

Session created by [St Ebbe's](#) for [Home Groups](#).

View the session and the rest of the series [here](#).



# Leader's Introduction

Welcome to Free!, an eight part bible study series, looking at the book of Galatians. The series will jump right in, so it'll be helpful to give a brief outline of each session and how you might like to run it.

## Opening

Begin with some time catching up and chatting. This will allow people to get themselves settled and to start to share life with one another. You might also consider an icebreaker question, especially if your group is quite new. The aim here to get everyone talking and ready to contribute as the session progresses.

When the time comes to transition into the study, it is best to mark this clearly. A moment of prayer is a great way to transition. Starting the study in prayer sets the right posture for the time ahead. As a group, you turn your attention onto God and give the evening over for Him to speak through the Bible.

## The Study

Each study is made up of three sections: (1) Bible Passages; (2) Brief Notes; (3) Discussion Questions. It is worth discussing each in turn.

### Bible Passages

After prayer, read the bible passages together. The key here is not to rush. Allow time for God's word to sink in. Consider reading the passage twice with a pause in between. Another option is to

set a timer, ask everyone to read it themselves and reflect on it before coming together to read it once through as a group.

Whatever you do, the key is not to rush. As the leader it can be easy to already feel familiar with the passage. Don't assume that everyone else is familiar too. Give time for them to get used to the passage and to begin to form their own thoughts about it.

One final note: Sometimes the passages will be long. Do not shy away from this. Still take the time to read the whole passage. Who knows what God might communicate through some obscure section of scripture!

## **Brief Notes**

The Brief Notes provide a basic commentary for the passage. As the leader it will be worth familiarising yourself with these notes before the session however you decide to use them. There are a number of options for how you might use these notes, here are two:

- **During Discussion** – Rather than spending any time explicitly thinking about the notes as a group, you can dive right into the discussion and then call upon the notes when they are pertinent.
- **Before Discussion** - After reading the passage, you can share some of the content of the notes. You could read them through or deliver a short summary of the key points made in the notes. You can add to the notes too by doing your own reading if you are so minded.

Feel free to use the notes as you choose. They are there to serve you.

## **Discussion Questions**

Each session ends with a sizeable list of discussion questions. There is no need to answer every question as a group. Your wisdom and discretion as the leader come very much into play here: it is down to you to facilitate a guided discussion centring around the passage. As such the questions are a helpful toolbox and not a restrictive list.

You will find it helpful to read the questions through before the session starts. It is good practice to go through the whole session on your own ahead of meeting with your group. As you do so, ask God to guide you, think about the members of your group and the questions which might prompt life-changing discussion.

Life changing discussion is what you are aiming for. Yes, aim to get everyone talking but, most of all, aim to facilitate a conversation which allows the truth of scripture to bed down into the everyday lives of your group. There is no simple 3 step solution to this but two things will help:

- **Prayer** – Keep on asking God to guide you as you lead the study. By His Holy Spirit God shapes us and transforms us. God is the leader. Ask Him to lead you as you lead the study.

- Listen – You are aiming to facilitate what God is doing in the members of your group. As such, you need to pay particular attention to each group member. What are they saying verbally? What is their body language saying? What does this suggest? As you do so, you will be able to respond by asking questions that will help unlock the discussion and move things forward.

## Closing

Make sure to finish well. This might not mean a tidy finish. Sometimes it will be good to let some go on discussing whilst giving others permission to go. If you do this, make sure that it is well communicated. It's not fun being stuck in a meeting when you want to go to bed, even if that meeting is with close friends!

If discussion comes to a natural end, it is good to end in prayer. You might want to pray in smaller groups. Prayer can be related to the study, but it is also worth allowing group members to ask one another for prayer where they feel need.

## Final Remarks

Time will fly by when you meet. Think about some general timings ahead of the meeting and try your best to stick to them. This will be helped by prior planning. It is best practice to go through the session yourself ahead of the meeting. This will ensure you know the passage and have thought through some of the trickier bits before meeting. It'll also clear your headspace to really meet with those in your group.

**St Ebbe's**



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We are a friendly, evangelical church in the centre of Oxford. As those seeking to love and follow Jesus Christ we welcome people from all walks of life and all parts of the world. We believe that in the Bible God speaks a message of hope and forgiveness that is life-giving and life-changing.

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