

4:12

Special Instructions for the Leader

Overview of 4:12

This is an eight-week discipleship program, intended to be used one-on-one with an older and younger girl or a mother and daughter. The curriculum was designed to get you started on a Bible study each week, provide a springboard for discussions, help keep you accountable, and give you a place to record insights and progress.

Why is it Called 4:12?

Ephesians **4:12**, Colossians **4:12**, and I Timothy **4:12** sum up the purpose of this discipleship program. You may want to talk about these three verses the first time you meet together.

What to Do When You Get Together?

Our suggestion is that you do whatever you can to make it a special time. Go out for a snack. Or find a private place where you won't be interrupted. Give your partner your undivided attention and take the time to LISTEN to her. You will probably want at least an hour or maybe two for your 4:12 get together. After you have had a little time to talk about your week and just casually catch up on things, then get out your Bibles and work through the study sheet together. Then discuss how things went with your goal of the week, prayer requests, and other accountability projects. Quote your memory verses, and choose new goals for the coming week and new prayer requests. Pray together, if you'd like. If you are meeting with a young girl, you may want to think of some little "extras" to make it fun for her—a story to read, a short activity or game, a craft, etc.

Preparation

Make sure you read through the instruction sheet and look over the study sheet before you get together. You may want to study the passage yourself first. Ask the Lord for any insights or testimonies from your own life that you could share with your partner to encourage her. Have a time of prayer asking for God's blessing on your partner and the upcoming lesson.

Your Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to arrange the time each week to get together, and to bring any supplies you might need. Remember also that you are a role model for this younger girl. She is looking up to you and learning from you! Cry out to God for the strength to be a good example to her in every area. If you take your project and memory work seriously, she probably will too. Purpose to pray for her daily, as Epaphras prayed for the Christians at Colosse (Col. 4:12). That's a big part of what 4:12 is all about! Fervently interceding for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I encourage you also to be humble with your partner, and be willing to be open about your struggles. Let her know that you appreciate her as a friend and that you are excited about learning together with her.

What to Write in *My Thoughts and Prayers for You This Week*

This is a place for you as a leader to write something encouraging to your partner. She will probably read your note to her multiple times and treasure your words to her. Write something you appreciate about her, some specific things you are praying for her, and let her know how exciting and challenging it is for you to see her growing in Christ. Tell your partner that she doesn't need to write anything in your book, unless she wants to. (Younger girls might not be sure what to write, and you don't want to make it awkward for them.) This place is primarily provided for the leader to encourage her partner.

Memory Work Incentive

You may want to offer your partner a special reward if she completes all of her memory verses, reviews them, and can quote them all at the end of the eight weeks. Here are a few possible reward ideas: take her out to lunch, invite her to your home for a fun evening together, or buy her a small gift (one suggested gift is the Let My Life Be a Light music CD).

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Two Easy Craft Suggestions

You could do the bracelet the first time you meet together, and then the lovingkindness box on week four or so.

Bracelet—Buy colored braiding cord. Learn one or more ways how to braid and make bracelets. Wear the bracelet as a reminder to be praying for your partner.

Lovingkindness Box—Buy or find a small jar or box for yourself and your partner. (You can usually buy inexpensive, small cardboard boxes in various shapes at a craft store.) Decorate the box any way you like. Some possible supplies you could use would be wallpaper, cloth, ribbon, lace, or colored paper. This is a lovingkindness box. Inside the box place little slips of paper on which you can write God's special blessings to you that you want to remember. Set it in a place where you will see it frequently at home.

One extra assignment

I'd like to encourage you to send a short note to your partner sometime during the middle of the eight weeks. Send a handwritten note (not an email), just to encourage her, let her know how you appreciate her, remind her to keep pressing on, etc. Personal letters always mean a lot to people! Don't tell her in advance that you will be writing to her. Surprise her with a special note of encouragement.

A Couple Last Thoughts

Don't worry if you don't have enough time to finish everything in the booklet each time you meet. I intentionally included a lot of things to talk about because I know it can be a little "stiff" when you first start meeting with a partner, especially if you don't know her very well at first. I tried to include a lot of possible things to study/talk about. If you do not get everything in the booklet filled out, you and your partner can finish individually at home.

