

Q Place Quickstart Guide

The book *How to Start a Q Place* walks you through crucial elements in the process of starting a Q Place group. The *Q Place Quickstart Guide* works well as a supplement (not a stand-alone) tool to check your progress and to ensure that you cover all the essentials.

PREPARATION

- ☐ Make your commitment to start a Q Place group.
- ☐ Pray for one or two co-facilitators and invite them to join you on this adventure. Begin to meet regularly as a team, going through [How to Start a Q Place](#) and other resources.
- ☐ Pray for discernment and make a list of people that each of you could invite.
- ☐ Set a date and a place for your Trial Meeting. (Include time to pray together beforehand.)
- ☐ If you're not ready to set a date, then identify your next step:
 - If your challenge is: “How do I find people to come?” then go through the Art of Noticing, Praying, Listening, or Asking Questions —and practice! (Get the [9 Arts Complete Guide](#) or [9 Arts 4-Session Packs](#))
 - If your challenge is: “A Trial Meeting just seems like a big step!” then host a more casual event.
 - If your challenge is: “How do I invite someone to a group for seekers?” then pay special attention to *How to Start a Q Place* Chapter 3, and check out Invitation Best Practices and Invitation Samples in [Group Tools](#) at QPlace.com.
- ☐ Discuss the format of the Trial Meeting, deciding who will take each role needed for a practice run. (See “Trial Meeting” on the next few pages.) Practice the Trial Meeting as a team.
- ☐ Look at “Growth,” the last stage, and become familiar with discussion resource options. For any discussion option that your group will use, practice explaining the guidelines for your group.

INVITATION

As facilitators, be consistent, personal, and straightforward in your invitations. You are hosting a group in your home (or office, or coffee shop, etc.) to have a conversation about God (or to discuss questions about life, God, and the Bible). You'd love to have them come once and try it out. If they decide that it is something they would like to continue, then they are welcome to keep meeting with the group.

- ☐ Work on your invitation wording with your team. (Check out Invitation Samples and Invitation Best Practices in [Group Tools](#) at QPlace.com.)
- ☐ If possible, make the invitation in person or over the phone. People have also used letters or emails to invite their friends and neighbors to a group.
- ☐ Follow up with the people you invited by calling or sending an email to confirm the plans and to provide more details.

TRIAL MEETING

In the Trial Meeting, your job as facilitators is to help everyone feel comfortable, model what a Q Place group is like, and suggest options that are likely to be a good fit for ongoing discussions.

TRIAL MEETING PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use these pages to plan who will cover each element of your trial meeting.

You can use the Trial Meeting Format Card as a handy guide in your Trial Meeting itself. (In [Coaching Resources](#), Session 4.) Print, cut, and add notes as needed.

- _____ **Provide refreshments** _____ **Greet and provide nametags** _____ **Be the note-taker**
- _____ **Watch the clock to start and end on time** _____ **Get contact information**
- _____ **Welcome** (1 min.)
Thank everyone for coming. Mention how long the meeting will last, what this group is about, and your role as both facilitators and participants.
- _____ **Start with introductions** (10 min.)
Ask everyone to give their name, where they live, and a favorite hobby. Respond first, modeling how much time to take.
- _____ **Ask icebreaker questions** (10-20 min.)
Ideally, use [The Complete Book of Questions](#). (See instructions in chapter 4 of *How to Start a Q Place*.) Otherwise, choose a question like one of these: *Where are you from and what did living there teach you about life? What was the best time of your life, and why? What was the best gift you ever gave? . . . received? If you could relive one vacation, which would it be, and why?*

