



Character Building Ministries
1320 Saddleback Road, York, PA 17404

(570) 772-1643

www.CBMinistries.com

How to Lead a Group Discussion

The primary goal of an effective group discussion is to help participants apply God's Word in their own lives. In order for this to occur, they must understand God's Word, see how it relates to their own personal lives, and experience growth by receiving God's grace to change. The key to providing a context for growth to occur is asking good *questions*.

Good questions seek to draw people out and probe into what they truly believe, who they really are, and what is actually happening in their lives right now. Here are some types of questions that you should *avoid*:

- Yes or no questions (Do you think that evangelism is important?)
- Too many right or wrong factual questions (Who led the Israelites out of Egypt?)
- Vague questions (What did you think about last week's chaplain?)

Effective questions require more than superficial, safe responses, and often begin with *why*, *what*, or *how*:

- Why is thankfulness important in your current circumstances?
- What events in your life have been the most significant in shaping your understanding of God as Father?
- How have you specifically responded to the teaching we received this week on prayer?

The result of good questions is honesty, vulnerability, and humility—true Biblical fellowship.

This article originally appeared in Edify (Spring 2005), CBM's free newsletter for camp directors. If you would like to begin to receive a free copy of Edify bi-annually, just send your camp name and address to us. Permission is granted to duplicate and copy this material.

Here are some other suggestions for leading a group discussion:

1. Maximize involvement—don't let a few people dominate the discussion.
2. Redirect tangents—keep the discussion focused and on track by redirecting irrelevant or contentious comments.
3. Affirm participation—you always get more of what you affirm.
4. Relax with silence—sometimes people need time to think.
5. Lead with humility—when asking tough questions, provide your answer first, sharing appropriate examples of personal failure.