

Discovering
CORINTHIANS

**BIBLE STUDY AND QUIZZING
FOR YOUTH**

GENE SANFORD & BAREFOOT MINISTRIES





BIBLE STUDY AND QUIZZING FOR YOUTH

BY

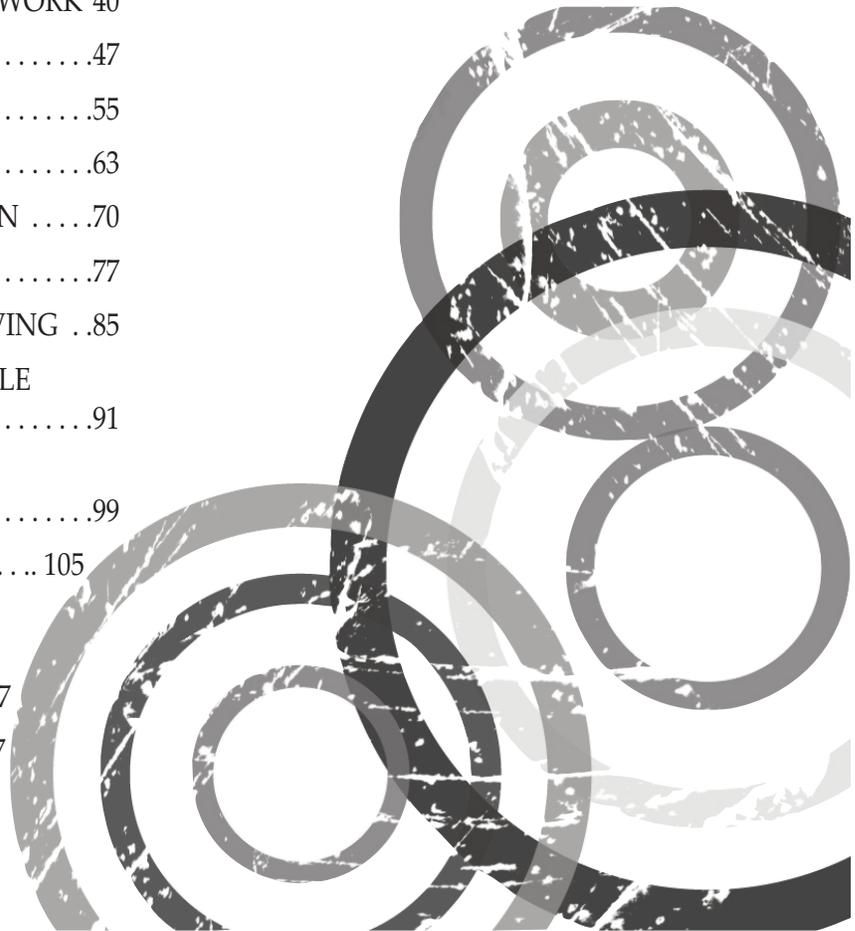
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User's Guide for Discovering Corinthians

Discovering Corinthians is best used in a "Discovery Group" setting. A Discovery Group is a group of youth committed to growing in God's Word, meeting regularly for a set period of time to study and share. The use of Discovery Groups is described in more detail in the next section of this guide. It also serves as a great group study workbook for youth involved in Bible quizzing.

Here are some guidelines to help facilitate your use of *Discovering Corinthians*:

- This study is divided into 13 Study sessions. Each Group Study lesson is written to take approximately 45 minutes. This Bible study is meant to be only a

part of a total session that includes you and your youth sharing insights from your Personal Study plus events and activities of the week and ending with prayer. A meeting of an hour to an hour and a half will provide adequate time for these components.

- Each Group Study session covers a specific section of Corinthians and also identifies a key verse for you and your participants to memorize.
- This leader's guide gives you a complete session plan for the entire Bible study portion of your weekly meeting. Each session contains the following elements designed to assist you in your preparation and presentation.

