



# 10 BIBLE TALKS

FOR EVERY OCCASION

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*by Justin Renton*



# INTRODUCTION

Small Group Bible Discussions have proven themselves over the years to be an extremely effective way to both strengthen the convictions of the members of the group and provide a non-threatening way to introduce visitors to the life-changing power of the scriptures. I vividly remember the first bible discussion I attended. I was struck by the friendly nature of the disciples, the honesty and openness with which they shared their lives and the way the scriptures were brought to life through the discussion. I had never seen anything like it before and it made God and faith come alive for me.

I hope these discussion outlines help you to present the scriptures in such a way that more people like you and me, can encounter God and start a relationship with Jesus Christ.

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# {01}

## ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONAH

**OPENING QUESTION:** "What are some situations you've run away from?"

Jonah 1:1~2 Nineveh is the Capital of the Assyrian Empire.

- – Explain how evil the Assyrians were (i.e. they used their captive's skin to wallpaper their temples and the skulls to build dams! They would lead a captive army across the desert naked and in a chain with meat hooks in each person's buttocks!)
- – This was a very challenging task for Jonah to call these people to repent.

### 1. What are some of the challenging things God has asked us to do?

- a) Share our faith
- b) Go against the flow of society
- c) Seek first the Kingdom of God
- d) Get open about what going on in our lives, etc...

(v3) Look at how Jonah deals with the challenge!!

### 2. How can we run away from God today?

- a) Dilute the commands of God
- b) Ignore the Bible
- c) Delay making a decision
- d) Make a series of excuses, etc ...

### 3. Why do we run away?

- a) Scared of changing
- b) Scared of friends

(v4-v5) Look what God does when we run away - He sends storms!!

### 4. What kind of storms does God send into our lives?

- a) People near to us dying
- b) Lack of fulfilment in life
- c) A break up of a relationship

### 5. Why if God is a loving God, does He do this?

a) To get our attention so that we will get our lives right with him before we die

(v6-v11) Read and explain how Jonah keeps running, but God keeps pursuing him with people in his life and the storm getting rougher and rougher.

(v12) Finally Jonah admits where he is at and takes the responsibility

### 6. What can we do to take responsibility for our relationship with God?

- a) Read Bible everyday
- b) Repent & stop blaming others or making excuses, etc...

(v13-v17) Explain how the sailors still fight a bit, but finally submit to God.

Explain how Jonah after thinking about life in the belly of a fish decides to go to Nineveh and how the whole city repents and listens to him.

## CONCLUSION

- God NEVER asks us to do something that we cannot do!!
- Jonah thought that running away the challenge was a solution.
- The truth is we can never run away from God.
- In V16 the sailors made some vows to God. People here need to some vows about what you are going to change.

# {02}

## THE BIG APPLE

### OPENING QUESTION

“Have you ever been deceived by some-one, a sales person etc.? What happened?” Satan is out to deceive all of us; it’s literally the oldest trick in the book.

Genesis 3:1~13

1. (v1) What is Satan’s first tactic here?

Get the woman to doubt God’s words.

2. What does Satan want us to doubt today?

- a) That God exists and he created us for a purpose.
- b) That we will face judgment.
- c) That we need to repent of sin .

3. (v2-v3) How does Eve do in resisting Satan?

She almost knows what God said. (Look at Genesis 2:17 not TOUCH but EAT)

4. Why is it dangerous to almost know Gods’ will?

- a) We feel comfortable.
- b) We think we know when we don’t.
- c) We can easily be deceived. (Read Matthew 7-21-23. Highlight that they thought that they were saved)

5. (v4-5) What is Satan’s tactic here?

He denies the seriousness of the consequences of sin and highlights the benefits.

6. How does he do that today?

- a) “Immorality is important to choose a spouse in today’s society.”
- b) “Racism is acceptable and normal”
- c) “Smoking is fine as long as it is outside the church building.”
- d) etc...

7. Satan uses this same pattern every time we sin.

See, Desire, Take, Eat, Give (See James 1:13-15)

8. What part does Adam play in all this?

- a) He was right there next to Eve all along.
- b) He should have said something to stop this rebellion.
- c) He should have protected his wife.

(v7-v13) They get caught and how do they handle it?

- a) Blame God.

b) Blame each other and blame the snake.

