Outlines

Devotion 1: Mark 12:28-34

Devotion 2: Mark 10:35-45

Devotion 3: Ephesians 3:16-21, 4:1-6

Devotion 4: Philippians 3:7-14

RENEW

SMALL GROUP LEADER



01. HEART

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE:

GOAL: The goal of this lesson is twofold:

1. *This small group lesson is designed to help you and your students go deeper into what it means to have a renewed heart and how to keep our hearts connected to God. It's easy to get lost in the checklist of saying and doing the right things, but not having our hearts in it. This lesson is designed to help students see the value that God places on what's inside (our hearts) not what's outside (how we appear to others).*

2. *It is also designed to make it easy for you to facilitate and teach students about renewing their hearts and authentically worshipping God. That is why the Small Group Leader's Guide is packed with easy-to-use instructions, timeframes, and questions that promote thinking and draw out real responses.*

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- A copy of the Facilitator's Guide for you and any other facilitators.
- A copy of the Student Book for each participant.
- Be sure to check out the Live It Out section ahead of time to prepare: Anything that could work as a fake microphone. 10 to 20 popular (and appropriate) songs from various genres, queued up on an iPod or iPhone. Printouts of the lyrics. A way to play the music so everyone can hear it.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Don't forget to take a minute and watch the teacher prep video found in your Dnow Studies account. It's a short video that will take you through some of the need-to-knows before you dive into this lesson with students.

The Small Group Leader Guide This table outlines the parts of each lesson and provides an approximate timeframe that you can adapt to meet the needs of your group.

<i>Lesson Outline</i>	<i>Included in Facilitator's Guide</i>	<i>Included in Student Book</i>	<i>Approximate Timeframe</i>
Large Talk Review with Opening Questions		Yes	3-5 minutes
A Second Look A look at renewing your mind in current, everyday life—followed by discussion questions.	Yes	Yes	10-15 minutes
A Little Deeper Dig into Bible passages that were not in the Large Group Talk. See what else Scripture says about this topic.	Yes	Yes + discussion questions	15-20 minutes
Live it out An experiential activity to help students reinforce and internalize the lesson.	Yes		10-15 minutes
Apply it A practical application for students to do this week.	Yes	Yes	2-3 minutes
Student Devotional A short devotional for students to do on their own		Yes	

The First Meeting: *Since this is the first meeting together for this event, take the time to lay the foundations for the whole event.*

- *If your students don't know each other, cover introductions and consider an icebreaker (see leadertreks.com/freebies for several icebreaker and team building activities).*
- *Be sure to cover the schedule and ground rules for the event, especially if you are staying at a host home.*

- *Tell students why you are here. You are probably sacrificing some time and comfort to be a small group teacher and, chances are, it's worth it! Let students know why you care so much about them and why you want to invest in them to help them grow. Tell students who you think they're great and why it's worth it for you to be small group leader this weekend!*

Large Talk Review

*Take a minute to review what students just learned in the Large Group talk. Have them pull out their notes, and ask them to share what their answers were for the two questions found on **page 4** of the Student Book. Consider having students share their answers with a partner, and then ask for two or three volunteers who might want to share with the whole group.*

A Second Look

*Read this story together as a group and answer the following questions, found on **page 5** of the Student Book.*

Have you ever gone to your favorite restaurant hungry for one thing, but you changed your mind as soon as you saw a mouthwatering picture of something else in the menu? Maybe it was the vibrant colors in a salad or the steam rising from a burger, but you can already taste the food before you've even ordered it.

Behind every amazing food photo is a ton of hard work. To make the food in the picture as appetizing as possible, a food stylist arranges each item with care. Individual sesame seeds are placed using tweezers. Salads are built up on mounds of potatoes so they look fuller and are easier to rearrange. Food dyes are injected into meat so burgers are the perfect color. A special concoction of oils, or even WD-40, is sprayed onto fruit so it looks shiny and fresh. Then a food photographer comes in to adjust the lighting, choose the best angle, and take the perfect picture.

But while the end result looks delicious, at best it tastes exactly the same as the food you actually eat, and at worst it's inedible. That's right—so it won't melt under the hot lights of a photo shoot, ice cream is replaced with a gross substance you'd never want to eat. Instead of ice cubes, plastic replicas float in drinks. And the milk in the bowl on the front of your favorite box of cereal? It's probably a heavy cream or even a mixture of glue. I'll take the less beautiful real food, thank you!

Discuss:

- Think through the last 10 decisions you made (to buy something, to wear something, to go somewhere, to hangout with someone). How important was appearance in your decision making process? Why?
- With the food from these menu pictures in mind, why do you think God cares more about our hearts than how we look on the outside?
- Why do you think some people spend so much time worried about how they come across to the world, instead of focusing on their hearts?

