

Curriculum



Creative Extremism ***God's lens***

This study was inspired by a [letter](#) Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from a Birmingham jail in 1963.



LEARN: Overview

Biblical Business Training (“BBT”) equips people to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and empowers leaders in a small-group Bible study setting to apply Biblical principles at work. Our mission is [Faith for Work](#) – and our vision is [Leadership for Life!](#)

To find out more, visit www.B-B-T.org.



Curriculum: The *BBT 1-2-3™* Format

BBT's curriculum is Biblically-based and applicable the day you study it. The *BBT 1-2-3™* format enables the group to consistently fit a meeting into a busy work week (e.g. before work or over a lunch hour, etc.). The Agenda and Recap are sent through Go!Connect to help group members prepare and continue discussion for accountability.



Agenda – Introduces applicable Biblical principles



Group Leader Guide – Facilitates discussion and allows for shared leadership



Recap – Encourages community and application



LIVE: Apply Biblical principles at work

Small group discussion begins typically with prayer, reading the Agenda together for context, then reading scripture and discussing the included questions. Questions are chosen to help the members in the study apply the scripture to their workplace and lives through group discussion. The Application Question is for group application and accountability between meetings.

Sample discussion question: Read Nehemiah 7:1-3. What do these verses teach you about delegation?

Sample application question: In what areas of your life have you been encouraged to do some humble self-evaluation and practice repentance?



LEAD: Start a small-group Bible study

The Lead question is for holistic life application at work, home, church, and in the community.

Sample lead question: Ask Yourself: How can I have the courage to face opposition, engage in necessary confrontation, and encourage others where God has placed me?

Learn more at:

Curriculum Samples: <https://b-b-t.org/curriculum/>

Contact a Coach: <https://b-b-t.org/coaching/>

Start Leading: <https://b-b-t.org/startleading/>



PRAYERS



LEARN

Wait!

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his work with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference led them to Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. They were invited to initiate the steps of a nonviolent campaign. Unfortunately, the demonstrations were viewed as “unwise and untimely” by the church in Alabama. He penned a letter to these church leaders from jail after his arrest. In this [letter](#), he says, “I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging facts of segregation to say, ‘Wait.’ But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity...and see the depressing clouds of inferiority begin to form in your children’s little mental skies...I hope, Sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.” He wondered why the people criticizing their actions weren’t more concerned with the reasons behind them or the lack of response to the other activities they had taken before the protests. Dr. King believed “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” and was an extremist for nonviolent campaigns, working to improve the lives of others.

Extremists

“Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be co-workers with God.” Jesus is the ultimate example of this sacrificial work with God. He and two other men were crucified for the same crime – extremism. The difference was, the other two were extreme immoralists who consistently took the low road. Whereas Jesus was an extremist for moral law, and always took the high road. God’s deep love for us influenced Him to choose the ultimate sacrifice – giving His son for you and me. This kind of deep love can also lead to great disappointment. But, if everyone would seek to understand the other through God’s lens of love, truth, and goodness, we too can rise above.



LIVE

Discussion questions: Read the passages and scriptures below, and prepare to answer the questions.

1. Read [Matthew 12:1-14](#). By what are you being influenced, and how is that affecting your perspective?
2. Read [Isaiah 42:1-4](#) and [John 8:31-32](#). What do you need to give up in order to carry the gospel of freedom?
3. Read [Matthew 7:28](#) and [Matthew 21:12-13](#). Upon what authority do you act when you are moved to do the right thing?
4. Read [Mark 5:24-34](#). When you experience something that breaks your heart, what will you risk to change the circumstances?
5. Read [Galatians 2:11-14](#). What do you stand to lose if you act on the calling God is placing in your life?

Application Question: How will you more closely examine the world around you to gain perspective and understanding this week?



PRAYERS

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer



PRAYERS

Opening Prayer & Prayer Requests



LEARN

Before you begin, read the AGENDA LEARN introduction together and review the APPLICATION QUESTION from the previous meeting's RECAP.



LIVE

Discussion Questions: Have someone read each Bible verse aloud and then ask the corresponding question. Be sure everyone has enough time to find the Scripture before the verse is read.

- 1) Read [Matthew 12:1-14](#). **By what are you being influenced, and how is that affecting your perspective?**



Social media, news, family, culture, law, class, race, and all ways people are influenced, but these may also fog the lenses of your perspective.



The traditions created by Pharisees and priests of the Old Testament added restrictions to the existing laws. While they believed that feeding the hungry or healing someone on a specific day of the week was a crime, Jesus defied this conventional thinking. The Pharisees often knew the right answers but did the wrong thing. When Martin Luther King Jr. was put in jail in 1963, he wrote a letter to some religious leaders of that time who called the demonstrations “unwise and untimely.” Dr. King revealed the church was influenced by the argument that the protests were wrong because it was “outsiders coming in” and helped them realize they had actually been invited.



