

Leader's Notes: Bible Study Guide to the book "Evangelism for the Rest of Us" by Mike Bechtle

This section is to give those of you who are leading study groups a little more insight into the purpose of each study. The twelve-week Bible Study was written as a guide for the book, to encourage an in-depth time of study and reflection on this subject as well as to provide a format for small group discussion. When used as a small group study, a copy of the book should be purchased for each participant (*ordering information here?*). This Bible Study insert can be removed, copied in its entirety, and given to each participant in booklet form. Prior to each lesson, group members should be expected to read one chapter in the book and complete the study questions. If you have any questions, feel free to email me through our website and I will be happy to correspond with you.

Suggestions for leading your small group:

1. Keep your group to no more than 10-12 individuals so there will be time for discussion.
2. Make sure that you as the leader do not turn this into a lecture time. Rather, after asking a question, allow ample time for people to think and respond.
3. Try to keep things positive even if a person gives a wrong answer. Help to guide them with another question or ask for other opinions.
4. Read the Bible portions during the group study before you discuss the questions.
5. Stick to the topic and do not allow the group to get side-tracked into other areas.
6. Be sensitive as others discuss issues and listen carefully. Affirm whenever possible. This will encourage others to participate.
7. Don't allow one person in the group to monopolize the whole discussion, but ask for opinions from other members present.
8. Set firm guidelines that all sharing within the group remains confidential.
8. Do not allow the study to go beyond your set time because those coming have other obligations to attend to.
9. Ask the women to mark any "light bulb" moments in their materials as they study, and to be prepared to share them with the group.
10. Encourage participants to keep a journal throughout the study.
11. Summarize each lesson at the end of your group time and close in prayer.

Week 1: "Why is it So Hard?"

Consider using questions 1 and 2 as an "icebreaker" to get the group talking about their perceptions, fears, and experiences surrounding the topic of evangelism as you begin this study together.

Question 4: If your time frame allows for it, this is a wonderful opportunity to share your "stories" of faith with one another.

Question 8: Break into groups of 2 or 3 and pray for one another regarding what you hope to get out of this study.

Week 2: "Looking for a Simpler Solution"

Since the author mentions *Fear Factor* on page 26, you could consider opening this week's session with an icebreaker game based on the *Fear Factor* game show! Ask the participants if they have ever felt like evangelism is as scary as being on *Fear Factor*.

Question 1: When discussing this question, refer to the paragraph on the bottom of page 22 for further insight and illumination into the passage.

Question 2: Don't let the introvert/extrovert discussion go into too much detail at this point, since next week's lesson will focus more on this issue. This would be a good time to give the women advance notice that there is a personality test in Chapter 3 which they will need to complete before the next meeting.

Question 5: Refer to Page 25 for further insight into this question. The last paragraph before "Being Yourself" on page 28 would also be good to emphasize during this discussion.

Week 3: "Innies and Outies"

While discussing the various qualities of introverts and extroverts, it is important to emphasize that we're not all at one extreme or the other. Most of us live somewhere on the continuum between the two, depending on the circumstance.

Question 2: Allow some time for the women to share their reactions and results from taking the personality test on pages 36-37.

Question 6: Peter's ministry was more "dramatic", involving preaching and the performing of miracles. He was a well-known leader who traveled from place to place, teaching and transforming lives. Dorcas had a quieter, more "behind the scenes" ministry and was probably unknown outside of her small community. Yet within her community, she had a vibrant servant heart that transformed the lives of those who were poor and needy.

Question 7: This question is discussed in detail on pp. 47-48.

Week 4: "Which Method is Best?"

Question 3: Be sure to discuss these seven statements while referring to pp.52-58. The Scriptures listed are best understood in the context of the author's comments about each point.

The following quote by John Stott may be helpful in your discussion about evangelism and methods of evangelizing.

"...our critics accuse us of intolerance and proselytism... *To proselytize* and *to evangelize* are not synonymous. The best way to distinguish them is to understand proselytism as "unworthy witness." The World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church produced a helpful study document in 1970 titled *Common Witness and Proselytism*. It identified three aspects of proselytism. Proselytism takes place (1) whenever our *motives* are unworthy (when our concern is for our glory rather than God's), (2) whenever our methods are unworthy (when we resort to any kind of "physical coercion, moral constraint, or psychological pressure"), and (3) whenever our *message* is unworthy (whenever we deliberately misrepresent other people's beliefs)...In contrast, to evangelize is (in the words of the *Manila Manifesto*) "to make an open and honest statement of the gospel, which leaves the hearers entirely free to make up their own minds about it. We wish to be sensitive to those of other faiths, and we reject any approach that seeks to force conversion on them."

--Quoted in "Christianity Today", Sept. 2003

Week 5: "Form vs. Function"

Question 3: Paul's main concern was that the *Gospel* was being preached; the "function" of the *Good News*.

Questions 4-6: Be sure to look carefully at the texts and allow time for questions and discussion in this frequently misunderstood area. Paul makes it clear that we are not to judge those **OUTSIDE** the church; as far as those **INSIDE** the church, we are commanded to judge only on issues of blatant sin and central doctrinal error—not "disputable matters".

