

Pacing Templates for Manuscript Bible Study

60 Minute Study

Introduction (2 minutes, a little longer the first day)

- Share background and context information
- Read the passage out loud and pray

Individual study – observation and questions (5 minutes)

Share observations and questions together in large group (15 minutes)

Note: if a group is big or exceptionally quiet, use some of this time for sharing in pairs

- Ask: “What do you see here, and what questions do you have?” To encourage the sharing ask open ended questions such as “What did you see?” and “What else did you notice?” Do NOT ask content questions such as “Where were Jesus and the disciples going?” or “Who did Jesus encounter on the road to Samaria?”
- Note their questions but tell the group that we will hold off answering them yet. This time should be lively.

Answer questions together in large group (25 minutes)

- Starting with the beginning of the text, walk through the passage using questions generated by the group.
- Use your own questions when necessary to cover the key sections of the text.
- Encourage the group to base their answers on evidence from the text itself and the context. Do not let the group use cross references except for Old Testament passages that are alluded to in the text.
- If you have helped the group observe well, the group itself becomes self-correcting.

Summarize (3 minutes)

- After walking through the passage and answering the questions as a group, a few main themes should emerge. Summarize those with a few sentences. Try to use the language of the text and the group as much as possible.

Apply (10 minutes)

- Help the group process and apply the passage. Have some possible application questions ready to go. Make sure you leave about 10 minutes for this. This is where Jesus will solidify what He has been speaking to the group about in the study. He will transform them by His Word as they make specific applications and then do them.
- Remember that you are the facilitator of the groups’ learning. Trust Jesus, the text, and the Holy Spirit to be the authority. Trust the Holy Spirit working through the group to come up with a good interpretation of the passage.

90 Minute Study

Introduction – context and prayer (5 minutes)

Individual study – observation and questions (10 minutes)

Share observations and questions in large group (25 minutes)

NOTE: in pairs for a few minutes if large group is >15 people

Answer questions (10 minutes)

Answer questions in large group (30 minutes)

Summarize (3 minutes)

Apply (7 minutes)

2 Hour Study

Introduction (3-5 minutes)

Leader set the stage for the study (5-7 minutes)

Read the text out loud – teacher or participants (5 minutes)

Individual study – observation and questions (10-12 minutes)

Share observations and questions in large group (15-20 minutes)

NOTE: in pairs for a few minutes if large group is >15 people

Answer questions and do research in pairs (10-12 minutes)

Answer questions in large group – move through the text section by section (45-55 minutes)

Summarize (3-5 minutes)

Apply – can be individual, pairs, or large group (10-15 minutes)

2.5 Hour Study

Introduction (5-7 minutes)

Leader set the stage for the study (10 minutes)

Read the text out loud – teacher or participants (5 minutes)

Individual study – observation and questions (10-15 minutes)

Share observations and questions in large group (15-20 minutes)

NOTE: in pairs for a few minutes if large group is >15 people

Answer questions and do research in pairs (10-12 minutes)

BREAK – encourage people to get up and move around (20 minutes)

Answer questions in large group – move through the text section by section (45-55 minutes)

Summarize (5 minutes)

Apply – can be individual, pairs, or large group (15-25 minutes)

3 Hour Study

Introduction (7-10 minutes)

- Sing
- Discuss how last passage impacted people
- Check in with the group about their energy and engagement level
- Pray in pairs for needs or concerns

Inductive Bible study skills training (15 minutes)

Leader set the stage for the study (5-10 minutes)

- Reiterate an element of background (author, audience, framing, etc.)
- Highlight a bible study skill for the group to work on
- Summarize previous studies
- Debrief group dynamic

Read the text out loud – teacher or participants (5 minutes)

Individual study – observations and questions (12-15 minutes)

Share observations and questions in large group (20-25 minutes)

NOTE: share in pairs for a few minutes if large group is >15 people

Answer questions and do research in pairs (15 minutes)

BREAK – encourage people to get up and move around (20 minutes)

Answer questions in large group – could act it out; or just move through the text slowly (50-70 minutes)

Summarize – leader gives summary and personal story or participants write and share (5-10 minutes)

Apply – can be individual, pairs, or large group (20-25 minutes)

Using this and other longer timeframes (longer than 90 minutes), the leader has flexibility to decide when to move on and when to sit in a text or discussion movement. A general rule of thumb is to move on just before the momentum of a group conversation wanes. Just be sure to preserve interpretation and application time by moving through the earlier steps, even if the conversation could go longer.