

RULES FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSION

Rule #1 – The more meaningful the relationships, the more meaningful the study. The impact of your study material will typically never exceed the impact of the relationships through which it was studied. In a sterile environment, even the best material is suppressed.

Rule #2 – Honestly face the question, “Do I really want a discussion?” A true discussion presents the possibility of a loss of control. Resist the urge to teach. Resist the urge to persuade. Actions that show evaluation, control, strategy, superiority, and certainty all have a cooling effect on spontaneity, a distinctive of discussion. A leader’s aim should be to stir up others to the point where they’re willing to take the risk of saying what they think and becoming involved.

Rule #3 – Come Prepared (2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Timothy 4:13, 15).

- i. Study and know the passage – make application to your own life
- ii. Mark highly significant questions in study
- iii. Be selective
 - Trust people to do their homework
 - Don’t duplicate everything they did in study
 - Pick 3-5 questions to discuss
 - Leave time at end for burning questions
- iv. Write new questions
 - Launching Questions. These get the discussion rolling (warm up) by posing a problem that needs to be solved or by eliciting their previous experience.
 - 1) What are some of the hardest things about sharing your faith?
 - 2) What is your favorite promise in the Bible?

- Understanding Questions. These help the participants interpret the biblical text and get at the author's meaning. They tend to be more specific, whereas launching questions are more general.
 - 1) According to 1 Cor. 12:7, why does God give us spiritual gifts?
 - 2) What event in the life of Christ fulfills the prophecy given in Isa. 7:14?

- Applying Questions. These help participants apply the truth of Scripture to their daily lives. They help people think about how biblical principles look today.
 - 1) Read what Paul says to slaves and masters in Eph 6:5-9? If Paul were writing today, what do you think he would say to employers and employees?
 - 2) Jesus said that if you are offering your sacrifice and realize that your brother has something against you, that you are to first go home and make things right with your brother (Matt 5:23-24). How does that apply to us today?