Question 7: When facilitating the discussion of this question, do not allow the comments to descend into a critical or negative evaluation of the local church or church leaders. Rather, the intent should be to have a constructive discussion that focuses on gaining an honest perspective of our effectiveness.

Week 6: "The Fear Factor"

Question 1: The author makes the point that the common characteristic in most of our fears about evangelism is that the focus is on "me". Prepare various examples of scenarios that illustrate this claim.

Question 2: Some participants may feel self-conscious about admitting some of these fears. Put them at ease by being transparent and taking the lead in sharing some of your own fears.

Question 5: The psalmist testifies that the most effective antidotes to fear are seeking the Lord, and recognizing that His presence is always with us.

Question 6: This question is a good one to emphasize and spend some time discussing. As Dr. Andrew Neillie noted in the introduction to this book, the "three-legged stool" is really the key to overcoming fear and understanding the process of evangelism.

Week 7: "The Graceful Witness"

Question 2: See page 91 for further insights in discussing the answer to this question.

Question 3: Prior to the meeting, prepare one or two examples to share in case the women have not come up with personal observances. This could be an encounter you had either on the giving or receiving end of evangelism; or a situation that you observed personally or heard a story about.

Question 4: This would be a good opportunity to allow the women to share their personal transformation testimonies. Before moving on to the next question, you may want to close this part of the discussion with a prayer of praise, thanking God for His great grace.

Question 6: Close the group by praying together for the names that were written down in response to this question.

"Nothing commends the Gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency."

--Manila Manifesto, quoted in "Christianity Today", Sept. 2003

Week 8: "What Would Jesus Do?"

Question 1: Possible answers to this question are: being spiritually connected to God and listening for His voice; being available to Him and not "too busy", etc.

Question 3: Ask if anyone tried the prayer "experiment". The goal of this experiment is not to encourage legalistic adherence to a certain time frame in prayer, but rather to raise our level of awareness with regards to the priority of prayer in our schedule.

Question 4: The paragraph at the bottom of page 104 gives helpful direction to this discussion.

Take time at the end of today's lesson to read and review the bullet points listed on page 106 in the book.

Week 9: "What Would Satan Do?"

Question 1: While we don't want to give undue focus to Satan or give the impression that there is "a demon behind every bush", we need to be aware of the strategies of the enemy in order to effectively combat him.

Question 3b: II Kings 6:15-17 is a good example of being deceived or "blinded" by Satan. We need to have our spiritual eyes opened to the power of God that is available to His children.

Question 3d: The example of Elijah is an illustration of a common lie that Satan uses to discourage us; he makes us believe that we are alone in our circumstance. Refer to Joshua 1:9 to emphasize that regardless of how we may feel, God is always with us!

Question 4: After discussing these various examples, spend some time in prayer asking God to help you be aware of Satan's subtle tricks and to stand firm against him.

Week 10: "Methods That Are Biblical"

Question 1: Before reading II Kings 7:1-9, give the background story of this passage that starts with chapter 6, verse 24.

Question 3: Mark 4:2-20 and 26-29 tells the parable about the sower and the seed. The seed is the word of God; some of us may plant the seed and some of us water, but God is the one who causes the growth. See also I Cor. 3:5-9.

Question 6: Our transformation is an on-going process. Paul said he did not consider that he had reached perfection, but was still striving towards it. Although we are imperfect beings, the process of our transformation should be evident to those around us.

Week 11: Techniques That Are Personal

Question 1: God knew each of us before He formed us in the womb. Discuss how various personalities and temperaments have impacted each of us in the faith.

Question 3: Discuss the concept of paying attention to your warning signals. Why isn't it selfish to take time to make sure your own needs are being met?

Question 4: Jesus had a clear sense of His mission and purpose, and He set boundaries when necessary in order to accomplish that purpose.

Question 5: Talk about the list of suggestions on pp. 139-141. Ask if anyone already practices one or more of these suggestions, and if they have helped in building relationships.

Next week's lesson contains an assignment to write a one-minute "elevator speech" that articulates your faith simply and concisely. Prepare your women in advance for this assignment by asking them to take some extra time with it in the coming week and to be ready to share their "speech" with the group.

Week 12: "Intentional Sharing"

On pages 145 and 146, the author describes "sharing our faith" as being similar to ordering a delicious dessert at a restaurant, and then offering everyone at the table a bite because it tastes so good. Illustrate this by bringing a special dessert to the class and acting out the concept!

Question 1: According to the author on p. 146, the two things we should focus on are preparation and relationship.

Question 2: Practice sharing your one-minute "elevator speeches" with one another. Time them so that no one goes over a minute, and then give constructive feedback to each other.

Question 4: Share the various opportunities that group members have to interact with unbelievers. If some do not have any such relationships, discuss possibilities for developing them.

Question 7. Spending some time "debriefing" and discussing what the group has learned and found most helpful during this Bible Study. Share stories of change and conviction.