Also, don't feel that you must stick precisely to the topics or passages listed in the 4:12 booklet. If you end up spending the whole time together talking about something totally different than the passage assigned, that's fine. Each girl obviously has different needs and struggles. Ask the Lord to lead you to discuss, study, pray for, and be attentive to areas of specific need in your partner's life. The study sheets basically just give you something to work from.

I know it's a big time commitment to spend this much time with a younger girl. But I really believe the Lord will do some very special things for every single young lady who is part of a 4:12 group. The Lord will bless you for your sacrifice and labor of love. *"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb 6:10).*

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me (Matt. 25:40).

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. (Matt. 10:42).



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Week One Instruction Sheet

Ask Each Other Some “Get to Know You” Questions:

- How many siblings do you have?
- Do you play any musical instruments?
- What is your favorite restaurant?
- What is something you really like to do?
- What was the hardest thing you had to do this past week?
- What is one thing you're really thankful for?

Explanation of Colossians 3 Study

First of all, read Colossians 3 and answer the discussion questions. Then fill in the circle diagram:

The first circle represents each of us before we received Christ. In the center of the circle draw a throne. Draw yourself on the throne. Add a picture of the cross *outside* the circle. Each dot represents an area of life. Who does life revolve around when self is on the throne? How does that affect all these areas?

In the connected box, write the reference of one verse in Colossians 3 that portrays what that kind of life is like. Write a few words (or draw a few pictures) that remind you of the consequences and outcome of a life lived for self.

The second circle represents us after we have received Christ as King of our life. Share with your partner about the time you put your trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior and invited Him to be on the throne in your life.

Draw a throne in the middle of the second circle. On the throne draw a cross, indicating that Christ is King. At the foot of the cross draw yourself, indicating that you have submitted your life to Christ. On the blank lines around the circle, write down some of the areas that have been or continue to be the most difficult (or most important) for you to yield to the Lord. In the box connected to the circle, write down one reference from Colossians 3 that portrays a life lived in submission to Christ. Then draw some pictures or write some words that remind you of the rewards and blessings of a life lived for Jesus.

Suggested Areas of Life to Record on Blank Lines

- Friends
- Music
- Time
- Clothes
- Relationships with Parents
- Relationships with Siblings
- Food
- Books
- Computer
- Words
- TV, movies, video games
- Specific Hobbies
- Thoughts
- Forgiving Someone
- A Particular Difficult Situation
- My Health
- My Outward Appearance

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Suggested Goal of the Week

Try to choose something measurable. For the first week, I suggest that you choose something specifically relating to your relationship with the Lord. Here are some possibilities:

- Read your Bible every day (choose a Bible reading plan for the week).
- Pray for a certain amount of time each day.
- Meditate on Scripture each night before you go to sleep (maybe five minutes before turning off the light).
- Stop and give thanks to the Lord seven times each day (Psalm 119:164).
- Choose to honor the Lord with your lips at least once a day by speaking of His goodness to others.
- Purpose that the very first thing you will do when you wake up each morning is pray and tell the Lord that you want to seek Him today, and ask for His help.
- Honor the Lord in one specific area of your life which you have been trying to control yourself.

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Week Two Instruction Sheet

Talk about this past week. How did you do on your goals for the week?

Quote your verse to each other. Keep trying until you can get it perfectly and then check the box.

Explanation of I Peter Study

The main focus for this week is relationships with parents. Be prepared to share insights, struggles, testimonies, and lessons the Lord has taught you as you have sought to honor your parents (or husband).

Memory Verse: I Peter 5:5b and 6

“Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

Suggested Goal of the Week:

I encourage you to pick a goal related to your relationships with parents. Again, it would probably be a good idea to choose something “measurable.”

