

Small Group Bible Study Leaders Guide

These notes have been prepared for those leading a small group Bible study involving up to say 15 people. The time allocated to the Bible study is about 50 minutes, which leaves time for prayer as well. The Bible study has been designed to enable people to participate in a discussion on the Biblical passage being considered.

Leader's responsibilities

- *Before leading the study:* Do the Bible study yourself.
- Encourage group members to bring their own Bibles. Have pens available.
- Start and finish on time. Have prayer at beginning and end of the study (can ask others to do this).
- *At the beginning:* Could do a get-to-know exercise so they know people's names. Explain that this is a discussion, not a lecture.
- Encourage group participation. Have different people read in turn from the Bible and the study notes (this ensures that everyone speaks sometime).
- Keep the discussion on the topic.
- Keep the discussion on the relevant passage and limit references to other portions of Scripture. This helps everyone to participate in an in-depth study on equal ground. It should not be an opportunity for anyone to show their Biblical knowledge.
- Don't dominate the discussion yourself. If someone asks a question, instead of answering it yourself, refer it to the whole group by saying "What do you think?". That will promote discussion.
- Try to ask open questions that promote discussion instead of closed ones that kill discussion.
- Summarise at the end.

Bible study

The more recent Bible studies are comprised of three stages: Bible reading, private Bible study and discussion.

Stage	Objective	Time period	Activity
Reading	To obtain a basic understanding (interpretation) of the passage (this helps to ensure that the private Bible study is profitable)	About 15-20 minutes (Move rapidly & don't dwell too long on the questions. Leave discussion until later)	The Bible passage is divided into sections. For each section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a person read the verses (share this around the group) • Ask the group to answer the questions verbally & then they can record some answers
Private Bible study	To study the passage and document personal responses	About 10 minutes	Ask the group to individually go through the discovery questions in turn and write down at least one response to each question (if they have trouble with a question, then go on to the next one). This is to be done in silence.
Discussion	To discuss the personal responses	About 20 minutes	Go through the discovery questions in turn and ask group members to share their thoughts. Note that as these are open questions, different people will have different responses to the same question. After a few have shared their response, move on to the next question.

