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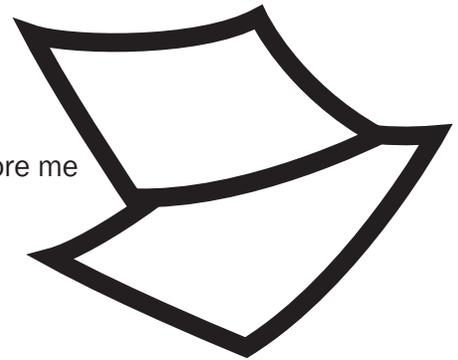
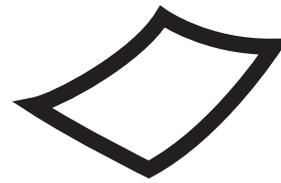
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Using these studies

The introduction in the first book covered how to run a small group Bible study and how to use *Studies 2 Go* most effectively. If you didn't read these instructions the first time around let me encourage you to have a look at some stage. You may find some helpful ideas that you had not thought of that will make your small group Bible study even better.

This latest set of studies has a similar pattern to the first book. It contains studies from the Old Testament and New Testament (including a Gospel and a letter) and some topical studies. You can use these in any order you like. The 10 Commandments is a long series so you may want to split it into two halves.

The studies from John and James recommend learning a memory verse for that series. See page 78 for examples of how to learn memory verses in a fun and creative way. These are samples taken from the book: *Creative Christian Ideas* by Ken Moser. Memory verses can be great fun but are also a helpful exercise for any Christian person whether young or old.

Each study is designed for a 45 minute Bible study. However, every group is different and the study may go longer or shorter depending on factors such as the size of the group, their age and the talkativeness of the group among other things. Remember that you are not a slave to the study.

If you complete a study early you can have a longer time sharing, praying or simply enjoying each other's company. If you find you are regularly completing the study early the optional exercises before the study may be a good way to use additional time.

If you don't complete the study you can drop some sections that you have not completed and go straight to the end of the study or you can finish it off the following week. If you are regularly unable to complete the study, work out what is taking up the time. If it is because of discipline problems, lack of attention, too much talking on irrelevant topics or other problem areas you will need to address these with your group. However, the long study may be because of good reasons such as good discussion. If this is the case, work with the situation and either cut down the study in your preparation beforehand or divide the study into two halves and complete the second half the following week.

If the study is not completely suitable for your group in some way, spend some time adapting it with your own additions/subtractions to tailor it more to the needs of your group.

New feature - The Optional Exercise

A new feature of this set of studies is the optional exercises. These will be particularly helpful for those of you who run your church youth group as a Bible study or use these studies as part of your youth group program. These studies were designed for a Bible study group so you might find that the optional exercises take too much time for a midweek group. You may also find that some activities are not suitable for some reason – the good thing is that they are *optional* and not necessary to the study.

Important note

The optional exercises are mostly a fun exercise to introduce the subject and are not necessarily meant to have deep theological significance attached to it. So beware building conclusions around them – your conclusions should come from the Bible.

Another important note

The optional exercises are not meant to take up large amounts of time. Try to not to take longer than 5 – 15 minutes per exercise. Your priority is time in Bible study, sharing and prayer. If any of these activities get squeezed because of the optional activity then drop the activity. You will find that if you have an older group they may prefer to spend any extra time talking to each other – this is a much better pursuit.

Preparing and writing your own Bible study

This book of *Studies 2 Go* took much longer than I planned (or promised some of you!). So if I keep you waiting too long for the next one I have put together some step-by-step guidelines to help you write your own.

In the first book I gave you six steps to writing your own Bible study which included:

1. sharing question
2. an exercise to introduce the subject (see some examples in the studies in this book)
3. read the passage/s
4. ask some questions that will help them think through what they passage is teaching
5. apply what they have learned to their own context
6. pray

Below are step-by-step guidelines for preparation of three different types of Bible studies: Inductive, Thematic and Topical. These are very basic outlines but they give you room to make a study more interesting and creative using your own style.

Inductive

- Step 1:** Choose a book of the Bible or a Bible passage.
- Step 2:** Start with a sharing exercise (a question easily answered by all and preferably leading to the passage to be covered).
- Step 3:** Prepare a short introduction to the book including author, recipients, historical background and key themes. Introductions to each book of the Bible can often be found in a 'Study Bible' though a Bible Dictionary or commentary will give you more information if needed.
- Step 4:** Study the passage – break it into sections (paragraphs, verses, key words etc), look at specific key verses, themes and characters. Read the passage and ask some questions that will help people understand what they have read. Try not to simply ask questions that are answered by quoting the passage back to you.
- Step 5:** Prepare some application questions. These are questions that ask 'how does this part of the Bible challenge me in my own situation?' and 'how will your life be different because of this passage?' Without application your Bible study will only be a lecture or a comprehension exercise.

