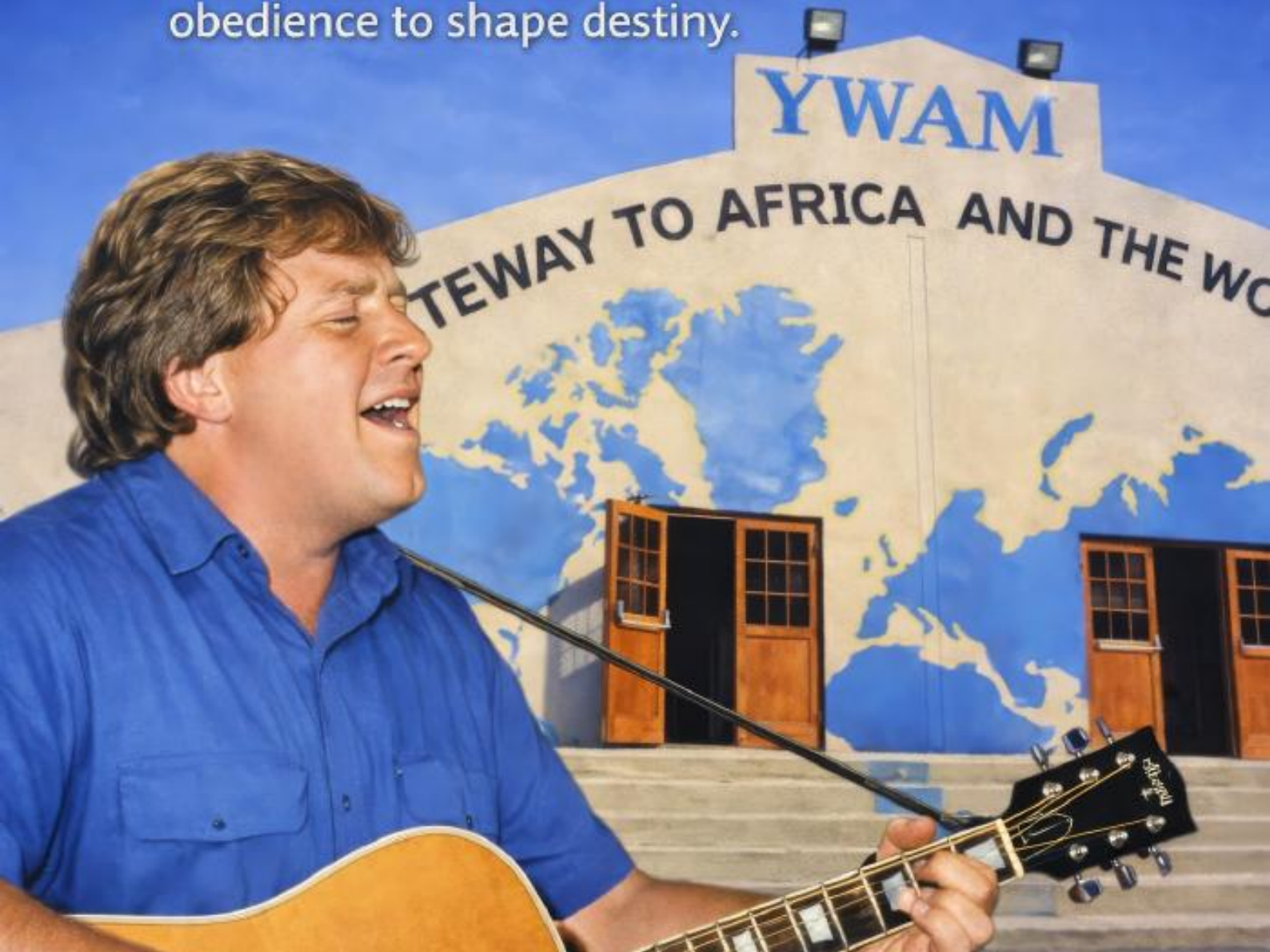


# AWAKENED TO PURPOSE

8-SESSION COURSE

Where grace meets faith and  
obedience to shape destiny.



## BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

For individual study, Bible studies, small groups and cell groups

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STUDY • REFLECT • DISCUSS • APPLY

# Welcome to the Journey

This study guide accompanies *Awakened to Purpose*. The book tells one person's story, but the purpose of these studies is to help you recognise God's work in your own life. Across eight sessions, you will explore identity, spiritual heritage, guidance, obedience, faithfulness, leadership, trust, and forgiveness.

