

Discovery Bible Study – Facilitator Guide

Review

- What are you thankful for this week?
- What difficulties and stresses have you experienced this past week?
[Optional] Have someone pray for what was shared above.
- How can this group help you?
- With whom did you share what you learned last week? What happened?
- How did you obey what you learned last week?
- In what ways did you experience God this past week?
[Optional] Go over “group rules” if there are new people.

Engage

- Step 1: Have participants take turns reading portions of the Bible passage out loud while the rest follow in their Bibles.
- Step 2: Ask participants if they don’t recognize any words. Have the group figure out the definitions.
- Step 3: Have one person read the entire passage out loud while the rest of the group listens. (Bibles closed)
- Step 4a: Have different people in the group retell the passage (one paragraph, a set of verses, or one verse at a time) in their own words. **Step 4b: For each section, ask the group “What would you add? What do you see differently?”**
- Step 5: Use the following questions to guide discovery and application:

Discover

- What did you like or find significant about this passage?
- What bothers you or what don’t you understand about this passage? Why?
- What does this passage tell us about God?*
- What does this passage tell us about people?*
- What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?*
- What other questions do you have about this passage?

Obey

- If this passage is true, how does it change how you personally view God?*
- If this passage is true, how should it change how you personally treat others?*
- If this passage is true, how should it change how you personally live life?*
- What, specifically, will you do differently this coming week in light of this passage?

Share

- With whom will you share what you learned this week? What will you share?
 - God’s **Word** (how this passage has spoken to you/what this passage has shown you)
[Next two are optional]
 - God’s **Work** (how God is working in or changing your life)
 - God’s **Ways** (how God is answering prayer and providing for you)

Care

- Do you know anyone outside this group who needs help? How can you/we help them?

Prayer

- Have someone in the group close in prayer, thanking God for what you learned, and asking for God’s help/provision regarding needs (shared above).

** Use these for Discovering God (See verse sheet for alternate questions for other series)*

10 “Rules” for a Discovery Bible Study

GROUP RULES (Review as a group each time someone new joins.)

- 1) Everyone shares in sentences, not paragraphs (no person dominating)
- 2) Focus only on what **this passage** is saying (not other passages)
- 3) Focus only on what **this group** is seeing (not other people or materials)
- 4) Give people time to respond (don't be afraid of silence)

Note: Anyone can say “pass” if they don't have something to share.

- 5) Facilitate, don't teach (using the **Facilitator Guide**)

Note: The “coach” (outsider helping to start the group) is there to help advise outside of the group and to silently pray during the group, not lead.

FACILITATOR RULES (guidelines for the facilitator)

- 6) Keep the session on schedule –

- Complete all sections if possible

[Note: You may need to shorten the passage selection or have fewer people share.]

- Most important is the “**Obey**” section (encourage everyone to share)

- 7) Responding to questions –

- Ask, “**What in this passage helps us answer that question?**” (The goal is to help the group see that “**even they**” can understand the Bible) [Facilitators: Don't contribute your answer/comment to every question. Let the group try to figure it out.]
- If the question is not about the passage, say, “**Let's discuss this further after our group time...**” If it is a genuine question, they will make time afterwards. If not, then it probably wasn't too important to them. If you don't know the answer and no one else does, say, “*Let's do a separate study at another time on a passage that answers that question.*” (Then afterwards ask your coach for guidance.)

- 8) Distracting questions or discussions (unrelated issues or “digressions”)

- Ask, “**Where is that found in this passage?**”
- Or, suggest the group talk about it after the group meeting since, “**The goal for today is focusing on what this passage has to say.**”

- 9) “Strange” or “wrong” interpretations:

- Ask the group if they see the same thing (builds a culture of self-correction)
- Ask the question, “**Where is that found in this passage?**”
- If this fails, suggest that you and the person or whole group talk about it after the regular meeting because, “**The goal for today is focusing on what this passage has to say.**”

- 10) Close the group after the second or third week. If someone wants to bring a friend after that, help them start a new group with that friend and their friends.

