

HOW TO GIVE A BIBLE STUDY

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Take a minute to pray for God to guide you as you study...

Hopefully by now, you are becoming more and more comfortable sharing the gospel presentation with someone else. It takes practice, but as you do it more and more, the easier it becomes. If you are still struggling, find someone that you trust that you can be vulnerable with and practice on them until you feel really comfortable. Who knows when you'll need to present the message of Jesus with someone? Whenever it is, you'll want to be ready!

So what's the next step in helping someone grow in their relationship with Jesus? You've become their friend. You've shared the gospel with them, but how do you help them take the next step in their journey with Jesus? More times than not, they will be asking you questions. Here are some of those common questions:

Why do bad things happen to good people?

What will happen when I die?

Can you really trust God?

How can I handle life-stress as well as you can?

Those questions aren't just looking for answers; those questions are an opportunity for you to share the bigger picture of who God is with them and how they can know Him in a more complete way. Those questions are a great opportunity for a Bible Study.

WHOA! I'm sure when you hear those words, you get terrified! You may be thinking, *"I can't give a Bible study! I don't know everything in the Bible! What if they ask me something I don't know? Isn't that what pastors are for...to give Bible Studies?"* And if you are feeling insecure and asking those same questions, you are not alone. Most people, including pastors, feel that same way. It's natural to feel insecure and unworthy, after all, you suddenly are put in a place where you are representing the God of the Universe! That sounds a bit scary! But the best part about being on God's mission and representing Him, is with you!

In the Great Commission, the part where Jesus gives us instructions on how to be on His mission, He says these words...

Matthew 28:18-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely ***I am with you always***, to the very end of the age."

Aren't those the best words ever? Sure, you're going to be scared to talk about Jesus, but He's right there with you. Sure, you're going to be scared to give a Bible Study, but He's right there with you. Sure, you feel insecure about representing the God of the Universe, but He's right there with you. He's with you through it all, because you are on HIS mission!

Ellen White writes in the book *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 333:

"As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His bid-dings are enablings."

When God gives us a command, a challenge, a calling, a mission, He ALWAYS gives us the tools to bring it to fruition! It's not your job to worry about "the how." It's your job to obey and to do your best. So when you have the opportunity to help someone grow as a disciple by giving them a Bible Study, God will go with you to help you lead them to Him.

So how do I give a Bible Study?

Giving a Bible study isn't as hard as you think. Most people think that it is a spontaneous, hurry-up, on-the-spot, not-prepared kind of thing where you have to know everything and every verse off the top of your head. In some situations, that can happen, but it doesn't have to be like that. When someone asks a spiritual question like some the questions we talked about earlier, the Bible study doesn't have to happen right then. An easy way to buy some time is to say something like, "That's a great question, and I think I can help you understand the answer. Can we get together sometime to see what the Bible says about this?" Make sure that you set an appointment, otherwise, it will never happen. By "buying time," it gives you an opportunity to get your thoughts together as well as prepare for how you'll lead the study.

Helpful Bible Study Steps

Step 1: Pray

It sounds like something that everyone would think of, but it really sets the stage for what is about to happen: an encounter with God! When you pray, ask for God to show you both something that will help you know Him better. This also shows that you are humbling learning and not talking down to the person you are studying with.

BASIC POINT

When God vies us a mission, He ALWAYS gives us the tool to bring it to fruition.

In Matthew, Jesus is talking about how to deal with conflict, but He says some powerful words that I believe apply in the context of a Bible study as well. Here's what He says:

Matthew 18:20: "For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them."

When you pray and invite God, through the Holy Spirit, to be a part of your study, He promises that He will be there. So, start with this prayer.

Step 2: Be Humble

Here's the deal: even if you have a doctorate in Theology and teach in a school of religion, you don't know everything! No one does! So don't act like it. I've found that the easiest approach is to say something like, "I don't know everything, and I enjoy learning, so let's learn together!" When you come with humility, people want to listen to what you have to say.

Step 3: Be Prepared

This is the part that scares a lot of people, but as you prepare, you will learn a lot, and your understanding of God will grow and develop too. It's a win-win for you and the person you're studying with! Preparation may look different to a lot of people, but it just means that you are able to present what the Bible says on a certain subject. You're not coming up with new ideas, but instead, you're just packaging the Bible's ideas together.

That may sound like work, and it might be, but there are several ways to make it easier. Here are a few of them.

Bible Study Guides: There are a ton of Bible Study Guides that are already prepared for you! Disciple Trek is one of them. So, start at the beginning (Fundamentals...remember that?) and work your way through the lessons. There are also a ton of guides that you can find online. One of my favorites is called Truth Link. You can find them at www.truthlink.org. They represent Jesus super well and are easy to follow.

Google: Sometimes Google can be your best friend in preparation. If there is a certain topic that your friend is looking into, spending some time reading articles and links on the internet can really help. Just make sure it matches your understanding of God.

Other Resources: There are many different books out there that will help you prepare. One of my favorites was written by my friend, Mark Finley. He's one of the greatest evangelists that I've ever met, and the book that he wrote is called, *Studying Together*. His book goes through many topics as well as fundamental beliefs, and it's put in a way that will really help you give a Bible study. You can download the book as an app, or you can get it online. I have used it many times before.

People: Sometimes the best resource is someone that you trust. It's totally fine if you bring someone else in to help you get started with a Bible study. Maybe they have a resource that will help you. Maybe it's just their presence that will give you confidence. Just make sure that you're not using them as a crutch and a way to shy away. Remember, YOU are the one that made the friend, and they trust YOU!

Step 4: Do it!

Now that you are prepared, and the time has come, do it! Sit down with them and humbly work your way through what you've discovered and know and let them see what God says to them. Maybe you'll invite them to your house and sit in the living room. Maybe you'll meet them at a coffee shop. Maybe you'll do it over FaceTime. Whatever way you do it, just make sure that they are comfortable.

In closing, read some of these awesome promises that God gives you as you press forward towards making a disciple.

Deuteronomy 31:6: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

2 Timothy 1:7: "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."

May you be filled with courage as you go forward on God's mission of making disciples.

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever given a Bible study? If so, share your experience?
 2. What gives you fear about giving a Bible study?
 3. What would help you be more prepared?
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LESSON 4: HOW TO GIVE A BIBLE STUDY