## COURSE PURPOSE

**To move from reading testimony to understanding Scripture, honest reflection, meaningful conversation, and practical obedience.**

## What You Will Need

- A copy of *Awakened to Purpose*
- A Bible
- This study guide
- A pen or notebook
- An open and prayerful heart

## Individual Study

Allow approximately 30-40 minutes per study. Read the recommended book chapters, work through the biblical teaching, answer the personal questions, complete the activity, and finish in prayer.

## Suggested Group Session - 60 to 75 Minutes

|                    |        |                                                   |
|--------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| WELCOME            | 5 min  | Opening prayer and a simple check-in              |
| BOOK CONNECTION    | 10 min | Recall examples from the recommended chapters     |
| WORD AND PRINCIPLE | 20 min | Read and discuss the biblical teaching            |
| CONVERSATION       | 20 min | Personal reflection and group questions           |
| RESPONSE           | 15 min | Interactive activity, prayer, and weekly practice |

# Creating a Safe and Fruitful Group

A healthy Bible-study environment helps people encounter truth without pressure. Agree on these principles before beginning:

## Confidentiality

Personal stories remain within the group unless someone gives permission to share.

## No forced disclosure

Participants may pass on any question or activity.

## Listen before fixing

Do not rush to give advice. Make space for people to be heard.

## Scripture remains central

Personal experiences are valuable, but God's Word is the foundation.

## Grace and truth

Speak honestly, kindly, and without condemnation.

## Safety matters

Forgiveness and service never require remaining in danger or tolerating abuse.

## Prayer, not pressure

Invite response without manipulating emotion or decisions.

### GROUP COVENANT

**We will listen with respect, protect confidentiality, keep Scripture central, allow people to pass, and encourage one another toward Christ.**

## Our Group

Leader or facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting day and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Group members:

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# The Eight-Part Journey

| STUDY | THEME                                                  | CHAPTERS                                             |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Known, Loved, and Created With Purpose                 | 1, 8, 9, 20, 24, 69, 73 and 74                       |
| 2     | Godly Heritage, Parenthood, and Formative Environments | 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 30, 56, 60, 63 and 67 |
| 3     | Hearing God's Voice and Following His Guidance         | 21, 22, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39, 40 and 42                |
| 4     | The Cost and Blessing of Wholehearted Obedience        | 17, 18, 26, 35, 45, 46 and 71                        |
| 5     | Servanthood, Commitment, and Faithfulness              | 31, 37, 43, 49, 50, 51, 58, 59 and 61                |
| 6     | Christian Leadership Is Servanthood                    | 27, 41, 47, 48, 53, 54, 55, 57, 64 and 72            |
| 7     | Trust, Faith, and Dependence on God                    | 4, 19, 23, 25, 34, 44, 52, 65, 68 and 70             |
| 8     | Forgiveness as a Way of Life                           | 10, 13, 14, 28, 29, 62 and 66                        |

## HOW THE CHAPTERS ARE ORGANISED

Every chapter has been placed under one primary theme so that the eight studies remain distinct. Some chapters could support more than one topic, but they appear only once in this course map.

## My Prayer Before Beginning

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## STUDY 1

# Known, Loved, and Created With Purpose

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 1, 8, 9, 20, 24, 69, 73 and 74

Recommended key reading: Chapters 1, 9, 20 and 73

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**Before we were born, God knew us. He formed us with care, loves us, and created us for purposes that bring glory to Him.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. God knew us before our birth

Arno's story begins with a prophetic word spoken when he was dedicated as a baby. He could not understand or earn that word. It pointed to something God already knew about his future. Our lives are not accidents or surprises to God.

#### JEREMIAH 1:5

God told Jeremiah that before He formed him in the womb, He knew him and had set him apart.

## 2. God personally formed us

Arno's disability caused him to struggle with rejection and questions about his worth. God's involvement does not mean we understand every physical condition or painful experience. It means no difference can remove the dignity and value God gives.

### PSALM 139:13-16

God formed our inward parts, knitted us together in the womb, and saw our days before we lived them.

