

How to Study the Bible

So you want to make disciples! This is the greatest mission this world has ever seen! Hopefully this Packet can help you as you strive to spread God's Kingdom on this earth. Before we jump into some specifics, here are a couple of baseline principles for helping someone become a disciple.

- **God is showing Himself through you** - The scriptures and questions can be received well or poorly depending on how well you can show your friend God. This includes the love of God, the justice of God, the forgiveness of God and etc.
- **Make them your friend** - Notice that we have referenced the person that you are studying with as your friend. This is not a project, this is a person. They should not just be a random person by the end of your studies, one of your main goals should be to baptize a friend. As such, your bible studies should not be the only time you see them. Eating together, studying together, playing sports, and going to church together are just a few examples of ways to build brotherhood with them. It is a whole lot easier to take a challenge from a friend. The old adage holds true – They don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.
- **Prayer** – Make it your goal to pray for your friend everyday. Regardless of how much work or preparation from us, we must remember that God is the one who converts the heart. *“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the LORD Almighty”* – Zechariah 4:6

Order we will go through the Studies-

- Seeking
- Word
- Discipleship
- Sin
- Grace/Cross
- Repentance
- Baptism
- Church
- Count the Cost

Is this the only Order?

- **NO!** There is no set order you have to go through, just baseline biblical convictions that someone needs to understand and commit to before they make Jesus Lord.
- Your studies should look different with different people, especially when you go to extremes like studying with atheists, muslims, or even someone that has deep hurts in their past.

Why this order then?

- We have chosen this order because in Atlanta where we find a lot of lukewarm christianity, we believe this is generally the most helpful for a religious person - here is the thinking behind it so you can personalize it.
 - The beginning to studies are interchangeable with the thought that before learning anything else you have to have a heart to seek a relationship with God and know how to do that. Also if the bible is what is going to be studied, then your friend must have a firm understanding of how to use the bible in their lives and that it is supposed to have the power to change them.
 - After that we go into discipleship b/c here in the south most people think they are Christians already and that can prevent most people to being humble to scriptures with the thought of “why do I need to change if I am already saved?”. We know that you have to be lost before you can be saved, so we have to help people realize they are lost. This study is largely about helping people be humble.
 - Next we go into sin because the main thing that has kept someone from becoming a disciple has been their sin. Also in order to fully appreciate what Jesus did on the cross someone needs to realize how broken and lost they are in their sin.
 - While we have ruined our salvation God has given us a chance at salvation by his Grace. We go to the cross to find grace and the answer for our sin.
 - Next studies are about the biblical response to the cross – repentance and baptism.
 - When you get baptized you become a member of the body of Christ. As such it is helpful to understand what local body you should invest in and what biblical expectations there are if you are going to be a part of the body.

- Last is to follow through on Jesus's Words to "not begin until you count the cost"

Overview of each Study

This is not a comprehensive list, nor is it exactly what you must do. There are many other passages and questions that are great to use and are extremely helpful. Depending on your friend, the perspective that you look at each scripture should change. This should be a launching point to help you guide some one's heart towards Jesus, not an exact formula for every bible study.

Starting point:

- A chunk of the first time you sit down with your friend should be to get to know them. Share your background stories, ask about their families, church history, spiritual experiences. It is a whole lot easier to know where you are going if you know where they have come from.

Follow up:

- At the beginning of each study spend some time catching up and being friends. Also spend some time following up from the last study and the challenge you gave them.

Seeking God

Objective:

- Help them understand that God has given them a purpose to seek God. But that God wants them to seek after them with their whole heart. Figure out if they are seeking God with everything, if not what that looks like and if they want to learn how to do that.

Scriptures:

- **Acts 17:24-28**
 - o Why do you want to seek after God?
 - o You were made with a purpose to seek after God
- **Jeremiah 29:11-13**
 - o Which is better, your plan for your life or Gods?
 - o How does God want us to seek Him?
 - o What does it look like to seek Him wholeheartedly?
 - o Are you doing that?
- **Matthew 7:21-23**
 - o Why didn't these guys find Jesus?
 - o Seeking God is a salvation issue

Challenge:

- Read your bible and pray every day for the next week

Scripture Bank (Additional Passages):

- o Matthew 22:36-40
- o Matthew 7:7-12
- o Matthew 7:13-14
- o Matthew 6:33
- o Acts 8:26-40

Word of God:

Objective:

- Most of modern christianity has a terrible perspective on the bible. This study is a course correct on how they should view the bible (that they need it, it has all power, etc) and thus help inspire them to read everyday and to make it the standard of their lives.