Leader's Note: *Be sure to say a positive or encouraging comment after students share, for example, "Thanks for saying that," "Good insight," "I think we've all felt that way," or "I've never thought of it like that." If you let silence take over after a student shares, it can change the tempo of the discussion and prevent students from sharing any more. Stay upbeat, nod at them, and smile. It can change the whole atmosphere of each small group time.*

A Little Deeper

In this section, you'll take a look at several Bible passages and students will answer questions. The Background Notes below will give you a little more insight into the confusing parts of these passages. As students share, remember to listen deeply. Don't be afraid to ask second-level questions.

Read each Bible passage and answer the questions found in the Student Book on pages 7 and 8:

Matthew 13:15: *This people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.*

Background Note: *Jesus had many confrontations with the Pharisees. They were religious leaders, trained in the law. They knew what was written in the Old Testament better than almost anyone else. Of all people, they should have known what God wanted and how to worship God. But they lost their heart connection to God in the minutia of trying to do the right things for the wrong reasons. They kept laws in order to bolster their image, becoming prideful and arrogant in their religious performance. While their hearts may have started in the right place they were far from God by the time Jesus encountered them.*

Discussion questions found on **page 7** of the Student Book

Matthew 15:18: *But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.*

Background Note: *We wash our hands before we eat so we won't get sick, but people in Jesus' time washed because they thought eating with unwashed hands made them unholy. Jesus is making a point here: that unholiness comes from the inside, not the outside.*

Discussion questions found on **page 7** of the Student Book

Philippians 4:6-7: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Discussion questions found on **page 8** of the Student Book

Live It Out

Lip Sync Contest

What You'll Need: It works really well to give one or two students the task of gathering these things a day or two before the event.

- Anything that could work as a fake microphone
- 10 to 20 popular (and appropriate) songs from various genres, queued up on an iPod or iPhone. Printouts of the lyrics. A way to play the music so everyone can hear it.

Have students who want to participate take turns choosing songs to lip sync to from the list you put together. Let them know that this will be a competition for the most believable performance. Encourage them to perform in groups, maybe using back up singers. And if time is an issue, limit each performance to just one minute. After everyone has performed, the group will vote on who gave the most believable performance.

Debrief:

- If you had a chance to lip sync, how difficult was it to make it look like you were actually singing the song? What did you do to look more convincing?
- Why did you vote on the winner that you did? What made their performance the most believable?
- Have you ever felt like you were just going through the motions (or lip syncing) in your walk with Jesus? Do you think other people could tell? Do you think God cared?
- When you feel that way, how can you turn the corner from empty actions and start following Jesus with your heart first?

Apply It

Write down one way you are going to apply what you now know about renewing your heart. Think about what you can do today, or this week to grow in this area.

Be specific:

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

Leader's Note: *Whenever students make applications, challenge them to be specific. It's one thing to say, "I'm going to trust God more." The truth is, our students won't really know if they did this, or if they grew in trust over the week. It's another thing to say, "Every morning this week before I eat breakfast, I'm going to tell God that today is his and that I trust him, and I'm going to ask him to give me the strength to replace worries with trust." Challenge your students to answer the questions under the "Be Specific" section. You can even have them pair up, share their applications, and ask for accountability from their partner.*

What's Next?

Schedule: Make sure you let students know what's happening next in the schedule and what they need to do or bring with them.

Student Devotional: *The Student Book contains a short devotional for students to do on their own. Make sure to point this out to students and let them know if and when this fits into the schedule of the weekend. The devotional that corresponds with this lesson is found on **page 35**.*



RENEW

heart • soul • mind • strength

This book belongs to:



RENEW: Heart. Soul. Mind. Strength.
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welcome to **RENEW**

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” MARK 12:30

As Christ-followers, we are called to love God with everything we have. Every part of our being—heart, mind, strength, and soul—should be intent on loving and glorifying him with everything we do. But to love God like that means we need to breathe new life into the dusty, worn-out places of ourselves. We need to be renewed.

The problem is, people are notorious for having no-fly zones in their lives. Have you ever heard of no-fly zones? In a no-fly zone, any uninvited aircraft that enters may be forced out or even shot down. While no-fly zones are usually meant to keep enemies out, we sometimes use them to keep God out of our lives, too. We say, “Here, God. You can be the Lord of this part of my life, but you’d better stay out of these other parts!”

Jesus wants to connect with you in a deep and personal way, not just hover at the edges of your no-fly zones. As his creation, you are precious to him and he wants to be as close to you as a best friend. He wants to be the kind of friend where you have no secrets and can trust each other completely. The kind of friend where you do everything together and people can’t tear the two of you apart.

Here are some things you need to know as you go through this study:

1. GOD WANTS TO CONNECT WITH YOU. In fact, he’s looking forward to it. But how ready are you to connect with him? As you go in and out of the sessions and devotional times, make sure you are willing to listen to him and learn from him. He promises that he will come near to you if you come near to him (James 4:8). Try it!