## 3. Our identity is received, not achieved

The pressure to perform made Arno feel that he had to succeed in order to be valuable. Scripture gives us a different foundation: we obey because we are loved, not so that we can earn love.

### EPHESIANS 1:4-5

In Christ, God chose us and adopted us into His family.

## 4. God created us for purpose

Purpose is not limited to preaching or full-time ministry. God can work through a parent, teacher, businessperson, engineer, farmer, artist, administrator, missionary, or someone serving quietly behind the scenes.

### EPHESIANS 2:10

We are God's workmanship, created in Christ for good works He prepared for us.

## 5. Purpose unfolds through relationship and obedience

Arno did not understand his entire calling when the prophetic word was spoken. Purpose unfolded gradually as he walked with God. We do not have to force destiny; we remain close to God and obey the next step.

### PHILIPPIANS 1:6

God is faithful to carry forward the good work He begins in us.

### CENTRAL TRUTH

**I am known by God, formed by God, loved by God, and created for His purposes.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. What has most influenced your sense of value?
2. Do you find your identity in belonging to God or in proving yourself?
3. Is there something about yourself or your background that you struggle to accept?
4. What gifts, desires, or experiences might God use for His purposes?
5. What is one step of obedience already in front of you?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. What standards does society use to measure human value?
2. How does Psalm 139 challenge those standards?
3. What is the difference between discovering God's purpose and trying to make ourselves important?
4. How can ordinary work be part of God's purpose?

# Interactive Activity: God's Workmanship

## INSTRUCTIONS

Divide a page into four areas: How God has formed me; gifts and qualities He has placed in me; experiences He may redeem and use; and people I may be called to serve. Share one discovery if you wish.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Read Psalm 139:13-18 each morning. Thank God for one specific way He has formed you, and ask how it can serve others.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You knew me before I was born and formed me with care. Deliver me from measuring my worth by appearance, achievement, possessions, or people's opinions. Help me receive my identity as Your child and walk faithfully in the purpose You have prepared for me. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**My purpose begins with the God who knew and loved me first.**

## STUDY 2

# Godly Heritage, Parenthood, and Formative Environments

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 30, 56, 60, 63 and 67

Recommended key reading: Chapters 2, 3, 11 and 67

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**Our family and spiritual environment influence us deeply. We can receive what was godly, seek healing for what was broken, and create a healthier inheritance.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. Faith can pass from one generation to another

Arno's parents created a spiritual foundation through church involvement, prayer, generosity, and service. A godly heritage is not created by perfect parents, but through sincere faith, repentance, consistency, and everyday obedience.

#### PSALM 103:17-18

God's faithful love extends to those who fear Him and to their children's children.

## 2. Children learn from what they observe

Arno watched his father pray, give, serve, and trust God. Spiritual formation happens at the table, in the car, during conflict, and through the way adults treat people. Faith becomes believable when it can be seen.

### DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7

God's words are to be kept in our hearts and taught throughout everyday life.

## 3. An environment can contain both faith and brokenness

Arno knew his parents loved God, yet conflict at home affected his security. Acknowledging harm does not dishonour our family. It allows us to honour what was good while bringing painful truth into God's light.

### PSALM 34:18

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.

## 4. Our upbringing influences us but does not imprison us

Arno's history affected his anger, insecurity, rejection, and performance. Through Christ, forgiveness, truth, discipleship, and healthy community, a new inheritance became possible.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

## 5. Spiritual community helps form people

Sunday school, youth meetings, local church, small groups, YWAM, and multicultural friendships all contributed to the family's formation. We need places where faith is practised and people are valued.

### HEBREWS 10:24-25

Believers meet together and encourage one another toward love and good works.

### CENTRAL TRUTH

**I can receive the godly inheritance of the past, find healing from its brokenness, and help create a healthier spiritual legacy.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. What positive spiritual inheritance did you receive?
2. What unhealthy attitudes or patterns affected your upbringing?
3. What family pattern do you not want to repeat?
4. What godly quality would you like to pass to others?
5. Who has modelled genuine faith to you?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. Why does a lived example often teach more powerfully than words?
2. Can we acknowledge family brokenness while still showing honour?
3. How can someone build a godly legacy if they did not receive one?
4. What makes a church or small group spiritually formative?