Study:

- Intro question - If you could describe the bible as an animal, what would it be?
- **Matthew 4:1-11**
 - Vs 4 - What insight does this show us about how much Jesus believes He needs the bible?
 - To Jesus scriptures just as necessary as food
 - If you go a few hours without eating what do you feel? Day? Week?
 - If you go a few hours without getting into the Word what does your spirit feel? Day? Week?
 - Don't feel it because we are so distracted by this physical world.
 - Do you actually believe you need the bible in your life?
 - Satan tempts Jesus with physical desires, security, pride - what does Satan tempt you with?
 - Biggest battle of all time - Jesus vs Satan - Jesus decides to use the Word of God as His weapon all three times, what does that show us about how Jesus views the bible?
- **Hebrews 4:12-13**
 - What words are used here to describe the Scriptures?
 - Bible is like a LION. Powerful!
 - If a wild lion attacked us right now it would change your life forever - you can't come into contact with something that powerful and it not change you.
 - See lions in zoo and it doesn't change you - you can't take the power out of a lion but you can cage its power away from you.
 - Have you caged the power of the bible from your heart?
 - Do you want it to have its full power in your life? Why? How can you do that?
- **John 12:47-50**
 - What is going to judge us on the last day?
 - What would change in your life if you lived like the Word was going to judge you?
- **1 Timothy 4:16**
 - Explain life and doctrine. Which one can you lean more towards?
 - Does this say living the right way or believing in the right thing more important?
 - Why is it important to persevere in both life and doctrine?
 - If you found something in the scriptures that you didn't want to do or didn't already believe - what would you do?
 - Have you ever felt hypocritical or experienced hypocrisy? There are actually people who are actually following the bible. We want to help you be one of those people.

Challenge:

- Take notes daily as you read your bible. Write down questions and thoughts.

Scripture Bank:

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- James 1:22-25
- Matthew 7:24-27
- Mark 7:6-13
- Acts 17:10-12

Discipleship:

Objective:

- To define biblical discipleship and christianity by looking at Jesus' teachings. Also to figure out if your friend is a disciple or not. (While it is true you probably could pick up by now if they are following the teachings of Jesus, it is good to go in questioning rather than already judging.)

Scriptures:

Depending on who you are studying the bible with and time restrictions, this study can be split into 2 studies. Ending after Luke 9 is a good point if you are wanting to do this.

- **John 8:31-32**
 - Who was he talking to?
 - They already believed, why isn't that enough for Jesus?
 - What is the Truth? What are you being set free from?
- **Mark 1:16-20**
 - What character trait is demonstrated by Jesus's first disciples that would have drawn Jesus to chose them?
 - The disciples showed a desire for Jesus, over their family, jobs, and friends (hired men). Why do you desire to follow Jesus?
- **Luke 9:23-26**
 - It says Jesus is talking to "them all" in other places it says "to the crowds"- why does Jesus's teachings get harder with a larger crowd?
 - Separate the men from the boys – see who really is there for Jesus vs who is there just for the perks of Jesus
 - What would Jesus tell you to deny yourself in if you were in the crowd?
 - Get specific about how they are denying themselves in their pride, purity, foul language, selfishness. It is important that they take a good look at how they are doing at denying themselves.
 - Go to Matthew 5:27-30 if purity is an issue.
 - Explain what would have gone on in people's minds when they heard "take up your cross" – They only crucified murders/revolutionaries. Jesus was talking about being a revolutionary for Him.
 - How would your life become revolutionary if you started following Jesus?
 - How are you doing at following Jesus's teaching of denying yourself and taking up your cross?
- **Matthew 28:16-20**
 - 4 action verbs – "go" "make" "baptize" "teach"
 - What does it mean to make a disciple?
 - Not just being an example.
 - Does "making disciples" characterize your life?
 - Excited that we can go make disciples together in the future.
 - Has someone made you into a disciple?
- **Luke 14:25-27**
 - Large crowds – we can expect a hard teaching
 - What is Jesus teaching us here when He says hate?
 - Useful scripture to help explain is Matthew 6:24, Matthew 22:36-40
 - Jesus wants to be your master, not just your friend/teacher/roommate - you can only have one master

- **Luke 14:33**
 - What would be the hardest things for you to give up if Jesus asked you to?
 - Why does Jesus call us to give up everything, hate our father and mother, deny ourselves?
 - How are you doing at hating father and mother, giving up everything?

- **Recap** - you haven't been following a lot of Jesus' teachings
 - Jesus draws a clear line here "otherwise you cannot be my disciple"
 - Based off of His teachings, are you a disciple of Jesus?

