

Creating a Bible Study Discussion

Choose a passage

- Often this comes from your personal reading (so try to get on a personal reading plan). Be consistent in reading and studying well.
- Pray & choose something meaningful to you, that excites you, that you're passionate about.
- Pray & consider "where" your group is and choose something they need (for the group or as individuals).

Study the Passage

- First, answer the question, "What do I see?"
 - Read the passage several times.
 - Consider the perspectives of different people in the passage. What would it have been like to be them and experience this?
 - Answer the Who, Where, When questions
 - Note down everything you notice.
 - Note down any questions you have (inc. why questions).
 - These may become some of your questions, or they will be questions others may ask.
 - Try to learn the answer to as many as you can.
 - Answer the "what difference does this passage make" question.
- Second, answer the question, "What does it mean?"
 - Consider the context. Some questions to help:
 - What's going on before and after this in this chapter? In this book?
 - Where does this fit in the flow of the Bible?
 - Where else do these people or themes or words show up? How do those situations help us understand our passage?
 - Your goal is to try to understand what the first readers understood the passage to mean. What did it mean to them then? Then, What does it mean to us now?
 - Always interpret Scripture in light of other Scripture.
 - Bible handbooks, concordances, dictionaries can be helpful. You may check commentaries, too. Download the Blue Letter Bible app as one option.
 - While you made many observations, there is only one interpretation. And that interpretation should be able to be stated in a sentence or two that would be true for all cultures at all times.
- Third, answer the question(s), "What do I need to know?" or "What do I need to do?"
 - "No theology is of any threat or consequence until we try to apply it to our lives." - Gayle Erwin
 - Note: There can be many different applications.
 - The more specific the application, the more dynamic the potential life change for us (e.g., "pray more" vs. "all of our Life Group pray for 10 minutes at 7:10am daily about this issue until we meet next week").

Develop Your Questions

- Your questions should help lead them to answer the 3 questions above ("see, mean, do").
- Ask the questions that you asked when you first read the passage.
- Never tell something when you can ask and have one of them tell. Minimize monologuing.
- Personalize the experience: "What do you think it would have felt like to have been Nathan when he confronted David?"

- Develop more questions that you will use. It's always easier to cut some out than to have to think of them on the fly!
- Pray that God will help you to become a better question-asker. According to one count, Jesus was asked 183 questions in the Gospels. He only answered 3 times...but he responded with asking 307 questions back! (See I Once Was Lost by Don Everts & Doug Schaupp.)

Additional Help

- Go to toolsformentoring.com and click on Small Groups. There are additional details on developing a small group outline, leading a discussion, developing a Bible study, planning worship for Life Group, planning prayer in Life Group, etc.
- Attached are some sample studies. They don't include opening questions for your time together or examples of worship or prayer. They are simply examples of the Bible study time when your Life Group meets.

Sample Study #1 - John 13:1-17

1. As we read this together, what were some of the most significant things that you saw (try to trace their thoughts throughout the time together)?
2. What are things you've read or learned before that might be helpful for us to understand this passage (i.e., if this was your first time reading this, what questions would you have)?
3. What do you think it means in verse 1 that "he loved them to the end"?
4. What would it have been like to be Peter in this passage? (maybe talk through "clean")
5. Who does Jesus say this action is for in this passage? Why do you think that is significant?
6. What do you think was the example Jesus set?
7. Can you describe an experience like this that you have had before (being on the receiving end)?
8. What are things that we could do that would be comparable to washing feet in the context of one another and our Life Group in light of this? Entire Chi Alpha group? (Push them to be very specific.)
9. When Jesus says we will "blessed if we do" these things how do you think we will be blessed?

Sample Study #2 - Ephesians 4:1-16

1. What are some of the things that strike you in this passage? Any questions you have? (Try to answer them as you walk through the passage.)
2. What are things you've read or learned before that might be helpful to understand this passage?
3. What is the significance of the repetition of the word "one" in verses 4-6?
4. Which of the attributes mentioned in verses 2-3 is the most difficult for you? Why? (humble, gentle, patient, loving, unified, peaceful)

5. How could verses 12-13 look in a Life Group? What are the goals Paul is outlining (answer: unity & maturity)? Why might these goals be important?
6. Verse 16 mentions the whole body; how do we as XA (the whole group), function as a body? What is your contribution ("work") to the whole body? (Be specific)
7. How can we pray through these verses to strengthen our XA, Life Groups, or views of ourselves as parts of the body?

Sample Study # 3 - 1 Peter 4:1-10

1. The translators of the ESV version use the chapter heading "Stewards of God's Grace" for this section. What does it mean to be a steward? What's it mean to then be a steward of God's grace?
2. Verse 1 says, "for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." Is this true? How so?
3. What are some very practical ways we can put what we read in verse 2 into effect?
4. In verses 3-5 Peter seems to be giving no excuse to continue in those lifestyle choices. What are your thoughts on this?
5. What do you think Peter is saying in verse 6 when he writes, "even to those who are dead..."?
6. What could the significance of verse 7 be: "...for the sake of your prayers"?
7. Practically, what is the point of verse 8? What does it mean in day-to-day life? How do we live it out?
8. What is hard about hospitality (v. 9)? Why do you think Peter felt he needed to put this blurb in there? Go back to being stewards of God's grace..how does being hospitable tie in to that? How can you model that in your life this year? How can we do this in our Life Group?
9. Have each person give their thoughts on what verse 10 might mean. Being "good stewards of God's varied grace" could potentially look different for everyone. What does that look like for you? (Be specific.)
10. Being good stewards of God's varied grace manifests itself in so many ways (hence "varied"). Each of us have been given a unique opportunity to show that grace to our Life Groups this semester. Depending on the group of guys/girls that we've gathered, what are some ways that we can serve each other? How would this look if we reached out to other parts of the student body (e.g., athletes, internationals, freshmen, etc.)?

Sample Study #4 - Colossians 3:1-17

1. What sticks out to you from this passage? Any questions?
2. What does it mean for us to seek things above?
3. What does it mean for our lives to be hidden with Christ?
4. Verses 5-10 say that we need to put sin to death. How do we do that?
5. Our culture places a high importance on being yourself and true to who you are. What does

Paul have to say about that?(verse 9)

6. What kind of things are we to put on from verses 12 through 17? Which of these is the hardest for you?

7. Paul says we must forgive as Jesus has forgiven us. How do we do that?

8. Paul says to put on love above all because it binds the rest together. What if love was missing? How would that affect the other things we are to put on?

9. What implications does this passage have for you this semester? What about for your Life Group?

10. How do we apply a passage like this? (one idea: Pray for things we struggle to put to death and things we struggle to put on. Partner up and pray together for 5 minutes a day until the next Life Group meeting. Keep each other accountable [2 texts/day].)