# Interactive Activity: The Inheritance Tree

## INSTRUCTIONS

Draw a tree. In the roots, write positive things you received. Beside the roots, note patterns God is helping you address. In the trunk, write truths strengthening you now. In the fruit, write what you want to pass on.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Contribute to a godly environment: pray with your family, encourage a child, apologise for a wrong response, share a testimony, or welcome someone into Christian community.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for everyone who planted faith in my life. Bring healing where my upbringing contained pain. Help me forgive, learn, and grow. Teach me to live a sincere faith that others can see and to leave an inheritance of truth, love, prayer, and obedience. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**My history has influenced me, but through Christ it does not have to control my future.**

### LEADER NOTE

Family experiences can be sensitive. Do not pressure anyone to disclose private pain. Encourage honesty, honour, wise boundaries, and pastoral support where needed.

### STUDY 3

# Hearing God's Voice and Following His Guidance

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 21, 22, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39, 40 and 42

Recommended key reading: Chapters 21, 33, 38 and 39

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**God guides surrendered people through Scripture, the Holy Spirit, prayer, peace, wise counsel, circumstances, and confirmation.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. God desires to lead His children

During military service, Arno sensed God calling him into ministry. Later, God guided him through university, inner-city ministry, Shalom, YWAM, and Worcester. Hearing God grows from knowing the Shepherd.

#### JOHN 10:27

Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice, He knows them, and they follow Him.

### 2. God's guidance agrees with His written Word

God will not guide us contrary to His revealed character or Scripture. A lamp usually shows the next steps rather than the entire journey. God often gives enough light to obey today.

#### PSALM 119:105

God's Word is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path.

### 3. Hearing requires surrender

We may struggle to hear when we have already decided what the answer must be. A surrendered prayer values God's will above personal preference.

#### ROMANS 12:1-2

Surrender and the renewal of our minds help us discern God's will.

### 4. Guidance should be tested

Arno describes both hearing accurately and making mistakes. Humility allowed him to learn. Ask whether guidance agrees with Scripture, reflects God's character, produces good fruit, receives wise confirmation, and glorifies God.

#### 1 THESSALONIANS 5:20-21

Do not despise prophetic words; test everything and hold on to what is good.

### 5. God's word and timing work together

Arno believed God was leading him to YWAM, but there was initially no accommodation. The door opened shortly before the school began. A closed door may mean no, not yet, prepare, or wait.

#### HABAKKUK 2:3

A God-given vision may wait for its appointed time.

#### CENTRAL TRUTH

**God faithfully guides surrendered people, usually one obedient step at a time.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. How has God guided you in the past?
2. Which way of receiving guidance do you recognise most easily?
3. Are you resisting something God has already made clear?
4. Is there a decision you need to test through Scripture and wise counsel?
5. How do you respond when God's timing differs from yours?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. Why is relationship with God essential to recognising His voice?
2. What dangers arise when people say, 'God told me,' without testing it?
3. Can God's peace be present while we still feel nervous?
4. How should we respond when we believe we heard incorrectly?

# Interactive Activity: The Guidance Grid

## INSTRUCTIONS

Place a current decision under six headings: Scripture, God's character, prayer, inner peace or warning, wise counsel, and circumstances or confirmation. Do not manufacture an answer; place the decision openly before God.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

On three days, set aside fifteen quiet minutes. Read a short Scripture passage, ask God what He wants to show you, write your thoughts, and test them against Scripture.

## Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd. Give me a surrendered heart that wants Your will above my own. Teach me to recognise Your voice, test what I hear, wait for Your timing, and obey the next step You make clear. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**God's guidance becomes clearer as I know His Word, surrender my will, and obey His leading.**

## STUDY 4

# The Cost and Blessing of Wholehearted Obedience

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 17, 18, 26, 35, 45, 46 and 71

Recommended key reading: Chapters 17, 18, 35 and 71

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**Following Jesus involves surrender, sacrifice, and daily obedience. The cost is real, but so are the freedom, purpose, joy, and fruit found in walking with Him.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. Jesus calls for wholehearted love

Christianity is not merely church attendance or agreement with Christian beliefs. Wholehearted devotion touches relationships, money, plans, habits, work, ambitions, and time.

#### MARK 12:30

Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

## 2. Counterfeit freedom leads to bondage

Arno's teenage choices initially looked exciting and free. Drinking, smoking, partying, and compromise eventually revealed their emptiness. God's boundaries protect us from choices that promise freedom while producing bondage.

