

DEEPENING

HELPING THE GROUP GO DEEPER INTO THE BIBLE



How might you enable people go deeper into the Bible? A start could be to ring the changes in your approach. Discovering suggests several ideas.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

You could supplement these with Discovery Bible Study. This is another brilliant approach, used all round the world.

Download the Discover App or order the booklet, *Discover*, which is here:

Hope Together

You'll find 29 Bible studies about Creation, The Fall and Redemption. They will introduce the group to the overall Christian story, which is vital to sharing Jesus.

Or go here for [families and children](#).

The illustrated material uses a Bible story, a focus on a single verse, a couple of simple questions and space for reflection.

Employing different methods will help the group – and the Bible – to remain fresh.

SHARE LEADERSHIP

To increase confidence and generate commitment, share the leadership of the discussion with others in the group. Follow Lucy's example in the video and encourage 'unlikely leaders', such as children and teenagers in a multi-generational context, or people who are less confident or difficult.

When Tim listened to families before starting 11 Alive in England's East Midlands, they told him that community would not be their community unless they could share in its leadership. When he did this, he found that 'It greatly accelerates their journey to faith.'

So keep looking for ways to share your leadership.

As others get used to leading the discussion, they will gain the confidence to start studying the Bible with their friends.

FOUR CHANNELS FOR THE SPIRIT

If you use Bible Talk, Discovery Bible Study, or one of the alternatives, the Holy Spirit will have opportunities to work through Scripture, the insights of the group, and people's experiences. Once the group is ready, open a fourth channel – the wisdom of the wider church.

- Point people to good resources on the internet – websites, podcasts, videos, recorded sermons and so on. The resources should be by Christians in good standing with the church, recognised for their spiritual wisdom and knowledge, and who have something relevant to say to your particular group. See the resources below.
- Encourage people to attend retreats, study days, conferences and short courses on the Bible, ethics, doctrine and pastoral topics. Ask your minister or a wise Christian friend for suggestions.
- Alongside discussion, introduce more formal Bible instruction by a group member or your local minister, or via a YouTube video or a live-streamed sermon. Enriching suggests how you can introduce worship around this.

Connecting to these resources will expand people's understanding of God, prevent them from being trapped in a truth ghetto, protect them against being over subjective in interpreting the Bible, and develop links that may enable the group in time to offer its own distinctive gifts to the wider church.

RESOURCES

Here are some resources you may find helpful:

Bible Society – The Bible Course. An eight-session course helping you explore the world's best seller.

Multi-sensory Bible – exploring the Bible with all your senses. A book with 15 sessions to discover God's epic story. Written by Terry Clutterham, and published by Scripture Union in September 2012.

BIOY – Bible in one year. Nicky and Pippa Gumbel explain the Bible as you read some or all of it through a year.

Explore Bible Devotional App – the Explore app contains daily Bible readings with questions to help you engage with the Bible text, comments to get you thinking, and ideas for further reading, prayer and application. It includes the Bible text so that you can open the Bible wherever you are.

Gospel in Life Podcast – excellent expository teaching to help Christians understand the Bible from Tim Keller, minister at Redeemer Church, New York.

Bridgetown Church Sermons – Bible teaching by John Mark Comer from Portland USA

Holy Habits – an adventure in Christian discipleship that fosters 10 holy habits (Bible teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer, sharing resources, eating together, gladness and generosity, worship, making more disciples).

Why on Earth? is a lively collection of sessions from Church Army for small groups. Each session gives an easy way into one of the hard questions of faith and includes a short, animated video. It takes seriously the group members' own ideas and questions on the subject and asks what difference these big questions make in the real world.

Faith Pictures – a Church Army video and discussion course to help us talk about things that matter.

Talking of God Together – a Methodist resource which helps Christians speak comfortably about their experience of God.

The Psalm Project – a Dutch band shares their music and worship to help us use the psalms in our worship.

Missional Adventure – articles, podcasts and videos of stories which encourage us in how God is at work across the country.



AN IDEA

In Birmingham, UK leaders of B1 invited families to read three Bible passages during the week and discuss them at home. When the community met, as the 'sermon' people shared their insights and questions, sometimes in age-based groups.

Jonathan, one of the leaders, recalled, 'Sometimes people would bring soul searching questions about the text and its meaning, some responded through art or further study, but even if people had only been able to simply read the texts a few times, they always had something to contribute.'

This became a way of encouraging families to worship God on their own and then together. Might you do something like this?