

How to Give a Bible Study

Insights and Practical Tips from My Personal Journey – J. Zita

Setting Up the Study

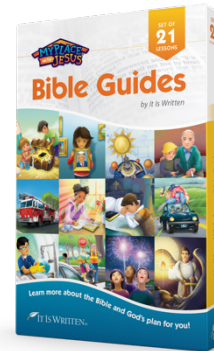
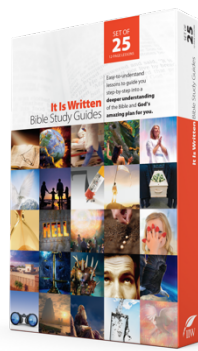
- **Give the whole boxed set to those who seem very committed** – but first, remove the certificate at the end. Once they complete all the studies, you can fill in their name and laminate it before presenting it to them. Make it a special occasion when they receive their certificate, even if they haven't yet decided to be baptized.
- **For those who may not seem as committed, start with the first 3 lessons.** You can also get some people to start the studies by agreeing to have you practise on them. It's a great way to start!
- **Not every Bible study contact that begins, will finish the set**—and that's okay. Your role is to share; God is the one who converts hearts. And God never forces anyone. Stay friends and in touch, even if they don't continue. And try to be intentional in inviting them to special programs and events.
- **Let the student know that the appeal question will always be asked** as this is part of the process for growth. But let them know that they don't have to say yes. They can say, "I need to think or pray more on this." Or even, "I'm not ready yet to make this commitment." God takes you where you are at and you don't have to feel guilty about taking baby steps.
- **Give them *The Desire of Ages* and/or *Steps to Christ*.** These are powerful supports for the Bible lessons. As they start understanding the truths for this time, you also want them to develop a strong relationship with Jesus. Do not pressure them to read the books.

Study Guide Preparation

- **Always complete your own study guides in advance.** Take time to understand the material and research any point that may need clarification. This helps you gain deeper insight – mostly for yourself, as most questions people ask will not be complicated. (Actually, very few people ask questions because the lessons are so well structured). On your copy, you can jot down comments or short life stories to share during the study. The *It Is Written* Guides are preferred because of their Question-Bible Lookup format. Note that the answers are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) Bible.
- **When you connect with the student, it is to go over the Bible Study guide that they have already filled in advance.** In other words, in most case, you are expecting the student to have already filled out the study guide and now they are reading the answers that they already filled in. So, they would not be looking up the verses then and there – only additional verses you might have added from your notes.

Group vs One-on-One Bible Studies

- **Group Bible studies** can be beneficial to start with, but you can only meet so often while still remaining effective and impactful. Once participants show a clear commitment to follow Jesus all the way (e.g., after the study on baptism), it's usually better to move to **one-on-one studies**. This one-on-one approach has several advantages:
 - Students won't miss lessons since lessons don't happen without them.
 - Students are more comfortable opening up in a personal setting.
 - You can build a stronger connection and show genuine care and compassion.
 - You can better understand their individual situation and help address specific questions, objections, or challenges in their spiritual journey.



Scheduling & Meeting Platform

- **Meet once per week.** Be committed and willing to sacrifice personal time. Others did it for you, and Christ is also a good example in his emotional investment in them and in you!
- **When one of you cannot connect that week,** the study is simply postponed to the following week. Let them know it's just like music lessons. You don't want to reschedule for later in the same week, as this can create unnecessary pressure and scheduling conflict.
- **Use online platforms** such as Zoom, FaceTime, or Google Meet. If you use Zoom, get the paid version to allow for more than 45 minutes. Always keep your camera on—this builds trust, creates a more personal connection, and allows for better communication.
- **Advantages of Virtual Studies**
 - You can meet even if one of you is traveling or away somewhere. I've had many studies in my car, airport, hotel, etc.
 - There's no need to prepare or clean up your house.
 - It saves time and gas.
 - You can study safely with someone of the opposite gender, with appropriate caution and professionalism.
 - You can easily share short videos or visual aids to enhance the study.
- **Seek opportunities to connect outside of the virtual setting**—such as at church, social gatherings, family events, or a meal at your home. These personal interactions help strengthen spiritual bonds and build trust.
- **Set aside a specific day each week to pray intentionally for the individuals you are studying with.** If possible, add fasting to your prayer time—it helps clear the mind and deepens your connection with God. Encourage others to join you in praying for those you're reaching out to.

Conducting the Study Itself

- **Send a friendly reminder text.** A quick text or WhatsApp message less than 1 hour before the appointment helps ensure they remember the session. It also gives them an opportunity to let you know if something came up. As for a sample text... *"Hi _____. Hope you had a good week. Just checking to see if we're good to connect this evening at 7:30PM."*
- **ALWAYS BE ON TIME** – even when the student is often late. You must show yourself to be someone reliable that can be trusted. Being on time also shows that you respect them and value their time. I put a reminder on my phone to remind me before each Bible Study I lead out in.
- **Keep the session to one hour. I repeat, "Keep the session to one hour!!"**
 - Spend 10+ minutes catching up and building a personal connection, and 40-45 minutes focused on the Bible study itself. The last 3-5 minutes is for prayer and goodbye. Finishing early is not a problem.
- **Open and close with prayer.** One person prays at the beginning, and the other at the end. Let the Holy Spirit lead as to who prays when. I usually say something like, "Do you think you can

pray to start, and I can pray at the end?" or "Maybe I can pray to start, and you can pray at the end." Ask if they have any specific prayer requests or things they'd like remembered in prayer.