Notes:

- Many of the “Obey” questions are phrased “**If this is true...**” so that people who don't yet fully trust the Bible can participate in this Bible study process comfortably. If you know everyone in the group believes in the truth of the Bible, you could change the statement to “**Since this is true...**”
- If people are having a hard time saying what they will do differently (**Obey** section), you can introduce them to the SPECK tool. (**S**in to repent of, **P**romise to embrace, **E**xample to follow or not, **C**ommand to obey, or **K**nowledge to adopt)

Discovery Bible Study – Base Passages

For each study, you want to focus on one passage and discover what God wants you to see, understand, share and obey. If you are going through this for the first time, find a coach who can help you.

Because we may not have 2 years of weekly study with the same group in our situations, “Discovering God” is designed to help students get the big picture and meet the God of the Bible within a semester. **Start a new group using “Discovering God Series (Set 1).** Set 2 reinforces Set 1, but also explores ideas like God’s law, etc. Use this set for groups who want to continue to explore God for a second semester.

Coaches: **You can add or remove passages you think are necessary** based on the things you hear in the meetings or from the facilitator. For example, if some couples are struggling with their marriage relationship, you might add a study exploring Ephesians 5:21-33. Using the three verse series’ below students will have a basic understanding of being a follower of Jesus Christ.

Important: let the students discover what the Bible and God says about the topic in each passage.

Studies to Start Off With (Discovering God Series)

Discovering God Series (Set 1)

God Creates

Genesis 1:1-25 – God Creates All Things

Genesis 2:4-24 – God Creates People

Man Rebels

Genesis 3:1-13 – People Disobey God

Genesis 3:14-24 – God’s Response

God Makes a Way Back

Genesis 6:5-22, 7:6-12, 7:18-24, 8:18-22 – God Judges His Creation

Genesis 9:1-19 – God Makes Promises to All Creation

Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-8 – God’s Special Promise to One Family

Genesis 21:1-7, 22:1-19 – Abraham’s Big Test

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 – God’s Promised Suffering Servant

Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20 – The Birth of Jesus

John 3:1-21 – Jesus Meets a Man Seeking God

Choose one of these:

- Luke 5:17-26 – Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man
- Mark 4:35-41 – Jesus Calms a Storm

Matthew 26:17-30 – Jesus Shares a Last Meal

Luke 23:32-49 – Jesus Dies on a Cross

Luke 23:50-24:12 – Jesus Rises from the Dead

John 1:1-18 – Series Summary: Becoming a Child of God – **(IMPORTANT)**

Discovering God Series (Set 2)

God Creates

Psalms 19 – Creation a Testimony to God, His Word Makes Us Wise

Psalms 139:1-18 – Man’s Special Relationship with God

Man Rebels

Psalms 14 & 53 – All Have Turned Away from God

God Makes a Way Back

Deuteronomy 5:1-21, 5:32-6:2 – God’s Commands

Discovering God (Set 2 – cont.)

Leviticus 4:13-31 – Sacrifices for Sin

Psalms 32 – The Blessing of Forgiveness

Psalms 2 – How We Will Know the Messiah/Christ

John 1:19-34 – Jesus is Baptized

Matthew 4:1-22 – The Testing of Jesus

John 4:1-26, 39-42 – Jesus Meets the Samaritan Woman

Choose one of these:

- Mark 5:1-20 – Jesus’ Authority Over Spirits
- John 11:1-44 – Jesus’ Authority Over Death

John 14:1-14 – How to See God

John 19:28-42 – Death and Burial of Jesus

Luke 24:13-35 – Jesus Meets Disciples after Rising Again

John 1:1-18 – Summary: Becoming a Child of God

Studies about Living as a Follower of Jesus

Following Jesus Series

Luke 5:1-11 – Followers of Jesus Leave Everything

John 14:15-31 – Followers Demonstrate Their Love by Obeying

Philippians 2:1-13 – Followers Have the Same Perspective as Jesus

Luke 4:1-13 – Followers Overcome Temptation Using God’s Word

John 1:35-51 – Followers Introduce Others to Jesus

Acts 4:23-31 – Followers Will Experience Persecution

Matthew 6:5-18 – Followers Apply Jesus’ Model of Prayer & Fasting

Matthew 5:38-48 – Followers Show Love for Enemies

Luke 8:22-25 – Followers Don’t Fear Circumstances

Matthew 6:25-34 – Followers Don’t Worry about Tomorrow

Matthew 18:15-35 – Followers Forgive and Seek to Restore Broken Relationships

Following Jesus Series (cont.)