- **Acts 11:25-26**
 - What is the connection between a Christian and a Disciple biblically?
 - So if you are not a disciple, then are you a Christian?

- Key to ending this study, you want them to leave with hope of becoming a Christian, not demoralized with self hatred that they are not one.
 - Share how you felt when you figured this out
 - Share analogies that help build hope to realize that this is a good thing. No one has ever been a disciple without first realizing that they were not one.
 - Give them a vision for how great becoming a disciple can be, if they have experienced all this great stuff up till now with Jesus and they were not a disciple yet, imagine what it will be like as a disciples.
 - What do you want to do to become a disciple?

Challenge:

- Read your bible and pray everyday
- Get in 2-3 bible studies a week
- Come to meetings of the Body
- If split into 2 studies - think of 5 areas you need to deny yourself in and how you can start doing that.

Additional Passages:

- Matthew 10:34-39
- Luke 9:57-62
- John 13:33-34
- Galatians 2:20
- Mark 10:17-31

Sin:

Objective:

- To define sin, understand its consequences, where it comes from, and that all sin will send you to hell, not just the “big ones”. Also to find healing by confessing your sins.
- We will be breaking this into two different studies. We will title them “Sin from 3000 feet” and “Sin under the magnifying glass”. Yet again, depending on who you are studying the bible with and the amount of time you have, these can be combined into the same study. If doing this it is beneficial to not go over every single verse.

Sin from 3000 feet:

- **Romans 3:23**
 - What is the definition of sin?
 - If sin means to miss the mark, what does that mean about the equality of sin?
 - Why is it important for us to believe all sin is equal?
- **Mark 7:20-23**
 - Where does sin come from?
 - Who is responsible for our sin?
 - How does knowing that our sin comes from our own hearts help us to understand the equality of sin?
 - Useful to read Matthew 5:21-22, Matthew 5:27-30 to explain how even though the actions look different, our hearts are in the same place.
- **Isaiah 59:1-3**
 - What is the consequence of your sin?
 - Helpful to draw diagram of a wall of sin with you on one side and God on the other. Show that Light is on the side of the wall with God and darkness is on the side where they are.
 - Why does sin separate us from God?
- **Romans 6:23**
 - What is the eternal consequence of sin?
- **1 John 1:8-10**
 - Have you had a time to confess all of your sin to God at once?
 - Confess means to agree with God
 - Specify that this only one piece of the puzzle to forgiveness of sins.
 - Explain how this can be meaningful for them and why it would be helpful to do it in written form.
 - ASK if the next time you get together if you can confess your sins to one another, reference James 5:16

Challenge:

- Confess your sins to God in written form. Helpful to give them a list like Galatians 5:19 or Ephesians 5:3-7

Sin Under the Magnifying Glass:

- Whether you combine the study or do this separately, when confessing sin atmosphere is extremely important. A bunch of times your friend will share things they have never shared with anyone before, you want to help as much as possible by having the study in as quiet and private place as possible.

- **James 5:16-18**
 - Why does it say to confess your sins to one another?
 - What does it mean to “be healed”?
 - ASK again if it is ok for you to confess your sins with each other.
- **Galatians 5:19-21**
 - There are different ways to facilitate a confession time but the objective is to come into the light, that your friend has the opportunity to bring his sin into the light.
 - Confess sin- which ever way you decide, lead in humility and weakness. Confess first, and confess until it’s embarrassing. Your friend will only confess as deep as you will.
 - Use other passages like Ephesians 5:3-7 if needed
 - Explain how they will never fully appreciate Jesus for what He did unless they understand the magnitude of the sin they are in.
 - Read vs 21 again.
 - Since you are still living like this, if you were to die right now where would you go?
 - Lift them up, you don’t want them to go to hell - excited about how they have been growing. They can change their eternity by continuing to follow the bible.

Challenge:

- If combined into one study then challenge them to confess their sin to God. If not this is a good time to give them a fellowship challenge – for them to ask people in fellowship what helped them get over their sin, or what helped them become a disciple.

Scripture Bank:

- James 4:17
- James 1:13-15
- Luke 7:36-50
- Luke 18:9-14
- Romans 6:15-23

Grace - The Cross

Objective:

- To show people God's answer to their sin. The Grace of Jesus Christ. For them to understand the emotional, physical, and spiritual pain Jesus went through because of His love for them. Help them put Jesus at the center to all their change.