- **Follow a simple reading pattern.** You read the question, and the student reads the Bible verse aloud. Afterward, ask the question again to encourage them to express the answer in their own words—this helps deepen understanding. If they answer wrongly, you can say, "That is one way to look at it. But if we go back and look at the verse, what do you think..."
- **Add comments or illustrations as you feel impressed.** You may share a short thought, a personal story, or a practical application—but only if you sense it will enrich the study. Avoid lengthy explanations that might shift focus away from the Bible itself.
- **Be Cheerful and Kind.** A warm smile and genuine kindness speak louder than the study itself. People may forget what you said, but they'll remember how you made them feel. Let your tone be gentle, your attitude patient, and your presence uplifting. A cheerful spirit reflects the joy of knowing Jesus and opens hearts to receive His truth.
- **Before the appeal question,** pause to ask if they have any questions or if anything was unclear in the lesson. This ensures understanding before moving to a spiritual decision.
- **Always include the appeal question at the end.** Invite a personal response. After asking, you might gently add, "I say yes—what about you?"
- **Pray for discernment to recognize when someone is opening up.** When someone is opening up, who has been somewhat reserved, take the time to listen and ask questions without giving opinions or counsel. Be prepared to set aside the study guide and focus entirely on the person during the session, meeting their emotional needs as you listen to what God is doing in their life. It is understandable for this kind of session to extend beyond the one-hour time frame.
- **Confidentiality is very important.** When it looks like someone is starting to share something personal for the first time, gently interrupt them and let them know that unless something is shared that is life-threatening or regarding abuse of a minor, they can rest assured that you are committed to keeping all that is shared completely confidential.
- **Additional Bible Study sessions** that I usually do in addition to the study guides:
 - Dealing with Temptation
 - My Story/Testimony – Forgiveness
 - Christian Lifestyle

What Most People Worry About

Getting a question that they cannot answer.

- If you get a difficult question, you can simply say the following if applicable...
 - *"That's a good question. We will cover that in an upcoming lesson."*
 - *"That's a good question. I'm actually not sure on the answer, but let me study that further and get back to you." – E.g. Why are the Apocrypha books not in the Bible?*

What You Should Probably Worry About Instead

- Talking too much and going over the one-hour limit
 - Set a timer or alarm if you tend to lose track of time.
 - If the discussion runs long, consider dividing the lesson into two parts rather than rushing through. In other words, make a note on how far you reached and do a "Part II" the following week.
- Sharing too many personal opinions instead of letting the Bible speak for itself. Remember that the power is in God's Word, not in our explanations. Let Scripture do the convincing.
- Being too proud to admit when you don't know something. Avoid trying to fill in the gaps by rambling or overexplaining. Humility leaves room for the Holy Spirit to teach both you and the person you're studying with.

After the Studies Are Completed

- **Revisit their baptism decision after the last lesson.** (Lesson 14 is when most people express their commitment for baptism.) Take time to gently revisit that decision, helping them reflect on their readiness and understanding.
- **Explain the true meaning of baptism.**
 - Help them understand that **baptism is not the end—it's the beginning** of a lifelong, personal walk with Jesus. Just as you don't know everything about your spouse before marriage, you don't need to know everything about Jesus before baptism. But you should have a **basic understanding of who He is**—His character, His mission, and His church.
 - Baptism is more than joining a faith community; it's uniting your life with Christ's purpose. Jesus' greatest passion is the **salvation of souls**, and when someone joins Him only for personal blessings—without sharing His mission—they become spiritually “unequally yoked.”
 - When you are baptized, you are baptized **into the Body of Christ—His Church**. You become a living part of that body, called to contribute to its mission and purpose. Each member has a unique role in carrying forward the work of Christ on earth.
- **Emphasize the heart of true baptism.**
 - Baptism is an **outward symbol** of an **inner surrender**. If that surrender hasn't taken place, baptism loses its meaning. The Bible gives a clear sequence:
 1. **Repent**, and then
 2. **Be baptized** (Acts 2:38)
 - So, encourage them to see baptism not merely as a ceremony, but as the joyful declaration of a transformed life—fully yielded to Jesus Christ.
- **Connect them with the local pastor.** Once they've completed the studies, refer them to the pastor for a follow-up conversation. The pastor can review what they've learned and help fill in any remaining gaps in understanding.

Great Resources

- To Read
 - **AmazingFacts.org** – Free Book Library: A great collection of short, easy-to-read booklets on key Bible topics.
 - **AskAnAdventistFriend.com**: A helpful site with clear, Bible-based articles that go deeper in answering common spiritual questions of our beliefs.
- To Watch
 - YouTube Evangelistic Series by speakers such as John Bradshaw, Doug Batchelor, and C.D. Brooks. These series provide powerful, Christ-centered messages that can strengthen faith and deepen understanding.
- To Listen
 - **AudioVerse.org**: A rich library of sermons, seminars, and Bible studies available for free streaming or download—perfect for growing spiritually on the go.

A Sample Bible Study Session

- Let's explore a 5-minute version of a typical Bible Study session.

After Baptism

- The Discipleship Handbook – Mentor/Mentee