



## Leaders Preparation for the Meetings

### Before the meetings begin:

- Consult with the host re venue preparation for the sessions. Be sure that the venue is suitable and that the hosts know what to expect each evening and how long the group will meet at their home. Refreshments are important but make sure that they are kept simple and agree when they will be served
- Ring members in advance to encourage them and put their minds at ease
- Pray for your group members by name

### Preparing the material

- Make sure that you allow plenty of time to prepare your material and to do so prayerfully.
- Read the introduction to the study for overview and background information on the passages you will read together.
- Give enough time to your preparation of each week's material. Read through the Bible passage for the evening and the study questions. Think about your own understanding of the bible passage, what excites and moves you, what do you not understand and even what makes you angry or frustrated? The study must mean something to you or it cannot come alive under your leadership for the other group members
- Additional material on the passages is available should you want it. For Study Exodus! look at the background and sermon notes in the Preach Exodus! resource. For Luke or 2 Corinthians look at the sample sermons and background notes for preachers. These resources are on the

Giving in Grace website. Be clear about the structure of the session. Each of the Exodus and 2 Corinthians studies have two main sections and you should allow at least 30 minutes for each of these main sections. The first section involves reading the bible passage together and discussing the questions. The second main section is the "money autobiography" questions - telling the story of money in our own lives. This section needs to be given time and group leaders will need to be sensitive to the pastoral issues around such sharing

- Optional exercises are offered as ice breakers and to illustrate the theme of the study. If you choose to use them make sure you leave enough time for the additional preparation although they have been chosen to be as simple as possible.
- A group of leaders may like to meet together for a session or two and work through a Study 'to get the feel' and iron out any issues

### During the meeting

- Always open and close the meeting with prayer – perhaps after the first week you can invite someone else in the group to do this next time.
- Begin promptly, especially in the first week
- Keep a set time for the actual meeting e.g. one and a half hours and finish the business in that time. Those who want to stay on over coffee afterwards may do so, but others may have to leave. Some (maybe requiring baby-sitters) will need to know how long they are going to be out.

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People do need to feel they have permission to leave after the session!

- Give encouragement to group members. The subject itself may be a sensitive one for some people and for some it will be their first experience of a small group in the parish.
- Keep to the point! Try to pace the session so that you don't get bogged down by one particular point
- Don't be afraid of silence. Try to involve everyone, drawing out the quieter members of the group. Try to make sure all members are included and that discussion is not monopolised by a few. If anyone is causing particular problems, take them to one side afterwards and perhaps point the need to include the opinions etc. of others
- Avoid over talking yourself - it is a discussion not a lecture!

### And finally ...

One piece of important advice.

The issue is money and it is possible that personal issues around debt might be shared either in the group or privately with the group leader. What you must not do is to try to offer detailed practical advice around debt. Rock solid expert advice is available from the Consumer Credit Counselling Service on 0800 138 1111 or contact can be made with a Christian debt counselling service Credit Action on 01522 699777 or click to [www.creditaction.org.uk](http://www.creditaction.org.uk) . What you can do, and what the experts advise you to do, is to "hold the hand" of the person who has a problem as they take that expert advice.