Scriptures:

- Emotional Pain
 - **Matthew 26:14-30**
 - Disciples care more about clearing their own name "surely you don't mean me" than about protecting Jesus
 - **Matt 26:31-35**
 - Peter and rest of disciples effectively call Jesus a liar
 - **Matt 26 36-46**
 - In Jesus' most desperate time of need, they can't even do the small things Jesus asked - to stay awake with Him.
 - **Matt 26:47-56**
 - Peter makes Jesus look like a hypocrite - even his number one disciple will not follow His teachings about love
 - Why didn't Jesus call down the angels?
 - He wanted to save us - His Love
 - **Matt 26:69-75**
 - Peter is supposed to be the rock of the church but he doesn't even stand up to a little girl for Jesus
- Physical Pain
 - **Matt 27:11-26**
 - Which of these characters describes you the most?
 - Barabbas sinned - he deserved death. Jesus came in and took his punishment for him. You have sinned, you deserve death - Jesus came in and took your punishment.
 - Jesus didn't just die for the whole world - He died for you personally. You downplay the love of Jesus if you don't personalize it. If you were the only person who ever lived after the cross - do you think Jesus would still die, just for you?
 - Either describe medical account of flogging or show clip of Passion of Christ
 - **Matt 27:27-44**
 - Either describe medical account of crucifixion or show clip of Passion of Christ
- Spiritual Pain
 - **Matt 27:45-50**
 - Up to this point everyone had abandoned Him except God
 - Why does He say "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
 - Jesus died for our sins, this is when sin came upon Him. Sin separates us from God.
 - First time in all history that Jesus was separated from God.
 - Jesus was willing to be separated from God in order to be united with you.

- Jesus can't take it - he dies right after that.
- **Matt 27:51-56**
 - Why was the curtain in the temple torn from top to bottom?
 - Explain curtain separated God from sin's of people. God tore the temple.
- **Matt 28:1-10**
 - Jesus lives! Pinnacle of all humankind. Most powerful thing that has ever happened. Our timeline is based off of Him.
 - How much of your motivation is based off of Jesus?
 - Do you really love Him?
- **Acts 2:36-38**
 - First time these people realize Jesus died for their sins.
 - They were cut to the heart, are you cut to the heart?
 - What do you want to do?
 - Next couple studies going to study out the response to Jesus on the cross - repentance and baptism.

Challenge:

- Write a letter of gratitude to Jesus for what He did on the cross for you. Tell Him what you want to do about it.

Scripture Bank:

- Luke 22-Luke 24:12
- Isaiah 53:1-7
- 2 Cor 5:14-15
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Hebrews 12:1-4

Repentance

Objective:

- To help your friend understand what biblical repentance is, what the motivation should be, and what that would look like in their own lives.

Scriptures:

- **Acts 2:36-38**
 - First thing Paul tells them to do is Repent
 - Greek definition. Metanoia - Change the way you think.
- **Romans 12:1-2**
 - How is repentance defined here?
 - Not just doing a set of rules - your mind needs to change. That's what separates legalism and following Christ. Your heart and your mind need to change.
 - Change from something to something else
 - From You being Lord to Jesus being Lord
 - You repent into being a disciple. You cannot be a disciple if you haven't repented
- **2 Cor 7:8-11**
 - Godly sorrow is the motivation of repentance
 - What is the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow?
 - Difference between being sorrowful that you hurt you/world vs being sorrowful that you hurt God and putting Jesus on the Cross
 - Is repentance necessary for salvation?
 - Do the words in vs 11 describe you? If not how can you generate those in your heart?
- **Acts 26:9-20**
 - What kind of man was Saul before Jesus?
 - When did he repent? - vs 15 - Jesus became His Lord
 - Where does he describe repentance?
 - vs 18 - repentance can be described as a military term - "Stop, about face, march"
 - Stop Sinning, Turn towards God, Live for Him with everything
 - Where are you at in this process?
 - vs 20 - If your mind changes, what else should change?
- **Luke 3:7-14**
 - John gets specific here, even though repentance is the change in your mind - there should be specific actions that change.
 - What are the main areas you need to repent in?
 - What would be the mind change that would lead to the actions change?
 - Go through each one specifically and give scriptures

Challenge:

- Is 32:8. Make a plan for how you can repent in these main areas. Find scriptures for each one.

Scripture Bank:

- Luke 19:1-10
- Luke 13:1-5

- Acts 3:19-20
- Mark 1:14-15
- 1 Timothy 5:1-2

Baptism

Objective:

- Help your friend understand that baptism is where they receive forgiveness of their sins and the Holy Spirit. This happens because it is where they unite with Jesus. Help them figure out if and when they need to get baptized.
- Usually a good place to do a spiritual timeline.
 - Have they gotten baptized before? If so when? Why?
 - If someone were to ask them a year ago what baptism was all about - what would they say?

