

QUIET TIME

Theme: Leadership

- Try to make a specific time every day to meet Jesus Christ through reading and meditating his Word.
- Pray, talk with Jesus Christ and make a few short notes about this Bible passage in your notebook.
- Record what you discover, what speaks to your mind and heart, what you find difficult or what you understood.

- Day 1 Deuteronomy 1:9-18
(Moses) Leading means dividing the tasks and carrying the burden together
- Day 2 Mark 10:42-45
(Jesus) Leading means setting the example in serving
- Day 3 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
(Paul) Leaders are goal-directed and stick to the rules
- Day 4 Revelation 1:5-20
Christ as the Sovereign Leader is present and active in the midst of the congregations
- Day 5^{BS} Acts 20:17-38
(Paul) Elders are shepherds and overseers
- Day 6 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18
(Paul) Elders must walk in front in serving others
- Day 7 Isaiah 8:5-20
(Ahaz) Leaders must not make plans together with the wrong allies¹
- Day 8 Isaiah 30:1-5
(Hezekiah) Leaders must not make plans without consulting God (cf. Isaiah 31:1-3)
- Day 9 2 Chronicles 20:11-23
(Jehoshaphat) Leaders who depend completely on God may count on God's victory
- Day 10 Daniel 6:1-11
(Daniel) Leaders must be irreproachable, even when they are under attack
- Think about Psalm 32:8-9.
Thank God that he really leads.
 - Pray every day for someone or something specific and wait in expectation for what God is going to do (Psalm 5:3).

STUDY

Theme: Leading: making plans

Read study 47 carefully before the next meeting. If you have questions, write them down and mail them to one of your group leaders. We will seek an answer together.

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: The Holy Spirit has made elders the pastors and overseers of the congregation

If you like, you may already prepare the Bible Study for the coming meeting by reading through the Bible passage. Make use of the 5-step Bible Study method. The Bible passage is: **Acts 20:17-38**

MEMORISATION

1. Motivation

Jesus memorised Bible verses (Luke 4:4-13). Are you doing that?

2. Memorisation

Memorise this verse in the Bible version of your choice.

PLANNING

Proverbs 20:18

Make plans by seeking advice;
if you wage war, obtain guidance.

Proverbs 20:18(NIV)

3. Review and back-review

Review the last 5 memorised verses once every day and back-review all other memorised verses once every three weeks.

¹ Context of Isaiah 8:5-20. King Ahaz of the southern kingdom of Judah was attacked by king Pekah of the northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and king Rezin of the kingdom of Aram (Damascus). Ahaz sought help from king Tiglath-Pileser of the kingdom of Assyria (Nineveh). But this alliance offended God!

47. Leading: making plans

Leading a (new) youth club, a Bible study group, a discipleship group, a congregation or any activity does not happen by itself. As a manager a leader has four important responsibilities: making plans, organising, leading and evaluating. In this study we will see how one can make a practical plan in a biblical way.

Planning consists of having a clearly defined goal and a programme to reach this goal.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT PLANNING?

1. Biblical reasons to make plans

Planning leads to better results (Proverbs 21:5), better relationships with other people (Proverbs 14:22) and a better relationship with God (Isaiah 30:1-2)!

2. Planning involves the following:

Hard work at the right time.

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son (Proverbs 10:4-5). *Read also* Proverbs 20:4; Proverbs 27:1; Proverbs 28:19; Proverbs 30:25.

Good advisors.

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed (Proverbs 15:22). *Read also* Proverbs 19:20; Proverbs 20:18; Proverbs 29:12.

Prayer.

Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed (Proverbs 16:3).

Humility.

In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps (Proverbs 16:9). *Read also* Proverbs 16:25; Proverbs 19:21; Proverbs 21:31.

Priorities.

Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready (the very important things that cannot wait); after that, build your house (the less important things that can wait) (Proverbs 24:27).

Gathering facts.

I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw (Proverbs 24:32). *Read also* Proverbs 25:2; Proverbs 27:23; Proverbs 29:18.

