

How to Give a Bible Study

Suggestions for finding Bible study interests

— AND —

effective tips for leading them to Christ

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Acknowledgments

A booklet of this type is not the product of just one person. The principles for giving Bible studies have been passed down from person to person and generation to generation. Yet each individual and each generation must adapt these methods and approaches to specific cultures, times, and situations. I have shared my ideas and personal experiences in these pages, but I am indebted to others who have gone before me—as well as to various printed materials—including the following:

Mark and Ernestine Finley, *Light Your World for God* (Hart Research Center) as well as their lectures on prayer, soul winning, and giving Bible studies.

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Yes, You Can Give a Bible Study

On a hot, sticky August afternoon I found myself standing on a sidewalk in Pasco, Washington, with my heart beating like a hammer in my chest. I was sixteen years old and facing giving my first Bible study! The prospect scared me to death. I stood there wondering, *Why in the world am I doing this?*

Actually, it was my pastor's fault. I had been baptized eight weeks earlier, and I was convicted that I needed to witness—to share my love for Jesus with others. The problem was I had no idea how to do it.

So I had made an appointment with Pastor Ralph and shared my dilemma. He immediately picked up something he called a “Gift Bible” from the corner of his desk. The plan was simple, he explained. I was to walk down the street, knock on a door, and tell the person who answered that if he completed the full set of lessons, the Bible was his to keep. I would return each week with a new lesson, and we would discuss the one I had left the week before—which

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presumably the person had studied, filling in the answer sheet.

Simple.

For the pastor maybe! But he was talking to Mr. Shy, a teenager who sat in the corner and trembled at the prospect of standing up in front to talk to people. That was me—the kid with the shaky voice. Now, of course there are many other ways that a sixteen-year-old can share his faith. Walking around a neighborhood, trying to give Bible studies, is probably far from the top of that list for most teens. But I believe God impressed Pastor Ralph to share with me what he did.

Why? Because that little speech launched me on a lifetime of giving Bible studies and teaching others how to share the message of the Bible with their friends and neighbors.

But that's getting way ahead of my story. Back then, a few days after my meeting with the pastor, I stood on the sidewalk in Pasco, clutching a set of lessons and a sweat-covered Bible—yes, my hands were dripping wet! If Pastor Ralph said this is what it meant to witness, then it must be God's plan for every member. I *had* to do this. I had no choice; I must obey God. What I didn't find out until much later was that I was one of only a handful of people in my church doing this!

With a trembling hand, quivering legs, and a shaky voice, I knocked on thirty doors. Most people were polite, but they declined my offer as I stared at them

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with a “deer in the headlights” look on my face. But finally, Patricia opened the door. Patricia—Pat, I came to call her—was a young woman in her twenties, and she said, “Sure, I’d like to study the Bible.” I left Pat the first lesson and the Gift Bible, and then set an appointment to come back the next week.

What a huge relief! As I left Pat’s house, I kept thinking, *Thank You, Jesus. Thank You. I’ve got a Bible study; no more knocking on doors!* My feet barely touched the pavement as I hurried home. God had led me to someone with whom I could share my love for the Bible.

I have to admit that when I first started giving Bible studies and visiting people who were interested in the Bible, I began the hard way. No one really showed me what to do or helped me know what to say. No one gave me a book about witnessing to read. No one took me with them to hold a Bible study to show me how it was done. I didn’t even know enough to ask for help. I didn’t know what questions to ask or how to lead a person to make a decision about what he was studying. I just prayed and walked down the street, Bible lessons in hand. Later, I was able to attend some training sessions. I went visiting with experienced church members and pastors. And I learned rather quickly because I had struggled so much on my own. But there is an easier way to learn to study the Bible with others.

This booklet is designed to help you get started, to help you give that first Bible study. And even if you are

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“seasoned” in studying the Bible with others, perhaps you will pick up some practical ideas that will strengthen your ministry. One thing I have learned through the years is that, although there are certain basic principles that apply to all Bible study situations, there is more than one approach to accomplishing the task. So if you say or do something different from what I suggest in this booklet, that’s OK—work in your own armor. What really matters is that you and I, together with God, are a team leading people to the foot of the cross and on to eternal life.

My experience as a sixteen-year-old did teach me one important thing—anyone can give a Bible study. Yes, anyone—even you! It might be hard at first, but with God’s help you can give a Bible study or be a partner with someone else who leads out in the study. You may be saying to yourself, “Pastor Kurt, you don’t know me! Giving Bible studies just isn’t my gift.”

Well, that’s exactly how I felt when I started back there in Pasco, Washington. But today, giving people Bible studies is one of the greatest joys of my life. So keep on reading, and let’s journey together.