

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

January 1st

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. Do you have any New Years Resolutions? If so, what are they?

Bible Study Questions

1. Studies show that most Christians regard the Bible as being valuable, but few have a habit of reading it. Why do you think that is?
2. Do you have any regular habits of Bible study? If so, what are they?
 - If not, then what most often prevents you from doing that?
 - What do you know about good Bible study skills?
3. How would you answer someone if they asked you why studying the Bible was important?
4. Read Psalms 119:97-104. What do you notice in these verses? How does the author describe his love for the law? Can you relate to that kind of desire for the Bible?
5. Read 2 Peter 2:1-4. What do these verses warn about false prophets? How do knowing the Bible help protect ourselves from false teachings?
6. What advice would you give to someone who wants to start reading the Bible but doesn't know where to begin?

January 1st: Getting the Most out of the Bible Christians most ignored treasure

Studies have shown that while Christians value the Bible, a small number have a habit of actually reading it. For many, it remains on the shelf with little knowledge on how to properly use it.

I. Recognize the Value of God's Word

- **The source of wisdom:** Psalms 119:97-104 make some powerful claims about Scripture. The author meditates on it constantly because of the wisdom that it gives him...even more than the elders or his enemies.
- **Protection from destructive choices:** Psalms 119:104 says that the author now hates every wrong path because of what he has learned in the law. It has protected him from destruction. In Deuteronomy, Moses told the people to remind themselves constantly of what the law taught (Deut 6:6-9). They were even to write it on their doorposts so they would be reminded every time that they stepped into their home.
- **Enables us to discern false teaching:** There are multiple times in the New Testament (Acts 20:29, 1 John 4:1) that warn of false prophets. Paul tells Timothy to watch his doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16) in order to discern what is true. In fact, the New Testament was organized in order to protect Christians from various false teachings that were circulating during that time.

II. Tools for the journey

- **The key to start a habit of Bible study is to "start":** For those who know the Bible, it involves developing the habit. Many though don't start because they don't know where to begin. It is helpful to remember that...
 - **The gospels are the core of the Bible. The Old Testament serves as a prequel and the epistles help explain and apply the gospels:** As a result, the gospels and then Acts are the best place to start if you are new to the Bible
- **Use an appropriate Bible translation:** Not all translations serve the same purpose
 - **Literal translation: Great for indepth study but hard to read:** They strive to do a Greek/Hebrew word for word translation. Examples are KJV, NAS, or RSV
 - **Dynamic Equivalent: Best for reading:** These translate the meaning of the text. They are the most

readable of scholarly translations. Examples are NIV, ESV, or New Living

- **Paraphrase: Good for devotional use but not for study.** Translations such as the message try to take the message of the Bible and update it to be culturally relevant. The problem is that the views of the author can impact the translation.

Conclusion

One of the problems with Bible study is that we tell people to do it but don't teach them how. Over the next month, we will be doing a series on how to study the Bible. The goal is to get resources into our hands in order to gain a more rich study of the Bible.