

Intro



You've got your group and you're ready to get going on your Bible study journey. That's great! But where on earth do you get started? There are so many great books of the Bible, so many encouraging stories, and such deep truths. What's a Group Driver to do? Getting your group started (or restarted) in the Bible can feel overwhelming. But you don't have to go it alone. You've got a solid pit crew (your CBC staff) who stands ready to help. We've also put together this guide to help you map out your course!

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Starting Out

Assess Your Group

Get Ready

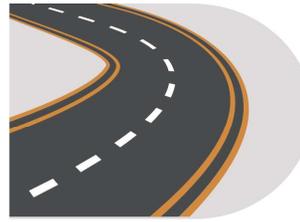
When beginning a new Bible study, it's helpful for the Group Driver to take a basic assessment of the group. Just like you would check the oil or tire pressure before a journey, you need to assess your group to know the best course to take.

Ask yourself questions like:

- Is the group composed of primarily all new Believers?
- Do the group members need foundational teaching?
- Does the group have a common desire to learn about a specific topic?
- Do group members seem to struggle with applying what they know?
- Are group members experiencing or struggling with something?
- Have the members expressed an evaluation of their own spiritual health? (If so, what?)
- What are the dynamics of our group? (E.g., gender, season of life, marital status, etc.)
- What are the dynamics of our meetings? (E.g., short meetings, tech savvy, love discussions, accountability/application focused, etc.)

Starting Out

Assess Your Group, Cont'd.



Start Here... Or Here...

Let Your Assessment Guide You

Start Here

Let's imagine this scenario: *You've assessed your group. You realize that you have mostly new Believers of a variety of ages, wanting to apply what they are discovering in the Bible.*

A group like this would benefit greatly from a Bible study on the foundations of the faith. For example, a good starting point might be looking at the Gospel of John and discussing how the truths there impact a Believer's life. Or, read through the Book of Mark to find out what Jesus taught His disciples and what that means for us today.

Since the basic foundations would be a good place for this group, this means that even if the group asks for a study on end times prophecies or the Book of Revelations, schedule that farther down the road. Let them know that the stopping points you'll visit *first* will help them understand those difficult passages a little later on the journey.

Or Here

Now imagine this scenario: *Your group is mostly seasoned Believers who know the Bible well. They are primarily struggling with loss of some sort and are struggling to understand God's wisdom and ways.*

A group like this is ready for a deep study of books like Job or Ecclesiastes. They will have the skills to handle the "rugged terrain" of difficult passages, and will gain valuable insight into God's wisdom, finding meaning in what seems meaningless. The Group Driver should avoid any passages taught in a trite way. The group is ready for depth and is likely equipped to wrestle with the text.

Get Ready

Use this space to write out three of your top, most important observations about your group members needs: (e.g., *new Believers, need foundational truths, desire topical studies, etc.*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Use this space to list three things about your group dynamics that are worth considering when choosing where to start in the Bible: (e.g., *short meetings, members crave discussion time, need accountability, etc.*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Start Here... Or Here...

Guidance, Cont'd.

Or Even Here

In real life, your assessment results may not be so cut and dry.

Let's imagine this scenario: *Your group has a wide variety of ages and experiences. Some Believers are new to faith and others have been Believers over 50 years. Some have new babies, while others have great-grandkids. Some know the Bible well and apply it. Others know very little and are struggling to apply even the very basics.*

With a little guidance, a group like this is ripe for healthy and hearty discussions! New Believers can learn from the seasoned Believers. A study of Jesus in the Gospel of John, a topical study on the Fruit of the Spirit (using Galatians 5:22-23 as a starting line), or a study on sanctification (the whole Book of Galatians), all with lots of focus on practical application, would likely go over well and be a good fit for everyone. The Driver must encourage open conversations and a judgement-free zone.

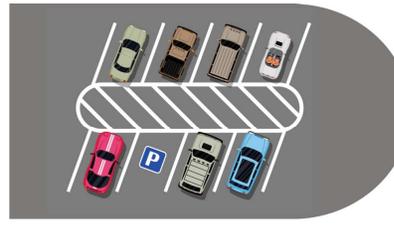
But My Group is Different! What Do I Do?

These scenarios exist just to get your *wheels turning*. (Pun intended.)

Your group will be unique, and we know it. That's why working with the CBC staff and networking with other Group Drivers is so helpful. You don't have to go this alone, and you shouldn't!

