

JESUS AND YOU

*Introducing Jesus  
from the New Testament Gospels*

**How to run a  
JESUS and YOU  
group**



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## Introduction

Welcome to *How to run a Jesus and You group*.

*Jesus and You* is...

- a series of evangelistic courses, each one just four sessions long, centred on Jesus in the New Testament Gospels.
- designed to be used in small groups or one-to-one.
- made up of a mix of interactive questions and brief DVD talks.
- designed with a special emphasis on clear and simple English, suitable for use with internationals who are learning English, and for anyone else who would benefit from this feature.

To run a *Jesus and You* group, you will need the booklets for the *Jesus and You* course that you have chosen (one for each person who joins), and the appropriate leader's guide and DVD. The booklets and DVD can be purchased from **The Good Book Company**. The leader's guides for each course are available as free downloads from **Good Book Company** websites:

UK: [www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk)

North America: [www.thegoodbook.com](http://www.thegoodbook.com)

Australia: [www.thegoodbook.com.au](http://www.thegoodbook.com.au)

New Zealand: [www.thegoodbook.co.nz](http://www.thegoodbook.co.nz)

*How to run a Jesus and You group* gives plenty of information and ideas about how to set up and organise a *Jesus and You* group. In particular, it aims to help Christians and churches who are new to this kind of evangelistic introduction to Jesus Christ.

## How *Jesus and You* works

### a. Goal

To see people grow in their understanding of the Christian message by looking at Jesus in the Bible, so they will come to trust in him as their personal Saviour.

### b. Target users

Obviously anyone interested in discovering more about the Christian message can benefit from *Jesus and You*, but it is specifically designed to help those who have difficulty accessing the Christian message through the normal means used by most churches—sermons and services, books, Bible studies and mainstream evangelistic courses. There are a number of reasons why some people find this difficult:

- They may be English language learners from another country.
- They may lack formal education and find it difficult, practically and/or culturally, to discuss a text (like the Bible), or follow a discourse (like a sermon).
- They may have special educational needs, and even the idea of doing a 'course' or 'study' could be intimidating for them.
- They may have little or no experience of churches or religion and feel that sort of stuff is not for them.

### c. Strategy

To present the Christian message in a non-threatening way, either in a small group or one-to-one. With this in mind...

- *Jesus and You* is short—it takes only 4 sessions.
- no previous Bible knowledge is assumed.
- a simple English Bible translation is used—the New International Readers' Version (NIRV), and the text is printed in the *Jesus and You* booklet.
- each session includes a light optional activity to help people familiarise themselves with the Bible passage for that session. They will be able to hear and/or look at the Bible passage three times before any discussion about it takes place.
- the discussion questions are interspersed with short DVD presentations (called 'Downloads'). This gives people a break from looking at printed text, explains things in a way which doesn't require them to do extra reading, and communicates the Bible in a more personal, colourful and memorable way.

The discussion parts of *Jesus and You* work best used in groups numbering between 2 and 10. However, a whole church could watch the DVD parts together, and then divide into smaller groups to look at the questions.

### d. The booklet

*Jesus and You* sets out to help people learn the Bible for themselves. You will see in the booklet that each session runs according to the following pattern:

1. A starter topic drawn from everyday life.
2. 'The Story'—people listen to the Bible passage read by the group leader, and, if they wish, can follow the text printed in the booklet at the end of each session.
3. An optional 'memory test' activity, giving people time to understand and become familiar with the Bible passage. This can be done individually, in pairs or as a whole group, but the emphasis should be kept on light-hearted fun—like a 'Test yourself' magazine feature and certainly not like an exam.
4. The Bible passage, or the relevant part of it, is listened to and read again.
5. 'Think about it'—these are simple questions (sometimes with multiple choice answers) that get people to do just that with the Bible passage.
6. The first 'Download'—a short DVD presentation that opens up an aspect of the Bible story. (A printed summary of the main points of the Downloads is printed at the end of each session.)
7. A few further questions that pick up points from the Download.
8. 'Ask yourself'—questions for personal application that seek to apply the teaching points made so far. These may be discussed together or a few moments given for personal reflection, depending on what the leader thinks is best for the group.
9. Stages 4-8 are repeated up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Download.
10. The session ends with 'The Big Question(s)' and a relevant verse from another part of the Bible.

