WHAT IS PURSUIT?

Students don’t think they need God!

God has become a “back-pocket” God for many students—like a Get-Out-of-Jail-Free card, they stuff God in their back pocket until they need him. Their faith isn’t a relationship; it’s a convenience, a routine. Even though he’s not their top priority, God is still in pursuit of them. Pursuit is a year-long curriculum (52 lessons) based on the 8 Roots of Deep Discipleship (see page 2 for a description of each root) that will help your students move beyond routine into relationship with God. Relationships aren’t one-sided, and it’s no different in our relationship with God. He promises that if we draw near to him, he will draw near to us (James 4:8). And that’s how we grow in spiritual maturity—by pursuing God, trusting his pursuit of us, and knowing him more.

DESIGNED FOR MULTIPLE ENVIRONMENTS

Whether you meet once or multiple times a week, each flexible lesson can be used as a comprehensive Large Group Talk with separate Small Group Discussion Guide, an in-depth Small Group Lesson, or a stand-alone Large Group Talk. We’ve built in flexibility to meet your changing needs.

WHAT’S INCLUDED?

Pursuit includes 52 Lessons, divided into smaller, 4-lesson sets (PDF and Word). We’ve included one lesson in this sample with corresponding Memory Verse and Mark of a Disciple graphics. Pursuit was created to fit perfectly into the Deep Discipleship system (including the 8 Roots of Deep Discipleship and Marks of a Disciple), designed to help your students grow deep faith. Each one of the 8 Roots is covered in-depth in its own set of lessons.

PURSUIT ALSO INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING (NOT INCLUDED IN THIS SAMPLE):

*For a full list, see What’s Included on page 6.

- Community Engagement Guides
- Parent Guides
- Video Training for Adult Leaders
- Media and Graphics

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

It’s simple. Included in this sample is one lesson (When the Good Life Hurts) from the ABUNDANT LIFE set of lessons. Open the folder entitled ABUNDANT LIFE and you’ll find a Facilitator Guide and Student Guide.

To learn more about Pursuit, check out the SCOPE AND SEQUENCE that give you an entire overview of this resource.

Have Any Questions?
Give us a call!
RESCUE
The Rescue Root helps students understand their need for a savior:
We are slaves, held captive by terrible enemies: sin and death. In this fallen, corrupt, and shattered world, we need a rescuer—Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer. In fact, he’s the only one who can free us. And once we’ve been freed, we have the opportunity to join in the rescue mission for others.

APOLOGETICS
The Apologetics Root, which prepares students to explain the hope they have in Christ:
The Bible encourages us to defend our faith: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” (1 Pet. 3:15, ESV). That’s the point of apologetics—to explain our hope in Christ to others. In the Apologetics Root your students will find ways to do just that.

KNOWLEDGE
The Knowledge Root, which helps students understand the basics about God:
God is enormous. He’s too big, too awesome, and too complicated to wrap our minds around. Yet he wants us to know him. He wants a relationship with us, so he has revealed himself in a number of ways. We will never know everything about God. But in order to become his disciples, we need to know some essential truths about the One we follow.

WORSHIP
The Worship Root, which helps students explore what it means to have a lifestyle of worship:
Worship is more than just singing. It is a lifestyle. It’s how you go about your day, and it happens when you get a vivid glimpse of God, his power, and his majesty. In the Bible, anyone who has a close encounter with God can’t help but marvel at his glory. The angels, his messengers, are in a constant state of worship. We, too, can express a life of worship by encountering God on a daily basis.

COMMUNITY
The Community Root, which helps students understand the meaning of biblical fellowship:
We weren’t created to be alone. Our emotional, physical, and spiritual well-beings depend on deep, loving relationships with other people. God has created a family for you. They are his people, and they will help you grow in another essential connection—with God.

