

Facilitator's guide · Session 1

Laying the foundations · 3 hours · Practical & Pedagogical

« YOUR HOUSE » – IN THE SENSE OF JOSHUA 24:15

« As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD » (Joshua 24:15). Here, « house » means everyone who lives under one roof: a large family, a couple, a single parent with their children – or a person alone before God. A household of one is a household. Whenever this guide says « as a family » or « as a household », hear all these situations, and make sure everyone recognizes themselves in it and finds their place – never setting anyone apart.

RULE FOR EVERY WORKSHOP · PERSONAL FIRST

Each workshop follows the same order, faithful to Back to the Altar: **first alone before God** – we write or reflect in silence – **then we share or build together**. Never have people share cold: personal silence always precedes sharing together. And before the sending, the **anchoring duo** (2 min) fixes the goal in everyone's mind.

PREPARATION

Materials to prepare

- Round tables · 4 to 6 people per table
- Opaque container at the center of each table (jar, box) for Workshop B
- Printed anonymous questionnaires · 1 per person
- Sheet A « My personal altar » · 1 per person · **the entry, for everyone** (including those who live alone)
- Sheet B « Our home altar » · 1 per household · the overflow (family or oikos)
- Jars or envelopes for the prayer box · 2 per household
- Colored sheets for the requests · 3 to 5 per household
- Small slips of paper for Workshop B · 1 per person
- Pens and markers on each table
- Soft instrumental music tested and ready

SPIRITUAL GROWTH – PERSONAL PREPARATION

Pray personally for each participant 24 to 48 hours beforehand. Re-read *Deuteronomy 6:4-7* and *1 Kings 18:30*. Identify in your own life 2 to 3 moments when the personal altar was cold – and what rekindled it.

▣ 0:00-0:20 OPENING · 20 min.

Worship & Icebreaker

1 **Worship · 5 min.** One or two hymns on returning and grace. Let the music create the space before speaking. Do not start speaking during the music.

2 **Prayer of invocation · 2 min.**

« *Father, here we are together. As Elijah repaired the altar that had been thrown down, we come with empty hands. We do not need to be perfect to draw near to You. Come and repair what is broken. In Jesus' name, amen.* »

3 **Pastoral word · 5 min.** Four sentences — no more. Do not improvise a long speech.

The problem · The promise · The destination · The invitation. The destination is new: "This altar is not only for your home. It is the starting point toward someone God has placed on your path."

MATTHEW 28:19-20

4 **Icebreaker · 8 min.** Begin with what EXISTS — never with what is missing.

« *Tell us a memory of prayer or a spiritual moment as a family — even very far in the past, even very short. Everyone has one.* »

IF SOMEONE SAYS THEY HAVE NOTHING

Then tell us about the time you saw someone else pray — and what you felt.

5 **Spontaneous prayer through the names of God · 3 min.**

« *Which name of God do you need to hear today? Just the name. Aloud, where you are.* »

Allow 90 seconds. The names rise. Then conclude: "That name you spoke — He is the One you will meet this afternoon."

▣ 0:20-0:40 DIAGNOSIS · 20 min.

The broken altar

ORDER OF THE QUESTIONS

The question about the wound is in 8th position. Never read it before the first ones. Do not force answers. Read each question, allow 20 seconds of silence.

ORDER OF THE 3 REASONS FOR AN ALTAR THROWN DOWN

1. Haste (everyone recognizes themselves). 2. The world's competition (name the screens). 3. The unhealed wound (name it gently). Always in this order – from the least threatening to the deepest.

« *We have just named what hinders. Now we will build what is missing.* »

SPIRITUAL GROWTH – S1 DISTILLATION

Question 4 of the questionnaire measures personal spiritual life: *“I had a personal time with God in His Word this morning.”* If the majority answer NO – do not correct. Simply say: *“That is why we are here. We begin this afternoon.”* The worship card contains a personal commitment field. It is the first concrete step of growth.

▣ 0:40-1:15 WORKSHOP A — Building home worship · 35 min.

Each household leaves with a written decision

“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

DEUTERONOMY 6:7

« How many moments of the day does this text cover? Every moment is an occasion for the altar. »

IF A HOUSEHOLD IS STUCK FILLING IN ITS SHEET

Ask: “Which evening of the week is quietest at your home?” / “If worship lasted 3 minutes, what could not be missing from it?” / “Who in your family loves stories?”

