

Discovery Bible Study

Life Group Study Method

You are about to embark on a great adventure! This tool is designed to help you and your life group members discover more of who God is through understanding the Bible. The Discovery Bible Study method is unique. There is no lesson to prepare, nor specific text questions. The outline given below is the only tool you need to facilitate a great discussion! Below is a detailed explanation of the outline, followed by a skeleton outline that you can print off and put in your Bible.

Studies show that much of what people remember and apply to their own lives comes through self-discovery. The Discovery Bible Study is based on the words of Jesus in John 6:44-45, "No one can come to Me (Jesus) unless the Father who sent me draws him...It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God. Therefore, everyone who hears and has learned from the Father comes to me.'"

The goal of Discovery Bible Study is two-fold:

- 1) To encourage people to hear God for themselves through His Word. (What is God saying to you?)
- 2) To encourage people to obey what the Father is teaching them. (How will you apply what you have learned?)

This Bible Study method works best in a group of three or more. It helps reveal to people how they can learn from and make sense of scripture as well as to introduce them to different Christian disciplines like worship, prayer, community, service, and accountability. This makes the study great for anyone, no matter what his or her level of exposure to the Bible may be. It is designed to be effective for seekers, international students, and mature believers alike. Because the content is driven by questions and conversation, there is no limit to the depth of learning and application a group can experience.

Connect

The first portion of the Discovery Bible Study should be focused on your relationships with members of the group. First, ask everyone to share two things: one thing they are thankful for this week, and one thing that has been difficult or stressful this week. This creates a basis for worship and praise, and for leaning on one another as a community. Optionally, ask the group how they have applied last week's lesson and with whom they shared. This introduces accountability to the group.

Discover

Now turn to the passage for the week. The passage could be as short as a few verses, or as long as a story that covers several chapters. Narrative passages, especially from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, work well. It is important to make sure everyone has a Bible, so bring a few extra in case. First, ask one person to read the passage aloud. Next, have another person read the passage aloud while the others listen. Then, have someone else retell the story in their own words. After the retelling, ask the group if anyone has anything to add to the retelling, or if anyone saw something different in the passage.

Next, guide the discussion with four basic questions:

1. What does this passage tell us about God (or Jesus)?
2. What does this passage tell us about people?
3. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?
4. What other questions do you have about the passage?

During discussion, keep the following ground rules in place:

1. Keep discussion to the passage. It is especially important to rein in students who have more Bible knowledge and may be prone to drawing connections with passages that are unfamiliar to others in the group.
2. Don't teach; facilitate conversation through questions. If a student makes a questionable comment, rather than correcting, ask, "Can you show me where in the passage you see that?" Or ask, "What does everyone else think about that?" Allow the group to self-edit.
3. Keep to the time allotted and redirect tangents.

Apply

It is important to always end with an application question. Have each person in the group answer the following question: "If this passage is true, how should it change how you live this week?" Students respond with: "I will..." statements. This teaches the importance of obedience to God's word. This way, you empower the student to obey even if they aren't a Christian yet.

Suggested Passages

Matthew

- Jesus is Baptized: Matthew 3:1-17
- Jesus Feeds the 5,000: Matthew 14:13-21
- The Faith of the Canaanite Woman: Matthew 15:21-28
- The Triumphal Entry & Jesus Cleansing the Temple: Matthew 21:1-17
- The Parable of the Wedding Banquet: Matthew 22:1-14

Mark

- Jesus Heals a Paralytic: Mark 2:1-17
- Jesus and a Paralyzed Man: Mark 2:17-26
- Jesus Calms the Storm: Mark 4:35-41
- Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter: Mark 5:21-43
- The Death of Jesus: Mark 15:33-40

Luke

- The Birth of Jesus: Luke 2:1-20
- The Temptation of Jesus: Luke 4:1-13
- The Calling of the First Disciples: Luke 5:1-11
- The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Luke 10:25-37
- The Parable of the Prodigal Son: Luke 15:11-32

John

- Jesus Walks on Water: John 6:16-24
- Disciples Desert Jesus: John 6:60-71
- Jesus's Testimony: John 8:12-30
- Jesus Heals a Blind Man: John 9:1-12
- Jesus is Arrested: John 18:1-11

Discovery Bible Study Outline

Connect

1. What is one thing they are thankful for this week?
2. What is one thing that has been difficult or stressful this week?

Discover: Read the Story

1. Ask one person to read the passage aloud.
2. Ask another person to read the passage aloud while the other students listen.
3. Close Bibles. Have someone else retell the story in their own words.
4. Ask the group if anyone has anything to add to the story, or if anyone saw something different in the passage.

Discuss

1. What does this passage tell us about God?
2. What does this passage tell us about people?
3. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?

Apply

1. Have each student share an "I will..." statement.
2. Have each student identify a friend they will share the passage this next week.

Serve

Return to the needs shared at the beginning of the study and discuss as a group how you can help one another this week.

Pray

Close the study with prayer. This should not always be done by the facilitator.