JOHN 8:34-36

Sin enslaves, but the Son brings true freedom.

## 3. Obedience has a cost

Arno left university, entered unsupported missions, lived simply, moved when God directed, and served through demanding seasons. The cost may include comfort, recognition, security, personal plans, or control.

LUKE 9:23

Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow Him.

## 4. Obedience brings deeper blessing

Biblical blessing is not a trouble-free life. It is knowing Christ, living with purpose, seeing lives changed, and participating in God's work. Arno's yes opened doors he could never have planned.

JOHN 14:21

Jesus connects loving Him with keeping His commands and promises to reveal Himself.

## 5. Obedience is usually daily before it is dramatic

Major decisions in Arno's journey rested on years of smaller choices. A wholehearted life is built through quiet acts of obedience when no one is watching.

LUKE 16:10

Faithfulness in little things prepares us to be trusted with more.

CENTRAL TRUTH

**Wholehearted obedience may cost me comfort, but it leads me into the freedom and purpose of walking closely with God.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. Is there an area of life you have kept outside God's leadership?
2. Have you mistaken compromise for freedom?
3. What has obedience to God cost you?
4. What fruit have you experienced through obedience?
5. What small act of obedience is God placing before you now?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. Why can God's boundaries sometimes feel restrictive?
2. What is the difference between biblical blessing and a trouble-free life?
3. Can obedience be worthwhile when we do not immediately see fruit?
4. Why are small choices important?

# Interactive Activity: Open Hands

## INSTRUCTIONS

Close your hands while thinking about a plan, comfort, habit, or right that is difficult to surrender. Slowly open them and pray: Lord, everything I have belongs to You. Show me what obedience requires. Write down one practical response.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Take one concrete step of obedience. At the next meeting, share what you learned rather than merely whether the outcome was successful.

## Closing Prayer

Lord, I want to love You with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Expose counterfeit freedom and divided loyalty in me. Give me courage to obey when it costs something and grace to recognise the deeper blessing of walking with You. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**The greatest blessing of obedience is not what I receive, but the God with whom I walk.**

## STUDY 5

# Servanthood, Commitment, and Faithfulness

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 31, 37, 43, 49, 50, 51, 58, 59 and 61

Recommended key reading: Chapters 37, 43, 50 and 61

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**God forms faithful servants through ordinary responsibilities, long commitments, hidden seasons, changing circumstances, and healthy endurance.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. God sees faithfulness in hidden places

At Shalom, Arno served in roles that seemed small but prepared him for future responsibility. The hidden season forms character, develops skills, tests motives, and teaches dependence.

#### LUKE 16:10

Whoever is faithful with little will also be faithful with much.

## 2. Servanthood responds to what is needed

The book includes camps, cooking, painting, developing property, discipling individuals, leading worship, administration, and care. Servanthood asks not only what position we want, but what needs to be done.

**MARK 10:45**

Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and give His life for others.

## 3. Commitment requires staying in our lane

Arno received attractive opportunities elsewhere, but they were not his assignment for that season. Faithfulness is not doing everything; it is doing what God entrusts to us.

**HEBREWS 12:1-2**

Run with endurance the race set before you while keeping your eyes on Jesus.

## 4. Faithfulness must adapt

YWAM Worcester grew from a pioneering family into a larger organisation. Remaining committed required adapting expectations while preserving the heart of the calling.

**ISAIAH 43:19**

God sometimes does a new thing that requires us to perceive and respond.

## 5. Long-term service requires healthy rhythms

Commitment does not mean ignoring physical, emotional, relational, or family needs. Boundaries, rest, recreation, and family time can protect rather than weaken a calling.

**MARK 6:31**

Jesus invited His disciples to withdraw and rest after a demanding season.

**CENTRAL TRUTH**

**Faithfulness means serving wholeheartedly where God has placed me,  
while living in a way that allows me to endure.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. How do you respond to responsibilities that seem unimportant?
2. Are you distracted by another person's assignment?
3. What has God currently placed in your hands?
4. Are you resisting necessary change because you prefer an earlier season?
5. Which healthy rhythm would strengthen your service?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. Why does God often prepare people through hidden service?
2. What is the difference between faithfulness and overcommitment?
3. How do we know when persistence is required and when change is necessary?
4. How can a community honour practical and unseen service?