**e. The DVD**

- You will need the DVD for the short talks ('Downloads') that are interspersed with the questions in every session.
- There are three Downloads in each session. These are marked in the booklet so it is clear when to use the DVD.
- In the booklet you will find a printed summary of the main points mentioned in the Downloads, at the end of each session.
- The DVD for each session ends with the real-life story of a Christian, which illustrates the Bible teaching for that session.
- You can select from a choice of two speakers on the DVD for your Downloads. One is male and one female but they give the same talks. Choose whichever is best for your group.
- Alternatively, you may wish to do the talks yourself. You can find the scripts for the Downloads at the end of the leader's guide for each *Jesus and You* course.

## Planning the first *Jesus and You*

**a. What type of group?**

As mentioned already, the discussion parts of *Jesus and You* work best in groups numbering 2-10. Obviously, a group of people who have a similar age or occupation, or with something else in common, is generally easier than a very diverse group. For example, it's probably best to run separate groups for internationals who are learning English and for Brits.

*Single-sex groups*—you might discover that you have someone who can bring a whole group of men or women, in which case a single-sex group for that particular crowd may be the best thing to arrange.

*Joining with others*—you will probably find that some have an individual contact for whom one-to-one would not be appropriate. Why not get them to join up with others in a similar situation?

*Christian helpers?*—it can be very effective to have a 'Christian buddy' assigned to each visitor. This works well where you have several Christians each bringing one friend, and also with internationals who are learning English. 'Bringers' are a very important group of people, and not to be despised or overlooked—many evangelistic initiatives would suffer without their often quiet but effective involvement. Make sure that they are encouraged and supported in prayer.

**b. Where to meet?**

The best places are comfortable surroundings that feel normal for the people doing *Jesus and You*. Homes are one option but be aware that in some communities people are not used to visiting one another's homes. Comfortable church premises provide a neutral meeting ground that is also free of distraction, but some may feel intimidated about walking into a religious building. Alternatively, some groups may meet in a pub or hire a room. However, be careful of a place that is too exposed to the public, where there can be many distractions or people may feel embarrassed.

**c. When to run a group?**

It all depends on the people. Often Christians can get into a bit of a rut when planning meetings. We tend to think all meetings should start at 7.30pm and end by 9.30pm so we can all be snuggled up in bed by 10.30pm. Now that may or may not be the best time for the guests. Have you considered that lunchtime may be best, or even early morning? Be imaginative but realistic about the people being invited.

**d. How to invite people?**

You may have identified a list of contacts from your church. Assign suitable Christians to invite each one and make sure that no one gets forgotten.

Or you may have a particular group already meeting that you would like to invite to *Jesus and You* eg: international women's group, baby and toddler group, literacy support ministry, youth outreach, summer school language students etc. If possible, get those already involved in running those groups to show the advertisement section of the DVD to the group and hand out printed invitations.

**e. Think about a meal**

If you have more time, why not kick off with a meal? This would make the first evening a little longer but could really help the group to 'gel'.

Or you could run an Introducing *Jesus and You* session for people who may be interested. This could include a meal, a presentation about *Jesus and You*, and contributions from those who have done it previously or who have recently become Christians. You could organise a session like this, both as a final get-together for a *Jesus and You* group, and also an introduction for new people.

**f. First impressions**

**The first 15 seconds are very important.** Welcoming and making people feel relaxed is essential. Remember, they may never have been in a meeting like this. They may not know the other people and they could feel uneasy about being there. The key word in all this is to be NORMAL... unless your normal is abnormal!

**g. Prepare your venue**

It is really the responsibility of the host/leader to set the atmosphere, especially where you are in control of the venue

*Put on some fairly neutral background music*—popular jazz is often a good option. Be careful of pushing your particular eccentric tastes in music. Obviously, if the group consists mostly of young people, then you might want them to bring some of their own music. But remember, this is to be in the background to set the atmosphere—not too loud or it will make chatting together difficult. And don't forget to turn it off when you get started.

*Have a pot of coffee/tea on the brew* and a jug of fruit juice. Ask guests as they arrive what they want to drink. But take care not to spend a long time in the kitchen while the guests sit in a different room on their own or with other people they don't know. Have everything ready before they start arriving.

*Buy or make a special cake or biscuits.* A good idea, after the first week, is to get the guests to bring something along. This makes them feel that they are an important part of the group.

*Think of some topics to talk about beforehand* so that, as you are drinking and waiting for others to arrive, there won't be those embarrassing silences. You may not need those topics, but be prepared.

*Make sure you introduce guests* to each other and yourself to the guests. If you know some background that is relevant, then use that too. 'Let me introduce you to Fred. He works in the building trade too.' 'Sarah has two boys at Bean Road School as well.'

*Think about the type of people coming* and make them feel as relaxed as possible. Make sure they know where the toilet is etc. Think about...

