

## Encouraging Bible Studies in Indiana District Churches

In our stewardship ministry, our primary goal is to help God's people grow in their relationship with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This relationship will grow as your members faithfully spend time reading and studying God's Word. One of the challenges that many churches face is that people are not making Bible study a priority. Fortunately, pastors and church leaders are in positions to provide meaningful studies to the members along with encouragement to those members to participate.

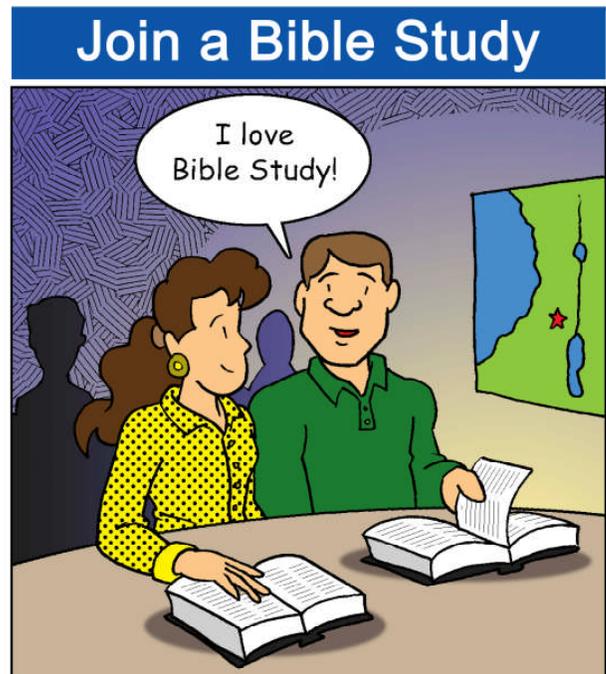
To help provide encouragement to your members to attend Bible studies, I am providing some tools. You are receiving a newsletter article, lay reader talk, a letter to lay leaders, a flyer, a format to publicize Bible studies, and a survey or questionnaire. You can also order a vibrantly colored banner. I believe these materials will be very helpful.

The banner is available in two sizes:  
17 x 23 inches (\$22.00) plus shipping  
32 x 40 inches (\$49.00) plus shipping  
To order, call me (248-644-6150) or email me (stewardshipadv@aol.com). No prepayment is necessary.

In addition to the strengthening of our relationship with Jesus, group Bible studies provide fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. I also have found that, as I spend time in group studies, I am led into more personal study.

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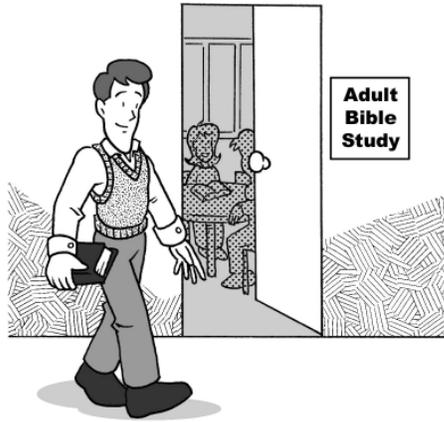
**We live "by every word that comes  
from the mouth of the Lord"  
(Deuteronomy 8:3).**

Newsletter article, mail box stuffer, or bulletin insert

## Why Join a Bible Study?

A big part of church life should be the offering of Bible studies. There is a wide range of interest and involvement in group bible studies among our members. Some are blessed by participating in multiple studies while others have no interest in attending any study. What is your experience and history of attending Bible study? You may fall somewhere in the range from eagerly attending to no interest.

For many, the biggest impediment to attending a Bible study is time. We are so busy with work and activities that we are not willing to make Bible study a priority. However,



Jesus tells us, *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4). Our Savior would remind us that just as we need physical nourishment, so do we need spiritual nourishment from His Word.

God invites us to read and study His Word. God doesn't require us to understand everything, nor does He promise that the Scriptures will solve all our problems. God invites us into a relationship through the words of the Bible with His Son, Jesus, Whom we call the Living Word.

In addition to growing in our relationship with our Savior, Bible studies give us the opportunity to have fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. A bonding often takes place as people share their faith, joys, and challenges.

I hope and pray that these few thoughts will provide a little encouragement for you to find a Bible study to attend and to make regular attendance a priority in your life. You won't be sorry! If I can be of any help in finding a study or answer any questions, don't hesitate to call \_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_ (telephone #) \_\_\_\_\_.

Lay reader talk

## **The Blessings of Bible Study**

Do you find it difficult to find time to give God, the Giver of time, any space in your day? How easy it is to enjoy all of God's gifts while failing to thank Him for them and neglecting to carve out some time to spend with Him.

What a mistake we make in doing so! God gives us His Word and Sacraments for the forgiveness of sin and the nurturing of our faith. Do we want to deprive ourselves of daily and weekly Bible study and worship? By spending time in personal Bible reading and in group Bible studies, our relationship with Jesus deepens, and we are armed to handle the challenges we face.

The writer of Hebrews tells us, "*The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword...*" (Hebrews 4:12). God's Word cuts through any spiritual barrier that stands between us and Him. God's Word gives life. Jesus declares, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Luke 4:4).

In your worship folder, you will find a listing of the Bible studies at our church. If you are not already attending a Bible study, I hope and pray that you will join a Bible study.

We will never regret making God our first priority. The blessings He offers us in His presence during prayer time and study of His Word are lasting, unlike the temporal perks we get through our careers or leisure activities. Nothing compares with spending time in God's Word alone and together with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Letter to church leaders

Dear Church Leader,

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus!

I thank you for your willingness to use your time and talents to serve as a leader in our church. It is a joy for me to be in ministry with you.