WALKING PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Do not skip this gesture. Deut. 6:7 says precisely “when you walk.” It is the program’s first prayer gesture in motion. It prepares all the others.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH — DISTILLED INTO THE CARD

The card contains a 3rd field: *“My personal commitment — my time with God: how many times a week, at what time.”* Ask 2 to 3 people to share their personal commitment — not only their home worship plan. Deut. 6:6 says *“in your heart”* before *“to your children.”*

▣ 1:15-1:25 BREAK · 10 min.

Do not skip this transition

- 1 Prepare the room: small slips of paper on the chairs, a container in the center of each table.
- 2 When resuming: ask each person to close their eyes for 30 seconds. In silence.
- 3 Say the transition sentence before Workshop B.

« You have just built a plan for your altar. Before passing it on to your children, there is something your hands must be emptied of. You cannot bless with hands that hold a grudge. »

▣ 1:25-2:05 WORKSHOP B — Laying down the wound · 40 min.

Empty the hands — and pray for the absent

« What follows is not a therapy exercise. No one will be asked to share a wound in public. Everything stays between you and God. You are free to take part at your own pace. »

IF SOMEONE CRIES

Do not intervene. Do not comment. Leave the music playing. A team member may sit silently nearby. No words.

PRAYER WITH PHOTOS OF THE ABSENT

Protocol: open the phone find the photo hold it face out name softly silence 20 seconds ask one thing silence 30 seconds silence 60 seconds turn the screen over. Those without a photo: write the name on a piece of paper and hold it to pray.

« Take your phone. Find the photo of a family member absent this afternoon. Just one photo. »

« Hold this phone face up in front of you. Look at this face. God knows them better than you do. »

« Name them quietly before God. Just their first name. »

[Silence, 20 seconds]

« Tell God one thing you want for this person. Not to change them — to love them. »

[Silence 30 seconds · then silence 60 seconds · music only]

« Turn your phone over, screen down. You have just prayed for that face. God has heard. »

▣ 2:05-2:45 WORKSHOP C — Passing on a gesture · 40 min.

Faith is passed on through the gesture, not through teaching

KEY PRINCIPLE OF THE PARENTAL BLESSING

Writing always precedes the spoken word. Without this writing time (3 min.), many parents stay silent before their child. Never skip the writing step.

« [Name], I bless you in the name of Jesus. You are a gift from God to our family. I see in you [the quality]. May God keep your life and bring you to Himself. I love you. »

For adults who are alone or without children: a peer or an elder lays on a hand. No one is left without a blessing.

CORPORATE INTERCESSION BY NAME

When the cards are in the center — the facilitator prays with hands stretched toward them. Silence 30 seconds. No comment. The cards go into the prayer boxes after the prayer.

ANCHORING DUO · 2 MIN — OPENS THE SENDING

Before the blessing: « Turn to the person next to you — not your spouse, whoever is there — and tell them the one thing you take away and will do this week. » Two sentences each. **Odd number: a trio.** Make sure no one is left without a partner — that is what includes those who are alone. Only then, the sending.

▣ 2:45-3:00 SENDING — Hineni · 15 min.

Ritual of light & Proclamation

FLAMELESS RITUAL

Turn off the lights. Turn on the phone flashlight. Pass it from family to family in a silent cascade. Read Deut. 6:4-7 as the lights come on. 30 seconds of silence.

« Each household will say aloud one name of God — the name you most need for your home this week. Not all at once. One after another. Just the name. »

« These names — that is Him. He enters your homes this afternoon. Go. »

DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

No one responds to the icebreaker

Share a very short memory yourself first. Then ask the question again.

A child is disruptive

An extra facilitator assigned to the children. A quiet activity: drawing their ideal home worship.

Time runs over

Cut first: Workshop A sharing (7 min. 3 min.) and Workshop B testimonies (5 min. 2 min.). Never cut the walking prayer or the parental blessing.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH THREAD – S1

S1 plants three seeds of personal growth:

- In the *diagnosis* : “I had a personal time with God in His Word.”
- In the *worship card* : the field “My personal commitment” with time and frequency.
- In the *pastoral word* : Matthew 28:19-20 planted from S1 so that the destination is missionary from the start.

Spiritual growth in S1 is a commitment, not a teaching. It will be measured in S2.