

## Some hints and tips about leading a Bible Study

### Preparation:

- Don't underestimate the importance of preparation!
- Pray through the passage and ask God for help!
- Spend time reading and re-reading the passage. Try and get to the passage a week ahead of time so that it can swirl around your brain.
- Jot down all your thoughts and questions as you go along. Not only will they be helpful for the session, but they will also be good for future times!
- Think about the links to previous passages in the book and about the bigger themes coming through.
- Formulate questions for verses/paragraphs based on what they are saying (i.e. don't just ask 'What do you think of this?').
- There are some good online commentaries and resources available e.g.
  - Calvin's commentaries (covers nearly all the Bible; older language but pretty solid). <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/commentaries.i.html>
  - Wiesrbe OT and NT Bible Commentaries. Designed for preaching, but a really good starting point to get you thinking.
  - 'How to read the Bible: Book by Book' (by Fee and Stuart). Inexpensive overview of the Bible.
  - The clergy may be willing to lend you some books if you talk nicely to them (and promise to return them!!)
- Be creative! Images, timelines, maps, quizzes etc. can all help

### During the Bible Study:

- Remember that you are the facilitator and not the preacher! You will have done the most prep, but that is so that you can enable the others to share.
- Arrive on time/early – you do not want to rush in last minute!
- Start and end with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation.
- Try and get everyone involved – you want the conversation flowing between everyone else and not back and fro with you. Here's a few things you can try:
  - Ask open questions (i.e. where the response cannot be 'Yes' or 'No').
  - Ask specific questions to quieter members of the group to involve them.
  - Get people to discuss in pairs and then feed back to the wider group.
  - Try to stop one or two voices dominating a discussion – you are the referee.
- Don't worry about silence – it does not mean no one is participating.
- Summarise answers and discussions to help keep everyone on track.
- Be encouraging and warm as well as being willing to be honest about your own questions and vulnerabilities thrown up by the passage.
- Try to keep the discussion on topic, although use your judgement about how important an issue appears to be and if it is worth continuing. Make sure you cut gossip off early on though!
- Ensure there is plenty of time to discuss how the passage or topic applies to our lives. The goal is to not just hear the word, but to do it (James 1:22-25).
- Keep an eye on the clock so that you can finish on time.