

Here is a Small Group Study Guide based on Pastor Reuben's recent message, "Build Your Life: Faith, Love, Humility." My prayer is that this guide will help you and your group members dive deeper into God's Word and experience His transforming power this week!

Small Group Study Guide Build Your Life: Faith, Love, Humility (and the Wisdom from Above) Based on the Sermon by Pastor Reuben, April 6, 2025

Theme: Our lives are spiritual houses God is building. This week, we explore the foundational blocks of faith, love, humility, and the fear of the Lord, which leads to divine wisdom – essential for building a life that hosts God's presence and endures.

Leader's Note: Welcome to leading your small group! Your role is to facilitate discussion, encourage participation, and create a safe space where people can share and grow. Don't feel you need to have all the answers; trust the Holy Spirit to guide your time together. This guide is a tool – feel free to adapt it as the Spirit leads. Encourage everyone to share, but no one should feel pressured. Let's begin!

I. Welcome & Opening (10-15 minutes)

1. **Icebreaker:** Pastor Reuben talked about "building blocks." Share with the group: If your life right now was a building under construction, what kind of building would it be (e.g., a cozy cottage, a skyscraper, a lighthouse, a fortress)? What's one "tool" or "material" you've found especially helpful in your spiritual construction recently?
2. **Opening Prayer:** Start with a short prayer. You could say something like: *"Father, thank You for bringing us together. Holy Spirit, we invite Your presence to fill this space and our hearts. Open Your Word to us, give us understanding, and help us to apply these truths to our lives, that we might be built up into the house You desire. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

II. Connecting with the Sermon (5 minutes)

Pastor Reuben reminded us that God is building our lives as His house, using foundational "building blocks." He revisited **faith** (how we're saved and receive from God) and **love** (the mark of discipleship), then focused on **humility** (the key to God's favor) and the **fear of the Lord** (the beginning of **wisdom**). Wisdom, in particular, is crucial for building, protecting, and defining the purpose of God's house.

III. Scripture Focus (Read these aloud or have group members read)

- **Galatians 5:6 (NIV):** "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."
- **1 Peter 5:5b (NIV):** "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.'"
- **Proverbs 9:10 (NIV):** "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
- **Proverbs 24:3 (NIV):** "By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established."
- **James 3:17 (NIV):** "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere."

IV. Discussion Questions (30-40 minutes) (Leader, choose the questions that you feel will best serve your group. You don't have to ask all of them.)

1. Faith & Love:

- Pastor Reuben said, "Faith is how we are saved... through faith we receive everything God has for us." How have you experienced receiving from God through faith?
- He also emphasized "faith working through love." How can our faith be practically expressed through love in our daily interactions?

2. Humility:

- Pastor described humility as "how we think, how we see God, how we see ourselves and how we see one another... not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less, and more of God and others." Why is this kind of humility often challenging?
- "God gives grace to the humble." Can you share a time when embracing humility opened the door for God's grace or favor in your life or in a situation?

3. The Fear of the Lord & Wisdom:

- The sermon linked the "fear of the Lord" directly to "wisdom." How does a healthy fear (reverence, awe) of God lead to wisdom in our choices?
- Pastor Reuben mentioned two kinds of wisdom: one "from above" (James 3:17) and one "earthly, sensual, demonic" (James 3:14-16). Can you think of a situation where you had to discern between these two kinds of wisdom? What helped you?

4. The House God Builds:

- Pastor Reuben highlighted Genesis 28 (Jacob at Bethel) and Exodus 33:14, noting that God's house is marked by His **presence** and His **rest**.
 - How can we practically cultivate God's presence in our personal lives and as a church?
 - What steals your "rest" in God, and how can heavenly wisdom help you maintain it, even in storms?

5. Growing in Wisdom:

- Pastor Reuben pointed to James 1:5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God." He also noted that trials can be opportunities to grow in wisdom.
 - When has a trial become a "stepping stone" for growth in wisdom for you?
 - How can we make asking for wisdom a more consistent part of our daily walk?

6. Practical Wisdom:

- Pastor Reuben talked about "love without wisdom" leading to costly choices. Can you share (without gossip) an example of how acting with compassion but without wisdom can be problematic?
- The "seven pillars" of heavenly wisdom from James 3:17 are: pure, peace-loving, considerate (gentle), submissive (willing to yield), full of mercy, good fruit, impartial, and sincere (without hypocrisy). Which of these pillars do you feel the Holy Spirit is highlighting for you to grow in right now?

V. Application & Action (10-15 minutes)

1. Pastor Reuben emphasized that God wants to build *us* by wisdom so we can fulfill His purpose. What is one specific area in your life (a relationship, a decision, a habit) where you recognize a need for more of God's heavenly wisdom this week?
2. How can this group pray for you in that specific area? (Allow time for members to share briefly).

VI. Prayer Time (10-15 minutes)

- Spend some time praying for one another based on the applications shared.
- Pray specifically for:
 - A fresh outpouring of humility and the fear of the Lord.
 - An increase in heavenly wisdom for daily decisions and interactions.
 - For each member, and the church as a whole, to increasingly become a "house" that hosts God's presence, rest, and glory.
 - For protection from "demonic wisdom" that brings envy, self-seeking, and confusion.

VII. Closing

Thank everyone for their participation. Encourage them to continue reflecting on these truths and to actively seek God's wisdom throughout the week. Remind them of Pastor Reuben's encouragement: "Whatever you do, wherever you go throughout each day, remember who you are in Christ. Remember, you're a house that He is building."

Close with a blessing, perhaps: *"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He fill you with His wisdom from above, establish your steps in His truth, and make you a beacon of His presence and peace this week. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

Leader's Tips for a Spirit-Led Group:

- **Prepare your heart:** Pray before the group meets.
- **Listen actively:** Pay attention to what people are saying and what the Holy Spirit might be highlighting.
- **Be flexible:** It's okay if the conversation takes a slightly different direction, as long as it's fruitful and Christ-centered.
- **Encourage vulnerability by example:** If appropriate, share briefly from your own life.
- **Affirm contributions:** "Thanks for sharing that," or "That's a great insight."
- **Gently guide:** If the conversation veers too far off-topic, gently bring it back.
- **Time Management:** Keep an eye on the time to ensure you cover the main points, especially prayer and application.

God bless you as you lead!