- Express your gratefulness to your mom or dad at least once a day this week.
- Choose one struggle you’re having that you’ve never talked about with your parents and purpose to discuss it with them this week.
- Choose one area in which it is hard for you to obey cheerfully—and purpose to do it with a joyful attitude.
- Purpose not to speak disrespectfully to your parents at all... and if you do to ask forgiveness.
- Take initiative to help your mom with one thing you know she would appreciate (making your bed, keeping your room clean, helping with housework, etc).
- Clear your conscience with your parents if there is something you haven’t confessed.



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Week Three Instruction Sheet

Quote last week's verses to each other. Ask your partner how she has been doing with her goal of the week. Ask how things are going with her relationship with her parents. Share anything in particular the Lord taught you this week in the area of honoring parents, or from your memory verse, or goal of the week.

Explanation of Romans 8 Study

Before you begin your study sheet, here is a question to ask as sort of an "attention getter". Read Romans 8:28 ("all things work together for good...") to your partner and ask her if she has heard that verse before. Obviously, she probably has heard it before since it's a very common verse. Then ask if she knows what the other verses in that chapter say. Romans 8:28 fits right into a very exciting section of verses. In our study today we're not going to focus on just that one verse, but on the whole passage surrounding it.

Read and discuss Romans 8 as explained on the study sheet. Then fill out the diagram.

Diagram

In each of the cloud shapes write difficult or undesirable situations or circumstances you experience in your life (people who are hard to get along with, physical sickness, loss of possessions, death of a loved one, not having friends, things I'm required to do which I don't like to do, fears, not being happy about something related to my outward appearance, a friend or family member who has hurt me, getting up early, missing out on an activity, etc.)

Then consider the thoughts and attitudes we will have about these circumstances if we are 1) looking at it from an earthly perspective or 2) looking at it from God's perspective.

On the blank lines underneath the cloud shapes, write down the thoughts that we will have about these circumstances if looking from an earthly standpoint.

Then on the blank lines above the cloud shapes, write down the thoughts that we will have about circumstances if looking from God's perspective (as we learned in Romans 8).

In the blank box at the bottom of the page, write down (or illustrate) the actions that we will have in our life if believing the wrong thoughts (i.e. discouragement, sadness, anger, taking out frustrations on others, complaining, etc.)

In the blank box at the top of the page, write down (or illustrate) the actions and responses that we will have in our life if looking at hard circumstances from God's perspective (i.e. thanksgiving, peace, joy, focus on serving others, etc.)

Discuss how important it is that we learn to GIVE THANKS in everything. Talk about how pleased the Lord is by this attitude. Instead of complaining when things go wrong, make the choice to respond with thanksgiving, rejoicing, and trusting.

Memory Verse: James 1:2-3

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

Suggested Goal of the Week:

I encourage you to choose something relating to how we respond to circumstances.

Some possibilities:

- Give verbal thanks to God or others at least once a day for something that you normally would be tempted to complain about.
- Keep track of any times that you complain. Commit to express thanks five times for every one time you complain.
- Each morning greet each of your family members with a joyful smile and say something encouraging to them
- Spend some extra time each morning in thanksgiving to the Lord.
- Choose one area in your life that is the *hardest* to thank God for. Make a list of at least ten benefits of this difficult trial. Surrender your desires in this situation and ask Him for the grace to trust Him more fully. Think about how you can demonstrate your inward trust and surrender through your words and life.

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Week Four Instruction Sheet

Quote last week's memory verse. If you have time, review previous memory verses. Discuss prayer requests, goals, struggles from the previous week, how things are going with your weekly goal, and lessons God has been teaching you.

Explanation of Philippians 3 Study Sheet

The study sheet should be pretty self explanatory. The emphasis this week is pressing on—not being satisfied with where we are at, but seeking to grow more and more.

Diagram

The longer you've been a Christian, the more you grow—right? Well, that's certainly how God intends it to be. He desires that we keep pressing on, learning more, and growing deeper in Him. *"Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving"* (Col. 2:7). Unfortunately, many Christians start off well, maturing in the Lord, but then they stop growing. They cleanse the obvious sins from their life, but then stop there, not pressing on to the greater things to which God is calling them. It is easy for us to be too easily "satisfied" in our Christian life, thinking that we have come far enough, and that we can settle for where we are at. We become complacent and fail to keep pressing on to God's best.

