

5. Sharing One-to-One in Follow-Up Bible Studies

In our last topic, we talked about sharing one to one in evangelistic Bible studies. A second type of one-to-one Bible study is a follow-up Bible study. That will be our focus today. A follow-up Bible study is a Bible study with a new Christian to help him or her to begin growing as a Christian. Most new Christians need a follow-up Bible study for a period of time because they have many questions that need to be answered in order to help them in their spiritual growth.

In Acts 2:46, we read, “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.” The early church leaders were going from house to house to help the new Christians grow in their understanding of their new life in Christ. In this verse, we see that the church leaders were going from house to house to have communion with the families that had become Christians. This provided an ideal opportunity for them to teach what Christ had taught them about communion, in Luke 22:19-20. “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.’” This also gave them the opportunity to answer questions and have follow-up Bible studies with these new Christians.

Aquila and Priscilla also realized the importance of follow-up Bible study with Apollos. In Acts 18:24-26, we read, “Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

In these verses, we learn several things about one-to-one follow-up Bible studies. Apollos had a good Biblical background before he met Aquila and Priscilla but he still needed personal Bible study. We see that he:

- had great speaking ability
- knew the Old Testament well
- had been instructed in the way of the Lord
- was fervent in spirit
- was even quick to teach others what he knew
- did not know about the death and resurrection of Christ

Aquila and Priscilla quickly recognized this lack in his knowledge. Instead of criticizing him for wrong teaching, they chose to spend time with him in Bible study. What they did teaches us some important lessons about follow-up Bible studies. We see that they:

- ◆ listened to what Apollos was teaching
- ◆ recognized that he did not understand certain things
- ◆ did not criticize him in front of others
- ◆ took him aside (probably invited him over to their house)
- ◆ explained to him about the death and resurrection of Christ

- ◆ helped him develop an accurate understanding of the way of God

The results of this follow-up Bible study are clearly seen in verses 27 and 28. We read that, “And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.” As a result, of the follow-up Bible studies with Apollos, we see the impact that Aquila and Priscilla had on the life of Apollos. We see that their influence also greatly helped the church in Corinth and the surrounding area of Achaia, the area from which they had just come – Acts 18:1-19. Because of that time of follow-up Bible study, Apollos:

- * had a vision for the area of Achaia
- * developed a good testimony among the disciples in Ephesus
- * greatly helped many Christians in Achaia
- * was able to refute the unbelieving Jews in public meetings
- * was able to show from the Old Testament that Jesus is the Christ

Aquila and Priscilla had already learned the value of home Bible studies from Paul when they had lived in Corinth. In Acts 18:1-3, we see that Paul had lived with Aquila and Priscilla for a period of time, “After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.” Paul had lived with them and worked with them in their business in Corinth. In these verses, we see that Paul used the combination of living and working with them to:

- reach them for Christ
- answer their questions
- use their home as a base to reach out to the city of Corinth

This had a great impact on the lives of Aquila and Priscilla. They developed a vision of reaching out to others similar to the vision of Paul. As a result, when Paul left Corinth, he took them with him and left them in Ephesus to help start the church there as we have already seen in what we learned about their ministry to Apollos. Later, the Lord used them to start another church in the city of Rome – Romans 16:3-5.

Another example of a follow-up Bible study in a home is seen in Acts 16:14-15, where we read: “Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household were baptized, she begged *us*, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.’ So she persuaded *us*.” Once Lydia and her household became Christians, she realized that she and her household needed to know more about Christ so she invited Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke to stay at her home. This provided daily opportunities for the four of them to share with the various members of the household to help them grow in their new life in Christ. Even when Paul and Silas were beaten, thrown in jail, and forced to leave town, they returned to the home of Lydia to have one more home Bible study to encourage Lydia and

the rest of the brethren in their new life in Christ – Acts 16:40.

Christ also taught informal Bible studies in or near the homes of those who followed Him. One of the great passages on the resurrection was taught in an informal Bible study with Martha following the death of her brother, in John 11:20-27. That ministry, and the events that followed, also gave Christ the opportunity to show that family, and their friends, how much He loved them. In fact, John 11:36 says, “Then the Jews said, ‘See how He loved him!’ Christ taught another informal Bible study in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus a few weeks later that is recorded for us in John 12:1-9. Christ used that opportunity to teach about His coming burial.

Perhaps one of Christ’s greatest Bible studies occurred after the resurrection. That Bible study started along the road and ended up around the table as Christ ate together with two in the town of Emmaus. That Bible study is recorded for us in Luke 24:13-32. That Bible study had a life-changing impact on those two individuals, because it included a summary of all the Old Testament taught about Christ. That life-changing impact is recorded for us in Luke 24:32-35, where we read: “And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.”

The Bible study with the two on the road to Emmaus did several things for the two:

- ◆ It caused their hearts to burn within them
- ◆ It caused the Scriptures to be opened to them
- ◆ It changed their immediate priorities (they immediately headed for Jerusalem)
- ◆ It changed their long-term priorities (they became witnesses of the resurrection)
- ◆ It equipped them to share what they had learned with others

These five things will also happen as we have one to one follow-up Bible studies with others. May the Lord richly bless you as you have follow-up Bible studies with others.

If you have never taught a follow-up Bible study or you do not know what materials to use, visit our web site at www.aibi.org and look at the following manuals:

New Life in Christ (Building our relationship with God)

New Life in the Family of Christ (Building our relationship with one another in the family of Christ)

Feel free to download these manuals and make as many copies as you need for follow-up Bible studies. If you do not have Internet access, contact us and we can make these materials available to you in other ways.