



How-To Lead a Bible Study

Your First Bible Study and Beyond

GOAL

To help you prepare for your first Bible study through planning, hospitality, and choosing the right Bible study materials.

YOUR FIRST BIBLE STUDY AND BEYOND

Goal

To help you prepare for your first Bible study through planning, hospitality, and choosing the right Bible study materials.

Optional Lectio

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

- **First**, read John 1:1–5, 14–18.
- **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 John 1:1–5, 14–18?
2. What do you think about Jesus' being called "the Word"?
3. Why is it significant that this Word became flesh?
4. Through Bible studies, how can you practice incarnational evangelization?

Vision for Hospitality

As you plan your first Bible study, several questions might cross your mind: Who is going to come? Will they like the Bible study? Will they like me? What will we do? How should I prepare? This short guide to your first Bible study will give you a jump start in planning your first study. It can also serve as a great refresher for those who have already led a study.

Discussion Question: What is the best party you have ever been to? What made it so great?

Parties are great, but Bible studies are so much more important. They allow us to communicate God's word to others. It's so important to make your Bible study hospitable and take the time to create a fantastic environment.

Consider and discuss these questions together for your Bible study:

- When will you meet?
- Where will you meet?
- How will you connect people together in your group?
- What food and drinks will you bring?
- What Bible study material will you use?

Don't worry, you don't have to come up with all of the answers on your own. We've provided some suggestions below.

When and Where to Meet?

As the day of your first meeting draws near, set up the right meeting spot for your Bible study—a place that is inviting and comfortable for your group to come each week. Here are some tips to help make this happen:

- Find an accessible and informal location that can be used or reserved each week. Dorm rooms and possibly hall lounges can work well, as long as they are free from distractions and noise (and as long as your roommates approve). Be sure there is enough room for all the members to be comfortable and to see one another.
- Schedule a time when all of your group members can attend. As a rule of thumb, Monday through Thursday nights usually work the best.

- Provide food and refreshments, especially the first few weeks. (What college student doesn't like free food?) It also gives the participants a natural activity as they begin to arrive and chat with one another.
- Bring extra Bibles in case a member doesn't have one.

How Will You Connect People Together in Your Group?

You will want to arrive at the meeting room well in advance (30–40 minutes) of the actual meeting time. That way you can set up the food and drinks, pray for the study, and be available to chat with anyone who might come early.

Once people begin to arrive, use your previously gathered information about each member to connect them to other members of the group. Maybe two people both played the same sport in high school or share the same major. Work on remembering their names and give them a chance to introduce themselves to the group.

Have some discussion starters so that members of your group can get to know one another and begin to build relationships. Relationships are the glue that holds a Bible study together. People can learn information by reading a book; they come to a Bible study to meet new friends and to share their lives with one another. Here are some examples of discussion starters:

- *Best/Worst* (also known as Highs/Lows; Sunrises/Sunsets; Peaks/Valleys, etc.)
Have each person share their best and worst moment from the past week.

How-To Lead a Bible Study / Your First Bible Study and Beyond

- *Two Truths and a Lie*
Have each person come up with three statements about his own life: two factual statements and one false statement. For example, “I’ve never seen Star Wars. I’ve visited Taiwan. I’ve ridden an elephant.” The group then tries to guess which statement is false.
- *Physical Challenges*
Who can do the most push-ups? Who can balance a spoon on their nose the longest?
- *Additional Questions*
 - What do you do for fun?
 - If you could go out to lunch with any three living people, who would they be?
 - What would be your ideal vacation?
 - What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?
 - What quality do you appreciate in a friend?

What Bible Study Materials Will You Use?

During your first study meeting, you will also want to give your group a taste of the material you’ll be using. You might not finish the entire lesson, but try choosing a chapter from FOCUS’ Ignite Series to review. Be sure to prepare all of these elements well in advance of the first meeting, and prep any Bible study material the day before.

As you continue your study, you will spend more and more time on the Bible study material and less on introductions and discussion starters. At the same time, don't stop helping participants grow in their relationships with one another.

Sample Bible Study Timeline

Here's a sample one-hour timeline for the first meeting:

- Have food and drink; let the members connect with one another (8 minutes)
- Introduce yourself, remembering to be personable and real (5 minutes)
- Pray: Do it yourself and keep it short and simple (1 minute)
- Have members introduce themselves (5 minutes)
- Icebreaker (10 minutes)
- Communicate purpose and expectations (5 minutes)
- Go over some Bible study material (25 minutes)
- Close in prayer (1 minute)

Practice

What will your first study look like? Take some time to map out your plan. Share this plan with one another and get feedback.

Summary

During this time, you should have:

- Read and prayed through John 1:1–5, 14–18.
- Reviewed *Vision for Hospitality*.
- Reviewed the answers to the following questions:
 - When will you meet?
 - Where will you meet?
 - How will you connect people together in your group?
 - What food and drinks will you bring?
 - What Bible study material will you use?
- Taken some time to map out a plan for your Bible study.

Conclusion

Being good at hospitality is worth it. It helps you develop relationships and honor those in your study. Take the time to do it right!

