



FOR BIBLE
STUDY
LEADERS

Top Ten Tips for Bible Study Leaders

How to lead a life-changing Bible study

God can do amazing things in our lives through the fellowship and encouragement of other Christian women. That's why we, at TODAY'S CHRISTIAN WOMAN, are so excited that you are serving God by leading a women's Bible study.

Being a Bible study leader can seem like an intimidating job. What if nobody talks? (Or what if somebody talks . . . nonstop?) How will you navigate group dynamics? What's the best way to help women feel comfortable and connect? And, most importantly, how can you lead in a way that helps women truly and deeply grow in their faith?

The good news is that *God* is at work! The Holy Spirit can guide you as you do your best to serve as a leader—and God's Spirit will also be at work in participants' lives in ways you may never see. God speaks powerfully through his Word. And just like he'll be changing the lives of your Bible study participants, you can be assured he'll also be growing and challenging you through Scripture and through your willingness to serve as a leader.

So don't let the job intimidate you—because God can and will work in powerful ways as you open up his Word with other women. As you serve as a Bible study leader, here are some tips to help you along the way.

1 Embrace a Facilitator Mindset.

Rather than approaching your study as a “teacher,” remember that God is the one speaking to, guiding, changing, and convicting participants—not you. Your job as a leader is merely to facilitate participants’ learning from God. Before each meeting, pray something like this: *God, this is your Word, your Truth. Help me to lead in a way that connects readers to you. Help me get out of the way.*



2 Customize.

Use our [Today’s Christian Woman Bible Study](#) guide and *make it yours*. For example, you can pick and choose from the optional activities. You can cut questions you’re not into and add in some of your own. You can choose to spend your whole meeting on just one Discover point. You can add an extra passage to the study. Our studies are designed to be flexible, so do whatever it is you need to do to fit your unique group.



3 Value the light stuff.

Sometimes as leaders we make the mistake of valuing “deep” Scripture discussion and undervaluing casual conversation. But the “light” stuff—like small talk, chitchat, laughter, silly icebreakers, sharing snacks, catching up, playing games, goofing off—is actually *critical* to building the relational bonds participants want to have in a small group. So always prioritize time for casual talking, catching up, or fun experiences together. This investment will pay off later when group members feel safe enough to open up and be vulnerable with each other.



4 Mix things up.

Reading and talking are great ways to learn and engage—but they aren’t the only ways! Whenever possible, try to include something beyond just reading and discussion in your study experience. For example, try a movie clip, an active game, an outdoor worship experience, a time for journaling, a simple craft, or a hands-on service project. To help you get started, our Today’s Christian Woman Bible Studies always include one or two optional experiences that go beyond just reading and talking.

5 Take on hard conversations.

Sometimes problems come up in small groups, such as one member dominating discussion by talking too much or a participant who is divisive and overly opinionated. If a problem like this occurs, don't hide from it. Outside of the group meeting, talk to the person about the issue and kindly share your expectations for healthy group participation. This isn't the fun part of leadership—but it's a critical way to serve your group and keep it spiritually and relationally healthy.



6 Set an encouragement goal.

It's unrealistic to think you can personally call up every group member, every week, for personal conversation and prayer. But you can set a realistic goal for how you'll encourage participants outside the group meeting. For example, commit to send two encouragement cards a week to different group members. Or aim to call one group member each week to provide extra prayer and spiritual encouragement.



7 Expect God to convict you.

As God works in participants' lives, he'll also be working in yours. If you come to God's Word with an open heart, you can be pretty much guaranteed that God will convict you. As you listen to the Holy Spirit, you'll sense ways you need to change your heart or your habits. Conviction doesn't "feel good"—but it's actually a great thing! It means God is at work in your life.

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8 Be real.

Nobody wants to be part of a group where they always have to seem perfect. And, unfortunately, Christian leaders often feel extra pressure to appear to have it all together! But what your small group needs is the *real* you—they need you to be an example of authentic faith. You can do this best by being willing to be open about your own struggles and needed areas of growth.



9 Don't lead alone.

Be in touch with other Bible study leaders, pastors, ministry leaders, or mentors whom you can lean on for support. Ask for wisdom and encouragement from other seasoned Bible study leaders. As you network with others, you'll find the back up you need to be a strong leader even when you face challenges.



10 Bathe it all in prayer.

As you prepare for your study and even during your study, seek God's leading and listen to the Holy Spirit. Rely on God's power and leadership, not your own strength or agenda. Keep reminding yourself that this is ultimately *God's work* through his Word. Your aim is just to serve, listen to, and obey him.

—Tips from **Kelli B. Trujillo**, Managing Editor of Today's Christian Woman Bible studies.

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