

Discovery Bible Study:

THE WHAT & THE WHY OF THE DBS PROCESS

The Discovery Process is the primary method of discipleship in movements around the world. *Discovery Bible Studies* are simple and reproducible groups that consist of spiritually interested people who read a Bible story together, discover what it says, and then are challenged to immediately live out what they learned and to share it with someone else.

THE WHAT

THE WHY

CONNECT QUESTIONS

- What are you **THANKFUL** for?
- What's a **CHALLENGE** right now?
- How did you do with your last "I will" statement?
- Who did you share with?

- The questions are non-threatening and simple, allowing anyone to share.
- These questions are not overtly "spiritual" at first, but they become the foundation for key aspects of following Jesus in community: *thankfulness* leads to worship and praise, *discussing our challenges* leads to confession and vulnerability, *reconnecting on "I will" statements* leads to accountability.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

- **READ** the passage out loud.
- Have someone **RETELL** it in their own words.
- Ask simple questions:
 1. What **STANDS OUT**?
 2. What does the text tell us about **GOD/JESUS**?
 3. What does the text tell us about **PEOPLE**?

- Discovering truth on your own (or in a group) is more powerful than simply being told the truth.
- Simple questions like these allow everyone to be on the same page.
- The Discovery Process allows the Holy Spirit to be the teacher rather than a person, helping to avoid false teaching or over-dependence on a gifted individual.
- These questions help create spiritually hungry disciples who are "self-feeding." They teach people how to hear from God, not just what the text says.
- These questions are theologically "safe" as well as spiritually deep.
- These questions are reproducible in every setting. This empowers anyone and everyone to make disciples wherever they are.

GO QUESTIONS

- How can you put into action what God is showing you in this text? Everyone creates an "I will" statement.
- Who are you going to tell about what you discovered in this text?

These are the most important questions!

- DBS groups focus on response (obedience) over gaining knowledge. "I will" statements are incredibly important. Make them as specific as possible (the more vague, the harder to accomplish).
- By focusing on obedience, people experience God throughout the week, and begin their discipleship by *following* rather than merely *agreeing* with God.
- When people who are just discovering God tell others what they're learning, new groups and viral growth are possible! People notice changed lives!

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

1. Leaders facilitate, they don't teach

- This allows everyone to participate and discover truth together.
- This makes it possible to reproduce.
- This allows the Holy Spirit to be the teacher, not a person.

2. Focus on the GO section. Don't skip the last two questions.

- Obedience is the main goal, not acquiring knowledge.
- By always focusing on what to do and who to share something with, we help form new disciples who possess the DNA of surrendering to Jesus and proclaiming his truth from the very beginning.

3. Try to stay in the passage and not bounce around.

- This allows everyone to stay on the same page, no matter how mature or undeveloped people are in their faith journeys.
- Often people who are new to discovering God can feel like an outsider if others keep referencing different passages in the Bible.
- Zooming in on one story helps focus the group instead of tackling too much in one setting.

4. Pass off leadership. Allow others to facilitate.

- Do this as soon as possible. It helps groups not be dependent on one dominant leader.
- Model and pass off. This actually serves to train people how to make disciples. Anyone can ask the questions.

5. Multiply. Who can start their own group?

- Set this vision from day one. Empower people to reach their own friends and family by starting a Discovery Group on their own.
- They don't need to be an expert. There's no qualifications needed to be a DBS facilitator... just a willingness to discover God together.
- The goal is not necessarily to "grow" groups by addition, but by multiplication.
- Sometimes people will stay in the original group while starting new groups, sometimes they won't. Many factors play into this and it's different for every setting, but the goal remains the same: to multiply. Make disciples who make disciples.

6. Use a tool like dbsgroups.com for scripture list pathways and plans.

- Begin with a passage list that seems to fit the spiritual curiosity of the group. Check out *10 Stories of Hope* or *Journey of Jesus*.
- Move on to other scripture lists depending on the group. Other lists focus on topics such as discipleship, baptism, living in community, and more.
- Ongoing fellowships (simple church gatherings) can emerge from groups. As disciples are being formed, the group can move on to a list helping the group transition into more mature expressions of the gathered Body of Christ.