Faithfulness.

He who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honoured (Proverbs 27:18).

Order.

When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a man of understanding and knowledge maintains order (Proverbs 28:2). *Read also* Proverbs 30:27.

MAKING A PLAN

How do you make a plan? A plan consists of *facts*, a *goal*, *activities*, a *time schedule* and eventually *evaluation* (remember: **f gate**). In order to make a good plan you need to work out the following steps:

Gather facts.

Facts show the circumstances and what the situation is like.

Set a goal.

The goal tells what you want to reach with your plan. For this you need to make some decisions.

Devise the activities.

The activities explain how you want to reach your goal.

Determine a time schedule (or programme).

The time schedule tells when you carry out the activities.

Step 1. Gathering the facts

WHAT ARE THE FACTS? (checklist)

God's guidance: What does God say in the Bible and through his Spirit to all Christians and to you personally?

Explanation: It is important to seek God's guidance when you make plans. Your plans have no chance of success when they lie outside God's plan. God's plan cannot be thwarted! He is sovereign over all that happens (Job 42:2-3; Psalm 33:11; Proverbs 16:9; 19:21; 20:24; 21:30).

Goal of your congregation (or organisation): What are the goals/objectives of your congregation or organisation?

Explanation: Your plans need to fit, not only into God's plan, but also into the vision of your congregation.

Your progress: What have you reached up to now? What progress have you made the past year? (1 Timothy 4:15).

Explanation: It is important that your plan lies in line with your personal and ministry development.

Lessons learned: Which lessons can you draw from previous experience, successes, failures and mistakes? (Proverbs 24:32). Think about the causes.

Explanation: If applicable, apply previously attained knowledge to your new plan. This heightens its effectiveness.

<input type="checkbox"/> Culture: What are characteristic features of the (sub)culture in which you want to carry out your plan?
<i>Explanation:</i> Study the characteristics of the group of people you want to reach, their world-view, beliefs, superstitions, values, norms and habits (Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Matthew 15:1-9), so that your plan may connect with these people. Which aspects of their human culture are sinful and need to change?
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs: What are the conscious and unconscious needs of the people you want to reach, of your co-workers and of yourself? (Proverbs 27:23; Jeremiah 12:10-11; Zechariah 10:2-3; 11:15-17; Matthew 9:36) (Read Jeremiah 23:1-40; Ezekiel 34:1-24).
<i>Explanation:</i> List the needs so that you can take them into account.
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibilities (chances): What are the possibilities or open doors which God gives? (Acts 14:27; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3).
<i>Explanation:</i> See God's guidance (cf. study 34).
<input type="checkbox"/> Hindrances: What are the difficulties, problems, hindrances and opposition that you are facing? (Acts 16:6-7; 2 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:14,15,18)
<i>Explanation:</i> Problems and hindrances can come from either God or evil powers. Study them, pray about them and seek God's enlightenment.
<input type="checkbox"/> Means or resources: Which means or resources are available to you?
<i>Explanation:</i> Means or resources are for example: people (co-workers), their time, their dedication (Philippians 2:19-23), places to minister (Acts 19:9), materials, money (Philippians 4:15-16), prayer support (Colossians 4:2-4).
<input type="checkbox"/> Skills: What are the skills of your co-workers and the abilities of the people you want to reach?
<i>Explanation:</i> These are for example: natural talents, spiritual gifts, capacity, strengths, weaknesses, experience, faith, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Cost: What are the costs involved (Luke 14:28-30)?
<i>Explanation:</i> The costs in terms of time (2 Corinthians 11:27), energy, self-denial, money, preparation of materials and programmes, possible opposition (2 Timothy 3:12).
<input type="checkbox"/> Counsel: What counsel or advice do you receive from others: from leaders, from other respected and wise counsellors, and from people who have done similar things?
<i>Explanation:</i> Only ask advice when you have gathered all the other above facts.

Step 2. Setting the goals

1. Brainstorming: gathering ideas

Together seek new ideas, approaches and methods. Do this with your co-workers, but also with your leaders (elders), counsellors and marriage partner.

