

Group Bible Study—Old Testament Facilitator Guidelines

Before Beginning the Group Bible Study:

- 1.) Establish a pace that is right for you and your study group: Each chapter of your *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* study guide is divided into five sections. You and your group can select our 8-week or 16-week Study Schedule. For a more in depth study, extend the study time for each chapter.
- 2.) Print copies of the Study Schedule, Sample Section Summary, and Blank Section Summary for each member of your group. You will use the Sample Section Summary during the first session to demonstrate to your group how each session will be conducted. After the first session, group members are to complete the following assignments before coming to the next session:
 - a. Read *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* according to the Study Schedule established for the group.
 - b. Complete a Section Summary for each section of their assigned reading before proceeding to the next section.

During the group sessions, you will lead the group in a discussion of their completed Section Summaries. At the end of each chapter, you will facilitate a discussion of the Chapter Review Questions and Personal Reflections in your study guide.

Conducting the First Session:

- 1) Open with prayer. Each chapter of your *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* study guide begins with an opening prayer. You can use this prayer or say your own prayer.
- 2) Welcome members and introduce yourself. Ask each member to introduce themselves and briefly describe what they would like to get out of this study. If you prefer, you can create your own icebreaker to introduce members.
- 3) Ask a member or several members to read the following aloud from their Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament study guide:
 - a. Chapter 1 Summary: The Beginning of Mankind , page 24
 - b. Chapter 1, Section 1: The Creation, pages 27 thru 29
- 4) Distribute the Sample Section Summary which has already been completed for Chapter 1, Section 1: The Creation. Explain that the Section Summary helps us organize our thoughts, remember what we've read, and journal lessons learned and how lessons apply to us personally. If we want to get more out of our Bible reading:
 - a. Read thoughtfully, asking questions. Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
 - b. Look for lessons learned and how these lessons apply to our lives.
 - c. Ask the Holy Spirit for an inspirational thought for the day. Your thought for the day can be a passage of Scripture or a phrase based on your reading.

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- d. Meditate on your thought for the day throughout the day for inspiration, spiritual guidance, and to experience God's presence.
- 5) Review the Sample Section Summary which has already been completed for Chapter 1, Section 1: The Creation.
- 6) Explain that the Holy Spirit, our Teacher, gives us different "lessons learned" and "thoughts for the day" based on our particular needs. Ask members to identify the lessons they learned as they read Chapter 1, Section 1. Lead the group in a discussion of their lessons learned, personal application, and thought for the day.
- 7) Give instructions about how subsequent sessions will be conducted. Ask members to read assigned sections of *Big Picture of the Bible* according to the Study Schedule. Distribute copies of Blank Section Summaries or ask members to print copies from our website. Encourage them to prepare a Section Summary for each section of their assigned reading before proceeding to the next section. Explain that you will lead the group in discussions of their completed Section Summaries. Answer any questions group members may have.
- 8) Close with prayer. Each chapter of *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* includes a closing prayer. You can use the prayer in your study guide or say your own prayer.

Conducting Subsequent Sessions:

- 1) Open with prayer. Each chapter of *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* includes an opening prayer. You can use the prayer in your study guide or say your own prayer.
- 2) Lead the group in a discussion of the Section Summary. Use the first page of the Section Summary to review answers to the questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Use the second page to discuss lessons learned, how lessons apply, and inspirational thoughts.
- 3) Assign reading and homework for next session based on your Study Schedule.
- 4) Close with prayer. Each chapter of *Big Picture of the Bible—Old Testament* includes a closing prayer. You can use the prayer in your study guide or say your own prayer.