

# Discovery Bible Study

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International Urban Institute – LeafLine Initiatives

## What Are They?

**Discovery Studies** are a tool, a simple and effective strategy with powerful results for beginning new cell groups or new churches. This group-harvesting method has been used in many cities and different nations.

At the core of the studies are: a) six questions designed by John DeVries, founder and executive director of Mission 21 India, Grand Rapids, Michigan; b) biblical concepts of Oikos and Person of Peace, developed by Dr. Thomas A. Wolfe, formerly of the Church on Brady and currently Leaf-Line Initiatives and Golden Gate School of Intercultural Studies; c) prayer strategies and prayer walks, group development, and training developed by Carol Davis, The Church on Brady and Leaf-Line Initiatives.

We have found them most powerfully implemented after a foundation of prayer has been laid. They are great for proclamation, penetration and reproduction.

**For Proclamation:** Groups begin with a cluster of unbelievers and only one or two Christians to get them off the ground. When a receptive person is found, they gather people from their own circle of influence for the study. It is always on their turf and they make the decisions of where and when the group will meet as well as take on all the hosting responsibilities.

**For Penetration:** This method for studying the Scripture places the authority in the Word itself, not in the leader. Those in the group watch the leader learn and obey the Scriptures also. The Holy Spirit is their teacher. Each person is a contributor as they take turns answering each question. There are no right or wrong answers. They discover for themselves what God is saying to them. Their

understanding is enhanced by the group process so their learning curve and group participation is high. Usually, there are several conversions within a few weeks of each other. The Christian is the initial “question-asker” and then rotates that role among those attending. They concentrate on evangelism and equipping the emerging leaders as they become Christians.

**For Reproduction:** The studies are simple. Almost any Christian can lead a Discovery Study because you only have to ask questions. Everything the group sees done, they are also able to do with other friends. As the natural leaders begin to emerge, they can easily be equipped for the next meeting. The group learns to ask the questions, to pray for others, experience community and watch God work.

#### Questions

1. What do you like best? When you repeat the question you could use . . . What do you like best about this story?
2. What do you like least?
3. What do you not understand?
4. What do you learn about God? Or, how many things do you learn about what God is like?
5. What do you personally need to do about it?
6. Which phrase or verse would you like to continue to think about?

Happiness is

#### Series

1. Psalm 1
2. Psalm 51:1-13
3. Romans 3:21-26
4. Romans 8:29-39
5. 1 Corinthians 13

## Discovering Jesus

1. Mark 1:21-34
2. Mark 10:13-16
3. Mark 10:17-31
4. Mark 12:41-44
5. Luke 23:32-43

## The Powerful Jesus

1. Mark 1:21-28
2. Mark 2:13-17
3. Mark 3:1-6
4. Mark 4:35-41
5. Mark 9:33-37

We usually run a copy of the passage on a piece of paper to study from or, where people are illiterate, we use a tape with the passage prerecorded and work from a tape recorder.

## Discovery Questions

1. What do you like best?
  - What do you find encouraging?
  - What is the most helpful?
  - What do you get excited about in this story (reading, poem, etc.)?
  - What are the most important issues (facts)?
  - What is the best part of this story for you?
  - What part of this reading speaks to you?
  - What does this help explain?
2. What do you like least?
  - What is disturbing?
  - What is surprising or hard to hear?
  - What kind of problems does this present for you?
  - Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable?
  - What bothers you?
  - What do you wish was left out?
  - What is the most difficult for you?

3. What do you not understand?
  - What do you wish you had an answer for?
  - What questions does this raise in your mind?
  - Discuss anything that you find confusing.
  - Is there anything you would like to know more about?
  - Which parts puzzle you?
  - What is difficult to understand?
  - Is there anything you would like to learn about?
4. What do you learn about God?
  - What kinds of things can you know for certain?
  - How is God different than man?
  - How does this change or illuminate your picture of God?
  - What do you wish you had known before?
  - What impression of God do you get from this reading?
  - How would you describe God?
5. What do you personally need to do about it?
  - What is one thing you need to change?
  - What do you find immediately helpful?
  - If this is true, what is your next move?
  - What relationship is there between what you have read and your own life?
  - Is there any truth here that you want to respond to?
  - What do you want to say to God?
  - What do you want to build into your life?
6. Which phrase or verse do you want to take with you and think about this week?
  - Which phrase or verse will help you this week?
  - What nugget of truth will you take with you?
  - Is there anything you need to share with someone else this week?
  - Which part of this story will you hang on to?
  - What do you most need to remember?
  - Which promise would you like to remember in times of need?
  - Which part of this reading do you want to become a part of your own thinking?