**DISCOVERY THROUGH STUDY**

**LAY TALK 20 minutes including introduction, prayer, etc.**

**Note to Speaker:**

*The objective of this Talk is to convey to the Participant that the Christian life is an ongoing journey of discovery, an ongoing journey of learning and growth in deepening our friendship with Jesus. To demonstrate that this adventure is loaded with excitement as we uncover new treasures in the life of Jesus, our friend, and within ourselves as we relate to Him. To proclaim that the gates to this fascinating journey may be entered by study, prayer, listening and sharing which are open to all.*

PRAYER: Kairos Community Prayer, Page 11, FG

***Speaker introduces self, telling name, whether lay or clergy person and giving name of talk.***  *This information should also be displayed on a poster board, flip chart sheet, or be written on chalk board.*

I. After deciding in favor of Friendship With God, we must Open The Door to Him. When we open the door, we begin to discover God. Discovery through study is the continuing process of ever increasing intimacy with Jesus, who is our friend.

 *(NOTE: It is very important that you build upon the 3-legged stool by visually adding the Study leg to the stool)*

 Do you remember our stool that we called *Friendship with God*? STUDY is the 2nd leg of our stool, but notice that it still cannot stand by itself *(Speaker attaches the STUDY leg and tries to get the stool to stand).* Nevertheless, STUDY is a very important part of our *Friendship with God.*

A. So let’s look at its definition: The word “discover” means to dis‑cover, or un‑cover something that exists or is known.

B. The Christian life is an on‑going journey of discovery, and it is greatly aided by diligent study.

C. The evidence of God's love for us is all around but unless we train ourselves to look for it, we may never see it.

l. Jesus is not lost or hidden. He awaits our invitation to enter into our lives. Through discovery we may come to see Jesus in a new and exciting way. We discover more about Him and about our relationship with Him when we are active in our ongoing journey of learning.

2. As with any other friendship, we must be intentional in getting to know more about God if we expect the relationship to be meaningful.

II. WHY SHOULD WE LEARN ABOUT GOD AND OUR RELATIONSHIP?

A. This pursuit has attracted some of the greatest minds and strongest leaders in history, along with the least of us. Understanding God is one of the basic questions that has concerned man since his creation. This quest for understanding involves concentration and effort.

l. We journey for knowledge because our effort can transform our lives.

2. It also reveals to us new insights within ourselves as we deepen our relationship with Him.

III. THE GATES TO THIS EXCITING JOURNEY ARE OPEN TO ALL AND ARE ENTERED BY A VARIETY OF WAYS.

A. Prayer: Only by God's grace does He reveal himself to us. Always ask Him to reveal Himself before you start your study.

B. Study: Study aids us in doing to written words what a microscope does to a drop of river water…it reveals the life teeming beneath the surface.

C. Listening: God reveals Himself to us often through the words and actions of other people. This occurs in a variety of ways.

1. In one‑on‑one conversations

2. In study group discussions

* 1. Through sermons
	2. In general fellowship with others
	3. By observation
	4. By study

IV. WHY DISCOVERY THROUGH STUDY?

A. Being Christian involves our total life, not just a part of it.

1. Our Christianity affects not only what we do, but the way in which we do everything.

2. No one grows into the fullness of Christ in this life. We need to be constantly exploring for new knowledge about Christ and our relationship with Him. If we cease trying to study more and more about our friendship with God, we will begin to shrivel up and die spiritually. We must exercise our spiritual muscles through study.

B. To understand God’s plan for our lives, the Christian must first understand the meaning of God's incarnation in Jesus, His suffering, His death, and His resurrection and the love that is shown through those events.

C. Understanding Christ through discovery helps us to live in peace, without fear. It means to dedicate our lives to God, to understand His message and to be able to tell the difference between true Christianity and false Christianity. We discover that the Kingdom of God is within and among us – **for the Bible tells** **us so** - from the *“Jesus Loves Me”* song of our childhood.

V. PERSONAL WITNESS

A. *Personal witness of how studying what it means to live in Christ has been beneficial to speaker’s life. The witness should include the contribution made to his/her study with other members of his/her prayer-and-share group and to the joy and excitement resulting from a commitment to trust other trusting Christians*.

VI. WHAT DO WE STUDY?

A. The Bible, a book of directions. (When all else fails, read the directions.)

l. It is the source book of our faith.

2. It is not the only book, just the best one.

3. God spoke to those who preceded us in the life in faith, the life in grace.

a. Ancient Hebrews.

b. Prophets.

c. Gospel Writers.

d. Early Christians.

4. God worked through those who didn't even know him.

a. Cyrus. Isaiah 45:4

5. God speaks to us today through:

a. All of scripture.

b. The Church.

c. Other authors

1. Find selected Bible study classes offered in the institution on a regular basis by responsible teachers, library information, audio and video resources, and other resources from the chaplain’s office.
2. The Bible is intended to bring understanding, not conflict.

VII. HOW WE UNDERTAKE THIS ADVENTURE:

A. As an individual.

B. In a group with other Residents inside the institution.

1. With Christian groups from the outside.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The knowledge of God's love for us kindles a life‑long commitment to discovering more about the person of Jesus in order to "put on the mind of Christ." Life is a pilgrimage into the presence of God's perfect love. Jesus accompanies us on that journey whether we know Him or not.

Please bow your heads for 2 minutes of silent meditation. *(Speaker walks away)*