

Guiding through the Scriptures

By now you've teamed up, integrated unbelievers into your lifestyle, and made some friends. You've attracted them to a biblical outlook through faith stories and natural discussions about life issues. You've brought up the idea of looking at a Bible study, and after a while, they've agreed.

Now, what? This session and the next will equip you to face that situation by focusing on:

- Choosing what to study,
- Establishing a nonthreatening, nonreligious atmosphere, and
- Avoiding Christian jargon.

1. From the video, consider which of these do's and don'ts should be emphasized in a Bible study?

Do's

- Limit discussion to pre-determined period
- Food
- Light atmosphere to allow someone to feel good about joining in
- A leader facilitates discussion
- Understand what is written as much as possible
- Discuss answers in plain vs. theological terms
- Use the same translation
- Pray for the participants
- Expect God to work
- Any question or opinion is ok
- Ask more questions than give answers
- Start with one of the Gospels

Don'ts

- Don't be a biblical scholar or Bible answer man
- Don't try to defend God
- Don't require everyone to agree



- Don't assume the Word means anything other than in the context it is written
- Don't conduct the study like a Sunday School. It is an exploration not an explanation of the Word of God

2. Review the mini-decision list (pg 14). Which decisions are you trying to help your friends make as you look at the Bible together?

Help them through mini-decisions -7 through -1

“Keep working on your relationship between meetings for Bible Study. Don't talk about religion or the Bible at those social times. You don't want your friend to start thinking you have a one-track mind and have stopped caring for him as a person. Talk about what interests him.”

Jim Petersen, Living Proof

3. How should these goals affect the way you handle the Bible study with them?

These are intellectual issues of sowing, and we are primarily addressing the mind. But our friends haven't yet ceased to be ruled by their emotions and are blinded by the god of this world. We are bringing all of God's supernatural resources into play (the believer, the Holy Spirit and now the Word); but the spiritual battle is as hot as ever.

Even though we are addressing the mind, we need to keep the study as non-threatening as possible. The unbeliever's sinful nature is coming face-to-face with issues they would rather avoid, so our job is to make it as palatable as possible.

4. Steve offered this principle: “Jettison the jargon.” What did he mean?

Don't use Christian, churchy, spiritual terms (e.g., “salvation”, “sanctification”, etc.)

5. Why is this crucial?

It is not understandable and makes the unbeliever uncomfortable and makes them feel like an outsider.

6. Do you feel you could handle leading or co-hosting a group like Bill's?

For Further Reading

Jim Petersen, *Living Proof*, chapters 18-20,22.

Joe Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism*, chapter 9.

Richard Peace, *Small Group Evangelism*, chapters 4-8.

