



Principles for Leading Bible Studies

Use a method of discovery. People learn best when they find truth themselves. As leaders, we need to first discover truth in Scripture, and then we can lead people to discovery through good questions. Be careful not to ruin the joy of discovery for others by simply telling them what you've found. Remember, Christ often used a discovery method of teaching (see [Luke 7:40-43](#)). Depend on the Holy Spirit to give insight.

Have the purpose of the passage clearly in mind. The major point of the message should be clearly seen. Be careful not to get sidetracked with unrelated details. Formulate a specific aim for each discussion you lead. Use questions that will help people discover the main purpose of the passage.

Use ground rules. Approach the Bible with fresh eyes and open to learn, as you would study any good textbook. Avoid leaning on information from outside sources. Let the text speak for itself. Expect the text, not the leader, to answer questions. Stay in the passage under consideration and stay on the point under discussion. Strive for balanced participation by all group members. Begin and end on time.

Build interest with a good introduction. Give helpful background information for the passage. Help people focus their attention on the ideas of the passage. Build curiosity and don't give away the main point -- let them discover it! Establish a point of identification between the group members and the passage.

Use an inductive sequence of questions:

- *Observe* the facts: who, what, where, when and how
- *Interpret* the meanings: definitions, purpose, significance, implications, consequences
- *Apply* relevant truth: What does this passage say to us now? How will we act on it?

Promote good discussions. Try to get beyond a "one-question-one-answer" pattern. Never answer your own questions until a good discussion gets started. Gratefully acknowledge each response. Allow "think time." Don't be afraid of silences.

Pace the study within the time limit. Keep moving the discussion along. Give ample time to the main point of the passage as a whole. Don't cut good discussion short. Leave enough time to apply the passage to present life situations.

Summarize from time to time and at the end. State clearly and concisely the points the group has already discovered. Emphasize the main point the passage has brought out as you move to application. Don't use the summary at the end to introduce new material.

Enjoy the journey. Let the Word of the Lord open your heart and mind to the wonders of his love, grace and truth. Be transformed. The lives of you and your friends may never be the same!

--Prepared by Ruth Snapp, © 2001, 2010 Nurses Christian Fellowship
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