Thematic

- Step 1:** Choose a Bible theme, e.g. salvation, faith, grace etc.
- Step 2:** Write a sharing question that will help the group to share their views on the subject.
- Step 3:** Unless the study will do this clearly early on, give a definition of the subject to be studied.
- Step 4:** Choose several key passages from both the Old Testament and the New Testament – try to extract different information about the theme from these passages. Make sure you deal with the person of Jesus in your study. For example, the theme of salvation is throughout the Bible but is fully realised in the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Step 5:** Prepare some application questions. Your outcome must not be simply to understand a concept but to be challenged by your new understanding from the Bible. How will your life be different because of this Bible theme?

Hint: A concordance is very handy for this kind of study.

Topical

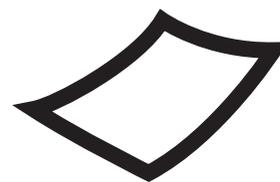
- Step 1:** Choose your topic – e.g. drugs, television, love etc.
- Step 2:** Invite discussion that draws some conclusions regarding the opinions of the group members, their friends and families as well as society. Also work out some ‘rights’ and ‘wrongs’ on the subject.
- Step 3:** Using one or more Bible passages, draw conclusions about what the Bible teaches about the topic and what the view of the Christian should be. Topical studies are where the Bible is most often neglected. Make sure that your study centres around what the Bible teaches and not popular opinion. If you find it difficult to find Bible passages that speak on the topic you have chosen, ask your minister, a mature Christian you know, read some Christian books or surf the net for help.
- Step 4:** Prepare some application questions. Discuss how they can change wrong opinions or actions. Think of standards set by the Bible in these areas.

Some other handy hints for preparing your own studies...

1. **Before you start**, consider your group: the age, needs, Christian maturity etc and prepare appropriate material for them.
2. **Make a plan:** Do you want to do a series or a single study? Where do you want to go?
3. **Beware of using only one style of Bible study** e.g. don't just write topical Bible studies, you need to do a whole range of studies to develop a good understanding of the Christian life and faith.
4. **You can use Studies 2 Go as a model**, however, don't be afraid to branch out and develop your own style of study which suits you and your group.
5. **Invite discussion** and involvement, try not to let it become a lecture.
6. **The better you know your group, the better your Bible studies will be!** So get to know the individuals within your group.

One last thing...

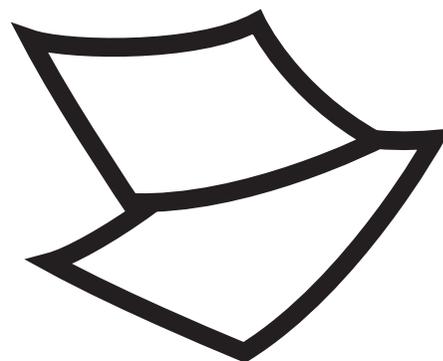
If I can be a help regarding the information in this book email me at kjmoser@hotmail.com and title the subject 'Bible Studies'.



May God continue to bless your ministry to the youth in your church through your faithfulness to his Word.

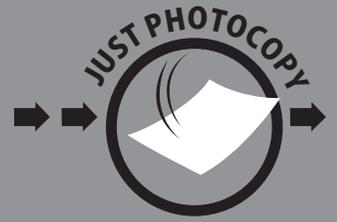
"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."
1 Corinthians 15:58

Regards
Julie Moser



Leader's Notes

You must have no other gods before me



Aim

To introduce the 10 commandments and a little of their historical context. To understand that God is the only true God and we are to place him as number one in our lives. We show that he is number one by obeying him.

Personal Preparation: Read Genesis 12:1-3, Exodus and Deuteronomy 5. Also read Romans 7:7-14 and 8:1-4. If the group is not familiar with the story of Israel's slavery in Egypt and Moses you could read a brief history about how Israel had become slaves in Egypt and how God used Moses to rescue them from slavery in Acts 7:2-22 and 7:30-38.

Share: Introduce the concept of rules or laws with the two sharing questions.