### 9. How can we do the same?

a) Blame our parents, upbringing, circumstances

b) Blame your spouse, friends, family.

c) Blame the government etc.

d) Have you ever found yourself saying “I wouldn’t have been so angry but she/he made me angry or made me do it...?”

What Adam and Eve should have done is taken responsibility for their actions. Today we need to do the same.

## CONCLUSION

- The smartest amongst us can be and have been deceived.
- We need to become aware of Satan’s schemes so that we can stop sin at the temptation phase.
- Think about the situations, and or people you blame in your life and think of how you can take responsibility for decisions you have made.

# {03}

## ARE YOU THIRSTY?

**OPENING QUESTION:** “When you are REALLY thirsty what drink is able to take away your thirst like no other and why?”

Today we are going to talk about spiritual thirst.

John 4:4-30

1. (v4-v9) The woman was surprised/offended that Jesus spoke to Her. Why?

a) Different cultures, Jews don’t associate with Samaritans.

b) She was used to prejudice.

c) She was a woman – men looked down on women.

d) Maybe she thought he was like every other guy – this was a pick up line.

Jesus is not afraid to cross social, gender and cultural barriers. He showed no favouritism or prejudice!

2. (v10-v14) Do you think she really believed what Jesus was saying?

3. Why don’t we believe that Jesus word today?

a) We don’t get to know it so we don’t understand it.

b) We know about it through what others have said or experienced.

c) Don’t see it in other religious people.

d) We don’t want to change our lifestyle.

(v15-v20) Jesus cuts through all the small talk and starts addressing the real issues in her life.

4. How does this woman respond and why?

- a) Changes the subject;
- b) Tries to act religious;
- c) Is embarrassed;
- d) Feels vulnerable and exposed.

5. What kinds of things are the most difficult to talk about?

- a) Our weaknesses and failures;
- b) Our relationship problems;
- c) Addictions (alcohol, nicotine, porn etc.)

They tend to be the things we probably need the most help with! They really should be the things we talk to people we can trust about. John 4:21-30

6. Do you think her life was different after this interaction with Jesus? Why?

- a) He cared about her, not what he could get from her.
- b) He was direct but loving.
- c) He spoke truth but wasn't condescending.
- d) He was the real thing, genuine sincere.
- e) He met a spiritual thirst.

She is so impacted, that it ends up impacting a whole town and Jesus changes his schedule from just passing through (vs. 4) to staying for 2 days (vs. 40)

Her spiritual thirst being met meant a whole town was impacted.

If you are thirsty, come to me! If you believe in me, come and drink! For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water will flow out from within." John 7:37-38 NLT

## CONCLUSION

- My question for you today is "ARE YOU SPIRITUALLY THIRSTY"
- What are you doing with that thirst?
- Jesus is the only one that can quench your thirst and the thirst of those around you.
- Have a Bible study with someone and at least take a sip!

# {04}

## WHOSE VOICE ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

OPENING QUESTION: "What is some bad advice you have been given in the past?"

1Kings 22 v1-v5

1. What are some of the typical plans people make today?  
Careers \ exotic holidays \ new girlfriend
2. Why is Jehoshaphat concerned about seeking counsel from God?
  - a) respects & loves God
  - b) a big decision needs Gods approval

(v6-v8)

3. Where do people generally go for advice on their plans?  
horoscopes \ friends \ movie character example
4. Why do some people not like to go to the bible?
  - a) has high moral standards
  - b) condemns sinful plans

(v9-v14)

5. What typically pressures us into going along with the crowd?
  - a) our fear of standing out \ dislike of criticism
  - b) comfortability
  - c) wanting to be accepted/liked

(v19-v23)

6. What are some of the false prophets today and what lies do they tell us?
  - a) Hollywood, horoscopes, magazines etc.
  - b) just belief is needed
  - c) you don't need to be a disciple
  - d) Homo-sexuality & immorality is O.K.
  - e) life is all about making yourself happy

(v24-v28)

7. How do people imprison Gods message today?
  - a) Ignore
  - b) delay
  - c) Dilute
  - d) rationalize

Let's see how all of this worked out for him:

(v29-v35) Everything the prophet predicted.

- You cannot mock or “trick” God.

## CONCLUSION

- The king of Israel goes into battle DISGUISED and yet an arrow fired at random (hmm) and struck him between the sections of his armour and he died.
- You can listen to the false prophets because they may say ‘nicer’ things but ultimately it is always better to follow the hard but right way.