✓ **TEACHING AIMS** and **PERSPECTIVE** — these will help you gain an understanding of the "main points" of the lesson.

✓ **BIBLE BACKGROUND** — this extensive section will provide you with additional information that will broaden your understanding of the passage being discussed.

- The actual group study time is designed to take place through the structure of the session activities. After you've prepared yourself through studying the Purpose, Perspective, and Bible Background, read through the session activities to develop



an understanding of what to expect from the coming group study time. Make sure you understand exactly what is intended to happen through each activity; remember, also, that these activities are here to assist you. Feel free to adjust them as necessary to fit your group environment, resources, and/or time frame.

- Regarding the group activities, you will find specific instructions that actually say, “Say, ...” or are printed in *bold italics*. This does not mean that you must quote this information word for word to your students. We’ve included this material only as a guide for you regarding what we recommend to be communicated to your group.
- Each session provides you with four activities, each one intended to bring your students into an encounter with the Scripture through a certain perspective. These activities are: Engage the Word, Explore the Word, Examine the Word, and Experience the Word. The session activities are intended to give you strong teaching options without neglecting your own creativity. Adapt and tailor the sessions to meet the individual needs and personalities of your group.
- Students are encouraged to keep personal notebooks as they read and study during the next several weeks. During the group sessions, they will often be asked to reflect in writing. Encouraging each youth to have a “notebook-type” journal will keep you from having to provide blank notepaper each time.

The first place to start on your journey through these books of the Bible is with the Word itself. Read through the books entirely before you begin your Bible studies. Then look through this leader’s guide and acquaint yourself with the contents.

GUIDE TO DISCOVERY GROUPS

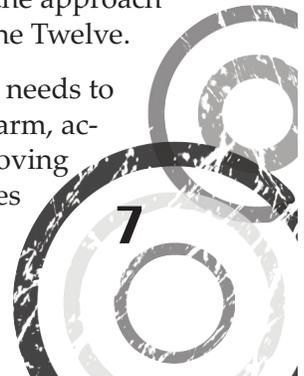
An effective small-group Bible study ministry for youth in the local church begins with Discovery Groups. Discovery Groups are important for:

- *communicating acceptance*
- *teaching by example*
- *building personal relationships*
- *modeling discipleship in a real-life setting*

There are many ways to start a Discovery Group in your church. The best way is to **invite** all of your youths to be involved. Use posters and promotional announcements beginning two or three weeks in advance to spread the word about the group. Contact persons you feel would especially benefit from the study. Also, make personal contact with those whom you think will be involved in youth Bible quizzing in the coming year, encouraging them to be involved in the group.

Another way to form a Discovery Group is to hand-pick youth who are already strongly committed to becoming all God wants them to be. These highly motivated youth will usually respond more eagerly to discipling than students at an earlier stage in their spiritual maturation. This approach to discipling is biblical and appropriate for leadership development and training; if you are not convinced, spend some time reading through the Gospels, noticing the approach Jesus chose in His training of the Twelve.

But remember, every Christian needs to be discipled and belong to a warm, accepting fellowship. In such a loving fellowship, halfhearted disciples will start to catch a vision of



their potential and will begin to develop a taste for further growth.

In many churches, all the youth will fit into a single small group. If you need more than one group, however, consider providing different groups for those with different levels of commitment. You may want to hand-pick a group for in-depth discipling, then provide other groups for those not yet ready for the intense commitment expected at this level. Rather than dividing the youth arbitrarily, you may want to set specific conditions for membership in the more in-depth group. These conditions might include disciplines of attendance, spiritual journaling, Bible study, accountability, and so on.

Any Discovery Group member must exhibit some level of **commitment**. An obvious minimum commitment is to attend the group regularly. To build mutual trust in the group, members have to get to know each other. If one group member drops in only occasionally, he or she will be a relative stranger to the rest of the group . . . at least at the level of sharing possible in the Discovery Group. The presence of a relative stranger will immediately reduce the trust level in the group, limiting the openness of sharing. Of course, some absences are inevitable. The needed commitment here is for each group member to make group attendance a very high priority so that attendance is regular. A discussion of the priority of group attendance can be helpful in the early weeks of the group.

