



Advent Bible studies

Structure of the studies

A series of studies looking at the coming of Jesus Christ, for the run up to Christmas. These studies are designed for a mixed group of Christians and seekers. Be aware that you may have to pause sometimes to re-explain the gospel.

There are a lot of questions in each study, but you will notice that several of them are simple comprehension questions and should not take more than a couple of minutes. I recommend that you do the study yourself before running it with prisoners, so that you can see which questions are likely to take up more time, and have a good understanding of the answers, and where the study is going.

Each study is designed to last for about 90 minutes (the 'Stations of Christmas' studies are about 45 minutes long). Guidance for timings are given, which should help you to see when to keep discussion brief and when to go a bit deeper! If you get diverted, and don't finish the first set of questions, make sure you study at least one application question before you close. I would suggest that you take a break around half-way. If you only have an hour, just do the starred * questions.

Each study is written out twice, once for leaders (*with a guide to answers*) and once for participants. The 90 minute studies are laid out in 2 sections:

What does the passage say and mean?

Please don't be put off by the number of questions in a study! These studies contain some comprehension questions – it is important that we understand what the passage literally says. These questions can be taken fairly quickly. Try not to go too deep with them - they just aim to set the background. There are also some deeper questions to help the group to think, and unpack the meaning of the passage. There are some interactive questions,

to keep people who have short attention spans engaged:

Self-Directed Learning – SDL – 3 questions that need to be prepared. Write them on flip-chart paper, spaced out so that there is room to write the answer. Prepare enough flip-chart sheets for the group to work in pairs, and provide enough marker pens for them to write their answers. When they are finished, download the answers as a group, with a leader co-ordinating the discussion.

Sticker Questions – Write the question on the top of a flip-chart. Give the group stickers or post-it's and ask them to write the answer to the question on their sticker. Give them biro's to do this. Ask them to stick their stickers on the flip-chart. When they are finished, the leader reads out the answers, and then explains the right answer to the group.

Shout-out Questions – these questions are designed to be asked of the whole group and their answers written on a flip-chart. This method of teaching tends to encourage people to give more answers than they would in a simple group discussion.

How can I live according to these truths in my life?

Each study ends with some application questions. These application questions are very important, but should not be tackled without understanding what the Bible says – we cannot apply the Bible to our lives if we have not read and understood it!

Bibliography

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