**How to do this study as a small group/**

**Sunday school structure.**

**NOTE: The structure below is designed for the Bible studies created by Kris Swiatocho but can be edited to fit any study you might teach.**

So how do you lead a Bible study? While there are many resources out there that teach you how to lead a Bible study, I have written some specific directions to lead the studies I teach. However, you can edit this to fit any study you might lead.

Some quick things to think about before leading a study are:

• Be sure to pray/plan ahead of time

• Send your homework, materials, reminders out so folks are prepared for when you meet

• Start on time and end on time; don’t punish on time folks by starting late for those who are late; set the example

• Allow everyone to share; balance your talkers with non-talkers; if you have a talker taking up too much time, simply say, that was a great thought or comment, let’s move so we can end on time or let’s hear what Susie has to say. If we have time, we will come back to that. Ask quiet people ahead of time to read questions or scripture as well as anyone to share a testimony.

• Always be thinking of training the next teacher(s) by training small group leaders to lead discussions; also allow them to facilitate from time to time. Remember, we are just not leading a study but building the next leader.

**Prepare**

1. Provide the Bible study at the first meeting, or have participants bring their own copies. You could spend the first night getting to know everyone and the last night as a celebration/dinner, expanding into additional weeks.

2. Decide whether you are going to lead or facilitate. Encourage others to help lead or take turns to develop his/her leadership skills and to provide you with a back-up in the event you have to be absent.

3. Decide on the demographics of your group if applicable: all male or female, co-ed, younger or older, etc.

4. Find a good place to have the study if you are using this as a small group. A place that has regulated temperature with the least amount of noise and distraction is best. It should also be a place that is comfortable, safe, has bathrooms, and provides childcare, if needed. Using your church will be favored by most due to its accessibility and resources; however, it might not be the best choice for the lost or spiritually weaker Christians.

5. Plan ahead of time to provide or not provide, childcare. Be sure you have the necessary insurance, facilities, and staff training if childcare is offered. Understand that when you allow children to wander in and out of the study, it causes a distraction; be sensitive to others who don’t have children.

Note: This also includes pets as now more than ever people are bringing their animals for support.

6. Before beginning the study, plan the dates, length of each session, and how your small group will meet. Be respectful of your participants’ personal schedules by starting and ending on time. Make sure you communicate this with your group and why it’s important. If people have questions that could lead you in other directions, or seem to monopolize the time, tell them you can answer their questions more thoroughly after the study has ended.

7. Other distractions:  Before beginning the study, ask people to use the restroom, turn off cell phones, get food/drink, etc.

8. Market your study ahead of time. Promote your study group to your church and throughout the community.  E-mail public service announcements to local radio and TV stations. Put flyers and posters up on the walls at restaurants and grocery stores. Promote on Facebook and other social

media. Be sure to have a way for them to contact you for an RSVP by a certain date. Go to www.TheSinglesNetwork.org for free marketing materials you can download.

**During**

1. Decide on the guidelines for the group. For example: tardiness, absenteeism, bringing children, not doing the necessary reading/assignment, sharing what is discussed outside the group, etc.

2. Understand that if you use this study for Sunday school, you might have some limitations during your discussions.  Keep the group to a maximum of 10 people, or break it down into smaller groups of three or four during discussion times.

3. If you don’t know your attendees, have them fill out a survey that might include how they found out about the study, their church name, marital status, hobbies, e-mail, etc. This provides a way to contact them during the study and, afterwards, for future events. Contact your group each week to check on them, encourage them, and tell them you look forward to seeing them again.

4. Have them sit in a circle or at a table to enhance communication.  Start with an icebreaker, a warm-up exercise, or another way of getting to know each person. You can purchase a huge list of icebeakers for $5 at www.TheSinglesNetwork.org.

5. Remind people of the purpose of this study (what God has given you as the vision).

6. Keep things upbeat and positive even in the midst of more serious topics of discussion.

7. Open with prayer. (as time goes on, you can ask others to open and/or close in prayer.) Start on time and end on time.

8. Encourage people to bring their Bibles and take notes each week. Encourage them to use a Bible dictionary or concordance if needed. Understand that each person will be at a different place in his/her spiritual walk.

9. Provide refreshments and extra paper, Bibles, pens, books, etc.

10. As a leader, you should prepare your lesson early, allowing time for the Holy Spirit to guide you in teaching the study. Be creative; use objects, jokes, music, videos...whatever might add value to the lesson. For additional help, see the last section of this study.

11. Encourage everyone to share their answers and/or questions. Call on individuals who do not normally share. Try to involve all the attendees. In private ask those who talk the most to allow others the chance to participate.

Note:  Some people believe you should tell participants they do not have to talk or pray if they don’t feel comfortable. I believe, however, that it should be a goal to help them through this. As they feel comfortable and accepted, I believe they will feel like sharing.

12. Teach others/disciple: Remember, we are all commanded by Jesus to go and make disciples. Empower people with options to help teach or facilitate, lead small group discussions, prayer, bring a refreshment, mid-week follow-up, etc.

**Close/Follow-up**

1. Close by briefly discussing the week ahead.  Make assignments or tell of your expectations for the week. When the return the following week, be sure to go over their assignment and/or share about their week. Note: For larger groups, you can break into small groups for this discussion.

2. Do a large group prayer or break people into prayer partners for the next several weeks of the study and have the groups pray after each lesson. Encourage them to get each other’s phone numbers, so they can call and pray for one another during the week. Note: Pair up men with men and women with women.

3. At the end of the small group study, consider having a special dinner or party to celebrate.  Use some of what people have learned as a part of the final celebration.

4. Ask the group leader whether they would like to continue into another study or take a break. Do a follow-up survey on the study and/or your teaching style.

Kris Swiatocho

919.434.3611

[www.TheSinglesNetwork.org](http://www.TheSinglesNetwork.org)

www.FromHisHands.com

Kris@thesinglesnetwork.org