What's the best **time** for a Discovery Group? Again, it depends upon your goals and the personality of your group. Some youths can commit themselves to a weeknight meeting, while

others may find a weekend afternoon meeting is best.

How long should we continue the Discovery Group? As long as the youths involved can stay committed. Some groups have continued year-round. Once they finished the 13-week study from the Discovering Series workbooks, they worked chapter-by-chapter on other books of the Bible or started on a new Discovering Series workbook.

It is generally best to run the group for 13 weeks. After the study has finished, there may be other youths who want to be a part of the Discovering Group. If so, locate a leader for them. Some of the youths in the original group may want to continue, while others may want to focus more on other activities. If you cannot continue as a leader, be sure another adult leader is there to carry on.

How does a person lead the Discovery Group Bible study? A small group leader is a person who makes it easy for the group to relate. He or she keeps the group moving, nudges it back on track when it begins to stray off the subject, and encourages participation in group discussions and activities. In the Bible study segment of the Discovery Group session, the leader's role is to help group members discover *for themselves* what the scripture means—how they can apply it to their lives—and then encourage them to follow through with obedience. The group leader's role is not to be a resident authority who *tells* group members what the scripture means and how they are to apply it to their lives. He or she must resist the temptation to lecture. This leader's guide offers specific suggestions for each session to help the leader serve as an effective Bible study facilitator.

USER'S GUIDE FOR DISCOVERING CORINTHIANS

While the Discovery Group leader is not authoritarian, he or she is an authority. That authority, though, is a spiritual authority, flowing out of the authenticity of the leader's life. Youths follow the leader, not because the leader forces himself or herself on them, but because of the kind of person the leader is.

Don't be discouraged if some weeks the group seems especially distracted or if a session is sidetracked by one youth's current crisis. Realize that when working with youth, you will need to have realistic expectations and be ready to adjust. Don't be afraid, however, to intervene and steer the group back on track when needed. It might also be easy to be discouraged if you feel like your group isn't functioning like you would like it to. It will take time to establish relationships in some cases. Remember—you have 13 weeks together! Be patient and allow the Holy Spirit to work.

Remember, also, that you cannot expect more from your youth than you are willing to give. If your youth sense that their group leader is halfhearted about the study times or seems preoccupied throughout the meetings or isn't adequately prepared for the discussion, then they will most likely begin to reflect that same level of commitment. Be certain to spend the time necessary beforehand to make sure you are confident in your knowledge of the session's material. You don't need to know all the answers, but be prepared to facilitate an informative, interactive discussion.

And, as a leader, always make one of your top priorities that of keeping the group in your prayers and to ask God to help you be in tune with Him as you guide them. He will be faithful!





Foolishness and Wisdom

PERSPECTIVE

The Bible is a confusing book to many youth. It was written in a time and place far removed from them. The language can sometimes be pretty complicated. And the book is so *long*!

Many youth respond by avoiding their responsibility to study the Bible, preferring instead to simply listen to what other people have to say about it. Unfortunately, that leaves them in the position of relying on others' interpretations and ideas. And it leaves them in a defensive position whenever their beliefs are attacked by non-Christians, especially those who appear to be intelligent and knowledgeable.

This lesson will help your youth understand that the Bible is a "user-friendly" book to the Christian, because the power of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, combined with responsible scholarship, can unlock the wonderful messages of God's Word.