Introducing the 10 Commandments

Read the short introduction and then ask for volunteers to read Exodus 20:1-17. You could also read one or two commandments each however, make sure they have the option to pass if they don't want to read.

Important note: Israel's relationship with God didn't come through following rules. God brought them into relationship with him FIRST. Israel's obedience came as a response to his love.

Optional exercise: See page 70

Commandment 1 – You must have no other gods before me

Ask everyone to tick one of the boxes that indicate how often he/she thinks about God then share their answers. Be open to discussing their answers if they want to. **Ask one person to read Exodus 20:3** and then ask each person to write this commandment in their own words and then share their answers. If this is difficult ask them how they would explain this commandment to a friend. This exercise is repeated for every study and will help the group to clarify what each commandment means. Discuss why they believe **God wants Israel to have 'no other gods' other than him.** You may like to have some responses ready. It was appropriate for Israel to recognise God as the one who rescued them from slavery. No other 'god' had done this. Ask the group to circle their responses to the five statements about following other gods and then discuss their answers. The following passage (John 14:6) will show the first two statements to be false and the third one to be true. The first commandment (Exodus 20:3) shows the last two to be false. **Read John 14:6 What does this verse teach us about following the true God?** No one comes to God except through Jesus. (Some other verses for you to be familiar with are John 3:16-18 and 1 John 5:10-12). **Ask one or more volunteers to read Mark 12:28-34** and then ask the young people for examples of loving God with their whole being. Try to help them come up with practical ways they can do this. For example when are some times they can put him first? How can they show other people that God comes first in their lives? etc.

The law and the Christian

It is important that the Christian person understands that following rules and laws does not give us a relationship with God. We fail to perfectly obey God because we are sinful however, God sent Jesus to deal with our sin. Just as God rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt, we have been rescued from the slavery of sin through Jesus' death. We now demonstrate our relationship with him through an obedient life.

Ask a volunteer to read 1 John 2:1-6 How does God deal with our failure to keep his law? (verses 1-2) He sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sin (sin=disobedience to God). **How do we show our love for God?** (verses 3-6) By living in obedience to him. **In what ways can we 'walk as Jesus did'** (verse 6)? Discuss some practical examples.

Pray: Ask for help to live in obedience to God as a response to his love for us.

Challenge: Give the group one 'law' to follow this week and review next week how they went keeping that law. A good suggestion would be that they are not to think bad thoughts of another person this week.

More-Studies-2-go

The 10 Commandments

You must have no other gods before me



Share: What is a rule that you have to obey that you think is a stupid rule?
What is a rule that you have to obey that you think is a good rule?

Introducing the 10 Commandments

The 10 commandments are laws God gave to his people Israel for life in the promised land. God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt and they were to show their special relationship to him by obeying his laws. Read the 10 Commandments God gave Israel in Exodus 20:1-17.

Commandment 1 – You must have no other gods before me

Complete the sentence by ticking the box of one of the following statements then discuss your answers. 'I think about God...'

- a lot only when I'm afraid or lonely every now and then
 a few times a day very rarely

Read Exodus 20:3 Write this commandment in your own words

- Why do you think God wants Israel to have 'no other gods' other than him?

What do you believe about following other gods?

Circle your response to each of the statements below then discuss your answers.

All religions lead to the same God	I agree	I disagree	I don't know
All religions take you to heaven	I agree	I disagree	I don't know
God has shown us one way to get to him	I agree	I disagree	I don't know
You can be a Christian and follow other gods	I agree	I disagree	I don't know
All religions agree with each other about who God is	I agree	I disagree	I don't know

Read John 14:6 What does this passage teach us about following the true God?

Read: Mark 12:28-34 Jesus summarised the 10 commandments as loving God and loving your neighbour. List some practical examples of what it means to love God with all your heart, soul and mind.

The law and the Christian

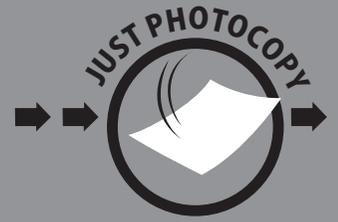
Being a Christian is not about keeping laws but about having a heart that places God as number one.

Our problem is that we fail to live in total obedience to God's law. **Read 1 John 2:1-6**

- How does God deal with our failure to keep his law? (verses 1-2)
- How do we show our love for God? (verses 3-6)
- In what ways can we 'walk as Jesus did' (verse 6)?

