

The Purpose of the Leader's Guide

This guide is designed to help leaders teach the devotional in a way that is clear, conversational, biblically faithful, and accessible to golfers with different levels of spiritual understanding. Some in your group may be lifelong Christians, some may be new believers, some may be curious, and some may not yet believe.

Like a golf swing, leaders have different gifts, talents, personality, and teaching methods. This guide is a ten page outline, please feel the freedom to pick and choose from the suggestions that follow or disregard altogether.

Like golf courses, no one audience is exactly like another. Links Fellowships share many similarities; yet they also differ in many ways. Be sensitive to attendees, especially be mindful of the vast differences between those who follow Jesus and those who do not. We hope this guide will encourage you to pray and prepare diligently before hosting your fellowship.

Questions Redirected: Questions We Ask About God!

Why Bother with God's Existence?

Main Scripture: "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." — Colossians 1:16, ESV

1. Purpose of This Session

This session helps golfers think honestly about the world they live in and the things they already assume are real: purpose, justice, reason, love, and choice.

The goal is not to win an argument or pressure anyone into a forced conclusion. The goal is to help the group see that everyday life is full of "signposts" pointing beyond ourselves to God.

2. Big Idea

If we recognize design, purpose, rules, reason, love, and meaningful choices on a golf course, we should at least be willing to ask whether those same things in life point to a greater Designer.

Christianity says reality is ***not*** ultimately grounded in accident, chance, or blind forces. It is grounded in God, the Creator of all things.

3. Leader Preparation

Before leading, read: Colossians 1:16; Psalm 33:6–9; Revelation 4:11; Romans 1:18–20

These passages simply help you understand the biblical foundation: God created all things, sustains all things, and gives meaning to human life.

4. Suggested Time Frame

This guide works best for a 45–60-minute group discussion.

Simple Flow

1. Opening golf question
2. Read Colossians 1:16
3. Discuss the golf course illustrations
4. Walk through the five signposts
5. Discuss objections or honest questions
6. Closing summary and prayer

5. Opening Question

Ask: “If you arrived at a beautiful golf course and the starter told you nobody designed it—that rain, grass, trees, bunkers, and time simply produced it—how would you respond?”

Let several people answer.

Possible follow-up questions:

- What makes a golf course look designed?
- What clues tell you an architect had a plan?
- Why would it be hard to believe Augusta National, Pebble Beach, or Pinehurst simply appeared by accident?

Leader note: Keep this light. Let the golfers enjoy the illustration. The point is not to prove everything immediately. The point is to get them thinking.

6. Read the Scripture

Read Colossians 1:16.

7. Set Up the Main Discussion

Begin: “The devotional gives us five **signposts** that point us toward God: purpose, justice, reason, love, and choice. These are things everyone lives with every day, whether they believe in God or not. The question is: Where do they come from, and what makes them real?”

Signpost 1: Purpose

The Routing of a Golf Course

Simple Explanation

A golf course has routing. It moves from tee to fairway to green. Hazards are placed with intention. Doglegs, bunkers, water, elevation, and green complexes all serve a purpose.

In the same way, human beings long for life to matter. We want our work, relationships, suffering, choices, and legacy to have meaning.

Ask: “Where do you see purpose on a golf course?”

Possible answers: Hole design, Risk-reward decisions, Bunker placement, Green locations, Tee angles, How the course uses the land

Then ask: “Where do people look for purpose in life?”

Possible answers: Family, Career, Friendships, Achievement, Service, Faith, Legacy

Deeper Question: “If the universe is ultimately an accident, where does ultimate purpose come from?”

Leader help: You are not saying unbelievers cannot have purpose. Many do live purposeful lives. The question is deeper: If there is no God, is purpose something real, or is it something we simply invent for ourselves?

For Believers, ask: “How does knowing that we were created by God and for God change the way we see our lives?”

For Seekers or Skeptics, ask: “Do you think purpose is something we discover, or something we create? Why?”

Signpost 2: Justice

The Rules of the Game

Simple Explanation: Golf assumes rules. If a player secretly moves his ball, improves his lie, or writes down the wrong score, we do not merely say, “That is his personal preference.” We say, “That is wrong.”

