

# HOW TO START A BIBLE STUDY

## *in your neighborhood*

*(it's easier than you think)*



*by Rozanne Frazee*

Of course, a pastor's wife would say it's easy to start a Bible study in your neighborhood. You probably think I have done this all of my life—Right? WRONG! Until a few years ago, I had never considered starting a Bible study. So, when God stirred my spirit to start one with my neighbors, I tried to shake it saying, "God, if you want me to do this, show me clearly."

A few months later, Randy and I hosted a potluck dinner for the neighborhood. Enter Sandra, whom I had never met, but she knew who Randy and I were. The first words out of her mouth were, "Hi, Rozanne, I called your church to see if there were any Bible studies this summer, but they told me there weren't." Knowing that couldn't be right, I suggested I check into it for her. Instead of simply leaving it at that, I hesitantly asked, "What would you think about starting a Bible study here in our neighborhood?" Her eyes lit up and she said, "Oh, I have always dreamed of simply walking to a Bible study after I came home from a long day at work." I smiled, and we agreed to chat the next day. I silently giggled to myself "Ok, God, that was clear enough!"

After Sandra and I blanketed our 100-house neighborhood with invitations, fear began to grip me. "What if no one comes? Worse yet, what if they DO come? They know I'm a pastor's wife—will they expect me to have all the answers? I don't!" But I pressed on with prayer, prayer, and more prayer.

**Here are some of the obstacles God helped me overcome.**

### **I can't teach!**

I found a plethora of Bible studies available with wonderful teaching videos of people who teach really well. We chose one we were interested in, and let the ladies know the study was meant to get us in God's Word for ourselves and discover what He had for each of us. We used the discussion questions provided in the companion study guide to facilitate discussion.

### **Share the responsibility.**

I chose a co-leader. My co-leader covered meetings I couldn't make. If you want, you can alternate weeks.

## My house is not “Pinterest perfect.”

Not many of us have those anyway, so most will feel right at home. If you wait until your house is perfect, you’ll never do it. There may be someone in the group who enjoys entertaining; ask them if they would open their home for the gathering, and you can focus on leading.

## Keep it simple, sweetheart!

Don’t try to serve a gourmet meal or dessert every time, unless you want to. Store bought goodies and iced tea/coffee are fine. If you want to celebrate at the end of a study, then do a potluck so not all the food preparation falls on you.

## Don’t start the study prematurely.

Christians get a bad rap sometimes if we appear as though we are all about trying to evangelize or recruit for our church. If you are new to the neighborhood and want to get to know other women, the Bible study probably isn’t the way to start. Get involved in other activities happening in your neighborhood first. For me, it meant participating in the neighborhood garage sale, helping canvas houses for signatures to start recycling pickup, and joining the Neighborhood Watch group. This demonstrates commitment and love for your neighbors before asking them to jump on what you want to do.

## Remember it is the Holy Spirit who brings people to salvation.

Make the salvation message clear but don’t push. Let the study/discussion plant seeds and God will do some of His best work!

So, what happened in my neighborhood? They did come! Twenty ladies from many different churches; everyone in a different place in their spiritual journey. Some who faithfully attended church and some who hadn’t been in church in many years. My favorite treasure is that several of the teenage daughters started coming. In the spring, one of them became a believer and was baptized in a neighborhood pool!

**My best advice, if you are feeling the nudge to begin a Bible study in your neighborhood, answer that call with a “Yes”! You will be amazed at the outcome, not only with the group, but how God impacts your own heart.**

## RECOMMENDED for neighborhood groups:

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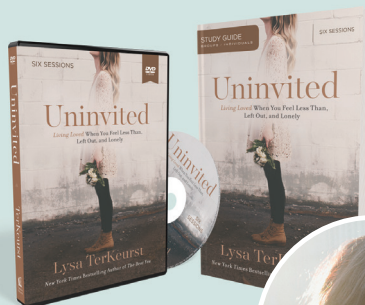
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