CHOICE A: Sample a Spiritual Discussion

- _____ **Ask “the God Question”** (10-15 min.)
Once the group is comfortable and connecting, ask, “If you could ask God one question and you knew that he would answer, what would you ask, and why?” Let them know that one of you is writing down these questions and they could be the focus of more discussions. Use good listening skills. Don’t attempt to answer their questions.
- _____ **Read and discuss:** Use Proverbs 4:5-7 (5 min.)
Explain that you will read a short statement from the Bible, and you would like to hear their reaction to it. Read it a few times and then ask for their thoughts. At an appropriate time, ask, “If you believed this statement was true, how would you apply it?”
- _____ **Wrap up and conclude** (10 min.)
 1. **Affirm the group’s participation and suggest meeting again.** *[I have enjoyed our time together! What did you think? . . . I would love to have more discussions like this with you.]*
 2. **GIVE OPTION(S)** (choose one or more):
 - a. We could keep using [The Complete Book of Questions](#) and share our perspectives on life.
 - b. We could discuss some of our questions for God using materials that would help us process those questions. (Tough Questions or Explore God Videos)
 - c. We could see what the Bible says about a topic (like how to deal with anxiety), or we could read and discuss the life of Jesus. (Suggest a Bible Level 1 Option)
 3. **Ask, “Which option sounds most intriguing?” . . . “Who’s in?”** *[If you’re not sure, try it a few times. There’s no pressure to continue. You could also invite friends who might be interested.]*
 4. **Share contact information.**
 5. **Discuss details**—day, time, and location that would work well for those who are interested.

CHOICE B: Sample a Discussion of Mark

- _____ **Have Bibles available** with bookmarks at Mark 2 or printed copies of the Scripture passage, or share a link to an online source (BibleGateway.com, BibleHub, YouVersion, etc).
- _____ **Go through Group Guidelines** (5 min.)
Pass around Group Guidelines cards (Coaching Resources, Session 5) and ask for a volunteer to read the ten 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.
- _____ **Use the Mark Sample** (15 min.)
Ask the questions in the Mark 2:1-12 sample discussion (Coaching Resources, Session 5), so everyone gets the idea of what this would be like. (No need to print out the questions for everyone.)
- _____ **Wrap up and conclude** (10 min.)
 - 1. Affirm the group's participation and suggest meeting again.** *[I have enjoyed our time together! What did you think? . . . I would love to have more discussions like this with you.]*
 - 2. GIVE OPTION(S)** (choose one or more):
 - a. *We could go through the whole book of Mark, seeing the life of Jesus using a discussion guide with questions like the ones we tried out today.*
 - b. *We could choose a different topic and see what the Bible says about that.*
[Give examples like how to deal with anxiety or choose a Level 1 option that fits your group.]
 - 3. Ask, "Which option sounds most intriguing?" . . . "Who's in?"** *[If you're not sure, try it a few times. There's no pressure to continue. You could also invite friends who might be interested.]*
 - 4. Share contact information.**
 - 5. Discuss details**—day, time, and location that would work well for those who are interested. Explain how you will get discussion guides to them and how much they cost.

HOW TO DECIDE ON CHOICE A or B

As you plan for the Trial Meeting, think about the individuals that you expect to come.

- If you think no one is open to the Bible yet, or if you aren't sure, use Choice A.
- If you think most are open or curious about the Bible, use Choice B.

HOW TO DECIDE ON OPTIONS TO GIVE

For both CHOICE A and CHOICE B, under "Wrap up and conclude," plan in advance to give one or more options during the Trial Meeting. To help you decide what to offer, go through the Discussion Resource Options described on the next few pages. Jot in the names of individuals next to the discussion resources that you think are likely to be the best fit for them. Pray and narrow down your list to one to three options to offer in the Trial Meeting.

When you are in the Trial Meeting, be flexible as you make new discoveries about the participants. As God leads, you could add an option that you hadn't planned to give. You can also ask everyone if you can get back with them about a good option for the group after you as facilitators think through the questions they had for God.

AFTER THE TRIAL MEETING

Soon after the Trial Meeting, decide who will contact each participant to follow up and hear what they think about their experience. Pray for everyone who came and for others who may also join you. Feel free to contact your coaches with any questions.

GROWTH

The growth stage starts when your group continues to meet after the Trial Meeting. As co-facilitators, continue to keep the pulse of your group and pray together about what you could discuss next as you approach the end of a series or discussion guide.

DISCUSSION RESOURCE OPTIONS

Below and on the next page, you'll find excellent discussion guide options to choose from when you are starting a new group. As noted on page 3, use these pages to jot in the names of individuals next to the discussion resources that you think are likely to be the best fit for them. When you complete a resource with your group, you can use these pages to help determine your group's next discussion topic.

PRE-BIBLE LEVEL OPTIONS

Open to Discussing Life

The Complete Book of Questions: 1001 Conversation Starters for Any Occasion

The questions range from "Light & Easy" (1-100),
to "Viewpoints" (501-600),
to "Extreme Spiritual Matters" (901-1001)

Simply choose a few questions
to discuss each time you meet.

