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4 Quick Tips for Leading a Bible Study

A practical reference for small group and Bible study leaders

1 Come Prepared: Prayer + Study

- Pray for your group — comfort, openness, focus, growth in Christ
- Pray for yourself — wisdom, discernment, creativity, Spirit's guidance
- Study ahead — know the passage, anticipate confusing questions, plan what to prioritize if time is short
- Short on time? Let your quiet time be your study time — you will meet with God and get to know his Word well enough to teach it.

2 Encourage Openness

- Engage with your group before the lesson begins — small talk and connection lower walls before discussion even starts
- Use icebreakers to warm up the group
- Stay positive and encouraging
- Call on people kindly (but don't pressure)
- Be transparent — sharing your own thoughts, struggles, and questions gives others permission to do the same

3 Give People Time to Process

- Slow down when reading or asking questions
- Count silently to 7 before repeating or rewording a question
- Don't fear silence, embrace it — God is at work
- Print questions for participants — following along helps them process and engage
- Let people write responses before sharing if needed

4 Prompt More Responses

- Use "What else?" or "Who else?" after open-ended questions — avoid "Anything else?" which lets people opt out with a quick no
- Ask follow-up questions — "What made you think of that?" or "Where did you find that in the passage?" — trains your group to go back to the text
- Try partner sharing for open-ended or application questions — pairs discuss first, then invite a few to share their own answer or their partner's
- Set a minimum out loud: "I want at least 3 people to share before we move on" — then hold the silence until it works