STUDY SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 1:1-2:16

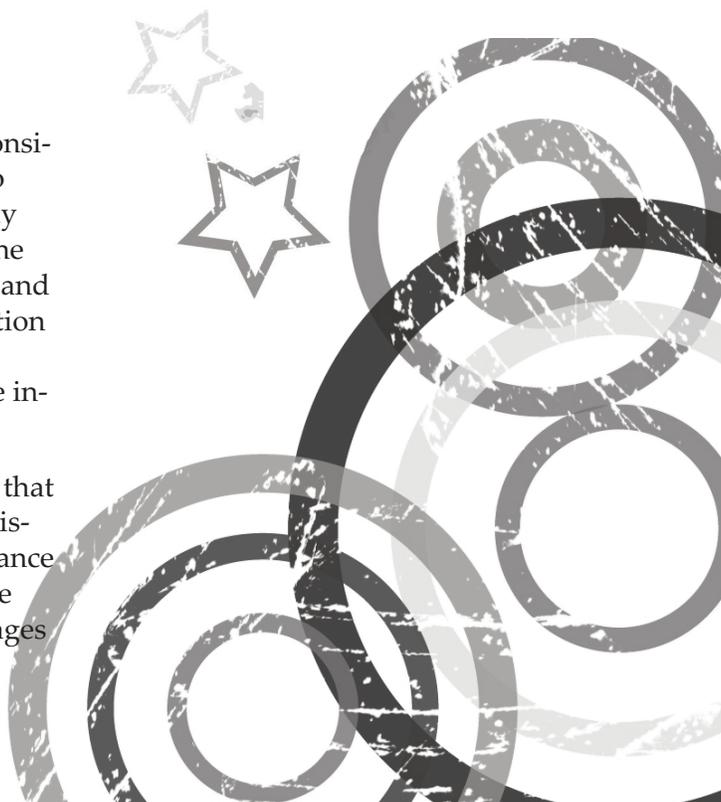
KEY VERSE

"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Realize that spiritual truths must be approached with spiritual wisdom.
2. Appreciated that God wants to teach them truth through both careful scholarship and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. Approach this Bible study with both their minds and their hearts.



BIBLE BACKGROUND

This Bible Background, and the ones that follow, will cover the entire Study Scripture, although only a portion of that scripture is actually used in the Discovery Group session. This is done so that the leader understands the context surrounding the passages and so that he or she is prepared to help their youth.

One of the mistakes that beginning Bible students make is to assume that all portions of Scripture are alike. Actually there are many kinds or genres of literature in the Bible, and it is important to understand what kind of writing we're dealing with. In 1 and 2 Corinthians we are looking at a letter. That makes it different from the Gospels, which are a type of history, or from Psalms, which is poetry.

A large portion of the New Testament is devoted to letters like these, written by the apostle Paul to the churches and people he encountered on his three missionary journeys. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth during his second such missionary journey, founding the church there.

Corinth was one of the three most important cities in the Roman Empire, located as it was at the junction of two major trade and travel routes. It was a wealthy town, known for its excesses and immorality.

Paul wrote this letter, by his own account, because a group of Corinthians had visited him and told him disturbing stories about divisions in the church (1:11). And because

he had received a letter from the church asking several specific questions (7:1). The Corinthian church

was a church in trouble! It was divided by rival factions, caught up in philosophical arguments, plagued with confusion and inappropriate behavior during worship, and struggling with practical questions about ethics and morality.

Where the Book of Romans is primarily a theological letter, 1 and 2 Corinthians are primarily *practical* letters, very specific, very straightforward, and very emotional.

Paul begins 1 Corinthians with his usual greetings, giving no clue to the stern words that would follow (1:1-9). Then he plunges right in to address the problems he had heard about.

In the first century of the Christian Church (this letter was written about A.D. 54) there were no large church buildings or cathedrals. The congregations usually met in the homes of the various believers. Corinth had a number of Christians and probably out of necessity had to divide into smaller groups in order to meet in homes. Perhaps that's where the trouble started.

The word that Paul had received from one of the Corinthians, Chloe (v. 11), was that at least four distinct factions had developed, each one claiming a different Christian "superstar," as its leader. One group claimed Paul, another Apollos, another Cephas (Peter's Greek name), and another, trying to trump the rest, even claimed to be directly in the spiritual lineage of Christ (v. 12).

