

HOW TO LEAD A LAMPLIGHTERS BIBLE STUDY

1. PRE-CLASS PREPARATION

- a. **Start with Prayer.** During the week prior to the Bible Study, pray for yourself and the other members of the class. Pray that God will give you and the class members a rich time of personal study in God's Word. The key to the Lamplighters' Bible Study ministry is the personal time each person spends with God in His Word. Pray also that God will give each person the courage to share the life-changing truths he or she has learned with the other class members during the Bible Study time.
- b. **Your Personal Study.** Complete the weekly Lamplighters' Bible Study without looking at the Leader's Guide answers in the back of the book. After you have completed the entire lesson, carefully compare your answers with the ones in the back of the Self-Study Edition book. Using a different colored pen, write in your Bible Study book any part of the answers that you failed to discover when you originally completed your lesson. You also need to become thoroughly knowledgeable of the answers in the Leader's Guide so that you can listen to the class discussion and determine if the class members have answered the questions correctly.

2. CLASS LEADERSHIP

- a. **Be prepared.** Regardless of the time the class is scheduled to meet, you should be in room at least five to ten minutes prior to the beginning of the class. You should prepare the room by arranging the chairs and eliminating everything that might distract the class members. You should also pray that God would convene upon the class discussion time and change lives for His glory. You should sit so that you can see a wall clock at all times. It is less offensive to glance at a wall clock than to look down at your watch. By doing this, you can keep track of the progress of the lesson and complete the entire lesson within the allotted time.
- b. **Greet the class members as they enter the room.** A warm welcome is always an appropriate gesture of Christian love and the individual responses of the class members will give you valuable insight regarding their state of mind. This will help you anticipate the initial response of the class members to the questions. Some might be discouraged as a result of having a difficult day and not be willing to participate enthusiastically in the group discussion time.
- c. **Start the group discussion time on time every time.** The Group Leader will generally need the entire class period to complete all the questions in the weekly lessons. By starting the class on time, the class leader demonstrates to the class members that he values their time and wants the class to hear what each person has to share with the rest of the class.
- d. **Always begin with prayer.** The Group Leader should take a brief time to ask God to bless the group discussion time and to give the group members the courage to share what God has taught them. If one (or more) in the group indicates that he has a special prayer need, the Group Leader should include any special prayer needs in his opening prayer. The Group Leader may also elect to lead the class in such a

way that there are a few minutes (e.g., 5-7 minutes) at the end of the group discussion time for the group members to prayer for one another. (Note: It is important to realize that the Lamplighters Bible Study is a Bible Study - it is not a church service, a fellowship time, or a prayer service.)

- e. **Read the Scripture passage.** Ask the class members to open their Bibles and turn to the main Scripture passage that you will be studying. If the passage is a chapter or less, read the entire passage yourself to the class or ask for a volunteer(s) to read. Never arbitrarily appoint someone to read the Bible out loud to the group! Even if the person can read well, there may be someone in the group that might fear that you will ask them. This may be enough to prevent them from attending the group in the future.
- f. **Begin the first question immediately.** The Group Leader can lead the class discussion 1) by asking those who are willing to answer to raise their hand, 2) by asking those who are willing to answer to simply speak out or, 3) by asking the class if they would be willing to answer in sequence around the room. If you choose option # 3, class members should be given the option of passing to the next person if they do not feel comfortable with their answer. No one should be forced to read or answer a specific question.
- g. **Encourage other answers and discussion.** If you receive a wrong answer or an incomplete answer, you should tactfully thank the person and ask for additional answers until the right answer is given. The Group Leader should lead by example by giving scriptural evidence for a specific interpretation.
- h. **Complete the entire lesson.** This is critical! You must control the pace of the Bible Study by encouraging more discussion on certain questions and limiting discussion on others. If you feel the discussion on a particular question is dragging on or someone asks you a question that is a sidetrack, you should draw the class back to the Bible Study and proceed to the next question.
- i. **Don't teach, but do lead.** The Group Leader is a Bible Study discussion leader. You are not just a class facilitator who moderates the class discussion. On the other hand, you are not a teacher in the traditional sense of a lecturer. If you talk too much, you will quickly discourage others from participating. If you do not lead the class, someone else will take over and the lessons will not be completed. In other words, you will lose control of the class. When this happens, class members will become discouraged because you are not able or willing to lead the class effectively.
- j. **Control the class discussion.** The Group Leader is responsible for controlling the class. The person who answers out of turn or wants to answer questions but hasn't done his or her lesson can ruin a class. You will need to exercise grace, wisdom, and courage to handle the various class situations without embarrassment. (Note: The Lamplighters Leadership Manual provides detailed instruction on how to handle various class problems.)
- k. **Be natural and relaxed.** The Group Leader should convey to the class a relaxed disposition. This will help the members of the class enjoy the study of God's Word.