

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO BEGINNING YOUR GROUP

- 1. Pray! Pray and ask the Lord who around you needs the Gospel and a foundation for growing as a believer in Christ.** It may put on your heart to reach a specific individual (co-worker, neighbor) or it may be a group of people (several in your neighborhood or a group of friends you see regularly).
- 2. Decide if you want to lead the group with a friend.** There are many benefits of leading with another person. You can pray together, share responsibility and help answer questions that may come up in the group. You both may live in the same neighborhood or work together making getting a group together easier.
- 3. Start a conversation with a prospective group member by saying, “I’m thinking of starting a Bible study. Would you be interested?”** Make it clear and to the point and wait to see what the Lord does. A face to face invitation is ideal but this could also be over the phone. Avoid texting about it initially and try talking to them in person or on the phone.
- 4. After speaking with prospective attendees, follow up with an email.** This way the email is expected and will give the friend an opportunity to think about it. The email could say something like, “Hi Sally, I wanted to follow up with you about the Bible study I mentioned I’m starting in a few weeks. It is a basic Bible study that covers foundational truths about Christianity. I would love for you to join me. It is a 10 week study and has a little homework each week, but not too much. I’m thinking of meeting on (fill this in...e.g. Wednesdays at 7:00) at (e.g. my house). Let me know if this is something you would be interested in. I’d love for you to come.”
- 5. Once you’ve got your group members, email the link for them to purchase the material** on Amazon OR order the books for your group and have them reimburse you.
- 6. Read through the Introduction in your study book on your own and prepare by reading through the lessons so you know what you will want to cover each week.** In the time you spend together as a group, you will want to discuss some, but probably not all, of the week’s questions. Look for the questions that encourage conversation. Group members can listen to the lesson on the podcast which provides more teaching on the week’s topic. This should be done on their own time as they desire before the group meeting. Find the podcast by searching “101-Christianity” on Itunes.

7. At your first meeting, after everyone has their study books, encourage a brief introduction from each member. Begin your time with a prayer. Ask for the Lord to reveal truth to each one of you and for His blessing on your time together. Go through the first lesson together and explain how your group discussion will go each week and the time you have planned for the study. Keep the meeting time to an hour and a half unless everyone is in agreement to continue talking past that time. Discussion time can be kept to an hour if meeting over the lunch hour.

8. End with prayer. If someone in the group is needing personal prayer, follow up with them individually at another time. This will keep your group time focused on the material and not allow the time to be overrun with personal prayer needs. If there is a real desire for more time with prayer requests decide in advance how much time will be allotted and keep requests focused to one specific need.

9. Do not be afraid to say that you don't have an answer to a question that may come up. Simply state, "That is an excellent question. Let me research that a bit this week and get back to you." People appreciate honesty so don't feel like you have to have all the answers.

10. Trust the Lord has purposes in your group you may not see. You may have a discussion one week that feels awkward or forced. Continue leaning on the Lord, asking for His purposes to be accomplished. Rest in the freedom of placing the results in God's hands.

11. Share a bit of your experience of coming to faith in Christ at some point. Your testimony is an incredibly effective tool and everyone loves a story—especially a redemptive one. Keep your testimony brief and to the point but do not be afraid to touch on a few ways the Lord worked to bring you to salvation or how He sustained you through a trial (i.e. you went through a time of confusion, a loved one passed away, a period of sickness.)

12. Rest in Christ. By your obedience to the Great Commission to make disciples, you are seeking to further the kingdom for the glory of God. He will honor your faithfulness even in ways you may never know about. Trust in His good purposes both in your life and in those you are leading.