That points to something important. We all live as though some things are truly right and wrong.

Ask: “Why does cheating in golf bother us?”

Possible answers: It disrespects the game. It gives someone an advantage they did not earn. It violates trust. It damages fellowship.

Deeper Question: “Why do we believe some actions are objectively wrong, not merely unpopular?”

Examples: Betrayal, Cruelty, Abuse, Murder, Lying, Injustice

Leader help: Be careful here. Do not make this sound like non-Christians cannot be moral. They can be kind, generous, courageous, and deeply concerned about justice.

The question is: What makes justice real? If everything is only matter in motion, where does the moral “ought” come from?

For Believers, ask: “How does belief in God give a foundation for right and wrong?”

For Seekers or Skeptics, Ask: “When you say something is truly wrong, what are you appealing to?”

Signpost 3: Reason

The Yardage

Simple Explanation: A golfer stands 157 yards from the flag and chooses a club. He trusts the yardage, his eyes, his memory, his swing, and his ability to understand the situation.

Every round of golf assumes that the world is understandable and that our minds can reason accurately about it.

Christianity teaches that this makes sense because our minds were made by the Ultimate Mind. God created us with the ability to think, learn, measure, calculate, and understand.

Ask: “What kinds of reasoning do you use during a round of golf?”

Possible answers: Choosing a club, Reading the wind, Judging the slope, Reading the greens, Managing risk, Remembering past shots, Deciding whether to lay up or go for it

Deeper Question: “If our minds are only the unintended result of blind physical processes, why should we trust them to tell us what is true?”

Leader help: This does not mean Christians are smarter than non-Christians. It means Christianity gives a reason why Reason itself makes sense.

The world is orderly because God is orderly. Our minds can understand the world because God made both the world and our minds.

For Believers, ask: “How should Christians use their minds in following Christ?”

Possible answers: Study Scripture carefully. Think honestly. Ask good questions. Avoid shallow answers. Love God with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

For Seekers or Skeptics, ask: “Do you think human reason is trustworthy? If so, why?”

Signpost 4: Love

Playing Partners

Simple Explanation: Golf is rarely only about golf. Much of the joy comes from the people beside us: longtime friends, friendly competition, laughter, encouragement, and shared memories.

We instinctively know love matters. Friendship matters. Loyalty matters. Sacrifice matters.

Christianity says love is not an accidental chemical reaction in the brain. Love exists because God Himself is love.

Ask: “What makes a regular foursome meaningful beyond the scorecard?”

Possible answers: Friendship, Trust, Shared stories, Encouragement, Laughter, Loyalty

Deeper Question: “If human beings are only random collections of atoms in an impersonal universe, why is love so deeply meaningful?”

Leader help: Do not reduce this to a cold argument. Let people talk about friendship, family, marriage, loss, and loyalty if they are willing. Love is one of the clearest places where people sense that life is more than chemistry.

For Believers, ask: “How does the love of God help us understand human love?”

Possible answers: We love because God first loved us. Love reflects God’s character. Christ shows us sacrificial love. Love is more than emotion; it is commitment and action.

For Seekers or Skeptics, ask: “Have you ever experienced love in a way that made life feel bigger than survival or biology?”

Signpost 5: Choice

The Shot

Simple Explanation Every golf shot involves choice. Go for the green or lay up? Hit driver or three-wood? Play safe or take the risk?

We live as though our choices are real and meaningful. We praise courage, blame dishonesty, regret foolishness, and admire sacrifice. That only makes sense if human choices truly matter.

Ask: “What are some choices during a round that can change everything?”

Possible answers: Going for a par five in two. Trying to carry water. Punching out instead of forcing a shot. Choosing the right club. Playing aggressively or conservatively. Admitting a penalty on yourself

Deeper Question: “If everything about us is simply the inevitable result of prior physical causes, what kind of free will do we really possess?”

Leader help: This can get philosophical quickly. Keep it practical. People do not live as though their choices are meaningless. We hold ourselves and others responsible because we know choices matter.

For Believers, ask: “How should knowing that our choices matter affect how we live before God?”

Possible answers: We should take responsibility. We should repent honestly. We should seek wisdom. We should trust God’s grace. We should live for Christ, not merely ourselves.

