The Sword of the Spirit.

Small Group Studies

Frameworks for reading the Bible

As we look at what God has to say about the Bible in the series: Sword of the Spirit, we're going to use two frameworks for reading the Bible in Small Groups. These are designed to equip everyone in ways to read the Bible for themselves and to provide a fresh approach to reading the Bible in our groups. The first two studies will use the Modified Swedish Method, and the last two studies will use the COMA method.

Modified Swedish Method

This method, first used with a group of Swedish university students, helps us explore the Bible text by working through 5 symbols.

1. Read the passage aloud

2. Each group member reads through the passage to themselves, and then writes down between one and three points in the *Light Bulb* and *Question Mark* sections.

3. Come back as a group and share and discuss your *Light Bulb* thoughts, then your *Question Mark* thoughts.

4. As a group, think of and discuss some thoughts under the *Cross* section.

5. Individually, spend some time thinking through the *Arrow* and *Speech Bubble* sections. Then share as a group and discuss.

6. Pray together in response to God's word

Modified Swedish Method

Light Bulb: This is anything that shines through the passage. What stood out to you, or was interesting?

Question Mark: This is for questions you have when you read. What is confusing? What might you need to discuss with others so you can understand it better?

Cross: This step looks at how the passage relates to Jesus. What does what you have just read tell you about who Jesus is and what he's done for us?

Arrow: This is the application section where we ask how the Bible can apply to our lives. How should we respond to what God has said to us?

Speech Bubble: The Bible has good news for everyone. This is a reminder to speak to others about what we have read. Who could you share what you have learned with?

Study 1: Psalm 119

Read Psalm 119:1-24 (or through to verse 40 if you wish!)

Hint: Imagine if Jesus was speaking this psalm. Would it work for Jesus to speak these words for himself?

Notes & Prayer Points

Study 2: 2 Peter 1:12-21

Read 2 Peter 1:12-21

Notes & Prayer Points

The COMA method

This method helps us go a little deeper in understanding a passage by looking at its place within the wider story of God's saving plan and asks a some more specific questions.

COMA stands for:

Context **O**bservation **M**eaning **A**pplication

- Read the passage aloud
- Ask some **Context** questions of the text:
    - What sort of writing is this? (E.g. a letter, narrative, poem)
    - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
    - What has happened so far?
- Ask some **Observation** questions of the text:
    - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text?
    - What surprises are there?
    - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
    - What is the main point or points?
- Ask some **Meaning** questions of the text:
    - How does this text relate to other parts of the book?
    - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
    - What does this teach us about God?
    - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
- Ask some **Application** questions of the text:
    - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding?
    - Is there some attitude I need to change?
    - How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?
- Pray together about what you've learned

Study 3: Acts 8:26-40

Read Acts 8:26-40

Context

- What sort of writing is this? (E.g. a letter, narrative, poem)
- Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
- What has happened so far?

Observation

- Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text?
- What surprises are there?
- What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
- What is the main point or points?

Meaning

- How does this text relate to other parts of the book?
- How does the passage relate to Jesus?
- What does this teach us about God?
- How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?

Application

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding?
- Is there some attitude I need to change?
- How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

Notes & Prayer Points

Study 4: 2 Timothy 3:1-4:8

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-4:8

Context

- What sort of writing is this? (E.g. a letter, narrative, poem)
- Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
- What has happened so far?

Observation

- Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text?
- What surprises are there?
- What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
- What is the main point or points?

Meaning

- How does this text relate to other parts of the book?
- How does the passage relate to Jesus?
- What does this teach us about God?
- How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?

Application

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding?
- Is there some attitude I need to change?
- How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

Notes & Prayer Points