To help our people grow in their relationship with Jesus, I believe we have to make a stronger effort to encourage our members to attend the Bible studies that our church offers. God speaks to us through His Word. Jesus said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matthew 4:4). Many of our members are physically well and strong, but their souls are languishing. We need to read and study God's Word for the nourishment of our souls.

I am asking for your help in this endeavor to increase Bible study attendance. I would like your prayers for this effort, and I ask that you encourage people to participate in our Bible studies. I also strongly encourage all of our leaders (elders, council members, committee leaders and members, etc.) to attend (one of) our Sunday morning Bible study (ies). You will grow spiritually and be a good example to our members.

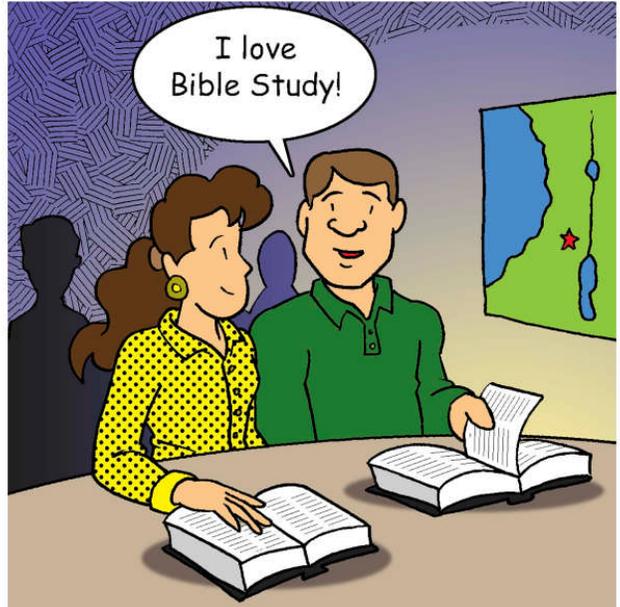
Thank you for your support of the mission and ministry of our church and blessings on all that you do for the Lord!

Serving Christ together,

Pastor

# Please Join Us in Bible Study

God speaks to us through His Word, and it is by the working of the Holy Spirit through His Word that we come to faith (Romans 10:17). God's Word offers us the greatest call on earth, the call to Jesus, the risen Messiah. To help you grow in your relationship with Jesus and in your fellowship with other brothers and sisters in our church, we want to encourage you to participate in a Bible study.



Please answer the following questions:

I am currently attending a Bible study:

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I currently attend the following study or studies:

What:

When:

Leader:

I am interested in attending a study on:

Sunday morning (time) \_\_\_\_\_

Week day (time and day) \_\_\_\_\_

Week night (time and day) \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday morning (time) \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday evening (time) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to join a small group study in someone's home: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following topics would you be interested in, if any, to attend?

\_\_\_\_\_ Books of the Bible

\_\_\_\_\_ Parenting

\_\_\_\_\_ Christian Money Management

\_\_\_\_\_ Single Parenting

\_\_\_\_\_ Money and Marriage

\_\_\_\_\_ World religions

\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheranism 101

\_\_\_\_\_ Marriage

\_\_\_\_\_ Your choice/ suggestion

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

The following is one way you might publicize your Bible studies

## **Real Faith for Real Life**

### **Please Join Us in Bible Study**

| <b><u>Day</u></b> | <b><u>Study</u></b> | <b><u>Time</u></b> | <b><u>Location</u></b> |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sunday            |                     |                    |                        |
| Monday            |                     |                    |                        |
| Tuesday           |                     |                    |                        |
| Wednesday         |                     |                    |                        |
| Thursday          |                     |                    |                        |
| Friday            |                     |                    |                        |
| Saturday          |                     |                    |                        |

**Come and Discover!!**

#### **Suggestions:**

For two or three Sundays, I recommend that you set up a table in your narthex so you can inform members in your church about the Bible studies that are being offered and studies you may be planning to offer in the future. Encourage people to sign up for these Bible studies. You may want to display the banner to draw attention to your efforts to get everyone involved in a Bible study.

You may want to organize some small group Bible studies to meet in people's homes.

As you develop your Bible studies, please remember the importance of stewardship education. To offer the full counsel of God's Word, you are encouraged to offer at a minimum two stewardship Bible studies a year. For stewardship Bible study ideas call 248-644-6150 or email me at [stewardshipadv@aol.com](mailto:stewardshipadv@aol.com).

Use the survey/ questionnaire to determine the time and interests in specific Bible studies.

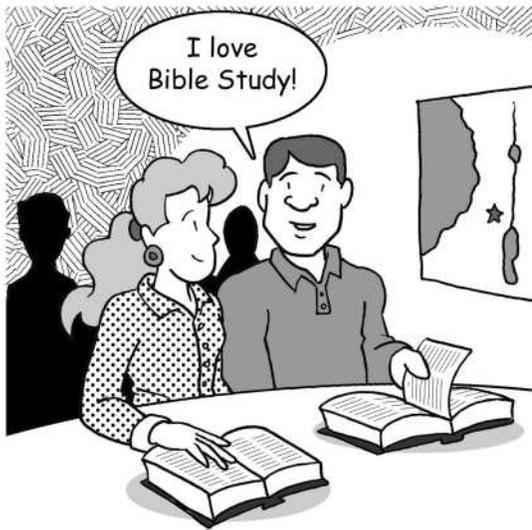
You may want to ask some people to give personal testimonies about how they have been blessed by attending Bible studies they've attended.

It may be beneficial to publicize the calendar of studies that is being offered for a six-month period.

# Are We Nourishing our Bodies but Ignoring our Souls?

Jesus tells us, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

## Nourished by reading God’s Word



## Nourished by prayer



## Nourished by receiving Jesus’ body and blood



## Nourished by worshipping together



