



ROUTE 66 Group Discussion

GOAL — to listen to God through His powerful Word and be open to His transforming work in each of us! TRUST Him as the teacher. Don't lean on your own understanding (Prov.3:5).

Remember our goal is not scholarship or even full understanding. When we release expectations, we can instead be filled with excitement about 'this journey' through the Word and what He will teach us!

PRAYER – Always BEGIN with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to give us eyes to see and hearts to understand what God wants to reveal to us! Ask for clarity above confusion (while still being comfortable exploring the mystery). Ask for eyes to see parallels to our lives today. Ask for paths to practical truths for our lives here and now. Thank Him for the supernatural gift of His living, powerful Word (Hebrews 4:12).

TONE – As discussion leader, pray about setting the tone for the group. Some may be apprehensive or overwhelmed by reading the OT, and that's okay!

- Share your enthusiasm about digging into God's Word together!
- Establish a 'no shame' culture in your group! If some get behind or don't 'get it,' that's totally OKAY. Not one of us is GOD. *But* all of us are His, and the Word is clear that God loves the seeker and will answer our prayers to know Him better! (Jeremiah 29:13).

INTRODUCTION (choose 1) –

Show a video clip

- from the *Bible Project* video; a relevant *Right Now Media* teaching; *The Chosen*, etc.
- show a video of a related song (ex. Promised Land by Toby Mac when you reach 2nd part of Exodus)

Ask the question: what one thing stood out to you this week? (This could be something you've *never* seen before; a *practical* truth; a glimpse into the *character of God*; a *parallel between OT and NT*; a *character* you identify with; even something that totally confused you.)

**Our amazing God invites us into
the mystery and loves our
questions and seeking hearts!**



STUDY – As the leader, choose one chapter or section of this week’s reading to focus on, a section which highlights an aspect that seems significant to you: the character of God, a parallel between OT & NT; a practical truth revealed; a type of Christ, a character you identified with; etc

- Begin by asking someone in the group to read the passage aloud (or listen to the You Version reader)
- Share what stands out to you and why you want the group to discuss this passage
- Discuss 1-2 launching questions
- Discuss 2-3 specific questions

HERE & NOW

What is one practical takeaway from this section of scripture? For example, in Genesis, the ‘big picture’ story of Joseph in Egypt during the years-long famine can build our trust as we pray for God to bless the people of Ukraine. It may not happen overnight, **BUT GOD** has the long-term picture in mind and is always at work, even when we don’t see it at the time (or even when we don’t see it this side of heaven).



GENERAL SUGGESTIONS –

- * Our goal is to READ through the Bible and invite God to speak to us. Keep it simple and ask God for staying power. If you ‘take a break,’ remember it’s okay to jump back on the road any time!
- * Form a group on YouVersion and encourage your group to make comments there as they read to stay motivated for this challenge!
- * Choose a reliable translation: NIV, ESV, NKJ. Use a paraphrase for a second reading.
- * When you don’t understand a passage, what simple things can you do?
 - ASK GOD for guidance. Remember *He wants* you to know Him better, so this is a prayer He loves to answer.
 - Choose several verses that are confusing and write them out in 2 different translations and 2 paraphrases. Read several times.
 - Alter your threshold: look for a small thing that God has shown you rather than expecting a grand understanding of things that only God understands. But be ready for great surprises!
 - Consider yourself a child in the Holy Spirit’s classroom. A 1st grader may not be ready for Algebra for example, but he can still take in so much and is often a very excited learner! Read a child’s Bible to a child in your life and relax into the childlike perspective that Jesus loves.
 - Want to go deeper? Watch for info on suggested study tools.

Principles for interpreting OT Narrative —

1. Old Testament Narrative rarely tells you but it shows you.
2. Old Testament Narrative expects that all of the readers know and understand Old Testament Law.
3. Old Testament Narrative is written with an immense amount of white space.
4. Old Testament Narrative is written to display the beauty of God.

From 'How to Study the Bible' by Faithspring:

Imagine walking into a doctor's office because you're feeling sick but instead of the thermometer being used the way it's supposed to be (by placing it in your mouth, ear, or on your forehead), it is placed in your hand. Then after a few seconds, the nurse picks it up tells you your temperature looks fine.

How would you respond? *Of course it looks fine, you didn't use it the right way.*

In that setting, used in that way, the best the thermometer could do was read the temperature of the room around it. It's not that the thermometer itself was broken or ineffective. It just wasn't being used correctly.

In the same way, when we keep the Bible at arm's length we miss out on the profound power, truth, and life waiting to be accessed. The Bible is one of the primary ways God chooses to reveal himself to us. If we want to have, be, and do everything God intended it all starts with approaching the Bible with the right tools and intentions in place.

For my own Christian walk, these are the seven pillars of effective (and transformative) Bible study:

1. Understanding context.
2. Building a habit.
3. Practicing memorization.
4. Using the right tools.
5. Learning in community.
6. Integrating prayer.
7. Pursuing vulnerability.

Your own walk may incorporate more, but certainly no less than these seven. They have helped me grow beyond what I thought possible and I believe they can do the same for you.

I hope and pray that you learn to love God's Word with a ferocious passion and that it will truly become a lamp unto your feet and a light upon your path.

