

TRIAL MEETING FORMAT

PRESENTING A BIBLE DISCUSSION

As everyone arrives, follow the plan that you as facilitators have set in advance, making the space welcoming, greeting everyone warmly, keeping on track with the time, and helping the group grow comfortable with each other.

Welcome (1 min.)

Thank everyone for coming. Tell them how long the meeting will last and what time you'll end. Explain this kind of group and your role as both facilitators and participants.

Introductions (10 min.)

Ask everyone to give their name, where they live, and a favorite hobby. Go first, keeping it to a minute.

Ask Icebreaker Question(s) (10-20 min.)

Respond first, modeling how much time to take, and giving everyone time to think. Examples:

- *Where are you from and what did living there teach you about life?*
- *What was the best time of your life? Why?*
- *What is one of your happiest childhood memories?*
- *What was the best gift you ever gave? . . . received?*
- *If you could relive one vacation, which would it be?*

Sample a Bible Discussion

Intro to the Sample Bible Discussion

Provide Bibles, printed Scripture, or a link to Mark 2.

Explain that you are going to sample a discussion of the Bible from the book of Mark, and that it's important to have guidelines for the discussion so everyone understands how this kind of group will work.

Group Guidelines (5 min.)

Pass around Group Guidelines cards and ask for a volunteer to read the guidelines. After each guideline is read you can add any comments that you think would be helpful. Ask someone else to read the Discussion Tips.

[See reverse side]

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Sample Bible Discussion (15 min.)

(No need to print the questions for everyone.)

Have someone read Mark 2:1-12. Ask the questions in the [Mark 2](#) sample, discussing them as a group so everyone gets the idea of what this would be like.

Wrap Up and Conclude (10 min.)

1. Affirm the group's participation and suggest meeting again.

I have really enjoyed our time together! . . . What did you think? . . . I would love to have more discussions like this with you.

2. Give option(s).

If we were to meet again, what do you think about this idea? [pre-select option(s) to offer]

- ☐ **Mark** (18 weeks). The book of Mark is about "Who is Jesus?" We can start with four weeks and then see if we want to go on.
- ☐ **Conversations with Jesus** (8 weeks) Eyewitness accounts of Jesus' interactions.
- ☐ **Finding Peace in an Anxious World** (6 weeks) See what the Bible says about dealing with anxiety.
- ☐ **Foundations for Faith** (6 weeks). Get an overview of the core message of the Bible.
- ☐ Other (see [Level 1 options](#))

3. Ask who is interested.

Which option sounds most intriguing?

Who's in? You could also invite other friends who might be interested.

4. Share contact information.

5. Discuss details.

What day, time, and location would work for you?
Explain how you will get discussion guides to them and how much they cost.

As participants are leaving, be sure to thank each one for coming.

After the meeting, decide who will contact each participant, to follow up and hear what they think about their experience in the Trial Meeting. Pray for everyone who came and for others who may also join you.

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