1 Corinthians 7:1-17, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 – Following Jesus in Marriage, Part 1

Matthew 19:1-12, Ephesians 5:21-33 – Following Jesus in Marriage, Part 2

Matthew 5:33-37 – Followers Keep their Word

Ephesians 4:15-31 – Followers Behave Differently as They Mature in Christ

Some Suggested Discover Questions For This Series:

- What do these verses say about following Jesus/God?
- What do these verses say about relating to one another?
- Based on these verses, what should we expect if we follow Jesus?

Some Suggested Obey Questions For This Series:

- Fill in the blank: “Based on these verses, I will _____.” (be specific)
- What in my life will cause difficulty in obeying these verses?
- What can people in the group do to help me in obeying these verses?

Growing in Maturity Series

2 Timothy 2:1-7 – Followers Pass On What They Know and Stay Faithful

Matthew 28:16-20 – Followers Make Disciples

2 Corinthians 5:11-21 – Followers are Christ’s Ambassadors

John 4:4-26, 39-42 – Followers Share Their Story

Act 26:2-29 – Followers Share Their Story

Luke 10:1-12, 16-20 – Followers Look for People of Peace and Help People See Jesus

Hebrews 10:23-25 – Followers Continue to Meet Together

Matthew 16:13-21 – Followers Understand That Jesus is Building His Church

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 – Followers Understand That They are a Part of Christ’s Body

Acts 2:42-47 – Followers Practice Community

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 – Followers Understand God is One

Colossians 1:15-20 – Followers Understand the Role of the Son

Psalms 139:1-8 – Followers Understand the Role of the Father

1 Corinthians 2:10-16 – Followers Understand the Role of the Holy Spirit

John 17 – Followers Pray Based on Their Relationship with God

Ephesians 1:3-14 – Followers Live in Light of Their Position in Christ

Following Jesus and Making Disciples Series (cont.)

John 10:25-30 – Followers Are Secure in Their Relationship with Christ

Hebrew 12:5-11 – Followers Accept Discipline from God

John 15:5-17 – Followers Remain in Christ

Mark 12:28-34 – Followers Love God and Love Others

Ephesians 4:1-6 – Followers Keep Unity in Christ

1 Corinthians 1:10-17 – Followers Keep Unity in Christ

Psalms 1 – Followers Delight in God’s Word Which Brings Wisdom for Living

2 Peter 1:16-21 – Followers Hear God Speaking Through Scripture

2 Timothy 3:14-17 – Followers Understand the Role of Scripture in Their Lives

Matthew 6:5-13 – Followers Pray with Purpose

John 14:12-14 – Followers Are Assured that God Will Answer Prayers

Philippians 4:4-7 – Followers Are Not Anxious But Pray

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – Followers Pray All the Time

Mark 1:14-17 – Followers Leave Their Past and Follow Jesus to Become Fishers of Men

Luke 9:57-62 – Followers Count the Cost of Following Jesus

Acts 8:9-13 – Followers Believe and Are Baptized

Romans 6:1-7 – Followers Are Baptized into Christ

Act 8:26-38 – Followers Are Baptized After Believing

Luke 22:14-23 – Followers Remember Jesus in Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-33 – Followers Remember Jesus in Communion

Acts 10 – Followers Understand That the Gospel is for All People

Matthew 22:34-40 – Followers Practice God’s Greatest Commandments, to Love.

Luke 10:25-37 – Followers See Loving your Neighbor is Loving Everyone

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 – Followers Give

2 Corinthians 9:1-15 – Followers Give

Some Suggested Discover Questions For This Series:

- What do these verses say about following Jesus/God?
- What do these verses say about relating to one another?
- Based on these verses, what should we expect if we follow Jesus?

Some Suggested Obey Questions For This Series:

- Fill in the blank: “Based on these verses, I will _____.” (be specific)
- What in my life will cause difficulty in obeying these verses?
- What can people in the group do to help me in obeying these verses?

Anatomy of a Discovery Bible Study ⇒ = Most Important DNA Elements

Review

- ⇒ • What are you thankful for this week?
- ⇒ • What difficulties and stresses have you experienced this past week?
[Optional: Have someone pray for what was shared above]
- ⇒ • How can this group help you?
- ⇒ • With whom did you share what you learned last week? What happened?
- ⇒ • How did you obey what you learned last week?