IDENTITY
The Identity Root, which helps students discover their unique identity in Christ:
God created humans in his own image, unique in all creation. Then sin entered the picture, and all people developed a warped version of their original identity. Christ came and died on the cross and rose again to offer us a new identity, even better than the first. He took on our sin and shame so we could take on his righteousness. He identifies with us so we can find our identity in him—a redeemed identity.

KINGDOM
The Kingdom Root, which helps students understand how to live in the Kingdom of God every day:
When students embrace the Kingdom life, they begin to look at the small things differently. They realize the weight that their decisions carry, and they can start to live by God’s value system instead of the world’s tainted values.

OUTREACH
The Outreach Root, which helps students understand their God-given mission:
Jesus gave his followers one last command: to spread the good news of his death and resurrection—the gospel—to the whole world. When we become members of Christ’s body of believers, the story doesn’t end. That’s just the beginning! Now we get to join in a remarkable mission to care for the least, to love other people, and to share Jesus as Lord wherever we go.
SCOPE
We recommend that you start with the four lessons included in Search & Rescue, then base your sequence on the needs of your group. Below is a description for each set of lessons included in Pursuit, as well as each lesson’s theme and associated Bible passages. Every Deep Discipleship lesson fits in one of the eight Roots of Discipleship—we’ve listed the corresponding roots for each set of lessons below. Look for other Deep Discipleship products and lessons to help your students grow a deep faith that’s built on all eight Roots of Discipleship.

*Note that the SEASONAL Lesson Set can be used throughout the year during holidays and major milestones in your group.

1. SEARCH & RESCUE (4 Lessons)
Your students will see that there is no way we could ever rescue themselves from sin—we need a savior. The Good News is that Christ pursues and rescues, inviting us into relationship with him.

Topics/Passages:
The bad news of sin (Gen. 1:26–31, 2:15–17, 3:1–7)
The Good News of Christ (Lev. 16:15–19, 29–30; Heb. 10:1–14)
Peace with God is available! (Rom. 5:1–11)
We’re saved by faith to do good works (Eph. 2:1–10)

Connected Root: Rescue

2. AWESTRUCK (4 Lessons)
As God pursues us, we’re called to pursue him in worship. It’s how we get to know God more and respond to him through every aspect of our lives. Your students will see that worship is more than just singing—it’s a lifestyle.

Topics/Passages:
Drawing near to God (James 4:1–10)
Listening to God’s voice (1 Sam. 3)
Honestly expressing doubts/praise (Ex. 3:1–15, 4:1–17)
Following God requires sacrifice (Matt. 4:18–22, 19:16–30)

Connected Root: Worship

3. BRANDED (4 Lessons)
Your students will learn that no one knows us better than God, who has a unique design and plan for every single person. When we become a part of God’s family, we’re challenged to live differently because of the new and redeemed identity we receive in Christ.

Topics/Passages:
God created and knows us (Ps. 139)
We’ve been adopted into God’s family (Rom. 8:9–17)
God’s discipline makes us more Christ-like (Heb. 12:3–11)
How to live up to our new/redeemed identity (1 Pet. 2:1–12)

Connected Root: Identity
9. STORYTELLERS (4 Lessons)
Your students will learn about their role in God’s mission to pursue the whole world. We’re called to share the good news of God’s salvation, fueled by the joy and love produced by our own vibrant pursuit of God.

**Topics/Passages:**
- We pursue the lost because God does (Matt. 18:10–14; 1 Tim. 2:1–7)
- Salvation is available to all, so we should share it (Rom. 10:1–17)
- Opposition should not stop us from sharing about God (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 4:1–20)
- Outreach as a joyful outflow of our personal relationships with Christ (1 John 1:1–2:6)

**Connected Root:** Outreach

10. I DOUBT IT (4 Lessons)
Doubt happens. It’s present in every Christ-follower’s life. Your students will learn about our proper response to doubt while addressing some hard questions from a biblical perspective.