# Interactive Activity: The Faithfulness Audit

## INSTRUCTIONS

Complete four statements: God has placed me in...; the people or responsibilities entrusted to me are...; one distraction I need to release is...; and one healthy rhythm I need to establish is...

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Choose one overlooked task and do it wholeheartedly without seeking recognition. Establish one healthy boundary that will help you serve with greater joy.

## Closing Prayer

Jesus, You came as a servant. Teach me to be faithful in small and unseen responsibilities. Keep me from comparison and distraction. Help me serve where You have placed me, adapt when seasons change, and establish rhythms that sustain me. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**Faithfulness is not doing everything; it is doing what God has entrusted to me.**

## STUDY 6

# Christian Leadership Is Servanthood

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 27, 41, 47, 48, 53, 54, 55, 57, 64 and 72

Recommended key reading: Chapters 27, 47, 53 and 72

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**Christian leadership is a responsibility to serve, develop, protect, and release people. God raises leaders in His timing, and healthy leaders hold position with open hands.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. Leadership begins with character

Before giving Arno greater responsibility, God worked on rejection, insecurity, forgiveness, dependence, and faithfulness. Gifting may open a door, but character helps a person remain trustworthy.

#### 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7

Biblical leadership qualifications focus on character, relationships, self-control, faithfulness, and reputation.

## 2. Godly promotion does not require self-promotion

Arno did not seek titles. Others recognised faithfulness and invited him into responsibility. Preparation and willingness are good; manipulation, unhealthy ambition, and status-based worth are not.

**PSALM 75:6-7**

God is ultimately the One who raises up and brings down.

## 3. Leaders serve rather than dominate

Christian authority is responsibility to protect, guide, equip, correct with love, and seek the good of people. It is never permission to control or use them.

**MARK 10:42-45**

Jesus contrasted worldly leadership, which rules over people, with Kingdom leadership, which serves.

## 4. Healthy leadership releases people

Ministries multiplied when leaders trusted people instead of controlling every detail. Success is not measured by dependence on the leader, but by people becoming mature and fruitful.

**EPHESIANS 4:11-12**

Leaders equip God's people for works of service.

## 5. Leadership requires truth and grace

Arno learned to listen, honour people, choose wise timing, and address issues without treating people as problems. Grace without truth avoids issues; truth without grace wounds.

**JOHN 1:14**

Jesus was full of both grace and truth.

## 6. Leadership must eventually be released

Letting go is not failure; it is multiplication. Mature leaders bless those who follow and allow them genuine room to lead.

**2 TIMOTHY 2:2**

Entrust what you have received to faithful people who can pass it to others.

**CENTRAL TRUTH**

**Christian leadership is not a platform for importance but a responsibility to serve, equip, and release others.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. Why do you desire influence or responsibility?
2. Is your identity connected to a title or position?
3. Do people feel heard and valued after interacting with you?
4. Are you developing others or making them dependent on you?
5. Is there something you need to release to another person?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. What makes Christian leadership different from worldly leadership?
2. Can someone be gifted but not yet ready to lead?
3. How can correction combine truth and grace?
4. How should leadership succession be handled?

# Interactive Activity: The Towel Test

## INSTRUCTIONS

Consider: Who has God entrusted to my care? What do they need in order to grow? Am I willing to serve without recognition? What opportunity could I give them? Choose one practical act of servant leadership.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Encourage someone's gift, invite someone into responsibility, or perform an unnoticed act of service for people you lead.

## Closing Prayer

Jesus, You are the perfect servant King. Purify my motives and form Your character in me. Keep me from striving for recognition or using authority to control. Teach me to lead with truth, grace, courage, and humility, and to release others into their callings. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**Kingdom leadership asks not, 'How important am I?' but, 'How can I help others become fruitful?'**

### LEADER NOTE

Servant leadership does not excuse disorder, avoid accountability, or tolerate abuse. Biblical service and healthy authority must operate together.

## STUDY 7

# Trust, Faith, and Dependence on God

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 4, 19, 23, 25, 34, 44, 52, 65, 68 and 70

Recommended key reading: Chapters 25, 34, 52 and 68

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**The Christian life is lived by trusting God's character, bringing everything to Him in prayer, acting responsibly, and refusing to depend solely on our own understanding.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. Trust is rooted in God's character

Arno experienced detours, doubt, need, opposition, accusation, and discouragement. His confidence was not based on easy circumstances. Faith begins with who God is, not with our ability to believe perfectly.

