

Helpful Hints for Writing Discussion Questions:

Biblical // Relational // Applicable

BIBILICAL

1. **Specific** - Ask questions that are specific and concise, not vague or rambling.

Don't Ask: Romans 8 is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, what is he trying to say?
Ask: What is Paul's perspective of suffering in Romans chapter 8?
Ask: What role do we see the Holy Spirit playing in a believer's life in Romans chapter 8?

2. **Meaning** - Ask questions that lead people to talk about the meaning of scriptures, not just what it says.

Don't Ask: In Romans 8:18 What is not worth comparing to the future glory?
Ask: What do you think the future glory will really look like in us?

3. **Empathetic** - Ask questions that help people enter into the real life dynamics of the story.

Ask: How would you feel if an angel told you at age 89 that you were going to have a baby (like Sarah)?
Ask: What would be going through your mind if you had been standing next to Peter when the wind and waves stopped at Jesus' command?

4. **Statement, then question** - It's difficult to teach people information through a question. If you want to teach people, start the question with a statement of truth, then follow-up with a question.

Example: The word for "grace" in the Greek language could also mean "abundance and resource." In Ephesians 1:7 we are told that God has riches of "grace" that he has given to us. Do you live as though you always have enough, or never have enough? Why?

5. **Observation** - The best way to help people learn in Bible Study is to help them observe what the scripture is saying.

Hint: Ask people to look up various scriptures that talk about the same topic or theme.
Example: Look up John 14; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Romans 8:5-17. Make a list of every activity you see the Holy Spirit doing.

Hint: Ask people to make lists or to accumulate information. Then ask a question that helps them process what they've observed through that.

Example: In Deuteronomy 6:4-9 write down all the commands God gives the children of Israel. Then under each command, talk about how we can fulfill them today?

6. Life Application – Sometimes Bible Study can feel informational. An excellent way to transition is to ask questions that force you to apply what you have been learning.

Ask: How should we live differently because of what we just learned?

Ask: What do we learn about God through this scripture and how does that change the way I relate to him?

RELATIONAL / APPLICABLE

1. Experiential - Ask questions that get people talking about their experiences.

Ask: Do you find it easier or more difficult to pray in times of crisis?

2. Emotional - Ask questions that get people talking about how they feel. Then, follow up with an application question.

Ask: Share about the most recent time someone encouraged you. How did that make you feel? Who are people you can be an encouragement to this week, and how?

3. Daily Life - Ask questions that lead people to talk about how it pertains to their daily life.

Ask: Colossians 3:2 tells us to “set our mind on things above.” What does that look like when I’m at work, when I’m watching TV, when I’m mowing lawn, or cooking dinner?

4. Practical - Ask questions that help people start the process of applying truth to their lives.

Ask: What are two practical things you can do this week to practice gratitude?

5. Connected - Ask questions that help us understand ourselves and the world around us, society, our culture, our families.

Ask: Do you think our society expects men to act a certain way? In what ways do you think so?

Ask: How do we show honor in our culture? How can we show honor to our parents as they grow older?

6. Occasionally you can throw in a personal or relational question that gives people options to choose from that are not right or wrong. This type of question can be fun, or help with self disclosure.

Ask: At the end of a difficult week are you more likely to...

- Collapse on the couch and watch a movie
- Go on a date with your spouse
- Get lost in one of your hobbies
- Work even more to make sure it all gets done
- Other _____

CAUTION: Don't Ask...

1. **Embarrassing** - Don't ask questions that will embarrass anyone for their lack of knowledge, faith, commitment, experience, etc.

Don't ask: When was the last time you led someone to the Lord?

Ask: Why is it important to share your faith verbally with people?

2. **Too Personal too fast** - Don't ask people the deeper or more personal questions until you're sure they have had time to build trust and are willing to volunteer their experience.

Don't ask: What is something you've never shared with anyone and why?

Don't ask: What is a sin the Lord is convicting you of right now?

Don't ask: Who is someone that you've never been able to forgive?

3. **Husband verses Wife** - Don't ask questions that require husbands or wives to be too vulnerable in front of each other, or in front of others.

Don't ask: Wives, in what ways do you feel misunderstood by your husbands.

4. **Gender related** - Don't ask gender sensitive questions in mixed company.

Don't ask: Husbands what do you wish your wife knew about your sexual desires?

Don't ask: Men, how do you cope with your sexual desires, when you don't have a legitimate outlet?