

Lesson 10

Leading Bible Studies

I. What are the steps to follow in preparing to lead a bible study?

A. Define who the study is for

1. Preferences in demographics or life stage.
2. Common interest group
3. Common life stage group
4. Common needs

B. Ascertain who is best suited to conduct the bible study

1. Led by one person
2. Co-facilitation
3. Led by an expert in the field
4. Each session conducted by a different person

C. Define the learning outcomes

You should be able to complete the statement "After going through this bible study the participant should be able to"

D. Identify how will you source the material

1. Purchased from external source
2. Downloaded for free from known internet source
3. Downloaded from unknown source
4. Tested and tried internal church material
5. Self-designed

It's important to be aware of the pros and cons of different approaches. Let's discuss.

E. Identify if there is a cost involved in the running of this bible study, for you, the church, and the participants

F. Decide how people will be invited

G. Decide the mode of delivery

1. You talk and they take notes followed by a discussion.
2. You watch a DVD or listen to an audio and then discuss.
3. You go through a workbook and discuss.
4. You only use your bibles.

H. Define the duration of the bible study

1. Length of each session
2. Number of sessions over a specific period

I. Find out the most advantageous time to schedule this bible study

1. Workplace
2. Evening during the week
3. Before church on Sunday
4. Weekend
5. Fortnightly or weekly

Again it's important to be aware of the pros and cons of each of these.

II. How does one design an effective bible study?**A. Consider the topic prayerfully****B. Decide on Bible research method to use. Some examples are:**

1. Book Study
2. Topical Study
3. Character study

C. Write out the requisite learning outcomes**D. Create the outline for your study****E. Develop discussion questions for each section.****The basic options in terms of layout of the questions include:**

1. The body of the study separate from the discussion questions.
2. Discussion questions after each section of the study lesson.

F. Consider guidelines for effective formatting and layout**G. Define the scope of the study**

This is very important. Often one cannot cover absolutely everything on a subject in the time allotted to a bible study. It may be beneficial to suggest relevant further reading. For example, a study on "marriage in the bible" is very broad and would require further reading in order to adequately cover this topic.

III. How does one develop discussion questions for a bible study?

A good pattern for developing questions is Head, Heart, and Hand.

1. Head = What was the writer saying? What do you understand?
2. Heart = What is the Holy Spirit saying to you as a result of this study or text?
3. Hand = What do you need to start doing as a result of this study or text?

Additional questions that can be asked are:

1. Questions of **identification** – Is there anything you identify with in the characters in this text?
2. Questions of **illustration** – Can you share an example of this phenomenon in your life?
3. Questions of **conviction** – Is the Lord convicting you of anything as a result of reading this passage?
4. Questions of **influence** – Is there anyone who can benefit from you sharing this new learning?
5. Questions of **prayer** – Is there anything you need to pray into as a result of studying this passage?
6. Questions of **understanding** – Is there anything you don't fully understand in this passage?
7. Questions of **repentance** – Is there anything you need to repent of or renounce as a result of studying this passage.

IV. What are the qualities of an effective Bible Study Leader?

I have outlined below a checklist for self-evaluation when conducting a small group or bible study. We use this for our small group leaders but it can be used in a variety of settings.

As a leader do I:

1. Build trusting relationships between myself and group members?
2. Foster collaboration between myself and group members?
3. Determine group members' relevant experiences, needs, strengths, and interests?
4. Clarify pre-formulated discipleship/learning goals or develop goals with the group members?
5. Set clear ground rules and expectations for the group learning, ministry and relationships?
6. Facilitate their active participation?
7. Have a strategy for drawing in and enrolling the quieter group members?
8. Facilitate and monitor the flow of the session(s) and group process?

9. Deal with group members who affect the group process negatively (perhaps by dominating or having ulterior motives)?
10. Deal with disagreements and manage conflicts constructively?
11. Invite learners to process and summarize what occurs during the session(s)?
12. Evaluate the learners' participation and capabilities, so they and I can learn from the experience?
13. Play a role as a facilitator who facilitates the contributions of others while avoiding preaching at them?

V. Conclusion

Small group bible study can be a very effective tool in discipleship. It provides an opportunity to meet individuals and their needs where they are at, whilst operating in an environment of relationship and hopefully accountability.

*'Jesus came and told His disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.** And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'*

Mat 28:18-20

Someone once said that in Africa the Gospel is a 'mile wide and an inch deep'. The church needs more thorough discipleship. One of the answers to this challenge is small group bible study.