

# **Start a Bible Study**

## ***Using our Study Guides!***



1. **Why start a Bible Study?** Small groups are the most effective means for helping people grow in their walk with Jesus Christ. The book of **Acts** gives us many examples of this (Acts 2:46). In small groups, people have the freedom to share their hearts, pray together, ask questions, and grow spiritually.
2. **Who can start a Bible Study?** Jesus said, *"Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations"* (Mt 28:19 / Mk 16:15). If you are a Christian, then this command is for YOU! The Great Commission can be summarized in three simple steps: WIN, BUILD, and SEND. You can encourage others and help build their spiritual lives by starting a Bible Study group.
3. **How to begin a Bible Study Group.** Start by praying and asking God for His direction on ***who, when, and where***. A good group size (that allows everyone time to participate) is a group of 4-6 people. You can meet in someone's home, a dorm room, a coffee shop, or almost anywhere!
4. **Suggestions for an Effective Bible Study Group:**
  - a. **Pray and invite** - pray about who may be interested in growing in their walk with God. Take a few days to pray over your list. Then be bold and invite 4-5 people. Tell them that you are starting a Bible Study group that will meet once a week for four weeks (later, you may decide to go longer -- but start with a 4-week plan). Set a specific time and place to begin and go for it! Talk to everyone to identify the best time and place to meet (i.e. Saturday morning at your apartment, etc).
  - b. **Give everyone a STUDY GUIDE in advance if possible** – select four of our Study Guides that you would like to use during your 4-week Bible Study. If you are unsure of which ones to use, then we recommend what we call "**THE BASIC FOUR**" [*Abiding in Christ, Discovering Who You Are in Christ, 7 Habits of a Strong Christian, and Secrets of the Tabernacle*]. If you have the ability to print our Study Guides from the internet, then make copies of the first Study Guide for each person before you meet. Instruct your friends to read the Study Guide before they come and mark sections that impress them. If you live in an area where you cannot make copies, then read the Study Guide carefully and take notes – and be ready to teach the session to your group. Once you've taught the session, it is very important that you encourage everyone to participate and discuss the various points. Our Study Guides can be found at: [www.WorldOutreach.org/abide](http://www.WorldOutreach.org/abide).

- c. **Be practical and plan each session** – Get organized! Before you meet, try to have the next Study Guide ready to hand-out for the following week. Additionally, it's a good idea to call your friends each week by telephone and remind them of the next Bible Study. Encourage your friends to bring their Bibles and Study Guides. In some situations, you may have to share Bibles and copies of the Study Guides.
- d. **Participation vs. lecture** – it is best if you can give everyone a copy of the Study Guide each week. However, if you have to teach the session from your own notes, keep in mind that your main goal is to encourage **PARTICIPATION**. Go through the Study Guide section-by-section and ask everyone in the group for comments and input. Let the others share their insights. Don't let any single person dominate the session, including you! It is important that you go around the circle and encourage others to share. Let the Holy Spirit speak through everyone who wants to participate. ***Group participation is a vital key for spiritual growth.***
- e. **Stay focused** - if someone brings up a question that cannot be easily answered, do not allow the entire Bible Study to be sidetracked. There are many questions for which no one has adequate answers: *“Why do bad things happened to good people” / “What if someone has never heard about Christ” / etc.* If you sense the group getting sidetracked, then assert your leadership and politely suggest that you can discuss the issue later, after the Bible Study is completed. Let everyone know that the aim of the Bible Study is to cover the material in the Study Guide. Use the Study Guide to help you stay focused and on track.
5. **Verse-by-Verse Method** - once you have completed the first 4-weeks, you may want to continue your Bible Study Group. Another method of Bible Study (to give variety from time to time) is what we call the **Verse-by-Verse Method**. It will give your group a refreshing change. Basically, you select a key passage in the Bible for study – i.e. Abiding, John 15 / God's blessings, Ephesians 1 / Protection, Psalm 91 etc. As the leader, you start by reading aloud the first two verses and make comments – and then allow others to share too. Then, you rotate around the circle letting each person read the next two verses, and so on. As the leader, you simply keep the turns rotating around the circle until the entire passage is covered. Your main job is to encourage participation. You will be amazed at how easy this method is and how many insights will come to light.
6. **End with Prayer & Fellowship** - when your session is finished (whether you use the Study Guide method or the Verse-by-Verse method) close the meeting with a short time of prayer and fellowship. Be sensitive to everyone's schedules and make the prayer time brief. Before you dismiss, remind everyone about the next time and place – and, give them the next Study Guide, if possible.

**Pray and get started today!**

***When you start a Bible Study, you are participating in the Great Commission by helping others grow in Christ!***