#### 2 TIMOTHY 2:13

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful because His character does not change.

## 2. Trust brings God into every area

Arno prayed about exams, finances, ministry, family needs, housing, health, leadership, and difficult conversations. Nothing is too spiritual or too ordinary to bring before God.

### PROVERBS 3:5-6

Trust God with all your heart, refuse dependence on your own understanding, and acknowledge Him in all your ways.

## 3. Prayer expresses dependence

Before counselling, teaching, confronting problems, or entering meetings, Arno prayed because his own ability was insufficient. Prayer is where we listen, surrender, receive wisdom, and join God in His work.

### JOHN 15:5

Jesus said that apart from Him we can do nothing of lasting spiritual value.

## 4. Faith includes responsible action

Trusting God for provision did not mean refusing to plan or communicate. We pray, listen, act responsibly, and trust God with what lies beyond our control.

### JAMES 2:17

Faith without corresponding action is dead.

## 5. God may provide before we recognise the need

The hospital plan provided before Chane's illness shows God going ahead of the family. Sometimes past provision only makes sense when a future need arises.

### MATTHEW 6:8

Our Father knows what we need before we ask.

## 6. Trust allows God to defend and restore

When falsely accused, Arno resisted revenge and manipulation. The truth eventually came to light. Trust may include speaking truth or seeking help, but it places justice in God's hands.

### EXODUS 14:14

The Lord told Israel that He would fight for them as they remained still.

### CENTRAL TRUTH

**Faith is trusting God's character, seeking Him in everything, doing what He asks, and releasing what I cannot control.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. Which area of your life is hardest to entrust to God?
2. When pressure comes, do you pray first or only after your plans fail?
3. Are you waiting for God to do something He has told you to act on?
4. Where might God already have provided for you?
5. What fear, accusation, or disappointment do you need to release?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. What is the difference between faith and positive thinking?
2. How do prayer and responsible action work together?
3. Why does God sometimes answer differently from what we expect?
4. Can we trust God while still feeling afraid?

# Interactive Activity: The Trust Circle

## INSTRUCTIONS

Draw three circles: God's responsibility - what only He can do; my responsibility - what He asks me to do; and what I must release - outcomes, timing, and circumstances I cannot control. Place a current concern in the circles.

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Begin each morning: Lord, I trust You with what I cannot control. Show me what obedience requires today. Record any provision or change in perspective.

## Closing Prayer

Father, forgive me for leaning only on my own understanding. Teach me to trust Your character, seek You first, and obey Your direction. Give me wisdom to act responsibly and peace to release what I cannot control. Thank You for knowing my needs and going before me. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**Trust does not mean that I understand everything; it means that I know the One I am following.**

## STUDY 8

# Forgiveness as a Way of Life

Chapters in this theme: Chapters 10, 13, 14, 28, 29, 62 and 66

Recommended key reading: Chapters 10, 13, 29 and 62

## The Big Idea

### SESSION FOCUS

**Forgiveness is an essential daily practice through which we release people, deal with offence, receive God's forgiveness, and protect our hearts from bitterness.**

## Before You Begin

Read the recommended key chapters. As you read, underline moments where the theme becomes visible in Arno's story. Record one example here:

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## The Principle and the Word

### 1. Forgiveness begins with recognising the wound

A childhood rejection remained painful because of the meaning Arno attached to it. Forgiveness does not require pretending nothing happened. Healing begins when we bring pain and its effects before God.

#### PSALM 147:3

God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

### 2. Forgiveness is a decision before it becomes a feeling

We may still feel hurt after choosing forgiveness. The decision releases our claim to revenge and places justice in God's hands. Emotions often need time to follow.

#### COLOSSIANS 3:13

Believers are called to forgive as the Lord has forgiven them.

### 3. Forgiveness is not excusing wrongdoing

The man in Chapter 29 allowed unforgiveness to imprison him after a terrible wrong. Forgiving would not make the offence acceptable; it would release his heart from hatred.

ROMANS 12:19

Do not take revenge; leave justice with God.

### 4. Reconciliation requires participation from both sides

Arno and his brother mutually asked for and extended forgiveness. Forgiveness can be chosen by one person. Reconciliation requires truth, repentance, safety, and willingness.