**Topics/Passages:**
- What should I do with my doubt? (Gen. 3:1–7; Jer. 1:1–9; Mark 9:24)
- What if I’m too busy for God? (Ps. 127:1–2; Luke 10:38–42)
- Does God’s grace mean I can just keep sinning? (Rom. 6:1–23)
- Is following Jesus worth it? (Ps. 73:1–3, 12–13; Eph. 1:3–14)

**Connected Roots:** Knowledge, Apologetics, Kingdom, Identity

11. MIRACLES (4 Lessons)
God provides for and delivers his people, but it doesn’t always happen how we want or expect. Your students will explore God’s power to perform miracles and what we can learn from examples of God’s intervention in the Bible.

**Topics/Passages:**
- God’s power to save (Dan. 3:8–30)
- A biblical overview of God’s deliverance (various passages)
- God’s miracles reveal his sovereignty and mercy (John 11:1–44)
- Our response when God intervenes (Matt. 14:22–33; Ps. 77:10–20)

**Connected Roots:** Knowledge, Kingdom, Worship, Community, Rescue

12. SEASONAL/HOLIDAY: (8 Lessons)
These seasonal lessons are independent from each other yet tied together by one common thread—God’s pursuit of us through all the seasons of life. God invites us into a dynamic relationship with him and he never stops pursuing us. Revisiting this theme during the ministry year will encourage students to make a life-long commitment to keep growing in their pursuit of him.

**Topics/Passages:**
- New Year/Beginnings: God renews our strength when we’re weary (Isa. 40:28–31)
- Easter 1: Jesus is a humble and worthy king (Luke 19:28–44)
- Easter 2: Jesus pursues the criminal on the cross (Luke 23:32–49)
- Easter 3: Jesus pursues Thomas in his doubt (John 20:11–29)
- Graduation: How will you pursue God in new phases of life? (Psalm 23)
- Thanksgiving: Gratitude is our proper response to God’s pursuit (Psalm 103)
- Christmas 1: God’s long-term pursuit/OT prophecy (Isa. 9:1–7)
- Christmas 2: God pursues in big and small ways (Luke 2:1–20)

**Connected Roots:** Rescue, Community, Identity, Worship, Knowledge, Outreach, Apologetics
4. I AM (4 Lessons)
There’s a big difference between knowing about God and knowing God. Your students will learn some essential aspects about God and his character so that they can grow deeper in knowing him personally.

Topics/Passages:
- Knowing everything about God vs. knowing God. (Rom. 11:33–34; 1 John 5:13–20)
- The Trinity (Deut. 6:4; Rom. 8:26–39)
- God is holy AND merciful (Isa. 57:15–21)
- God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present (Ps. 147)

Connected Root: Knowledge

5. DEFENDING A FRIEND (4 Lessons)
God doesn’t need defending, but he’s called us to always be prepared to explain to others the hope we have in Christ. Your students will focus on how to answer some common questions about why they believe what they believe.

Topics/Passages:
- How can we be in the world but not of it? (John 17:11–21)
- Will I ever be “good enough” for God? Faith AND sanctification (1 Pet. 3:15; Phil. 3:3–21)
- Does God really care? (Ps. 121)
- Is Scripture trustworthy? (2 Tim. 3:14–4:5)

Connected Root: Apologetics

6. UPSIDE-DOWN KINGDOM (4 Lessons)
Your students will learn that God’s Kingdom is based on his greater wisdom. God does things differently than the world, so we need to follow Jesus’ example as we live as citizens in God’s Kingdom.

Topics/Passages:
- Joyful submission to Jesus, our King (Ps. 95)
- We are Christ’s ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:1–21)
- Jesus’ example of seeking the least (John 4:3–30, 39–42)
- God uses what we think is “unusable” to build his Kingdom (Matt. 1:1–16)

Connected Root: Kingdom

7. ABUNDANT LIFE (4 Lessons)
Jesus promises his followers the spiritual blessings of an abundant life. Your students will see that being in relationship with God and abiding in him is the way to experience the blessings of God’s presence, both now on earth and forever in heaven.