Open to Discussing God

Tough Questions Discussion Guide Series

How Does Anyone Know God Exists?
What Difference Does Jesus Make?
How Reliable Is the Bible?
How Could God Allow Suffering and Evil?
Don't All Religions Lead to God?
Why Become a Christian?

Authors Garry Poole and Judson Poling formulated the questions in their Tough Questions discussion series with the intent of gently guiding participants through a five-phase discovery process on many common questions that people might bring up as the question that they would ask God.

Explore God Videos: The 7 Big Questions

Does Life Have a Purpose?
Is There a God?
Why Does God Allow Pain and Suffering?
Is Christianity Too Narrow?
Is Jesus Really God?
Is the Bible Reliable?
Can I Know God Personally?

This video series is available at QPlace.com in Video Resources, and a set of discussion questions is linked near the top of the same web page. (To see that specific video series, select the Category "Explore God: 7 Big Questions Videos.")

Simple Format

Q Place Bible Conversation Cards

“Does My Life Have Meaning?”
 “How Can Psalms Help Us Pray?”
 “Is There More to Life than This?”
 Marriage
 Parenting
 “Where’s God When I Hurt?”
 “Who Is Jesus?”

These cards have a standard meeting format, a set of questions that work well for many Scripture passages, and a list of six short passages to discuss. The reverse side of each card also provides guidelines for your group. They’re free through the Q Place Resources Site, in PDF format, 3 per sheet so you can print, cut, and share them with the group.

Q Place Bible Discussion Pages

4 Bible Discussions in Times of Crisis
 4 Bible Discussions in Times of Uncertainty
 “Can I Know God Personally?”
 Christmas Discussions
 Easter Discussions
 Thanksgiving Discussions

Bible Discussion Pages are also topical, providing Scripture with a set of questions that is uniquely designed to fit each passage.

They are available, free, through the Q Place Resources Site in PDF format, 8.5 x 11, and you can print and share them with the group.

Printed Discussion Guides

Q Place’s Bible Discussion Guides (Level 1: New to the Bible)

Mark: Discover Jesus or *The Book of Mark: Simplified English*
Finding Peace in an Anxious World
Foundations for Faith
Conversations with Jesus
They Met Jesus
The Passion of Jesus (great for a heritage of observing Lent)
Genesis (great for Jewish or Muslim participants)

Q Place Bible discussion guides have helped untold numbers of people get into the Bible and make discoveries in group discussions. They are available for purchase in print. In PDF format, these “new-to-Bible” guides are free of charge.

In the Q Place Resources Site, click “View Sample” to download and print a sample of any Q Place Bible study guide. Go through a sample discussion with your group so they can see what it would be like before they commit to the study. (We highly recommend the Mark 2 sample study as soon as your group is open to trying it.)

Since Q Place has discussion guides in three levels of Bible experience, there’s a seamless transition from coming to know Jesus to growing in him. You can find all Q Place Discussion Resources [here](https://www.QPlace.com/here). (You can also find that PDF any time by clicking on the green band at the top of the Q Place Resources Site, [QPlace.com/Resources](https://www.QPlace.com/Resources).)

GUIDELINES

Whatever you choose to discuss, start off with guidelines so that everyone will understand how the group will work.

For example, if you are going to discuss Explore God Videos, you can give informal guidelines like these:

- This group is an opportunity for all of us to consider what we think about many spiritual issues.
- We'll watch two short films and then discuss them, poke holes in them, agree, or disagree.
- There's nothing for you to prepare each week, and you can participate at whatever level you feel comfortable.
- This group is about discussion and exploring important questions together.
- We're on the journey just like you. The reality is that none of us has it all figured out. We all have questions and we can probably learn something from everyone.
- Let's agree to be respectful of each other's views and not argue or debate. We're here to foster great conversation around some of the most important questions we all have.

For Tough Questions discussions, you can read or summarize points given in the "Getting Started" section of the each guide.

Q Place Bible Studies have guidelines printed inside each book, and Group Guidelines Cards are also available in [Group Tools](#) at QPlace.com so that you can print, cut, and share them with every group participant.

MEETING FORMAT

Ramp Up (10-15 min.) Check in with what's going on in each other's lives or ask an icebreaker.

Discussion (30-60 min.) Use the option you have chosen.

Wrap Up (15 min.) "How can we pray for each other?"