2. Communication to and fro in an open atmosphere

Discuss the possibilities in an open and an unrestrained atmosphere. Consider the various ideas, approaches and methods. Listen well to everyone's reactions and questions. Try to understand one another's intentions.

Think through the consequences of every approach and decision you consider to make (Isaiah 47:7).

Test every idea with God's Word! All decisions and plans must be in accordance with the Bible!

Pray enough about every aspect.

Give people affected by the decision enough time to consider and pray about the consequences and react towards the plan.

3. Making decisions

Make every decision as much as possible together with your team members, co-workers and leaders (elders).

Do everything possible to arrive at a unanimous decision (Acts 15:4,28; 16:4). The Christian Church is NOT an autocracy in which one traditional pastor makes all the decisions. The Christian Church is also NOT a democracy in which the members exercise their will and plan by means of the majority vote! The Christian Church IS a Christocracy in which Christ exercises his will and plan by means of the Bible (correctly interpreted), the Holy Spirit and the council of elders!

And a wise council of elders will involve the whole congregation as much as possible in the decision making process (cf. Acts 1:21-23; 6:2-3; Acts 15:4,22-29; 1 Timothy 3:14-15)! The 'decisions' (Greek: dogmata kekrimata) were not decisions that were enforced to obey, but decisions that were advised to obey (Acts 16:4). In this case the decisions were: (1) not to make it difficult for the Gentiles who are becoming Christians by requiring circumcision, (2) to ask Gentiles to love Jews by not offending them by eating the meat of strangled animals (cf. Romans chapter 14) and (3) to avoid sexual immorality.

Some ministry decisions will have to be taken by the group leader! But then only he is responsible for the consequences (cf. Acts 15:36-41).

IMPORTANT DECISIONS TO SET THE GOAL (checklist)

<input type="checkbox"/> (1) Biblical basis: What is the biblical basis for your plan? <i>Explanation:</i> e.g. a command or teaching in the Bible.
<input type="checkbox"/> (2) Expectation: What do you expect God will do?
<input type="checkbox"/> (3) Influence: What kind of influence would you like to have on the lives of those involved?
<input type="checkbox"/> (4) Philosophy: What are the fundamental truths of your ministry? For example: multiplying new believers, disciples, workers, leaders and house fellowships. <i>Explanation:</i> These are the principles that guide the direction of your ministry.
<input type="checkbox"/> (5) Strategy: What is the approach according to which you operate? <i>Explanation:</i> This is the method of approach, the most important action steps, e.g. small groups and personal contact.
<input type="checkbox"/> (6) Plan: What is your plan? <i>Explanation:</i> This consists of the goal and programme (activities and time schedule).
<input type="checkbox"/> (7) Organisation: What is the structure of your organisation? <i>Explanation:</i> Who has responsibility for what and for whom? And to whom is he accountable? (job descriptions)
<input type="checkbox"/> (8) Relationships: What is the relationship towards other groups of people? <i>Explanation:</i> Determine the place of your plan and the execution thereof within your congregation or organisation.
<input type="checkbox"/> (9) Style: What is the style of your ministry? <i>Explanation:</i> Think through what will be the style of your leadership.

If you have made the above decisions, you are ready to set (formulate) goals.

4. Formulating the goal (objective)

A good goal (objective) is:

short, so that you can remember it

clear, so that it can be easily explained

realistic, so that it can be carried out without wasting time and resources

specific, so that everyone stays on the right track without straying from it, and without wasting time on unimportant issues. The more specific your goal, the

more you are able to 'check' whether you have reached your goal or not.

open: it describes results, not activities

motivating, so that it moves people into action and the participants know why they are doing it

challenging, so that it stimulates faith and development.