# {05}

## NOAH

**OPENING QUESTION:** "What is the most difficult task you've ever attempted?"

Genesis 6 v9-v13

1. What are some of the corrupt evil things in today's world that God hates?

Sexual immorality/pornography, lying, racism, greed, etc. ...

2. What can we do to destroy these things?

- a) Not participate in them.
- b) Not approve of others who do these things.

(v14-21)

God gives Noah a tremendously difficult task!!

3. What are some of the difficult things God has asked us to do?

- a) Share our faith.
- b) Always seek first His Kingdom.
- c) Repent of ALL sin.
- d) Help the poor.
- e) Trust him fully.

4. Why is it so difficult to trust God fully?

- a) Taught and trained by the world not to trust.
- b) Satan works at causing us to doubt.

5. What has God given us to help us live the Christian life and trust him?

- a) Evidences.
- b) The Bibles' truths.
- c) Jesus' life and sacrifice.
- d) Friends who are also serving God.
- e) The promise of Heaven (describe your picture of heaven) f) The fear of Hell.

(v22)

Noah begins to build.

6. What temptations do you think he faced during the building?

- a) To compromise on the size of the boat. (NB - Hydraulic engineers use the ratio 12:2:1 today for the best stability) Thus changing the dimensions would be fatal.
- b) To doubt whether the flood would happen.
- c) His neighbours must have ridiculed him.
- d) Family probably started complaining.
- e) To grumble against God because of their personal sacrifice involved in building the ark. (Giving up his home, Sunday afternoon naps, etc ...)

7. What temptations do we face today?

- a) To compromise on Gods' word. (Give examples)
- b) To doubt whether judgment will really take place.
- c) To be discouraged by people ridiculing us.

## CONCLUSION

- Imagine for a moment that Noah had decided to not obey God, and just go with the status quo, not rock the boat.
- Noah had to overcome his own doubt and fears.
- In the end he saved his family.
- This week, think about the difficult thing/s God is asking you to do.
- As challenging as they may be not obeying God is a lot scarier than obeying him!

## {06} REGRETS

**OPENING QUESTION:** "What would you say are some of the biggest regrets people have on their death beds?"

Today we are going to talk about a man who I am sure if he had to come back to speak to us today would have some big regrets!

Mark 6:v14-v16

1. Why do you think there was lots of confusion over Jesus Christ's identity?
  - a) Rumours
  - b) Pre-conceived ideas
  - c) Expectations
2. Why is there so much confusion today about what it means to be a Christian?
  - a) People's opinions
  - b) Not following the Bible
  - c) Not taken seriously
3. Why does Herod think it John?

Guilt
4. What do you feel when you're guilty?
  - a) Cold sweat
  - b) Tightening of the stomach

(v17-v18)

5. How do we imprison God and his message?

- a) Ignore
- b) Delay
- c) Dilute
- d) Complicate it (Herod was "Puzzled" at John's message)

6. Why do we imprison God?

- a) Disrespect for God
  - b) Fear of: challenge/people/comfort/pride (v19-v29)
- Things to catch up with Herod!
- When you don't obey God's word, Satan will wait for an opportune time to get you!

7. What opportunities do you think Satan is waiting for?

- a) Affair at work
- b) Lying at work/ on your taxes
- c) Conflict in relationships etc ...

8. What kind of dance do you think she did?

- a) Probably erotic and suggestive

- b) Unlikely to have been a waltz
9. What do you think of Herod's promise?
- a) Boastful and prideful
  - b) Rash
  - c) Emotional
10. What do you think of her daughter's response?
- a) Eager to carry it out
  - b) She had become just like her mom
  - c) She sought advice in the wrong place – that's always dangerous

What an absolute tragedy! John was known as the greatest prophet that ever lived. Do you think Herod had some regrets?