Facilitate a brief discussion. You might ask, “What is the difference in *being* right and *doing* the right thing?”

Notes:

- 2) Read [Isaiah 42:1-4](#) and [John 8:31-32](#). **What do you need to give up in order to carry the gospel of freedom?**



Jesus was God but made Himself nothing so that you might have the freedom to act, speak, and think. However, there may be consequences depending on how justice is interpreted where you are.



With Jesus, there is no question of justice – it is righteousness through Him alone and requires us to give up power and pride. We are made right with God when we believe His son took gave up every privilege and took the punishment for our sin, and we can live by the fruit of the Spirit. (see [Galatians 5:22-23](#)) Dr. King says, “just as the apostle Paul left his little village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the Greco-Roman world, I too am compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my particular home town.”



For more on the life and actions of Paul and the persecution he suffered to spread the gospel of freedom, see [Acts 13:49-14:7](#) as an example. Or for more on the fruit of the Spirit, consider the BBT study [Nine Words](#).

Notes:

3) Read [Matthew 7:28](#) and [Matthew 21:12-13](#). Upon what authority do you act when you are moved to do the right thing?



Action must be heavily weighed with the authority upon which it is taken.



There is a horizontal authority that comes from man and a vertical authority that comes from God. Jesus' authority and actions were compelling because they were granted to Him vertically. The high priest of the temple was commercializing God's house of worship on his own horizontal authority, making a profit by taking advantage of the captive audience coming to the temple from far away. As Dr. King says, "there is a type of constructive nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth. Privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. There is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was seen sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar because a higher moral law was involved." (see [Daniel 3](#))



Facilitate a brief discussion. You might ask, "How have you felt when you've known someone did something legal but wrong?"

"We can never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was 'legal,' and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was 'illegal.'"

Notes:

4) Read [Mark 5:24-34](#). When you experience something that breaks your heart, what will you risk to change the circumstances?



Fear shouldn't keep you from approaching God for a solution, no matter how desperate or impossible the circumstances.



Under Jewish law, the woman's bleeding made her "unclean," but she took a significant risk in entering the crowd, much less to touch Jesus. Her faith helped her bravely seek help and be healed. Dr. King says, "I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being. I am sure that each of you would want to go beyond the superficial social analyst who looks merely at effects and does not grapple with underlying causes."

Notes:

5) Read [Galatians 2:11-14](#). What do you stand to lose if you act on the calling God is placing in your life?



Often people choose to blame others, make excuses, or live in fear of losing the power their social standing or privilege allows.



Before the high-ranking members of Peter's social sphere arrived, he treated the Gentiles with kindness. Yet, Peter was afraid of what James and the others would think, so he "separated himself" v. 12. This action of hypocrisy was subtle but still perpetuated injustice. Confessing to God our sins humbles us to seek His perspective and reveal ways we may be blind to the way we are hypocrites. In Dr. King's letter, he says, "Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. In your statement you asserted that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But can this assertion be logically made...Isn't this like condemning Jesus because His unique God-Consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to His will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion?"



Consider [Christ Plus Nothing](#), a study in Galatians that reveals five lenses through which we distort the gospel of Jesus Christ, for our own sake.

Notes:

Application Question: How will you more closely examine the world around you to gain perspective and understanding this week?



PRAYERS

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer



LEAD

Ask Yourself: Through what lenses do I see the world, and how does that impact my actions or responses?



PRAYERS

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ROADMAP

This **BBT** volume of curriculum is based on [Martin Luther King Jr.'s letter written from a Birmingham jail in 1963](#). If everyone would seek to understand each other through God's lens of love, truth, and goodness, we can rise above.



LEARN

When they criticized Jesus and the Disciples, Jesus pointed out the Pharisees that He was influencing the world for the better rather than using his influence to hold people down. Jesus assures His followers that freedom is found in Him. Jesus took action when he saw the way that God's temple had been distorted and perverted for gain.

Scripture References for this study: [Matthew 12:1-14](#), [Isaiah 2:1-4](#), [John 8:31-32](#), [Galatians 5:22-23](#), [Acts 13:49-14:7](#), [Matthew 7:28](#), [Matthew 21:12-13](#), [Daniel 3](#), [Mark 5:21-34](#), and [Galatians 2:11-14](#)



LIVE

- Creative Influence
- Considerable Freedom
- Calculated Action

Application Question: How will you more closely examine the world around you to gain perspective and understanding this week?



LEAD

Ask Yourself: Through what lenses do I see the world, and how does that impact my actions or responses?