DNA of Prayer/Worship - Have each person share one thing they are thankful for and one thing that is stressing them out. After 1 or 2 weeks, share that prayer in its simplest form is telling God the things that we are thankful for and the problems we currently have. If most of the group believes in Jesus, transition this from group sharing to an open, interactive prayer and worship time. This form of "prayer" is interactive and gets the quietest people involved in group prayer. You can also eventually add worship music, etc.

DNA of Group Care – this develops the DNA of ministry within the body – the ministry of the group to one another

- In what ways did you experience God this past week?
[Optional] Go over group rules if there are new people.

DNA of Giving Witness & Accountability – DNA of sharing what God is doing and teaching you in your life (evangelism/teaching) and the importance of immediate obedience to what you learned.

Engage Can be paragraphs, 3 verses, even one verse at a time

Step 1: Have participants take turns reading portions of the Bible passage out loud while the rest follow in their Bibles.

Step 2: Ask participants if they don't recognize any words. Have the group figure out the definitions.

Step 3: Have one person read the entire passage out loud while the rest of the group listens. (Bibles closed)

⇒ Step 4a: Have different people in the group retell the passage (one paragraph, a set of verses, or one verse at a time) in their own words. **Step 4b:** For each section, ask the group "What would you add? What do you see differently?"

DNA- Looking for God -Encourages group members to have a personal time with God and look for him daily involved in our lives. Giving them an opportunity to share allows room for the Holy Spirit to take the group study in a completely different direction than planned.

DNA of Authority of the Bible - Emphasizes the Bible as our primary source of authority. Reading, listening, and retelling Scripture is important. This pattern allows different learning styles to engage Scripture. Everyone has time to think about the passage and ask the Holy Spirit to speak through God's Word.

DNA of Bible Interpretation - Retelling the passage allows them to interpret what they saw in the passage and to think through sharing this passage with someone outside the group.

⇒ Step 5: Use the following questions to guide discovery and application:

Discover Facilitator chooses best questions based on time and the passage

- What did you like or find significant about this passage?
- What bothers you or what don't you understand about this passage? Why?
- What does this passage tell us about God?*
- What does this passage tell us about people?*
- What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?*
- What other questions do you have about this passage?

DNA of Self-Correction - Allowing the group to add to or disagree with the retelling encourages everyone to think about the main points in the passage and encourages quality control through

DNA of Doing Biblical Theology – Choice of discovery questions with enough passages over time helps students develop a Biblical theology, for example here, of whom God is, theology proper.

⇒ Obey

- If this passage is true, how does this passage change how you personally view God?*
- If this passage is true, how does this passage change how you personally treat others?*
- If this passage is true, how does this passage change how you personally live life?*
- What, specifically, will you do differently this coming week in light of this passage?

DNA of Bible Authority – Discipline to Keep the Discussion focused on the Passage. If someone in your group is well-read (you?), it will be hard to avoid introducing outside materials into the study. As the facilitator, you need to work hard to limit the discussion of extra-Biblical materials or other passages. These things are not bad, but they don't facilitate interaction with THIS passage. Do your best to keep discussion focused on the current. You can change the discover questions based on the genre or the goal of study. (for examples see verse list)

⇒ Share

- With whom will you share what you learned this week?
What will you share?
 - God's **Word** (how this passage has spoken to you)
[Next two are optional]
 - God's **Work** (how God is changing your life)
 - God's **Ways** (how God is answering prayer and providing for you)

DNA of Sharing– develops the DNA of sharing what you learn about God right away with others which makes it natural to share about Jesus all the time later

DNA of Obedience Rooted in Love – Knowledge of God's Word must translate into personal obedience or it is wasted/rots. Everyone in the group should answer these questions before they leave. If they already obey this passage, have them share how. Focus on specifics. For example, realizing that there is only one God is good, but that realization needs to translate into action. In this case you might encourage them with a follow up question: "Now that you believe there is one God, what do you need to change in your life?"

Care (for others)

- ⇒ • Do you know anyone who needs help? How can you/we help them?

DNA of Ministry/Outreach - this develops the DNA of ministry outside of the community and also is the "proto" version of "making noise for Jesus" which is a "probe" to find & cultivate people of peace.

Prayer (God-dependence)

- Have someone in the group close in prayer, thanking God for what you learned, and asking for God's help/provision regarding members' needs (shared above).

DNA of God as our Authority & Provider

* Use these for Discovering God (See verse sheet for alternate questions for other series)