*animals*—put them in another room until you know if all the guests are comfortable with them.

*lighting*—check that it is adequate so people can see the booklet.

*room temperature*—make sure it is comfortable before people arrive.

*seating*—are there any special seating needs for the guests (bad backs, older people that don't want to be seated too low)? People with hearing problems might need to be nearer the leader. Everyone needs to see the screen comfortably.

Don't forget, if you are the leader, you need to be in a seating position where you can see everyone in the room, so you might need to save your seat (you could leave your booklet there), to avoid any embarrassment in having to ask people to move.

*Make sure there is time for people to relax and talk to each other* before you begin. This greatly helps the discussion later.

#### **h. Be well equipped**

*Booklets*—make sure you have enough copies for everyone you are expecting, plus a couple of extra copies for unexpected arrivals, or those who may forget to bring their booklet in subsequent sessions.

*Pens/Pencils*—leave plenty of pens and pencils around so that people can write in their booklets if they wish to.

*DVD*—make sure that your equipment is working properly before people arrive, that you have correctly cued the DVD, that you know how to adjust the volume, and that you can easily darken or lighten the room as needed.

*Sticky labels for names*—it would certainly be helpful for you and anyone else involved in leading or hosting the group to wear one of these. If your group includes people who don't know anyone, ask everyone to wear a name label, at least for the first couple of sessions.

## Leader's preparation

### a. Know the material

- Read thoroughly the Bible passage and make sure you understand it.
- Practise reading it aloud so that people will be able to hear it clearly and fluently.
- Go through the questions in the booklet, watch the Downloads and read the notes in the leader's guide for your course—so that you know where the session is heading, and can guide the group through it.

### b. Think from your guests' point of view

What might they not understand? What questions and problems might come to their minds? Which words will you have to explain to people learning English?

Some people think visually, so you might want to get a whiteboard or a large sheet of paper to write on (wall lining paper is cheap). This is also useful for writing up new words (for those learning English). You may be able to think up some diagrams / illustrations which help people to understand an important point.

### c. Think about any difficult bits

Do you understand them yourself? How will you explain them?

### d. Make the material yours

Think up some illustrations / stories / analogies / personal experiences / jokes etc that you might want to use.

### e. Plan what to do if everyone goes silent

Prepare some supplementary questions that will help people to work out an answer when they don't quite grasp the question you have asked. (Although, don't be afraid of short silences. Allow people time to think.) **Note:** The leader's guide sometimes includes supplementary questions in the *Target Answers* section for each session.

### f. Plan to get the timing right

Each session can be done **in about an hour**. If you are doing this one-to-one, it may be quicker.

You will need to know the material well enough to know how to speed up or allow longer on the various questions. Don't rush—give people time to digest what the Bible is saying and its implications. But don't let it drag on, especially if the discussion is going off on a tangent. Work out (and write down in your booklet) approximately how long each section should take.

Remember, it's best to finish with people wanting more, rather than feeling that the session went on forever.

### g. Think about prayer in the group

Of course, as a leader you will already be praying for the *Jesus and You* group, but when it comes to praying during the session itself, you need to be careful and think through how appropriate it might be. If you decide to pray, it should be a short, simple prayer. You may want to ask: 'Does anyone mind?'



#### **h. Plan to pray outside the group**

One of the main reasons why we don't pray is that we don't plan to pray. As you set aside time to prepare for *Jesus and You*, put aside time for praying for the leaders, hosts and guests.

*If you are a lone leader*—then get someone else to pray with you each week.

*If there are a number of leaders* —then meet up and pray.

*You could organise a prayer group*—the object of this is to have a group of people praying as you meet together with your guests for each session.

*And remember to pray yourself*—keep a list of the people who come, other leaders and even other groups. Put the list where you will see it daily (in your Bible?) and pray for them.

- *Use the word of God to pray*—this helps avoid mental drift and ensures biblical praying. It allows God to set the agenda for your prayers. Pray for people along the lines of the main point of each session. It's well worth reading the chapter entitled 'Lessons from the school of prayer' from Don Carson's book, 'Spiritual Reformation'.
- *Put 'feet' on prayer*—back up your prayer with follow-up. Watch out for guests' reactions. Do they seem annoyed or upset or very challenged? Why not contact them during the week? Send a card or text, or give them a call.

## Working with internationals

If the people in your group are internationals who are learning English, there are a few extra things to consider.

