

How do I have a Bible study with someone else?

Attitudes

- I'm not an expert. We can learn together.
- The Word does the work.
- I enjoy it. I think you will, too.
- I want to see for myself, not just accept what I have been told.

Objectives

- To know what it says
- To find answers
- To deal with life
- To have a purpose
- To be more than I can be

Tools

- Reasonable translation
- Map
- Timeline
- Concordance

Where to start

- Their questions
- A book they want to read
- A book you want to read
- Evidences
- Give homework

What do I need to know

- Reading comprehension
- Context
- Write down questions for next time
- Know where to look for answers

What if I get it wrong?

- Trust the promises
 - Understanding (1 Corinthians 2:9 – 12, Ephesians 1:17 – 19, 2 Corinthians 3:18)
 - Comprehend the love of Christ (Ephesians 3:17)
 - Wisdom (James 1:5 – 8)
 - Repair (Philippians 3:12 – 16)

How to approach people

- God brings people and the gospel together
- Your life is a mess. Would you like to see how God can fix it?
- I agree that Christianity in America is generally messed up. Would you like to see what the Bible actually says?
- I'm sorry church is not satisfying for you. Would you like to see what the Bible says you should expect?
- It's not complicated; people make it that way.

What if they don't respond positively?

- They are not ready yet.
- Be friendly but move on.
- When they become interested, they will know whom to ask.
- Recheck every year or so.
- People are the way they are. Accept them as human beings who are valuable to God.

Leading questions to bring up religion

- You must be a Christian.

- Where do you go to church?
- That's a good song (store music)
- Is everything OK?
- Good book (the person has a Bible)

Leading questions after the conversation has turned to religion

- Have you thought about why God bothered to create?
- What does God call faith?
- What is the point of forgiveness if we just fail again?
- How do we not fail in heaven?
- Who decides who is in charge in church?
- I know a Christian in Pakistan...
- Have you looked at the evidence?

Preparation

- Re-play situations until you have a better response. The situation will happen again.
- Be yourself – it's what you do best.
- Watch people. Get into their heads.
- First be sure you want it to happen, then pray.
- Be patient. God knows what He is doing.
- Keep trying. Like the rest of life, learn from mistakes and move on. Trust mercy.

Suggested starting places

- One of the gospels
 - Most people don't know the story
 - Non-threatening, not "doctrinal"
 - Easy to read and follow
 - People often expect it to be complicated.
- 1 John
 - Love
 - Lots of big concepts
- Philippians – positive
- Acts – good history and entertaining

Improving the Start

- Many specific questions are more trouble than they are worth.
- Many times, the problem is the question.
- Easy ways to shift to the profitable:
 - "I don't know. But, it has been my experience that if we just start reading, we will run across it."
 - "Rather than tell you my opinion, let's just read and see what we find."

Emphasizing Evidence

- Blind leaps are not faith.
- Many think evidence is contrary to faith.
- Without evidence, any religion is OK.
- Evidence from what we can see allows trust in what we cannot see.
- Without evidence, true faith is impossible.
- True faith is acting on humanly impossible promises. If you don't know the promises, you can't have faith.