



How-To Lead a Bible Study

Making Invitations to Your Bible Study

GOAL

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Optional Lectio

Before we get started, take some time to pray over a Scripture passage about God's word.

- **First**, read Romans 10:11–17.
- **Second**, reflect on the words that caught your attention.
- **Third**, pray from your heart and respond to what Jesus is saying to you.
- **Fourth**, rest in what God has told you and in His presence.

Discussion Questions *(These are sample questions; feel free to develop your own.)*

1. What jumped out at you as you read Romans 10:11–17?
2. In light of this passage, what is necessary for God’s word to be heard by others?
3. What prevents you from making invitations?

Vision for Making Invitations

Before we answer that last question, let’s think a little bit about why students come to (and stay in) Bible studies in the first place.

There are lots of reasons, but let’s look at three:

- *Friendship*
I like friends. You like friends. Students like friends. A Bible study is a great place to start or grow friendships, and students are drawn to that—plus they don’t want to miss out on something that the rest of their friends are doing.
- *Knowledge*
You have something they don’t know. Many students on campus know that they don’t know their faith very well, and they have questions. Maybe they were challenged by someone. Maybe something in their class made them doubt their faith. Maybe they have a great relationship with Jesus but want to learn more. Bible study is a concrete way for them to move forward and gain understanding.

- *Growth/Life Change*

In a secular culture, people realize that they need likeminded friends to help them live out the Faith. They are also looking to the missionary or student leader as a spiritual guide that they need in their life.

Whether your students are well aware of these reasons or have no idea that they apply, these goals are key reasons why many people join a study—and why they stay.

Discussion Question: Have you been in a Bible study before? Why did you come to or stay in the study? Have you led a Bible study before? What caused people in your group to stay or leave your study?

Four Steps to Growing a Bible Study

It's obvious that you need people for your study, but sometimes attracting members can be more difficult than you think. Here are four steps to getting people to join your study.

1. Start and build relationships

Here are a couple of tips:

- Learn to ask great questions

On campus, people are constantly meeting others. They get lots of bland questions and rarely have quality conversations. In your interactions, try to go beyond bland questions and get to the heart of others' lives. For example, use questions that ask why: Instead of asking, "What's your major?," try, "Why did you choose your major?"

- Think about utilizing affinity groups.

An affinity group includes people with a common interest: They could share the same major, sport, club, dorm—you get the idea. Often it is easier to invite people with similar interests into a Bible study; that way, the study becomes an extension of their friendships, rather than something completely new or foreign.

2. Keep track of contacts

Use your Spiritual Multiplication Depth Chart to record and pray for the new and meaningful contacts that you have met. (If you aren't familiar with the Depth Chart, check it out at focusequip.org.)

3. Face-to-face invitations

As you make contacts and develop relationships, eventually you will need to invite people into your Bible study. It can be easy to shoot someone a text message or email, but it is definitely worthwhile to meet with them in person to explain why they should join your study. Face-to-face invitations greatly increase the number of people who join your study and deepens their commitment to it.

When you meet with potential study members, consider sharing your testimony and telling them why you are leading a Bible study. From the friendship that you have developed, try to talk about why they might enjoy the study in terms they are familiar with. Use plain language instead of Catholic or FOCUS jargon.

4. *Schedule a time and place to meet*

Use a tool like Doodle to coordinate when you will meet. Doodle allows people to mark the times they are available so you can easily see when the majority people can meet. It beats asking everyone individually, over and over, until you find a time that works.

Practice

Invitations can be hard to make, so try practicing first with a friend. A few practice attempts will boost your confidence and help you make better invitations.

Summary

During this time, you should have:

- Read and prayed through Romans 10:11–17.
- Reviewed *The Vision for Making Invitations*.
- Reviewed *The Four Steps to Growing a Bible Study*.

Conclusion

Almost every conversion story involves an invitation. Romans 10:11–17 is so true: People cannot hear the good news unless they are invited. Work on developing not only the skill for invitations but the heart to make them as well. Good luck!