### a. Encouraging participation

It is worth knowing that many nationalities come from a culture where teachers and religious leaders are regarded as respected authority figures who are not to be questioned. As leader/host/organiser of your group, this is how your guests may view you. People from cultures like this are often reluctant to discuss or ask questions in front of a teacher, because the implication of asking questions is that the teacher has not done the job well enough. To get people participating, it might be helpful sometimes to break the group up into pairs. In any case, let people know that questions and comments are always welcomed, reassure people of that each session and ask the group regularly if they have comments or questions. You may find that people prefer to mention these after the session.

### b. Checking understanding

It can be a mistake to ask people 'Do you understand?' particularly those of Asian origin, as they invariably answer 'Yes'. Instead, try to ask questions that allow you to quietly check whether or not people understand.

Men in particular are often embarrassed by the fact that they do not know English very well. They may not volunteer that they don't understand something. Explain any words or phrases that you think may be a problem, (which ones will depend on the level of English that your group can understand). It's a good idea to write these up on a board, flipchart or OHP, along with a brief explanation, and leave it there throughout the session so people can refer to it later on, without having to show that they have forgotten what you said. With internationals who have a lower level of English, you should watch the DVD Downloads before each session, and select any key words or phrases that you think may need explaining.

Understanding all the words doesn't mean that people will understand the Bible passage yet, but reassure them that you are going to work slowly through it, bit by bit.

### c. Recapping

People doing this course in a second language will probably need more recapitulation—both of new words and Bible content. You may feel that you are saying the same things again and again, but it will be helpful for them.

### d. Using foreign language Bibles

Most internationals can get the Bible in their own language, and some may wish to use this in the session alongside the booklet. This is to be encouraged as it's always best for someone to hear God's word in their first language. You will simply need to give them a little extra time to also read the Bible passage in their own language.

Be aware that:

- in some languages the most widely available translation may be quite archaic (like reading the KJV in English), so ironically some may find the Bible easier to understand in English.
- dual language Bibles usually use the NIV for the English part, whereas *Jesus and You* uses the simpler NIRV.

## Giving extra help when needed

As already mentioned, *Jesus and You* aims to help those who have difficulty accessing the Christian message through the normal means used by most churches. This may be due to literacy problems or other special needs, or simply lack of familiarity and/or confidence with 'educational' activities. There are a number of things that you can do to make things easier and more comfortable for people in this category.

### a. Atmosphere

Some people are easily intimidated by the idea of studying, for practical and/or cultural reasons, so it will be important to avoid a classroom atmosphere.

- Think about how you arrange your venue—home-like and informal rather than utilitarian and formal.
- Be warm and friendly, and use humour. Reassure people that there are no exams or marks, and no passing or failing involved in *Jesus and You*.
- Be clear in your own mind about the goal of *Jesus and You* but flexible about how that goal is achieved (eg: not everyone needs to write down answers in their booklets).
- Try to avoid using educational terms with reference to *Jesus and You*.

#### Avoid...

study  
a study, a Bible study  
course  
  
students  
teacher  
homework

#### Use...

look at  
a session  
*Jesus and You* or the title  
of the specific course you are using  
group members, guests, people  
group leader  
preparing for next session

(**Note:** If, however, your group is made up of internationals who are learning English, they will be very comfortable with the idea of a course of study etc. and may be attracted to joining your group for this reason.)

### b. Opportunities to prepare

It's possible that people in your group may be unwilling to answer any questions in the session, however much you try to rephrase things or give them ideas. This may simply be due to complete lack of confidence, rather than lack of understanding. What can sometimes be helpful is the opportunity to go through the questions and, if people wish, to write down some answers in their booklet before coming to the session. They will need to get hold of the booklet in time to prepare for the first session. You could hold an introductory session to introduce yourself and any helpers, the venue, *Jesus and You*, and the members of the group to each other (see 'Planning the first *Jesus and You*: Think about a meal' on p6 above). This would be an ideal opportunity for people to take the booklet to prepare the first session.

Make this **optional** for those who will find it beneficial. Some will not bother, some will take the opportunity just to read through the Bible passage and questions, while

some will try to complete the whole session. Make sure they understand that no one is going to 'mark' their answers. To answer the questions in the booklet, people will need to read the Bible passage—make sure they know where to find it in their booklet.

(**Note:** Some questions will be easier to answer after people have seen the DVD 'Download' talks. Tell your group not to worry if they don't quite understand what the question is getting at and reassure them that it will become clearer when they watch the Downloads.)

