

Lesson 7: Participatory Bible Study

From this point on, when you meet as a group, you will simply open the Bible and study it together, asking God to show you what to obey and pass on to others. As you individually and as a group have the Holy Spirit in your heart, know that he will serve as your teacher and help you to understand and obey God's word. Using a similar pattern each week makes it easy to dig out the truth of the Bible no matter what passage you are studying.

The Pattern

Read the pattern that Ezra, a teacher of the Bible, used in Ezra 7:10. What are the three things that Ezra did?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Essentially, Ezra tried to answer three questions – S.O.S.!

1. What does this passage SAY?
2. What should I do to OBEY it?
3. What should I teach or SHARE with others?

Every time you study the word, you should try to answer these three questions.

The Power

You have the ability to understand the Bible because of the Helper that God has sent to live in your life – the Holy Spirit. How does he help you?

(John 14:26)

(1 John 2:27)

Before you begin studying the Bible on your own or as a group, always ask the Holy Spirit to fill you and guide you into understanding the truth of the Bible and give you the ability to obey it.

A Weekly Plan

It is helpful to study a book of the Bible passage by passage from the beginning to end over the course of several weeks or months. Or you can study a series of Bible stories. One

example is given at the end of this lesson. Each week, use the S.O.S. pattern to study the Bible.

How do you understand what the Bible passage you are reading says? What does it mean? Here is a guide on how to start.

- **READ** a passage of Scripture (usually between a paragraph and a chapter) out loud in the group. If it is not too long, read it two to three times.
- **PRAY**: Ask for the Spirit to guide you to understand and obey it.

I. What does this passage SAY?

Ask these additional questions to help you understand the Bible.

- What is the main message? (Don't spend the majority of time on minor issues.)
- Make sure every answer comes from the Bible, not your own ideas or opinions.

II. What should I OBEY?

- Try to focus on very practical ways you can obey and apply what the Bible says. Is there a command to obey, an example to follow, or a promise to hold onto?
- Never study the Bible without asking God how to obey it. Otherwise, you will have a lot of knowledge without a changed life. Make a commitment to obey these things and ask each other about them.

III. What should I SHARE with others?

- Think about others who need to hear something you heard today.
- Make a plan to share this with them this week.
- When you are done studying the Bible, pray. Ask God to give you the courage to obey this week and to share with others. Thank him for speaking to you.