THE CONTENTS OF YOUR GOAL (checklist)

<input type="checkbox"/> (1) God's calling and challenge: What does God want you to do? To what does God want you to give your life? (Isaiah 30:1-2) <i>Explanation:</i> A good goal (objective) reflects God's calling and challenge.
<input type="checkbox"/> (2) God's command and teaching: What are the most important commands and teachings in the Bible concerning this goal? (Luke 10:25-28) <i>Explanation:</i> A good goal (objective) reflects God's commands and teachings in the Bible.
<input type="checkbox"/> (3) God's kingdom, the Church and the neighbour: What are the goals (objectives) of the congregation or organisation to which you belong? <i>Explanation:</i> A good goal (objective) reflects the interests of God's kingdom, of the Church and of your neighbour.

Step 3. Devising the activities

After you have set your goal, you are ready to devise concrete activities that will reach or attain the goal.

What exactly do you want to do?

How do you want to do it?

The activities describe how you want to reach or attain your goal.

Step 4. Determining the time schedule

Finally determine the time schedule or programme. The time schedule or programme describes:

When you want to do what.

It shows the dates, day of the week and time of the day when you plan to execute a particular activity.

1. Checklist

Before you start, check the following questions:

Have I consulted others (Proverbs 15:22; 24:6)?

Has God confirmed my plan (Isaiah 30:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:18; Acts 15:28)?

Have I considered all the alternatives?

Have I put the means (resources) into the possibilities in

the best possible way?
How can I give Jesus Christ a more central place?

2. The organisation

Finally, write job-descriptions or overviews of each person's responsibilities, so that everyone knows for what, to whom and for whom he is responsible.

Pray and dedicate your plan and the execution thereof to God (Proverbs 16:3). Pray regularly with your assistant for the group members and with the team for the target group. For example, pray Colossians 1:9-12.

EXECUTING A PLAN

After you have made a *plan* you need to execute it by *organising*, *leading* and eventually *evaluating* (remember: **pole**).

You have planned when, based on the facts of your context, there are clearly defined goals and a programme that can attain these goals.

You have organised when everyone knows clearly to whom, for whom and for what he is responsible.

You are leading when you make the right decisions early enough and see to it that they are carried out.

Clear communication is an essential part of leading.

You have evaluated when you have compared what you have done with what you should have done (have planned to do), and have analysed the differences.

PLAN FOR BEGINNING A DISCOVERY GROUP

1. Evaluation of the facts

God's guidance. Matthew 28:19 "Go and make disciples. John 1:39. "Come and see!"

Organisation. The team wants to divide the house fellowship into two smaller groups: a discipleship group and a discovery group.

Lesson. It became evident that there are people who first want to discover more about the gospel before they want to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Possibilities. There are a group of young people, a leader and an assistant available.

Means. There is a room on the second floor with 12 chairs available.

Costs. I need to prepare the materials (two weeks), lead a discovery group every 14 days and keep studying the Bible to answer their questions.

2. Goal (describing the result, not the activity)

The group has discovered from the Gospel of John: who Jesus Christ is, what he teaches, what he has done in the time of the Bible, what he is doing now and how one can begin a personal relationship with him.

The group has found answers to their most important questions.

3. Activities

Begin by having a meal together (take turns to cook and host).

Read one chapter of the Gospel of John during every meeting.

Study a part of the Gospel of John during every meeting, making use of about three questions (45 minutes).

Answer some questions of the group members (30 minutes).

End by fellowshiping and drinking something together.

4. Time schedule or programme

Every 14 days on Tuesdays of the uneven weeks from September to June.

19.00 hours: the meal (45 minutes).

19.45 to 21.00 hours: the discovery group (75 minutes).

21.00 hour: fellowship

5. Organisation

Group leader (name): Tasks: planning, preparing questions, leading the discussion, praying, giving personal attention to group members.

Assistant (name): Tasks: hosting, caring for the mealtime and drinks, taking along Bibles, paper and pens, setting the chairs and white board, reminding the members to come, keeping an attendance record, praying, giving personal attention to group members, participating in the meeting.

Group members (names).

Place: Second floor left at back of house.

Materials: extra Bibles, questions, whiteboard with pens and eraser.