One concept that helps us to understand the need to keep pressing on is the idea of sins of "commission" and sins of "omission". A sin of commission is when we do something *wrong*, disobeying God's commandment. A sin of omission is when we fail to do something *right*—something God has called us to do. *"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin"* (Jas. 4:17). When we first become Christians there are many sins of commission which we will hopefully remove from our life right away. As we grow, we will probably find ourselves focusing more and more on sins of omission, which aren't as obvious to us at first, but become clear as we grow deeper in our relationship with the Lord.

Think about what some of these sins of commission or sins of omission might be in your life and write them on the lines in the diagram. Towards the bottom, write sins that the Lord has enabled you to overcome (or mostly overcome) and towards the top write areas in which you would like to grow. Talk about these things with your partner as you are filling them out.

Possible sins of commission: lying, stealing, disobeying parents, talking back to parents, teasing siblings, allowing wrong thoughts, complaining, gossiping, exaggerating, speaking unkind words.

Possible sins of omission: failing to read Scripture, failing to share the gospel, failing to give generously, failing to show hospitality, failing to rejoice in the Lord, failing to pray, failing to memorize or meditate on Scripture, failing to be diligent, failing to love God with all of our heart, failing to love others as we love ourselves, failing to speak of God's goodness, failing to give thanks, failing to trust God

Memory Verse: Psalm 63:1

"O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water."

Suggested Goal of the Week:

Our personal Biblical disciplines are some of the most common "sins of omission." As explained in Psalm 1, it is important not only to cut the bad out of our life, but to faithfully be filling our lives with what is good and pure—God's Word. Choose a specific goal in the area of Biblical disciplines. Remember that our desire is to know Christ more and more and to keep pressing on in our pursuit of Him.

- Read the Bible consistently each day. (if this is an area you have trouble being consistent in, then perhaps make the goal to read just one chapter a day). Maybe choose a book or two to read this week (Philippians, Colossians, I Peter, John 1-7, etc). If you have already been reading the Bible consistently each day, maybe you could choose a goal that would push you a little more. (i.e. reading more each day or spending some time "studying" instead of just reading).
- Choose one verse each day from your morning Bible reading to meditate on throughout the day.
- Make a commitment to pray a certain amount of time each day.
- Have a "one hour prayer session" alone with the Lord (see page 215 of *Before You Meet Prince Charming* for a suggested schedule).
- Meditate on Scripture each night before you go to sleep (maybe 5 minutes before turning off the light).
- Stop and give thanks to the Lord seven times each day (Psalm 119:164).
- Choose one unnecessary activity that you can cut out of your life this week and replace it by spending extra time with the Lord.

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Week Five Instruction Sheet

Quote last week's memory verse. If you have time, review previous memory verses. Discuss prayer requests, goals, struggles from the previous week, how things are going with biblical disciplines, and lessons the Lord has been teaching you. Share something from your lovingkindness box! (If you have made one. ☺)

Explanation of "One Thing" Study Sheet

This week is a continuation from last week—pressing on to know the Lord more and more, and not letting anything keep us from the *One Thing* that really matters.

As you rate yourself on the struggles that keep you from time with the Lord, and as you evaluate your relationship with your Heavenly Prince, I'd encourage you to make these things a discussion with your partner. Share special things the Lord has done for you and areas in which you know you need to improve in your relationship with Him. Share insights about how to get to know Him better as your best friend and Heavenly Prince.

Other optional verses to discuss:

Revelation 2:4-5—What does it mean to lose your first love? How do you regain it?

Hebrews 12:1-2—What are some of the weights we may need to lay aside as we run the race?

Memory Verse: Psalm 27:4

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple."

Suggested Goal of the Week:

- Write a letter to the Lord this week, expressing your heart and giving Him praise.
- Place reminders in your room/house/car etc to remind you to focus on your relationship with Him.
- Any of the goals recommended for last week would be good for this week, too (growing in personal disciplines, spending extra time in the Word, the one hour of prayer idea, etc.)