This was very troubling to Paul, who could see the Corinthian church split into several "denominations." In verses 13-17 he chastises the Corinthians for claiming any leader other than Christ.



LESSON 1: FOOLISHNESS AND WISDOM

As with all Greeks, the Corinthians prided themselves on their learning, their philosophers, and their open-air intellectual debates. Paul apparently saw this as one root of the divisiveness the church was encountering. It is important to read 1:18-2:5 carefully. At first reading it seems that Paul is minimizing the importance of learning and wisdom. That would be out of character for the apostle, since he himself was a great scholar. Paul is simply reminding the Corinthians that the message of Christ is not based on advanced philosophical reasoning, but rather on a simple truth: God took on the form of humankind in Christ and died to redeem the world. This simple truth has, indeed, been a “stumbling block” (v. 23) to many. In its simplicity, this message is “foolishness” to secular scholars and philosophers. But to the Christian, it is no less than the revelation of the “power of God” (v. 18).

The spread of the Early Church was accomplished mostly through the lower classes. Paul refers to this when he reminds the Corinthians that few of them were “wise,” “influential,” or “of noble birth” (v. 26). And yet God had chosen them to be the bearers of the simple message of Christ. Even Paul himself, when he was with them, did not present himself as wise and powerful, but as the humble servant of Christ (2:1).

In 2:6-16 Paul discusses the wonderful truth that “God’s secret wisdom” (v. 7) is revealed to the believer through the Holy Spirit (v. 10). That does not mean that the Bible is a mysterious or mystical book, inaccessible to ordinary people. What it does mean is that one does not understand spiritual truth through the intellect alone, but rather through the spirit working with the intellect. That should be a good reminder to all of us

who engage the task of Bible study. While there is certainly no substitute for careful research and study, the beginning point of Bible study is an attitude of openness and receptiveness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

SESSION ACTIVITIES

ENGAGE THE WORD

It’s Bible Study Time!

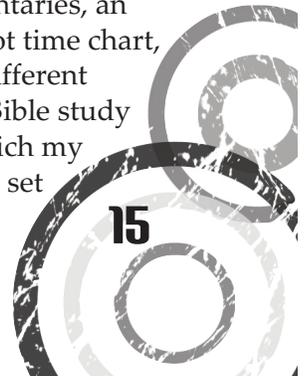
Since this is the first lesson in this series of Bible studies, begin by helping your students focus on how they approach the task of studying the Bible. The first activity describes three fictional youth on their way to a Bible study. To make this activity more interesting, ask three of your youth to take on these roles, complete with props, with you as the narrator.

IT’S BIBLE STUDY TIME

The youth of Westgate Church are arriving for the first session of their fall Bible study group. Let’s stand at the door and watch.

There’s Sara the Scholar, walking up the steps to the church carrying two huge bags that appear to be quite heavy. Hey, Sara, what’s in those bags?

“I’ve got a Bible encyclopedia, a Bible dictionary, three different commentaries, an atlas of the Holy Land, a 12-foot time chart, Bible study guides from two different book stores, and a super new Bible study program for my computer, which my brother Sam is carrying. I’m all set



to tackle any problem or question that comes up tonight!"

And there's Sam the Slacker, strolling up the sidewalk with nothing but his pocket New Testament in hand. Hey, Sam, aren't you prepared for tonight's study?

"You bet I'm prepared. I've got the Word right here. What else do I need? I mean, all you have to do is read what's written, right? It's all there in black and white!"

And here comes Praying Paul, tripping on the cracks in the sidewalk since his eyes are closed. Hey, Paul, what are you doing?

"Can't you see? I'm praying. We're going to be studying the Holy Bible tonight. You've got to wrap yourself up in prayer or you won't understand the Scriptures. God's Word is mysterious and full of hidden messages, and only the person who is tuned in to the Holy Spirit can unravel the secrets!"

