

Discovery Bible Groups - DBGS

How to read the Bible with friends in your life who do not know Jesus.

DISTINCTIVES of DBGS:

#1 – GOD IS YOUR FRIEND’S PRIMARY TEACHER, NOT YOU

In John 6:44-45, Jesus says, *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”*

You can rest assured right now that God is at work teaching your friend what they need to know for salvation! From the very beginning, a **DBG is an opportunity to facilitate an encounter between the truth that God wants to speak and your friend’s heart.** The goal of this process is to remove as many barriers to that as possible.

Right now, you can let out a deep breath because God is going to do the heavy lifting of teaching for you. To help your friend “discover” the answers to their questions through God’s Word, **you will only answer questions that the passage directly addresses.** There is no need to worry about having the right answers to every question that might pop up. Just politely respond to a difficult question (or one not addressed in the passage) by saying, “That’s a great question. Let’s write that one down and see if it is answered in a later passage.”

You will find the urge to answer peripheral questions to be quite strong – RESIST, RESIST, RESIST that urge. You might feel like leaving questions unanswered is leaving a stumbling block between your friend and Jesus, but demonstrating the role of spiritual expert can often make people feel as if they could never believe in Jesus because they do not know what you know. It also places your friend’s trust in your knowledge and not in their encounter with the living God through His Word. **You want their decision to follow Jesus to be based more around their response to the conviction of the Holy Spirit than on your ability to provide a sufficient answer to every question they might have.** These Bible readings will also tee up many other “outside of the group” conversations where you can follow up on other conversations at a later date.

#2 – BECOMING A GROUP IS KEY TO A DBG

From the moment your friend agrees to read the Bible with you, you want to encourage them to invite other friends to join you using a statement like: “I am really excited about reading the Bible with you, and I have found that these discussions are most interesting when more people are able to jump in. Is there anyone you would like to invite to read the Bible with us?” **Having others from their community join you is critical to keep your friend from feeling like a future decision to follow Jesus means that they must leave the group of friends they have had for so long.** If that friend group has been a part of their journey to Jesus, they are more likely to respect your friend’s decision, and they might even decide to follow Jesus themselves! With that said, it becomes difficult to catch new group members up to speed after the third or fourth lesson, so you will likely get to the point where it is difficult to have new people join. In this

case, encourage your friend to begin to read the Bible in Genesis 1 with interested people using the DBG method, and assure them that you will help them be prepared to lead their own group. Empower your friend to facilitate their own group regardless of whether they have chosen to follow Jesus yet or not!

#3 – EVERYONE CAN FACILITATE THE DBG

This gets us to the last major distinction of a DBG. You will find the DBG method to be **intentionally simple enough to empower your friends to be able to facilitate the group themselves after experiencing it only a few times.** Once you hit the fourth or fifth lesson, we encourage you to take a risk and empower your friend to lead the next group meeting. They will be honored that you would trust them with that, and in most cases, you will find that they take it more seriously once they have their own sense of ownership about the group! Because we believe that God’s Word is true and sufficient, you can trust that if the group is committed to the text, they will be able to navigate new theological territory with the trust in God’s Word.

THE DBG PROCESS:

This method is purposefully very **simple, reproducible, and obedience-oriented.** We have broken the DBG process up into three helpful sections:

CONNECT

This section of the DBG is designed to deepen your relationship with the other group members and to hold each other accountable to the actions steps that were committed to in the previous week. It also models for your friend what worship (“thankfulness”) and dependence on God (“stress”) look like before they ever believe in Jesus. At first, you are teaching them to express these things to the group, but once they believe in Jesus, they will naturally begin to express them to God as well.

- Ask the group: **“What are you thankful for, and what has stressed you out this week? Did you see an answered prayer this week?”** Have each person share briefly and set an example by recording their responses.
- After the first meeting, ask: “Did you do what you said you would this past week?” Ask everyone to share.
- After the first meeting, ask: “Did you share with the people you said you would this past week?” Ask everyone to share.

GROW

This section begins by helping the group become familiar with the passage being studied. Because you want to eventually empower other group members to facilitate the group, it is essential that you model a DBG that is centered on the text itself. That begins by teaching the group to be bold in self-correcting anything that does not line up with what the passage actually says. Once the group is familiar with the passage, you will walk them through the first three discussion questions. The goal is to have as many people share their thoughts as time allows. Again, you should focus on facilitating discussion about the passage rather than “teaching” or adding your own knowledge to the discussion. If the discussion begins to stray

from the passage, then you need to be firm in redirecting the conversation back to the text itself.

- Say: “Let’s see what the Bible teaches us today.” Starting with Genesis 1:1-25, read the passage twice out loud – asking different people to read it. (Go through one passage each meeting time.)
- Ask for someone to retell the passage in their own words like they were telling a friend who wasn’t there.
- Ask: “Do you agree with their retelling? Is there something they added or left out that they shouldn’t have?” If the group doesn’t miss a key component of the passage, continue on to the discussion questions. If they miss something, read the passage again. If someone states something that isn’t in the passage, ask, “Where did you find [what they said] in this passage?” Reread the passage, if necessary.
- Ask Discussion Question #1: **“What does this passage teach us about God?”**
- Ask Discussion Question #2: **“What does this passage teach us about people?”**
- Ask Discussion Question #3: **“What do you like about this passage?”**

ENGAGE

This last section is designed to develop a habit of being obedient to the Word of God. You will find that many of the passages have clear, moral implications that unbelievers are eager to incorporate into their lives. It is also quite natural for people to talk with others about things they find interesting, so do not be afraid of setting some tangible action steps as a response to the things that interested them in reading the Bible.

- Ask Discussion Question #4: **“If we believe this passage is from God, how must we change? How are you going to obey what God says in this passage this week?”** Have everyone share. This should be something very specific that you can say yes or no to doing the next time you have a DBG meeting.
- Ask Discussion Question #5: **“Whom are you going to share this passage with before we meet again?”** Have everyone share.
- Ask: **“Is there any way we can pray for you this week?”**

After each group meeting, go ahead and let the group know what passage will be read the following week and take a minute to put the next meeting on the calendar. Some people like to set a consistent, weekly time, whereas others prefer to ask a question like, “When would you like to get together to read the Bible again?”

Discovery Bible Group Passage List: Creation to Christ

Genesis 1:1-25
Genesis 2:4-24
Genesis 3:1-13
Genesis 3:14-24
Genesis 6:5-8
Genesis 6:9-8:14

Genesis 8:15-9:17
Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-7
Genesis 22:1-19
Exodus 12:1-28
Exodus 20:1-21
Leviticus 4:1-35
Isaiah 53
Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20
Matthew 3; John 1:29-34
Matthew 4:1-11
John 3:1-21
John 4:1-26, 39-42
Luke 5:17-26
Mark 4:35-41
Mark 5:1-20
John 11:1-44
Matthew 26:17-30
John 18:1-19:16
Luke 23:32-5
Luke 24:1-35
Luke 24:36-53
John 3:1-21