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Week Six Instruction Sheet

Quote last week's memory verse. If you have time, review previous memory verses. Discuss prayer requests, goals, struggles from the previous week, and lessons the Lord has been teaching you. Share something from your lovingkindness box (if you have made one).

Explanation of Psalm 119 Study Sheet

The focus of this week is *thoughts*. Many young ladies say that their biggest struggle is to have thoughts that are pleasing to the Lord.

Before you begin your study sheet, discuss some of the struggles you face in the area of thoughts:

Do you struggle with thoughts of discontentment? Angry or bitter or negative thoughts toward others? Impure thoughts? Daydreaming about movies or books or other unnecessary/unprofitable things? Untrue thoughts about ourselves, God or circumstances?

Do you have struggle with thinking about boys or daydreaming about marriage?

Our thoughts affect every other area of life. The key is not just to get rid of the wrong thoughts—but to fill our thoughts with the good (which will leave no room for the bad). If we are able to fill our thoughts with God's Word, God promises that we will be successful in every other area of our lives! This amazing promise should demonstrate just how important this topic is to the Lord and how important it ought to be to us.

For Older Girls

I'm not planning a 4:12 meeting specifically about courtship or purity. However, this would be a good week to ask them some questions and discuss those issues. Is it hard for you not having a boyfriend? Do you struggle with thoughts in this area? Do you talk about it with your parents? What are your personal commitments in the area of purity, courtship, or interacting with guys? What has the Lord taught you in this area?

Memory Verse: Psalm 19:14

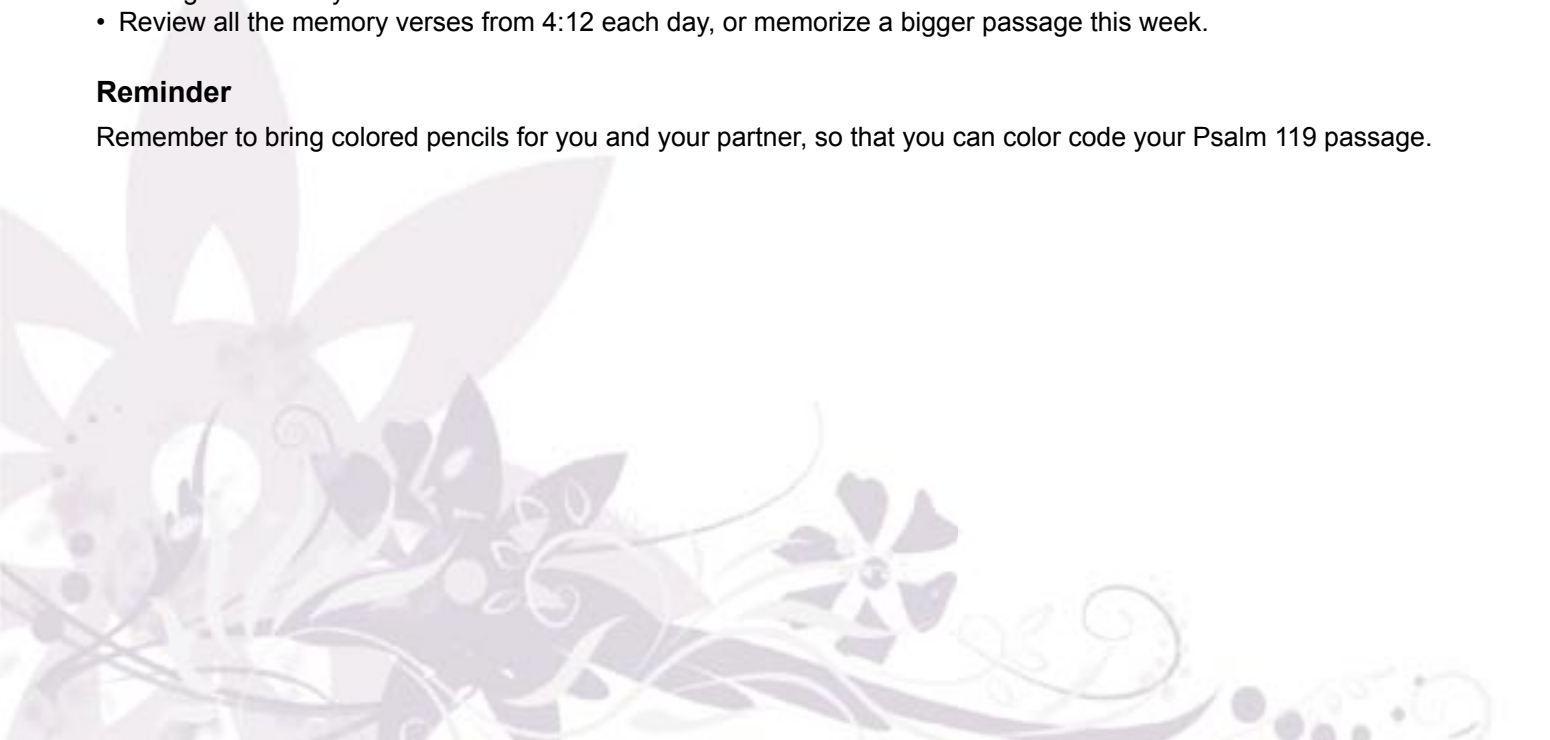
"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

