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## How-To Lead a Bible Study

# Bible Study Vision and Goals

### GOAL

To understand the vision and goals for leading a FOCUS Bible study.

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# BIBLE STUDY VISION AND GOALS

## Goal

To understand the vision and goals for leading a FOCUS Bible study.

## Optional Lectio

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

- **First**, read Psalm 1:1–6.
- **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 Psalm 1:1–6?
2. What are the effects on the man who meditates on the law (God's word) day and night?
3. How do we become like this man?
4. How do we help others be like this man?

### **Vision for Leading Small-Group Studies**

Imagine you're on a college campus without FOCUS, and you want to create a new campus outreach program to reach as many college students as possible. Would you make small-group Bible studies a part of this new outreach program? Why or why not? It's an important question to ponder. Often you don't realize the importance of something until you imagine not having it at all.

There are many reasons why small-group studies are important. Jesus Himself kept a small group of men around Him during His ministry. Though he had many disciples, Jesus specifically chose these 12 to entrust with His teachings and, in fact, His very life.

Psychologists and researchers have observed that there is distinct change in the nature of communication based upon a group's size. Within larger groups, people tend to broadcast their views, with louder and more opinionated people tending to dominate the conversation. Within small groups of ten or less, people tend to engage in face-to-face conversations. They feel more comfortable expressing their viewpoints and engaging in dialogue. Small groups allow relationships to grow through direct contact and personal interaction.

Ultimately, it is through relationships that real, life-changing events can happen. In the company of friends, people are much more likely to open up and to share what is going on in their lives—difficult situations, struggles with sin, life victories, spiritual realizations, etc. Friends feel more comfortable challenging one another and keeping each other accountable to the goals they set out to accomplish. In essence, we share our lives through relationships, and this sharing provides the support we need to become better Christians who can change the world.

### **The Three Goals of a Bible Study**

Lots of things can be accomplished within a small group, but as the leader, concentrate on three specific goals: deep transformation, intimate fellowship, and spiritual multiplication.

*Deep transformation:* Through interaction with God's word and one another, the lives of your Bible study members can be profoundly changed. The purpose of a Bible study is not simply to learn information or be a part of a club, but to allow the Lord to transform our lives. We want students, through the Scriptures, to be drawn more intimately to our Lord in the sacraments and liturgy of the Church where they can most fully receive the gift of God's grace in their lives.

*Intimate fellowship:* If people are going to be deeply transformed, they will need others along the way—not only to help their transformation now but to make sure they continue this transformation in the future. Your goal as a leader is to take a group of people with various backgrounds and personalities and help them form authentic relationships with one another.

*Spiritual multiplication:* Another important dynamic of small groups is their ability to be reproduced. As you lead, pray that the Lord will raise up members of your small group to go on to witness to others and to lead Bible studies of their own.

What other indicators can help someone determine whether their study is thriving?

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

1. Has a small group (a Bible study, close group of friends, tightknit sports team, etc.) changed your life? If so, how?
2. What are some ways to ensure that Bible study members continue to experience deep transformation?
3. What can a leader do to encourage intimate fellowship in a Bible study?
4. How does your goal of spiritual multiplication within your Bible study change the way you lead?

## **Summary**

During this time, you should have:

- Read and prayed through Psalm 1:1–6.
- Reviewed the *Vision for Leading Small-Group Studies*.
- Reviewed *The Three Goals of a Bible Study*.

## **Conclusion**

Knowing the vision and goals for your Bible study is important both for developing it in the beginning and for checking in as you go along. Return to these concepts as you evaluate what the Lord is asking you to do with your group.



