

Writing Guidelines for Word One Bible Studies

Each Word One Bible Study should include the following elements:

Objectives

Materials Needed

Group Guidelines

Building Community

Looking at God's Word

Reinforcing What Has Been Learned

Closing

Use these guidelines for writing Word One Bible Studies:

1. Based on your Scripture assignment, choose a theme and write objectives.
2. Write out instructions for small groups.
3. Choose activities to get acquainted and build community.
4. Choose strategies/activities to involve the participants in the theme of the study.
5. Choose strategies to "expose" Scripture and relate it to "right now" feelings.
6. Choose an activity that moves the participants toward action as they identify and process what has been learned.
7. Choose activities to close the learning experience.

Further Details on the Guidelines

1. The first step is to identify the theme or focus of the study based on the Scripture selection. This allows Scripture to set the direction of the study.

Answering the following questions about the selected Scripture portion may help in choosing a theme.

- What is the focus of this particular section of Scripture?
- What present day needs or concerns are similar to those of the Bible times?
- What were the attitudes and feelings expressed in this Scripture selection? Can people identify with any of these today?
- How might an individual's faith or Christian values be enhanced by better understanding this Scripture selection?

After a theme has been chosen, it is important to choose specific objectives. An objective for a study of Galatians 5 might be:

- to assist participants in relating Scriptural truths to their personal lives
- for participants to better understand how faith in Jesus Christ frees us to respond to life with the fruits of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and faithfulness.

2. The second step in developing the Word One Bible Study is to write out the instructions which will guide each small group. The instructions should include:

- directions for forming small groups
- suggestions for choosing a leader
- concern that every person have the opportunity to share--although they are free to pass

Example: "This Bible study has been developed for use in a small group of 6-8 persons. If your group is larger than this, divide into smaller groups. Choose as a leader the person whose birthday is closest to

the time of your study. The leader's sole purpose is to keep the group moving through the Bible study. One of the leader's most important functions is to encourage the participation of all members. The leader may at times function as a timekeeper so that each individual is given the opportunity to share. Participants should always have the freedom to pass if they do not wish to share their experiences."

3. the third step is to plan "community building" or "get-acquainted" activities for the group and begin building relationships. Openness is developed if participants can share "low risk" information about themselves. Community building is an essential element for newly formed groups as well as those who have previously established relationships. Examples:

- "Take time to get acquainted in your group. Share your name and where you attend school. In addition, share the most exciting thing that happened to you this week."
- "Share with the group a description of your most meaningful Christmas gift and tell why it was so meaningful."

4. The next step in developing a Word One Bible Study is to choose a theme that will help each participant become personally involved with the theme or focus of the Bible study as identified in the objectives, or an activity that will help them identify with the Scripture selection. This encourages the development of interest before there is a direct delving into the Scripture. Examples:

- Objective: to enable participants to discover for themselves their view of God's attitude toward them.
- Scripture Selection: The story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32)
- Involvement Activity: Finish one of the sentences with a brief statement:
 - I can remember a time when I ran away from home because...
 - The nearest I ever came to running away from home was...
 - I never thought of running away from home because...

5. This step should lead participants into a direct encounter with the Scripture selection. Ask for volunteers to read the Scripture.

Involvement strategies in this step should help each participant to personally identify with the content of attitudes in the selected verses. Avoid the temptation to structure the experience to teach a particular truth. Allow individual participants the opportunity to discover and relate the Scripture truth to their own needs. Examples:

- Read Galatians 2:15-21 and 3:1-14. As you reflect on this Scripture individually, choose a verse or two that has a special meaning to you and share it with your group.
- Read Ephesians 6:1-4. On the basis of these verses, individually make two lists, "How to Honor and Obey Parents" and "How Not to Provoke Children to Anger." List as many items under each title as you can in five minutes. Then take turns sharing these items with the members of your group.

You may want to include more than one involvement strategy. It is important that participants are helped in understanding the content of the Scripture selection as well as relating it to their "right now" feelings.

In choosing more than one activity for this step, consider that: 1) multiple activities should "build" on each other, 2) you can offer optional activities for selection by the individual groups, and 3) you do not plan for more activities than time will allow.

6. In this step learnings are identified and reinforced. Ask participants to complete as many endings to the words, "I learned that I..." as they can in a five minute period. Then have each person share his or her list within the group. Any of the following questions might also be used to process learnings:

- What did I learn in this Bible study?
- Will what I learned make a difference in my life? (Why or why not?)
- What did I learn from the sharing of other members of the group?
- What one word would I use to describe how I feel right now about my relationship with God?
- What one word would I use to describe my relationship with members of this group right now?

6. This step is a structured close to the Bible study, such as a group prayer, individual sentence prayers, silent prayers or a song.