

## Train Smarter, Not Harder | Week 1

### Introduction

**Welcome to groups! Small Group is one of the ways we train to follow Jesus; stick with it!**

*We all have dreams of what we'd like to become, especially at the beginning of a new year. If we're honest, most dreams have to do with a longing to be happy, but the route we choose may be a bit shallow. We want to be thinner and better looking, make more money, and win the admiration and even jealousy of others. We think that would bring us contentment. God's dream for us is different. He wants us to have real joy and satisfaction, but his route is about our character. It is in his transformation of our character that we find what our souls are truly longing for.*

*God's goal for us to become like Jesus is out of our reach. Frankly, it is an unattainable goal in our own power. He must supernaturally work in us as we partner with him in the transformation. Our part is not so much about trying harder but in training smarter. We train in godliness as he works in us and through us.*

**Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2 (NIV)**

### Conversation Starters (10 minutes)

1. What is the best training you've ever received? What made it great?
2. How do you continue to use that training today? How does it continue to impact your life?

### Sermon Notes Review (15 minutes)

What caught your attention, challenged, or impacted you from this weekend's message?

### [Watch the Video](#) (5 minutes)

### Group Discussion (25 minutes)

1. What is a type of training you are choosing to practice this year so the character of Jesus will show up in your life?
2. When you hear the name Jesus, what characteristics come to mind?
3. Read [1 Corinthians 9:25-27](#)
  - a. In the past, how have you tried, in your own strength, to follow Jesus? What did your efforts produce?
  - b. According to the passage, what is the difference between trying and training?

4. What type of training are you choosing to practice this year so that the character of Jesus will show up in your life?
5. Read [Philippians 2:1-11](#)
  - a. Ask each group member to share one thing that stands out to them from this passage.
  - b. Challenge: Read Philippians 2:-1-11 each day and write down one thing that stands out as you read the passage.

## Group Activity (20 minutes)

Spiritual Discipline is any activity that can help you gain the power to live life as Jesus taught and modeled it. Work as a group to list twenty examples of things you can do that will help you gain the power to live the life Jesus intended. From the list, what is one spiritual discipline you want to develop in your life? How can you encourage one another and hold each other accountable?

## Prayer (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes praying for each group member to grow in the area they shared during group today. Pray that the Holy Spirit will show each person the characteristics of Jesus He wants them to grow in this year.

## Announcements (5 minutes)

- Easily access group notes and stay connected with Sun Valley all week by downloading the Sun Valley app!
- Subscribe to receive daily devotionals delivered to your inbox every day, Monday through Friday, at [devo.sv.cc](http://devo.sv.cc).