Topics/Passages:
- What is God’s abundant life? (John 10:10; Ps. 16)
- Abiding in Christ (John 15:1–17)
- Abundance during suffering (2 Cor. 4:7–18)
- Abundance now and forever (Rev. 21)

Connected Roots: Kingdom, Worship, Community

8. PULL TOGETHER (4 Lessons)
God has put other people in our lives to help point us toward him. Your students will explore what Christian community looks like, see that every believer is valuable, and learn how to live as part of God’s family.

Topics/Passages:
- We’re members of one body (1 Cor. 12:12–27)
- We need other Christ-followers to grow (Acts 2:44–47; Heb. 10:19–25)
- We often experience God’s pursuit of us in community (James 5:13–20)
- God’s standards for community help us live a peaceful, others-focused life (Lev. 19:9–18)

Connected Root: Community
# WHAT’S INCLUDED

## 52 LESSONS
- **Facilitator Guide** PDF and Word Versions
- **Student Guide** PDF and Word Versions
- **What The Bible Has To Say About It** Ice Breakers to Begin Conversation
- **A Second Look** An Additional Illustration with Discussion Questions
- **Live It Out** An Experiential Activity to Reinforce the Lesson
- **Apply It** A Practical Application for the Week
- **Think About It** Challenging Quotes or Verses
- **Marks of a Disciple** Identify Signs of Growth in Students
- **Memory Verse** Promote Bible Memorization
- **Holiday Lessons** Seasonal Teaching
- **Online Teacher Management** Give your Volunteers Online Access to Digital Curriculum

## VOLUNTEERS
- **Facilitator Guide** PDF and Word Versions
- **Volunteer Tips and Training** Advice for Lesson Facilitators
- **Volunteer Training Videos** Equip Volunteers to Create an Individualized Discipleship Plan for Every Student
- **Student Discipleship Tracker** Online Access to Digital Curriculum
- **Online Message Center** Update Volunteers via the Message Center
- **Digital Ministry Calendar** Share with Volunteers Your Digital Ministry Calendar

* Included with your purchase of a HERO Membership

## PARENTS
- **Parent Guide** Lesson Overview and Scripture Covered for Every Series
- **Questions You Can Ask** Debrief Questions Designed for Parents
- **Family Activity** Activity Designed for the Whole Family
- **How To Run A Parent Meeting** Video Training for Youth Workers
- **Student Discipleship Tracker** Partner with Parents to Create an Individualized Discipleship Plan for Every Student
- **Digital Ministry Calendar** Share with Parents Your Digital Ministry Calendar

## MEDIA
- **PowerPoint Slides** Background and Title Slides
- **ProPresenter Slides** Background and Title Slides
- **Promo Art** Sized for Instagram, Posters, and Web Banners
- **Memory Verse** Graphic of Weekly Verse
- **Gospel Thread Videos** Animated Videos of the 8 Roots of Deep Discipleship
- **Countdown Videos** 20 Animated Countdown Videos
- **Motion Loops** 22 Animated Motion Loops
- **Bumper Videos** 44 Animated Bumper Videos

* Included with your purchase of a HERO Membership

## ANNUAL MINISTRY BLUEPRINT
- **Gospel Thread** 8 Roots of Deep Discipleship
- **Scope and Sequence** Suggested Yearly Teaching Outline
- **Dual Environment** Specific Instructions for Use in Small Group and Large

## TECHNOLOGY
- **Online Teacher Management** Give your Volunteers Online Access to Digital Curriculum
- **Online Message Center** Update Volunteers via the Message Center
- **Digital Ministry Calendar** Share with Volunteers & Parents Your Digital Calendar

* Included with your purchase of a HERO Membership

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DOWNLOAD A SAMPLE  
[leadertreks.org/pursuit-sample-lesson](leadertreks.org/pursuit-sample-lesson)