Ask: What a Bible study this is going to be! These youth probably won't get past verse 1 before Sara, Sam, and Paul are embroiled in an argument. So who's right? Who has the right approach to studying the Bible? (A show of hands will work, but another idea is to let the three youth who have taken the roles move to corners of the room. The rest of the group can then join the youth they most identify with. At this point in the lesson, don't comment on which of the three approaches is better. Just let the scriptures that follow speak for themselves.)

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. WELCOME TO 1 CORINTHIANS

Read or present in your own words the following information:

When beginning a study of any portion of the Bible, one of the first questions you have to ask yourself is, "What kind of writing is this?" It's the Bible, of course. It's holy writing.

Yes, but in addition to that, what kind of writing is it? In many ways the Bible is an anthology. You've probably had to carry around one of those heavy literature books for an English class that has all kinds of poetry, short stories, drama, and essays in it. That's an anthology. The Bible is an anthology, too, because it contains many different kinds of writing. We have history in books like Genesis, 1 and 2 Kings, and the Book of Acts. We have poetry in books like Psalms and other scattered chapters in the Old and New Testament. And, among other kinds of writing, we have letters.

A big chunk of the New Testament is taken up with letters, most of them written from the Apostle Paul to the various congregations and people he met on his several missionary journeys. That is the kind of writing we encounter with 1 and 2 Corinthians.

Corinth was an important city in the ancient world. In fact, it was the third most important city in the Roman Empire. It was located strategically at the intersection of two important travel and trade routes, one going north and south, the other going east and west. It was a wealthy city, given to excess, and known throughout that part of the world for its immoral living.

LESSON 1: FOOLISHNESS AND WISDOM

Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey, spending a year and a half there and founding a church, all described in Acts 18:1-18. A couple of years later he wrote the Christians in Corinth a series of letters. Although some of those letters have been lost, we have at least two of them preserved, known as 1 and 2 Corinthians.

Apparently Paul wrote the letter we call 1 Corinthians for two reasons: a group of Corinthians had visited the apostle and told him that there was trouble in the young church (see 1:11), and the church had written him a letter containing a number of questions about specific concerns (see 7:1).

Before we dig into this book chapter by chapter, it would be very helpful for us to get a broad overview of the entire letter. You can do that in less than an hour by skimming through the entire book. If your Bible has section titles, read these and then read one or two verses in each section. Don't try to read every verse (unless you have a couple of hours). Just get acquainted with this intriguing letter. Do it before we meet again next week. Well, let's jump into chapter 1.

2. TROUBLE IN RIVER CITY (AND CORINTH, TOO)! (1:1-17)

After his usual friendly greetings (vv. 1-9), Paul plunges right into the problems he had heard about. Because this letter was written before churches began to erect buildings, the church met in the homes of the believers. Since there were way too many Christians in Corinth to meet in one home, various smaller groups began to form and take on their own identity. Apparently some of these groups had adopted various Christian leaders as the leader of their "home church,"

and rivalries between the groups soon erupted.

Have someone from the class read 1 Corinthians 1:1-17 and then discuss the following questions as a class:

- *If you stopped reading after verse 9, what sort of letter would you expect to follow?*
- *Your school has a team name (the Tigers, the Spartans, the Wolverines), a school song, a school mascot, and school colors, all prominently used and displayed at sporting events. In Corinth there were apparently at least four "teams" in the church. How were these "teams" identified? (Note: "Cephas" was the Greek name for the Apostle Peter.)*
- *What was wrong with each of these "teams" claiming a different leader?*
- *Do you see any parallels between what was going on in Corinth and the present church?*

3. WILL ALL THE "BRAINS" PLEASE STAND? (1:18-2:5)

One of the things that all Greeks were proud of was their philosophy. That was true for Corinth as well. The city was filled with men eager to expound at great length on any subject. No doubt some of this fondness for philosophy and intellectual debate entered the church.