Scriptures:

- **Romans 5:20-21**
 - God's grace is incredible, so grateful that God's grace is unending
 - Ever asked yourself when does God's grace come on you. Jesus died for the whole world - but not everyone is saved. Must be a moment when your personal sins are actually forgiven. When you personally get united with death/burial/resurrection. When do you think that is?
- **Romans 6:1-7**
 - When are united with Jesus' death, burial, resurrection?
 - Draw diagram to help understand
 - vs 5 - only place in the whole bible where it says how you are united with Jesus
 - Huge celebration - where you get united with Jesus and the Glory of the Father raises you to a new life! Power of baptism is in Jesus
 - Does it say that it symbolizes these things happening or actually where it happens?
- **Acts 2:36-41**
 - Greek definition - baptizo - fully immerse
 - When does Peter say you get the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit?
 - Who is this promise for?
 - Is this what you used to believe? How do you feel about that?
- **1 Peter 3:18-21**
 - How did the flood save Noah and his family? Separates them from sin.
 - Says this water from the flood symbolizes baptism - important, baptism isn't the symbol, the flood is.
 - Does it matter when you get baptized?
 - Order matters - discipleship/repentance/pledge of good conscience are synonymous. All comes before baptism. Belief has to come before that.
 - Does that match up what you did?
 - What does it say baptism does? Saves you.
 - If you haven't gotten baptized this way then what do you need to do to be saved?
- **Colossians 2:11-12**
 - Baptism isn't a work of man, it is a work of God.
- What does all this make you want to do?
 - When do you want to get baptized?
 - What if we shot for next ____?

Challenge:

- Pray/fast about getting baptized. God might put it on your heart to get baptized earlier or wait and work on things for a while.

Scripture Bank:

- John 3:3-6
- 1 Peter 2:9-10
- Acts 22:16
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Titus 3:3-8

Church

Objective:

- Help people understand how much they need the body of Christ, what that will mean in their lives, and how to be an active member in the body. Also to see what are the standards for a local body they invest in.

What do you think of when you think of church?

- It isn't just the building - the church is the people, the Body of Christ.

Scriptures:

- **1 Corinthians 12:12-14**
 - How do you become a part of the body? Baptized into one spirit/body
 - Have you struggled with racism in the past? In the Body we are all equal. Light to this world
- **1 Cor 12:15-20**
 - The body needs you.
 - We all belong to each other, you belong to me, and I belong to you if you get baptized.
 - What gifts do you have that you can serve the body with?
- **1 Cor 12:21-26**
 - You need the body. That takes humility to live that out.
 - No spiritual ladder. Pastor, minister, song leader, we are all just different members of the body.
- **Hebrews 10:22-25**
 - What does a spur do? What would it look like to spur someone on to love and good deeds? Do you consider who you are going to talk to before church?
 - Also says to encourage one another - in fellowship how easy is it for you to go introduce yourself to someone you don't know and talk to them? What are some things you could say?
 - Why does it say don't give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing? Because we need each other!
 - Practical - Church, TNL, Devo, Bibletalk. Thats a lot. Why would you be willing to do that?
- You can find any church you want out there. What factors determine where most people go to church?
- (If they go somewhere else) Where do you go to church? Why have you gone there?
- What do you think the biblical principles are for where you should go to church?
- **Ephesians 4:11-14**
 - Church matures you and causes you not to thrown back and forth like infant. Matters where you invest and call your home church.
- **Ephesians 4:1-6**
 - The way you make every effort to keep unity is by staying committed to these 7 ones
 - These are the biblical reasons you should invest in a church.
 - vs 5 - what would be the differences between two churches if one was committed to Jesus being Lord vs one wasn't committed to that? Might help to say what would be the difference in an individual person who was committed to Jesus being Lord or not.
 - what about one faith?

- What would be the difference if a church wasn't committed to the one baptism of the scriptures? What are some of the other views out there about baptism besides for the forgiveness of sins and holy spirit?
- How does your old church match up to these things?
 - Good to pull up their website. Good practice for them to learn how to look beliefs up.
- Have you seen these things with us?
- (If they haven't been coming to church) What do you think you should do? Why are you clinging on to them so much if they aren't committed to these things? You have been going there for so long yet you haven't become a disciple. That concerns me. You met us just a few months ago and you already figured that out.

Challenge:

- Start coming to church with us. Make all meetings of the body. Think of gifts you have that you can use to serve the church.

Scripture Bank:

- Acts 2:42-47
- Colossians 1:15-20
- John 17:20-26
- Acts 20:28
- Hebrews 3:12-13