MATTHEW 5:23-24

Jesus teaches us to take initiative when we know a relationship has been damaged.

### 5. We must also ask forgiveness

The letters to Arno's parents were not only about what they had done. He took responsibility for his own attitudes. Maturity asks both: whom must I forgive, and from whom must I ask forgiveness?

1 JOHN 1:9

When we confess our sins, God faithfully forgives and cleanses us.

### 6. Offence is a trap

Offence grows when it is rehearsed and used to interpret everything negatively. First-hand and second-hand offence can both damage our spiritual life and relationships.

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

Unresolved anger can give the enemy an opportunity.

### 7. Receiving forgiveness frees us from condemnation

After confession and repentance, continuing to punish ourselves does not honour Christ's sacrifice. We learn not only to forgive, but to live forgiven.

ROMANS 8:1

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

CENTRAL TRUTH

**Forgiveness releases my heart from bitterness, while truth, wisdom, and healthy boundaries guide what happens next.**

# Personal Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes. Write honestly; you will never be required to share everything you write.

1. Is there a past hurt that still shapes your thoughts or reactions?
2. Have you confused forgiveness with approving what happened?
3. Are you carrying offence on behalf of another person?
4. Is there someone from whom you need to ask forgiveness?
5. Have you received God's forgiveness, or do you still condemn yourself?

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## Group Discussion

Move from understanding the principle to considering how it should shape Christian life and community.

1. Why is forgiveness often a process?
2. What is the difference between forgiveness, reconciliation, and restored trust?
3. Why can second-hand offence be dangerous?
4. How does unforgiveness imprison the person who carries it?

# Interactive Activity: The Forgiveness Path

## INSTRUCTIONS

Privately consider: What happened? How did it affect me? What am I carrying? What justice must I place in God's hands? Is a boundary, conversation, confession, or request for help needed?

## My Notes and Response

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## Put It Into Practice This Week

### NEXT STEP

Pray daily: Lord, show me quickly when offence enters my heart. Help me forgive as I have been forgiven. Seek mature help before any difficult or unsafe conversation.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for forgiving me through Jesus. Show me where hurt, bitterness, guilt, or offence has taken root. I place justice in Your hands. Give me grace to forgive, humility to ask forgiveness, wisdom for healthy boundaries, and faith to live free from condemnation. Amen.

### REMEMBER

**Forgiveness does not say the wrong was acceptable; it says bitterness will not control my future.**

### LEADER NOTE

Forgiveness never requires someone to remain in danger. In cases involving abuse, violence, coercion, or serious trauma, encourage professional and pastoral support and appropriate safeguarding.

# Completing the Journey

Review the eight truths you have explored. Read each one slowly and mark the truth that God is emphasising most strongly in your life now.

## TRUTH 1

I am known, loved, and created with purpose.

## TRUTH 2

My history can be redeemed into a godly legacy.

## TRUTH 3

God guides surrendered people.

## TRUTH 4

Wholehearted obedience leads into true freedom and purpose.

## TRUTH 5

Faithfulness means serving where God has placed me.

## TRUTH 6

Christian leadership exists to serve and develop others.

## TRUTH 7

Trust means depending on God without demanding full understanding.

## TRUTH 8

Forgiveness protects my heart and relationships.

# My Awakened to Purpose Plan

**A truth about my identity I want to remember:**

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**A family or environmental pattern God is helping me change:**

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**Something I believe God is saying to me:**

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**An act of obedience I need to take:**

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**A responsibility in which I need to become more faithful:**

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**A person I can serve, encourage, or develop:**

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**A situation I need to entrust to God:**

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**A person or offence I need to release:**

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**My next step is:**

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## Final Prayer

## PRAY TOGETHER

Father, thank You that You knew us before we were born and created us for Your purposes. Thank You for the people who have shaped us and for Your power to redeem what was broken. Teach us to recognise Your voice, obey You wholeheartedly, and serve faithfully where You place us. Make us humble leaders who build others up. Help us trust You when we do not understand and forgive as we have been forgiven. Complete the work You have begun in us, and may our lives bring glory to You. Amen.

# Notes, Testimonies, and Answers to Prayer

## Awakened to Purpose

Where grace meets faith and obedience to shape destiny.

Book and study-guide content by Arno Pienaar

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