The remainder of this booklet will help you come up with even more ideas that might fit your group. It will help you as you think through where to start or restart with your group in the Bible.

Ready? Let's go!



Variety!

Maintaining Engagement

Variety is important for maintaining engagement from session to session. Naturally, some group members will prefer and enjoy the study of one book or passage over another. That's the beauty of God's Word; it is full of variety! God uses that variety to catch our interest. Your goal is to maintain the overall engagement, growth, and interaction of the group over time and from one session to another.

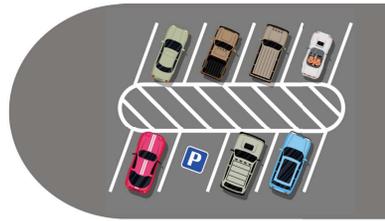
What sometimes happens in groups is that the Driver chooses study after study that he or she likes. While this is not overtly bad, it sometimes means that the group studies one particular Bible genre over and over again. (A common example is a group that only studies narrative stories.) Drivers can get caught in a rut. What's needed is a "change of scenery" along the journey. Sometimes, going in a new direction is all it takes to get everyone engaged again.

The chart on the next page is intended to help the Driver ensure that the journey stays engaging and interesting along the way. (The third column has space for you to give it a try.)



Variety!

Cont'd.



Use this chart to help you create variety and maintain engagement in your Bible study from session to session.

Year 1:	Example:	Your Turn:
Gospel	The Book of Mark	
Old Testament Character/s or Story	Joseph	
New Testament Epistles	Ephesians	
Topical Study	The Trinity	
Poetic or Prophetic	Psalms	
New Testament Character/s or Story	The Women of the New Testament	
Pentateuch	Genesis 1-3	

Things to Remember

The example above is just that— an example. Notice that it covers most of the literary genres of the Bible. (Notice it excludes “felt-need” studies. Our biggest need is Jesus!) If each session were 6 weeks, this plan would take up 42 weeks of the year, leaving wiggle room and time off.

Sometimes, after studying a particular book or passage of the Bible, group members want to study something similar. Sometimes, that makes sense. Other times, it creates confusion. Studying 1, 2, and 3 John makes sense. Studying two minor prophets back to back can be confusing... especially if they are from different centuries and addressing different nations.



More Ideas...

For a Blessed Journey

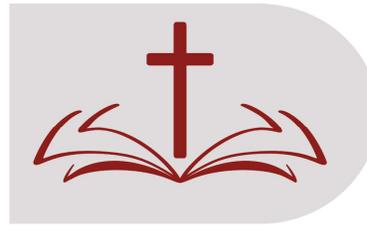
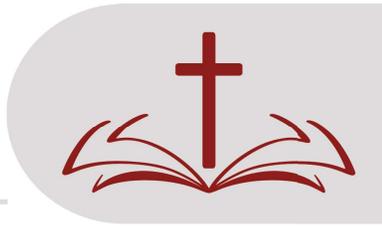
The following ideas are in no particular order:

- 1 Pray. Then pray. Now pray some more! Let God guide you and your group.
- 2 Using the chart on page 7, ask your group members where they want to go in the Bible. Don't be afraid to say no to suggestions if they are not a good fit.
- 3 Don't be afraid to rotate through studies you've done before. Maybe your members are new, or you all would like to do it again.
- 4 The Psalms are always a great go-to. If you are unsure of what to do, these beautiful prayers are an excellent place to turn!
- 5 Take holidays into consideration. Perhaps add in a Lent, Gratitude, or Advent study.
- 6 Consider using the information in most study Bibles, like reading plans, the section on “what the Bible says about...”, the plan of salvation, topical indexes, and so on. These make great Bible study material!



Where to Study It

...in the Bible



Where to Study It

...in the Bible

Whole Bible Books

Here are some whole books of the Bible that you can study in a few weeks:

Book:	Topic:
Mark	Suffering well, like Jesus did
Philemon	Acceptance of other Christians
Ruth	Loss and hope
Ephesians	Walking in Christ (sanctification)
Zechariah	Return to God / Jesus prophecy
Psalms (selected)	Prayers and songs to God
Ecclesiastes	Finding meaning in God
Hosea	God's love for Israel (and us)
Philippians	Joy in Christ
Esther	God preserves His people
1, 2 Timothy, & Titus	Orderly, sound churches
Daniel	Holiness in an unholy land & prophecy
Romans	Justification, the Gospel, and Christian theology

