

LAMPLIGHTERS INTERNATIONAL – DISCIPLE-MAKER TIP #3

TITLE: "HOW TO CHOOSE THE FIRST STUDY"

One of the most frequent questions I am asked is, “If I was going to start a Lamplighters Bible Study, which one should I start with?” Before you choose the right Bible Study for your group (to me, a group is 2-10), the discipleship leader needs to answer some key questions.

1. Are the individuals who are thinking of joining the Bible Study believers or non-believers?
2. If there are non-believers, do they have a church background or are they mostly biblically-illiterate?
3. What is the present level of biblical knowledge and understanding of the remaining individuals?
4. What is the religious background (i.e., their church background) of the individuals who may be joining the group?
5. What are some of the spiritual interests of the group members?

When you’ve answered these questions, you are ready to help your group choose the best study. Someone may suggest reading through a Christian book, but you should encourage the group to study the Bible. Remember, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Here are my recommendations.

1. Recommend 2-3 shorter New Testament books to study (e.g., James, 2 Timothy, Philippians). The NT books don’t require as much background knowledge to complete the studies.
2. Have a current copy of the Lamplighters resource catalog so you can read the actual course descriptions to help the group decide which study to do.
3. Have sample lesson print-outs of each Lamplighters study for each group member to review to help them make a decision. Sample lessons are available on the Lamplighters’ website (www.LamplightersUSA.org).
4. Let the group make the final decision regarding the book of the Bible. There will be a greater level of commitment if they choose the study instead of you choosing for them.
5. If the group is divided in their choice of studies, help them decide, and recommend that the group do the second choice as a follow-up study.