2. WHAT YOU PUT INTO THIS STUDY IS WHAT YOU’LL GET OUT OF IT.

There are people all around you who have spent a lot of time praying for you and getting ready to invest in you. You’ll probably meet some new people, hear some new speakers, and get a chance to spend some quality time with God and with friends. Take advantage of it! Ask hard questions. Commit to being authentic and honest. God wants to use this time and these people in your life.



01. HEART

When you see a cartoon picture of a heart, what do you think of? Most likely, you'll say "love." Think of the iconic "I♥NY" t-shirt. If you ask anyone what it means, they would say that it reads, "I love New York." But in this first session, we'll be taking about a deeper meaning to the concept of the heart.

What does Jesus mean when he says to love him with all your heart? Think about it this way: look at all the things you value in your life and ask yourself, "Where is Jesus on that list?"

Is he at the top, somewhere in the middle, or way at the bottom? From your pastor at church to the person who just decided to follow Jesus, everyone struggles with placing Jesus at the top of the list.

This session will help you see where things are at in your own heart and how you can make a daily decision to bring Jesus to the top of the list.

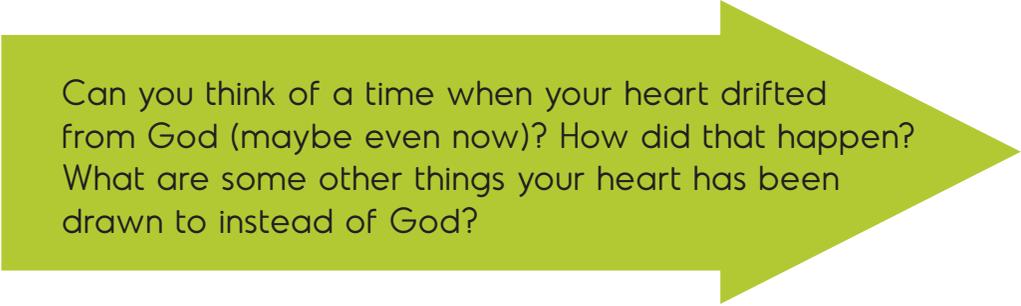


LARGE GROUP

01. HEART

These two pages are designed so you can take note of anything that stands out to you and that you think is worth remembering during the large group talk. This talk will set the stage for the rest of the session. Consider writing down main points, quotes, Bible verses, and any questions that pop into your head.





Can you think of a time when your heart drifted from God (maybe even now)? How did that happen? What are some other things your heart has been drawn to instead of God?



Why does God care more about our hearts than our outside appearances?

SMALL GROUP 01. HEART

A SECOND LOOK

Have you ever gone to your favorite restaurant hungry for one thing, but you changed your mind as soon as you saw a mouthwatering picture of something else in the menu? Maybe it was the vibrant colors in a salad or the steam rising from a burger, but you can already taste the food before you've even ordered it.

Behind every amazing food photo is a ton of hard work. To make the food in the picture as appetizing as possible, a food stylist arranges each item with care. Individual sesame seeds are placed using tweezers. Salads are built up on mounds of potatoes so they look fuller and are easier to rearrange.

Food dyes are injected into meat so burgers are the perfect color. A special concoction of oils, or even WD-40, is sprayed onto fruit so it looks shiny and fresh. Then a food photographer comes in to adjust the lighting, choose the best angle, and take the perfect picture.

But while the end result looks delicious, at best it tastes exactly the same as the food you actually eat, and at worst it's inedible. That's right—so it won't melt under the hot lights of a photo shoot, ice cream is replaced with a gross substance you'd never want to eat. Instead of ice cubes, plastic replicas float in drinks. And the milk in the bowl on the front of your favorite box of cereal? It's probably a heavy cream or even a mixture of glue. I'll take the less beautiful real food, thank you!

Think through the last 10 decisions you made (to buy something, to wear something, to go somewhere, to hangout with someone). How important was appearance in your decision making process? Why?



With the food from these menu pictures in mind, why do you think God cares more about our hearts than how we look on the outside?



Why do you think some people spend so much time worried about how they come across to the world, instead of focusing on their hearts?



SMALL GROUP 01. HEART

A LITTLE DEEPER

Take a look at each of these Bible passages and get ready to talk through the following questions with your group.

Matthew 13:15: This people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

*What does it look like to have a "calloused" heart?
How does your heart get that way?*

How do you think someone's heart becomes uncalloused?

Matthew 15:18: But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.

Think about the conversations you've had in the last 24 hours. What do your words say about what's in your heart?

Philippians 4:6-7: Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

What would it look like to do what this Bible passage says and turn to God in every situation? When, where, and how would you do that?

Why do you think it's important to Jesus that you guard your heart? What does an unguarded heart look like?

APPLY IT

Write down one way you are going to apply what you now know about renewing your heart. Think about what you can do today, or this week to grow in this area. Be specific:

 **What are you going to do?**

 **When are you going to do it?**

 **Is there someone who can keep you accountable?**

NOTES: