

How to Run a BIBLE GROUP

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The way of
THE SPIRIT

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Preface

This leaflet is a guide for those who are planning to use The Way of The Spirit Bible reading course in a group¹.

The reading course was born out of revelation of the life contained in the Bible through experience of the working of the Holy Spirit. One main purpose of group meetings is therefore to edify each other by sharing the revelation and experience you yourself obtain through reading your Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

¹ See [Page 9](#) for details of how to order the course materials.

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At your first Group Meeting

For some people the thought of conducting an introductory meeting for The Way of the Spirit may be quite daunting, but there is no need for it to be so. The following notes should help you to plan the meeting, but please feel free to be relaxed and run it your own way. The Way of the Spirit is not law, but freedom. Enjoy it! The purpose of the first meeting is mainly to get to know each other and to look at the basics of how to tackle the course. Once you have done that the rest of the course meetings tend to flow with their own momentum.

- **Before the first meeting**, have enough books and worksheets for everyone you expect to attend and have the recorded teaching ready to run at the beginning of the introductory talk.

- **Start with introductions:**
 - ▶ Do this in a relaxed way so that you can find out a little about who you have in your group: what Bible studies they have done before; what their standing in God is, and so forth.

 - ▶ It is always useful to know which churches are represented, but please avoid denominational issues. These are of little relevance as far as this course is concerned.

 - ▶ Remember to introduce yourself

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- **Explain about the course:**
 - ▶ That it is a Bible *reading* course, not a Bible *study* course;
 - ▶ That it teaches itself, through using the workbook, textbook and recorded teaching;
 - ▶ And that you are there, not to lecture them, but to guide them through it.
- **Tell them** something of what you yourself have got out of studying whatever part of it you have done.
- **Explain** as briefly as possible how to use the workbook and the textbook. Most of the information you will need to do that is found in the introductory pages of the workbook. Make sure you have read them and understood their instructions before the meeting.
- Now **listen to** the introductory recording². Lead the group in some **discussion** about what you have heard. Take a look at some of the Bible passages mentioned in the recording.

² Short 20 minute talks are available, one for each week of study. The teaching is recommended but not essential to completing the course

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- If you have time, **run through the Bible's story** as outlined on pages **4 to 7** of the **textbook** with your group.
- **Arrange** a suitable place and dates for further meetings.
- **Remember** to take names, addresses and telephone numbers in case you need to contact people to reschedule meetings, etc.
- **Pray** briefly with the group, committing everything to the Lord and praying for His guidance and revelation over the coming week as the members go off to start their Bible reading.
- Most important of all: **Enjoy it!** And God bless your meeting together.

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The Leader's Role at the Continuing Group Meetings

- Be sure you **open and close with prayer** but beware of turning the meeting into a prayer meeting. It is always good to pray, but the main purpose of this group is different.
- Also, **beware of letting the meeting focus on people's problems** and become a counselling or ministry meeting. We have found that many problems are dealt with on the way simply through the reading of the word. Remember that God's word is powerful and He will work through it far more effectively than you will by focusing attention on one individual and his/her problems.
- Members should **come having done their week's reading** and having answered the questions in the workbook. The group will only function properly if the members have all actually done their homework. If, for any reason, one or two members have not been able to do their preparation in any one week, don't make them feel guilty, but encourage them to come prepared next time.
- Remember that your job in the group is to **lead, not teach**. The course is written in such a way that it itself contains all the teaching needed to fulfil the purpose for which it was written. Your job is to run the group like a seminar, getting every member involved in the discussion and participate in the learning process.

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- The body of Christ is a place for **personal encouragement** in faith. Reading the Bible together enables excellent encouragement. One of the leader's main tasks is therefore to encourage group members to persevere with their Bible reading, to help them find their own encouragement from their reading and to encourage them to apply the word to their lives and so to grow spiritually and in faith.
- Try to **recognise and encourage talent** among the members of the group. If some of the members show talent for leadership, let them lead occasionally. In that way you will be preparing them for leading a group of their own sometime. While you can allow them to lead, don't hand over your leadership altogether, unless you want to leave them with the group so that you can go and start another group of your own. And don't allow others to lead during the first six weeks. You need to establish your own group first, but then to view it as a training ground for others to learn leadership.
- One of your main tasks will be to **keep the discussion to the subject**. There are many interesting and edifying topics that can arise as you talk together, as well as some thoroughly irrelevant ones, but each lesson does have a specific aim, and the set questions are there to help you fulfil that aim. Don't be rigid and formal about it, allow some freedom in the discussion, but try to keep the group as close as possible to the work that is set.

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- **Keep it simple.** The Bible is not a complicated book. Part of the purpose of the course is to show that simplicity. The questions very seldom look for complicated answers. If you think your answer is too simple, then it is probably a good one.
- **Some of the questions are so personal that there is no correct or wrong answer.** What people write will often tell you more about how things are between them and the Lord, rather than tell you the right way to answer the question.
- **Avoid heavy theology and academic debate.** The aim of the course is to give revelation, to teach faith and to encourage growth in the Spirit, not to produce theologians.
- Remember that **the textbook is not an answer book.** Make sure that your group members are reading their Bibles to find the answers. The purpose of the textbook is to paint the background to the readings. The answers are in the Bible and the best way to find them is to ask the Holy Spirit to lead you.
- Seek to **maintain vision and spiritual growth** in the group. Remember that *The Way of the Spirit* is not just a Bible study programme, but a way of reading the Bible to draw on its life with understanding so that you can grow in faith and in your walk with God, that you can become more alive

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and informed in your faith and more effective in your Christian life and witness.

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Contact

For more information go to www.thewayofthespirit.com, or email resources@thewayofthespirit.com.

The Way of The Spirit Bible reading course materials, including text books, workbooks and recorded teaching may be bought from our web shop. Go to our website above and click **Shop** in the main menu.