Have someone read 1:18-2:5 and discuss these questions as a class:

- *At first glance, it appears that Paul is putting down education and intelligence.*



But we know that Paul himself was a brilliant scholar. He uses the term “foolish” to highlight one of the most important aspects of Christianity. Why do you think that is?

- *Although it is important to become as informed as possible, especially about things that really matter like the Bible and theology, it is also important not to lose sight of the simplicity of the message of Christ. Can you put that message into one simple sentence?*
- *In the early centuries of Christianity, the Church spread fastest among the lower classes, just as it has in many great revivals since. Why do you think Paul reminds the Corinthians of their lowly beginnings in verses 26-31?*
- *Paul even reminds them that when he was with them, he did not use sophisticated arguments or present himself as some great man (2:1-5). What is Paul trying to teach the Corinthians by his own example?*

4. SHHH, I’VE GOT A SECRET (2:6-16)

Continuing with his line of thought, Paul further explains what he means about not being too dependent on human wisdom and intelligence. Here he introduces the idea of the Holy Spirit as the revealer of God’s truth to those who listen to Him.

Have someone read 2:6-16 and answer these questions as a class:

- *Paul talks about “God’s secret wisdom” in verse 7. What do you think this secret is?*

- *You’re at the beginning of a Bible study. The book you’re holding in your hand is, we hope, written with intelligence and knowledge. You’re being encouraged to study and use your mind to explore these passages. Have you taken the time to ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand what these verses are about? If not, do so now.*

EXPERIENCE THE WORD

Now ask your youth to respond again to the three youth from the first activity (Sara, Sam, Paul). Your students should be able to identify what each of those youth is missing.

Sara is too dependent on other people’s scholarship, thinking that you have to have a lot of education to understand the Bible. Sam underestimates the amount of dedication, study, and spiritual discernment that it takes to understand the Bible. And Paul goes too far in making the Bible a magical and mysterious book whose truths can only be unlocked by someone of superior spirituality.

The truth, of course, lies in a combination of all three positions. The Bible isn’t a simple book that can be taken at face value. Nor is it a book that requires either a Ph.D. or some kind of mystic knowledge to understand. What it does require is careful study under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Close the session by giving your youth a few moments of quiet time to invite the Holy Spirit to guide them as they study 1 and 2 Corinthians.

End with prayer.

Bible Quizzing: A Perspective

WHAT IS BIBLE QUIZZING?

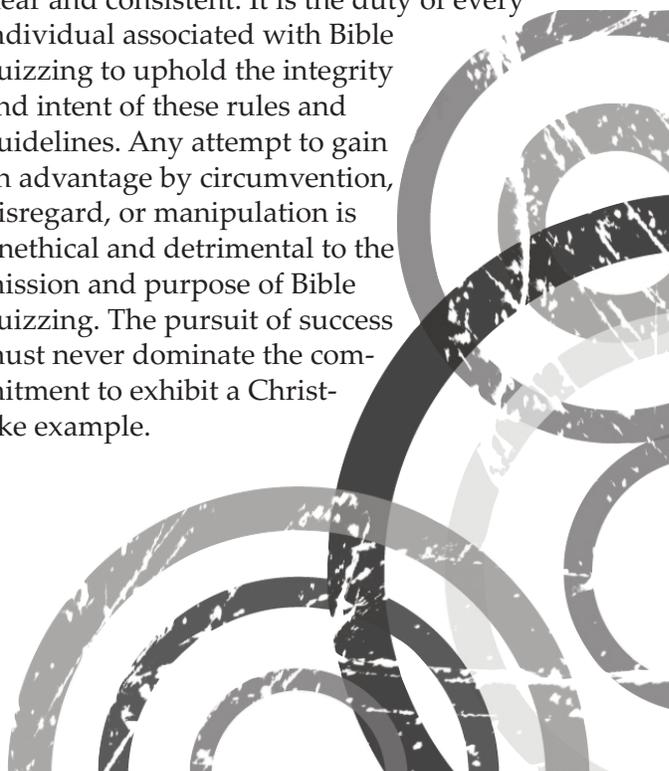
Bible Quizzing is a program that helps youths study and learn about the Scriptures. About once a month, youths from different churches gather for a time of fellowship and competition. In each competition, there are questions about a specific pre-announced portion of Scripture and the teams compete in order to correctly answer those questions.