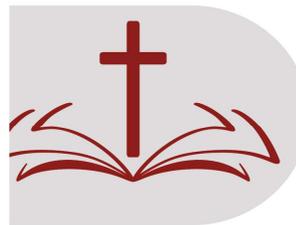
Passages to Study

Here are some short passages of the Bible that are great for study! For more, see <https://www.allenparr.com/25-exciting-bible-topics/>

Passage:	Topic:
Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12	Spiritual gifts
Hebrews 11; James 2:14-26	Faith
Psalms 88; Psalm 13	Loneliness
1 Corinthians 13; 1 John	Friendship
Romans 7:14-25; Romans 8	Struggling against sin
Song of Solomon	Dating / Courtship
Ephesians 5; 1 Corinthians 7;	Marriage
Genesis 1-3	Creation and the Fall
Matthew 5-7	The Sermon on the Mount
John 1	The Deity of Jesus
Romans 8	Hope and assurance for Believers
Exodus 20	The Ten Commandments

Where to Study It

...in the Bible



Study Mark!

Here's a simple plan to get you started. And there's more! **Don't forget** that we have a home-grown library of resources to help you start or restart your group in the Bible. For more, see cbcfamily.net/groups

People and Stories

These stories and characters in the Bible would yield great discussion:

Passage:	Topic:
Genesis 12-25	Abraham
Genesis 37, 39-50	Joseph, son of Israel
Judges 6-9	Gideon, Judge of Israel
Judges 13-16	Samson, Judge of Israel
1 Samuel 17	David and Goliath
1 Kings 17-19	Elijah the Prophet
2 Chronicles 36	The decline of Judah / fall of Jerusalem
Nehemiah 1 - 7:4	Nehemiah, a generous man of prayer
Luke 2:21-40	Simeon and Anna
Matthew 3:1-12; 11:7-10	John the Baptist
John 13:1-20	Jesus washes His disciples' feet
John 18:15-27 and 21:15-19	Peter's denials and restoration
Acts 9:1-31	The conversion of Paul

A 74-Lesson Study of the Book of Mark

1. Mark 1: 1-8
2. Mark 1:9-15
3. Mark 1:16-20
4. Mark 1: 21-28
5. Mark 1: 29-34
6. Mark 1: 35-45
7. Mark 2: 1-12
8. Mark 2: 13-17
9. Mark 2: 18-28
10. Mark 3: 1-12
11. Mark 3: 13-19
12. Mark 3: 20-30
13. Mark 3: 31-35
14. Mark 4: 1-20
15. Mark 4:21-25
16. Mark 4:26-29
17. Mark 4: 30-34
18. Mark 4: 35-41
19. Mark 5: 1-20
20. Mark 5: 21-24; 35-43
21. Mark 5: 25-34
22. Mark 6: 1-6
23. Mark 6:7-13
24. Mark 6: 14-29
25. Mark 6: 30-32
26. Mark 6: 33-44
27. Mark 6: 45-52
28. Mark 6: 53-56
29. Mark 7: 1-13
30. Mark 7:14-23
31. Mark 7: 24-30
32. Mark 7: 31-37
33. Mark 8: 1-10
34. Mark 8: 11-21
35. Mark 8:22-26
36. Mark 8: 27-38; 9:30-32
37. Mark 9: 1-8
38. Mark 9: 9-13
39. Mark 9:14-29
40. Mark 9: 33-37
41. Mark 9: 38-50
42. Mark 10:1-12
43. Mark 10: 13-16
44. Mark 10: 17-31
45. Mark 10: 32-34
46. Mark 10: 35-45
47. Mark 10: 46-52
48. Mark 11:1-11
49. Mark 11: 12-18
50. Mark 11: 19-26
51. Mark 11:27-33
52. Mark 12:1-12
53. Mark 12:13-17
54. Mark 12:18-27
55. Mark 12: 28-34
56. Mark 12: 35-40
57. Mark 12: 41-44
58. Mark 13:1-8
59. Mark 13:9-13
60. Mark 13: 14-27
61. Mark 13: 28-37
62. Mark 14:1-10
63. Mark 14:11-21
64. Mark 14:22-26
65. Mark 14:27-31
66. Mark 14:32-42
67. Mark 14:43-52
68. Mark 14:53-65
69. Mark 14:66-72
70. Mark 15:1-15
71. Mark 15:16-47
72. Mark 16: 1-8
73. Mark 16: 9-13
74. Mark 16:14-20