11. If Herod had to come back to as today what do you think that he would tell us?
- a) Don't compromise
  - b) Be careful what you promise

## CONCLUSION

- If you procrastinate you will only grow weaker.
- Life overtakes people who compromise.
- Think about what situations Satan is waiting for an opportune time to get you with and read God's word on that topic

## AFRICANS IN THE BIBLE

**OPENING QUESTION:** “If you met Nelson Mandela what would be the one thing that you would ask him and why?”

**PHARAOH:** Exodus 5:1-5 ...“Who is this God that I should obey him?”

1. What evidence do we have that supports the existence of God?
  - a) Fulfilled prophesies in the bible.
  - b) Scientists discoveries of the unique design of the universe.
  - c) The resurrection of Jesus.
  - d) The irreducible complexity of our bodies and nature.
2. What are some of Gods commands that people stubbornly refuse to obey?
  - a) Do not be an idolater.
  - b) Do not be sexually immoral.
  - c) Do not tell lies etc.

Briefly explain the ten plagues.

3. What are some of the “plagues” in today’s time that that inflicts us if we disobey God?
  - a) Depression. (Not applicable if your body has a natural imbalance of chemicals)
  - b) A Feeling of emptiness and lack of fulfilment.
  - c) Sexually transmitted diseases (Syphilis etc...)

This African did not know God and consequently thought it useless to obey him. Even after the plagues his heart was hard towards God.

**SIMON OF CYRENE:** Mark 15:21-24 (Cyrene is modern day Libya (North Africa)

4. How do you think Simon felt about being forced to serve (God)? Carry his cross.

- a) Angry.
  - b) Resentful about being inconvenienced.
5. How are we sometimes forced to serve God?
    - a) School religious functions.
    - b) Peer or family pressure.
    - c) We go to church out of duty or habit.

6. Can this be beneficial to us?

(Explain how Simons son “Rufus” and wife became Christians – Romans 16:13)

**ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH** Acts 8:26-39

7. What do you notice about this African man?

- a) Successful businessman.
- b) Searching for God.
- c) Humble.
- d) Immediately responsive to Gods word.

8. What is the good news about Jesus?

- a) Forgiveness of sins.
- b) Heaven is promised.
- c) Assurance of God's love.

CONCLUSION

- What type of African are you?
- Hard Hearted and stubborn like Pharoah?
- Being forced to serve God (Like Simon of Cyrene)?
- OR eager and seeking God like the Ethiopian?

{08}

A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

**OPENING QUESTION:** "How many of us have seen some-one change radically (for the good or the bad?) What happened?"

Let's look at a man who changed radically.

Mark 5:1~5

1. He lived in the tombs, that was his life. That can't be fun! So why would he live in the tombs?

- a) Isolate himself because he was scared of what people would think;
- b) Embarrassed;
- c) No one judges him;
- d) Can go crazy;
- e) Around other crazy people, don't have to take responsibility.

2. Legion cut himself with Stones – what does that tell you about him?

- a) Unhappy;
- b) Frustrated;
- c) Didn't like his life but felt trapped.

3. How do we really hurt ourselves today?

- a) Self-destructive habits;
- b) Smoking and drinking;

- c) sexual relationships;
- d) not listening to God.

V6-13

4. Legion was scared of Jesus - Why are people today scared of facing the truth?

- a) Don't want to admit the condition we are in. Put up facades.
- b) Scared to change.
- c) Scared to start and then not to be able to complete it.
- d) Despite being scared Legion still went to Jesus and fell to his knees in front of him. He knew he needed help!

V14-20

5. (v15) What do you notice about these other people?

- a) Their fear leads them to asking Jesus to go from their region.

6. How do we today ask Jesus to leave our Region?

- a) Follow traditions;
- b) Recreate Him differently;
- c) Not respond to the truth, etc...

7. What motivated Him to spread the Good News?

(v19) "All that God had done for him"

**CONCLUSION**

- Anybody can change.
- BUT you must overcome your fear.
- Trust that God doesn't want to hurt you but rather heal you.
- Let what God has done for me be the motivation behind why you want to spread the good news.

## A LOOK INTO ETERNITY

### OPENING QUESTION

“What is the scariest movie you have ever seen?”

Let’s look at a scary passage.

Rev 20:11-15

1. Why do people not like to talk about death?
  - a) sensitive subject
  - b) scary subject
  - c) so much is unknown
2. What do most people think life is all about?
  - a) achieving prestige / success / wealth
  - b) being remembered for your achievements
  - c) some don’t think – too busy running the rat race
3. V12 What kind of things do you not want written in your book?
  - a) refused to believe
  - b) extremely selfish
  - c) impure or immoral
  - d) lukewarm / hypocrite

READ 2 Tim 3:1-5

Briefly explain each sin.

