

## Discovery Bible Study

There are a lot of resources available on the web about Discovery Bible Study, or DBS, so we recommend learning more there. This handout provides a brief overview of the method.

DBS was created in a cross-cultural ministry setting among least-reached people groups, and is now being used in all types of cultures and settings around the world, among non-believers and believers. While the power to help people change comes only from God, not any method, a number of significant movements to Christ have come about using DBS.

### Key principles of DBS:

- *Studying in natural oikoi (sing. oikos), or communities.* Natural: gathering people who are already connected as friends or family. Oikos: group studies, rather than 1:1. Whenever possible, non-believers should make up the majority.
- *Discovery, rather than teaching.* DBS studies are often called “discovery groups”. Leaders/Facilitators let the text lead rather than providing answers.
- *Discipleship to conversion.* In the same way Jesus taught the disciples and brought them into mission even before they fully understood him, in a DBS we help people begin obeying Jesus’ words from the very first study.
- *Emphasizing obedience and passing it on.* The Bible prizes obeying God above acquiring knowledge about him (cf. John 13:17, 14:15, 15:10). Each DBS ends with a concrete response step, and a plan to share the lesson with someone else.

**DBS is extremely simple, which aids replication.** Even after a first DBS, it would be easy for someone to turn and facilitate the exact same study with another person...and that’s the point! By keeping it simple—no, *really* simple—there is a better chance that they will pass it on. Each element of the discovery group teaches an aspect of discipleship and being the church, as you can see below.

### Here’s the basic structure of a DBS/discovery group:

1. What are you thankful for these days? What are you stressed/worried about? (praise and prayer requests)
2. How did you do with last time’s response? Whom did you tell? (accountability)
3. Read the new passage aloud at least two times. Each person (including you) then tries to re-tell the passage without looking. The others can check and help. Do not overlook this step! It is crucial for our learning and for sharing later. (spiritual formation)
4. What does this passage teach us about God? (spiritual formation)
5. What does this passage teach us about humans? (spiritual formation)
6. Because this is God’s Word to us, how should we respond and put it into practice this week? (Aim for concrete statements that begin with “I will...”) (obeying God)
7. Who needs to hear this story? / Whom will you share this story with this week? (obeying God, evangelism)