The official slogan of the Nazarene Youth International is quoted from I Timothy 4:12 - *“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity”*. The purpose of Bible Quizzing is to help cultivate the actions, attitudes, and the lifestyle that are necessary to accomplish this slogan. The Bible Quiz program intends to reach this goal through a tactic that is divided in these different areas:

- An avenue of meaningful **Bible study** for youth to attain a deep and intimate knowledge of Scripture.
- A means of increasing fellowship and interaction among youth around the world.
- An integral part of the **outreach and discipleship** aspects of local church youth ministry.

- A medium for the **training and mentoring** of youth leadership.
- A catalyst for encouraging active participation in **ministry and mission** projects.
- A **bridge** for building relationships between youth from different world regions.
- An arena for exciting Christian **competition**.

Rules alone can never prevent unfair tactics or unsportsmanlike attitudes. However, these rules are necessary in order for the competition aspect of Bible quizzing to be clear and consistent. It is the duty of every individual associated with Bible quizzing to uphold the integrity and intent of these rules and guidelines. Any attempt to gain an advantage by circumvention, disregard, or manipulation is unethical and detrimental to the mission and purpose of Bible quizzing. The pursuit of success must never dominate the commitment to exhibit a Christ-like example.



Practice/Competition Questions

1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 1

- G What is Paul called to be by the will of God?
A. *An apostle of Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:1)*
- A According to 1 Corinthians chapter 1: verse 2, who is our Lord?
A. *Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:2)*
- G In whom is God's grace given you?
A. *Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:4)*
- G In whom have you been enriched in every way?
A. *God (1 Cor. 1:5)*
- G In whom was our testimony about Christ confirmed?
A. *The Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:6)*
- G For what do you eagerly wait?
A. *Our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed (1 Cor. 1:7)*
- G Who will keep you strong to the end?
A. *God (1 Cor. 1:8)*
- A According to 1 Corinthians chapter 1: verse 9, what is God?
A. *Faithful (1 Cor. 1:9)*
- G In what may you be perfectly united?
A. *In mind and thought (1 Cor. 1:10)*
- G Who have informed Paul that there are quarrels among you?
A. *Some from Chloe's household (1 Cor. 1:11)*
- X Who is Cephas?
A. *Peter (1 Cor. 1:12)*
- G Who is thankful that he did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius?
A. *Paul (1 Cor. 1:14)*
- G Into whose name can no one say that you were baptized?
A. *Paul's (1 Cor. 1:15)*
- G Whose household did Paul also baptize?
A. *The household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 1:16)*
- G With what did Christ not send Paul to preach the gospel?
A. *With words of human wisdom (1 Cor. 1:17)*
- G What is the power of God to us who are being saved?
A. *The message of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18)*
- G Whose wisdom will God destroy?
A. *The wisdom of the wise (1 Cor. 1:19)*
- G Who demand miraculous signs?
A. *Jews (1 Cor. 1:22)*
- A According to 1 Corinthians chapter 1: verse 23, what do we preach?
A. *Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1:23)*
- G Who has called both Jews and Greeks?
A. *God (1 Cor. 1:24)*
- G Whose foolishness is wiser than man's wisdom?
A. *God's (1 Cor. 1:25)*



DISCOVERING CORINTHIANS Includes

- User's Guide for Discovering Corinthians
- Guide to Discovery Groups
- 13 Bible Lessons from 1 & 2 Corinthians
- How to Organize a Weekly Bible Quizzing Team meeting and practices
- How to Coach a Quiz Team
- Organizing a Quiz Competition Tournament
- Rules for Bible Quizzing
- Study Tips
- Practice & Competition Questions
- and more!