For Seekers or Skeptics, ask: “Do you believe your choices are truly yours? Why does that matter?”

8. Pulling the Signposts Together

After discussing the five signposts, say something like:

“Purpose, justice, reason, love, and choice are not small side issues. They are at the center of human life. The Christian claim is that these things are real because God is real. They are not accidents. They are signposts pointing back to the Author of life.”

Ask: “Which of the five signposts is most meaningful to you personally: purpose, justice, reason, love, or choice? Why?”

Let this question hang. It may produce the best discussion of the session.

9. Handling Common Questions or Objections

Objection 1: “Are you saying atheists cannot be moral?”

Suggested response: “No. Many people who do not believe in God care deeply about right and wrong. The question is not whether they can act morally. The question is what makes morality objectively real in the first place.”

Follow-up question: “Where do you think our sense of right and wrong comes from?”

Objection 2: “Couldn’t people just create their own meaning?”

Suggested response: “People certainly try to create meaning, and some of that meaning may feel very powerful. But the bigger question is whether meaning is something we invent or something we discover. Christianity says we discover our purpose because we were created by God and for God.”

Follow-up question: “Is there a difference between subjective meaning and ultimate meaning?”

Objection 3: “Isn’t this just a design argument?”

Suggested response: “It includes design, but it is broader than that. The devotional is not only pointing to the design of nature. It is also asking about the things we depend on every day: reason, love, justice, purpose, and choice.”

Follow-up question: “Which of those is hardest to explain without God?”

Objection 4: “I’m not sure I believe in God.”

Suggested response: “This group is a safe place to ask honest questions. The invitation today is not to pretend certainty. It is simply to consider whether the things we already know are meaningful are pointing us toward God.”

Follow-up question: “What part of belief in God is hardest for you?”

10. Study Questions with Leader Helps

Question 1

“If you arrived at a beautiful golf course and someone told you nobody designed it, how would you respond? Why?”

Leader aim: Help the group see that design naturally points to a designer.

Possible follow-up questions: What features of a golf course reveal planning? Why would “it just happened” be an unsatisfying answer? How does that illustration help us think about the larger world?

Question 2

“How do these signposts—purpose, justice, reason, love, and choice—point to God? Why?”

Leader aim: Help the group see that these five realities are difficult to explain if the universe is ultimately impersonal and accidental.

Possible follow-up questions: Which signpost seems strongest to you? Which one raises the most questions? Which one do you rely on most every day? Could these things be truly real if there is no God?

Be careful: Do not make the discussion overly academic. Keep bringing it back to ordinary life: friendships, decisions, fairness, truth, guilt, love, and meaning.

Question 3

“How does Christianity better explain the things we already assume are real and meaningful in everyday life than a universe resulting from a cosmic rolling of the dice?”

Leader aim: Help the group compare two basic views of reality.

View 1: The universe is ultimately accidental, impersonal, and without final purpose.

View 2: The universe was created by God, through Christ, and for Christ.

Possible follow-up questions: Which view better explains human dignity? Which view better explains moral responsibility? Which view better explains why love matters? Which view better explains our hunger for meaning? Which view better explains why our minds can seek truth?

Leader summary: Christianity does not ask us to deny purpose, justice, reason, love, or choice. It gives us a foundation for them.

11. A Simple Gospel Connection

Try to connect the topic to Christ.

Say something like: “Colossians 1:16 says all things were created by Christ and for Christ. Christianity does not merely say there is a vague Designer somewhere behind the universe. It says the Creator has made Himself known in Jesus Christ. The One who made us also came to redeem us.”

Then ask: “What difference would it make if your life was not an accident, but was created by Christ and for Christ?”

This question can speak to everyone in the room—nonbelievers, seekers, young believers, and mature Christians.

12. Closing Summary

Use this summary near the end: “Today we considered five signposts: purpose, justice, reason, love, and choice. These are not abstract ideas. We live by them every day. We want our lives to matter. We believe fairness matters. We trust our minds. We treasure love. We know choices have consequences. Christianity says these things are real because God is real. They are signposts pointing us back to the Author of life.”