Suggested Goal of the Week:

- Choose a prayer target to pray for this week every time you are tempted to think about wrong or unprofitable things.
- Come up with a reminder or incentive system to help you meditate each night before going to sleep and several times throughout the day.
- Review all the memory verses from 4:12 each day, or memorize a bigger passage this week.

Reminder

Remember to bring colored pencils for you and your partner, so that you can color code your Psalm 119 passage.



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Week Seven Instruction Sheet

Quote last week's memory verse. If you have time, review previous memory verses. Discuss prayer requests, goals, struggles from the previous week, how things are going with thoughts and meditation on Scripture, and lessons the Lord has been teaching you. Share something from your lovingkindness box.

Explanation of Philippians 2 Study Sheet

The focus this week is your relationship with your brothers and sisters. The study sheet should be self-explanatory. If girls do not have any siblings, then you can focus instead on *friendships*. We each have brothers and sisters in Christ. God clearly communicates His commandment that we love one another. We should each be working on developing closer, stronger relationships both with our siblings and with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Memory Verse: Philippians 2:3-4

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Suggested Goal of the Week:

- Do one special act of kindness for your siblings each day. (Or for big families, maybe choose one sibling to focus on per day.)
- Say one encouraging thing to each of your siblings each day this week.
- Choose one way to humble yourself every day.
- If there is something you need to clear up, purpose to ask forgiveness from your sibling this week.
- Spend time in an activity that your sibling enjoys, but you do not.
- Start an ATTACH group (www.brothersandsisters.net).



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Week Eight Instruction Sheet

Review memory verses. Discuss prayer requests, goals, struggles from the previous week, how things are going with siblings, and the main things you have learned from 4:12.

Explanation of Study Sheet

If you evaluate yourself from 1 to 10 (10 being very strong spiritually and 1 being very weak) where would you rate yourself? Think of a number in your mind and then look at the hot/cold diagram on the top of the study sheet. Imagine where you would be in that diagram.

Most people tend to place themselves in the “lukewarm” category. Talk about how easy it is to allow lukewarmness into our lives, how displeasing it is to the Lord, and how He wants us to press on and be zealous for Him in every area of our life!

The rest of the diagram should be self-explanatory.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:1

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

Suggested Goal of the Week:

- Take a “fast” from one area of life which is hindering your spiritual walk or causing you to waste too much time (i.e. movies, music, specific Internet activities, friendships).
- Ask your parents or a godly friend to share blindspots with you. Purpose before you ask them that you will respond in humility and take seriously what they say!
- Choose a specific goal to help you abide in the Vine—spending extra time in the Word, having your own personal “retreat” fellowshiping with the Lord, etc.

Conclusion

Encourage your partner, letting them know how much you have appreciated them, some specific ways God has used them to benefit your life, etc. Pray together.