Yikes, scary stuff, this is described as “terrible” times!

4. Ok, what kind of things do you WANT written in your book?
  - a) Read Bible every day and followed it
  - b) Helped others to know the truth
  - c) Gave up our selfish dreams to follow God’s dreams
  - d) Always helping the poor and needy
5. What have we been given to help us know God’s will and live according to it?
  - a) The bible
  - b) Spiritual friends
  - c) Prayer
  - d) The Holy Sprit

Rev 21:1-5 (Paint the picture.)

6. What are you going to do your first 1000 years in heaven?

- a) Ask questions
- b) Sleep
- c) Watch videos of disciples and Jesus as a kid
- d) Thank Jesus and the person who lead you to Him

### CONCLUSION

- As difficult as it is to talk about, each and every one of us is going to experience death (except if Jesus returns before we die.)
- We can put our heads in the sand to ignore the reality or busy ourselves to running away from the reality, but that doesn't take away the reality.
- The wonderful thing is that God has given us everything we need to know His will and spend eternity with Him.

{10}

## A SOLDIER, A FARMER & AN ATHLETE

### OPENING QUESTION

“Which type of movie do you enjoy the most (comedy, drama, action etc.) and why?”

Today we are going to be looking at a few different ways that a Christian is described in the bible and discuss why.

2 Timothy 2:1-7

1. What are the three things a Christian is compared to?

Soldier. Athlete. Farmer.

2. Why a soldier?

- a) Under command
- b) Fighting (hardships)
- c) Enemies

3. What qualities make a good soldier?

- a) Loyal
- b) Obedient
- c) Team player
- d) Courageous
- e) Selfless

4. So how can we be like soldiers as Christians?
  - Be loyal and obedient to our commanding officer Jesus
5. V5, Why is being a Christian like being an athlete?
  - a) Training
  - b) Discipline
  - c) Self-denial
6. What rules are broken as an athlete?
  - a) Drugs (make it easier)
  - b) Short cuts (e.g. of a woman running the Boston Marathon who jumped on a subway!)
7. What rules are broken as a Christian?
  - a) Compromise on living like a Christian
  - b) Try to make the hard road easier – (no Repentance. No evangelism. No Commitment)
8. What qualities make a good athlete?
  - a) Dedicated
  - b) Disciplined
  - c) Focused
9. So how can we apply being like an athlete to being a Christian?
  - a) Self-control needed
  - b) Going through training daily to become godly
  - c) Have to make sacrifices to run our Christian race
10. v6, Why is being a Christian like being a farmer?
  - a) Planting seeds
  - b) Harvesting a crop for God
  - c) Weeding out sin
11. What are the qualities of a farmer?
  - a) Patient
  - b) Hardworking
  - c) Dependent

## CONCLUSION

- The qualities that we see in the above three people, the soldier, the athlete and the farmer are inspiring qualities!
- We admire and respect these attributes. Now God is calling us to not only admire them but to imitate them.
- As you go to work, school, at home let's remember these qualities.

# {Appendix A}

## 8 KEYS TO RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE BIBLE DISCUSSION

There could easily be more than eight keys and include; prayer, fasting, evangelism etc... but these listed below are practical guides for the discussion itself.

***Acts 14:1 Paul and Barnabas... spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.***

Effective presentations of the gospel are certainly a part of the New Testament. Here are a few keys to making your Bible Discussion more impactful for your visitors:

1. Establish a cheerful, warm, friendly atmosphere from the moment people arrive. First impression matter and set the tone.
2. Encourage the members to arrive early, to not get caught up in fellowship with other disciples but to be focused on reaching out to the guests.
3. Use the opening question to grab the interest and to connect to the everyday needs and interests of non-Christians, very much how Jesus used parables to connect with his audience.
4. Explain the Bible passages and concepts in simple, normal language. Avoid church lingo that is foreign to Non-Christians.
5. Don't dominate the discussion, let it flow but keep it on track and within time limits. (30-45min is ideal)
6. Encourage everyone to give real examples from their lives.
7. Discourage intellectualising, side-tracks and arguments.
8. Remember to set up individual bible studies with the visitors after the discussion. Very often people's hearts open after an impactful discussion, don't procrastinate and miss an opportunity and an open door.

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