Leader's Notes

Do not make idols



Aim

By the end of the study the group will understand that God requires our total devotion to him and that we cannot love him and worship other gods. The young people will also understand an idol is more than just a statue of a god but is anything that we devote ourselves to in place of God.

Optional Quick Quiz: Try to remember all 10 commandments in order.

Review homework: Ask if anyone tried to implement the challenge to not think bad thoughts of another person for a week. Have them share their experience. The exercise should demonstrate to them our inability to live God's way and therefore we need God's mercy and help.

Optional exercise: See page 70

Share: Ask the group to write down three things they love and then have everyone share their answers. *NOTE: if you use the optional exercise you need to specify that they should not include the item they modelled with the playdoh. If you used the optional exercise you could also skip the sharing question and go straight to the study.*

Commandment 2 – Do not make idols

Ask one person to read Exodus 20:4-6 and then ask each person to write this commandment in their own words and then share their answers. Ask the young people to write their own definition for an 'idol'. An idol can be anything that can become more important than God or replaces God altogether.

What reason does God give to his people for not worshipping idols? God is a jealous God. This means that he will not compete with other gods. We are used to the word 'jealous' being used in a sinful way (i.e. when we want to have what belongs to someone else). However, when the term 'jealous' is applied to God it means that he wants an exclusive relationship with us in the same way that a husband and wife should have an exclusive relationship.

Place a number between 1 and 3 next to each of the items listed to indicate to what degree these things can become idols. (1=always tempting to worship, 2=sometimes tempting to worship, 3=never tempting to worship). Ask the group to volunteer their answers. One way of sharing answers would be to ask them to read all of their '3 list', then all of their '2 list' etc. When you are finished **discuss which of the items listed have the potential to become their idols (things that you devote yourself to instead of God).**

The idols we make for ourselves

Read the short introduction and then ask for volunteers to read Exodus 32:1-10 and 30-35. **How does God respond to the people making an idol?** He is angry and wants to destroy them and punishes their sin with a plague. This story indicates how God feels about worshipping idols.

Ask volunteers to read the two passages. After each one is read, discuss the problem with worshipping idols.

Isaiah 44:9-19 – An idol is nothing more than a human creation which is not able to do anything.

Romans 1:18-23 – Idols exchange the true God for images of things he has created. It is a denial of evidence for the true God.

How are we to respond to the idols that this world offers us today? Ask a volunteer to read Acts 17:29-31. We are to repent of this kind of ignorance. Ask if anyone would like to share something they personally would **need to change in order to keep God number one in their life.** Then discuss suggestions of how to **help each other to keep God number one in our lives and how we can help our friends turn from idols to the true and living God.**

Pray: that we identify those things that tempt us to ignore the true God. Pray also that we can place God above all other things in our lives.

More-Studies-2-go

The 10 Commandments

Do not make idols



Share: What are three things you really love (not including people).
For example: *basketball, an iPod etc.* Write your answers in the space below.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Commandment 2 – Do not make idols

Read Exodus 20:4-6

Write this commandment in your own words:

Write a definition for 'idol': _____

- What reason does God give to his people for not worshipping idols? (verse 5)

What idols do you think people you know are tempted to worship? Look at the list below and indicate which things people are most tempted to make into idols by rating them from 1-3 (1=always tempting to worship, 2=sometimes tempting to worship, 3=never to tempting to worship)

___ Carved statues	___ Jobs	___ Sport	___ Boyfriend or girlfriend
___ Houses	___ Physical fitness	___ Friends	___ Money
___ Cars	___ Education	___ Entertainment	___ Possessions
___ Physical beauty	___ Life of pleasure	___ Fashion	___ Internet
___ Popularity	___ Musical ability	___ Free Time	___ Other? _____

- Which of the items listed have the potential to become your idols (things that you devote yourself to instead of God)?

The idols we make for ourselves

God gave the commandments to Moses on Mt Sinai. While this was happening God's people waited at the foot of the Mountain. However, as they waited they grew restless. Read what they did while God was giving his laws to Moses. **Read Exodus 32:1-10 and 30-35.**

How does God respond to the people making an idol? (verses 9-10 and 33-35)

Read the following passages and work out the problem with worshipping idols:

Isaiah 44:9-19 _____

Romans 1:18-23 _____

How are we to respond to the idols that this world offers us today? Read Acts 17:29-31

- Is there anything you need to change in order to keep God as number one in your life?
- How can we help each other to keep God as number one in our lives?
- How can we help our friends turn from idols to the true and living God?