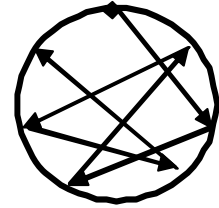


Bible Discussion Groups

Dr. Steve Johnson



I. Format for the Bible Discussion Group Time

- [1] Introduce new people to the group. Make them feel welcome.
- [2] Use an “opening question” as an icebreaker.
- [3] Explain the ground rules:

A- Our discussion will center around two basic questions: “What does the passage say” and “What does the passage say to you.”

B- We will read a section of Scripture (have each person read three verses aloud and rotate around the circle as needed) and then the discussion leader will launch some questions for group discussion based upon what we have read.

C- We encourage everyone to contribute to the discussion but ask you to stick to the passage at hand rather than going to other related passages.

D- After discussion of these verses is completed the leader will move to the next verses until we are out of time.

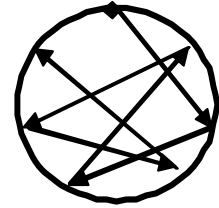
E- We will end promptly and resume next week where we left off.

Notes for Facilitator:

- [1] Launch a question, guide it and summarize if needed.
- [2] Share, don't teach. When a question is directed to you, pass it on. You might say, “That's a good question, what do the rest of you think?”

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- [3] When the questions on a section are finished go to the next part of the text. Do not try to exhaust a section, but go at a pace comfortable to the group.
- [4] Explain to members with a lot of Bible background that the goal of the group is to involve all of the members in the discovery process. Ask them to look for ways to encourage those who are unfamiliar with the Bible or are a bit shy to voice an opinion.
- [5] Allow people to ask “dumb” questions without making them feel dumb.
- [6] Questions are provided for the initial chapters of Mark and John’s Gospel. By the time you reach the end of the questions provided you should be able to develop your own questions. But remember... if you spend more than 30 minutes in preparation... you are over prepared and will likely try to teach rather than lead the group!
- [7] Close on time. If you want to close with prayer allow time to do so without going late. End on time. People can stay and chat if they want but the group should start and stop on time.]

II. Asking Good Questions

Questions should...

- Be neither too tough nor too simplistic.**
- Encourage creative thinking – call for opinion.**
- Be varied (length of response, content vs. application).**
- Be restated when not understood.**
- Frequently draw discussion back to the text at hand.**
- Allow follow-up on areas that strike a responsive chord.**

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III. The Opening Question

PURPOSE:

To allow each group member to share something about themselves, which in turn helps new group members get to know each other. The atmosphere should be relaxed and allow members to respond spontaneously.

EXAMPLES:

- [1] If you could be in any profession, what would it be and why?
- [2] If you were stranded on an island with one book in addition to the Bible, what would you want it to be and why?
- [3] What unusual pets or hobbies did you have as a child?
- [4] If you had a 25th hour in each day, how would you like to spend it?
- [5] What room in your house was your favorite when you were about 12 years old and what was it your favorite?

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