**c. Reading and writing**

Any reading aloud should be done by the group leader, or someone who helps you with the group and is good at reading aloud. Never expect the people in your group do this. It would be good to read aloud both the Bible passage and the questions in the booklet. (**Note:** For tips on reading aloud, see 'Getting started: Getting into the Bible: Reading the Bible passage' below.)

Any writing should be optional. People may have a lot of difficulty with writing and may prefer to do any out of sight of the group. Provide pens and pencils in a central, easily accessible place, rather than allocating one to each person, so that people don't feel they are expected to write something.

**d. Breaks**

Providing breaks will be more important for some groups than others. Be aware that some people may find the session quite intensive and tiring. Allow a few moments for people to go outside to smoke a cigarette, use the toilets or just stretch their legs and get some fresh air.

## Getting started

**a. Welcome and DVD introduction**

The leader first needs to welcome guests and, if necessary, to introduce each person. Show the introduction to *Jesus and You* on the DVD. This will:

- explain what *Jesus and You* is and why it's been put together
- introduce the part of Jesus' life and/or teaching that you will be looking at
- explain which part of the Bible it comes from
- introduce the modern, simple translation of the Bible that *Jesus and You* uses
- reassure people that they won't have to pray, read aloud, or answer questions if they don't want to
- give a summary of what's included in a session.

**b. Introduce the *Jesus and You* booklet**

Give out a copy of the booklet to each person. Don't assume anything although of course you should avoid talking down to the guests. In particular, make sure people know:

- how to understand a Bible reference eg: Luke 12 v 13-21 (the first number tells us which chapter of Luke, and the numbers after 'v' tell us which verses).
- how to find a Bible reference in the Bible passages printed in the booklet (the Bible reference at the beginning of each passage tells us which book of the

Bible, chapter and verses this passage comes from, and you can find individual verses by looking at the numbers on the left side of the page).

If this is someone's first time looking at the Bible, there is no reason why they will know this. You could explain how you didn't have a clue about these things when you first became a Christian if that was your experience.

Also make sure people understand:

- that they can write whatever they want in their booklet, or alternatively, they don't need to write anything if they don't wish to
- what a 'Download' is (they don't need to download anything from the internet!)
- where to find the printed Bible text for each session
- where to find the Download summaries for each session

**c. Encouraging people to join in the discussion**

We want everyone to feel free to speak without feeling stupid. Remind people of the brain illustration (see DVD introduction) and that getting something wrong helps everyone to work out what is right. Also explain that some people might have strong disagreements but that can be very healthy, because it makes everyone think. We can disagree without being disagreeable.

**d. Getting into the Bible.**

**Summary**

After the first session, you will probably want to go over what people learned last time. Depending on your group, you could get people themselves to talk about what they have learned so far, before you give a quick review.

**Questions**

It is often helpful to read the questions out *before* reading the Bible passage. This means that people will have an idea of what they should be looking for as they listen to the Bible passage.

**Reading the Bible passage**

Reading the Bible passage aloud is an important part of *Jesus and You*. You may well have people in your group who are learning English, or who have problems with reading (and are likely to be embarrassed about this). For this reason, don't ask your guests to read the Bible aloud. Some people find it very frightening, and others struggle to read aloud and understand what the passage says at the same time. In the DVD introduction we have promised that no one will be made to read aloud.

Either read the Bible passage yourself or get someone who helps you with the group to do it, and who you have asked earlier. (In this case, make sure they can read fluently and ask them to read the passage through before the session.)

Don't forget to point out how people can follow along in their booklet as the passage is read aloud.

### **Tips for reading aloud:**

- Practise reading the passage aloud before the session. You will get a feel for the NIRV translation and the way the sentences are constructed.
- Work out how you are going to pronounce any words (eg: names) that you are unsure of, and then stick to that pronunciation.
- Give people time to find the page of the booklet and the first verse of the passage before you start reading.
- Read slowly, but don't treat your guests like children. Look out for the natural breaks in the sentence and pause at those points.
- If your group includes people who are learning English and who have a limited vocabulary, work out beforehand what you will do about words that they may not understand. Will you point out these words before you read aloud? Will you stop and explain in the middle of reading the passage? (If so, make sure you start the sentence again when you continue reading aloud.) Or will you go through the new words after you have read the whole passage?

Follow the 'Read' instructions as they occur throughout the session. It may feel as if you are going through the Bible passage a lot—this is because *Jesus and You* has been constructed so that people can go through a Bible passage three times before there is any discussion about it. Don't forget that your guests may be completely unfamiliar with the Bible and they will need some repetition to help them remember what a passage says. This is particularly important for those who have problems with literacy or who are learning English.

## **Common pitfalls to avoid**

### **a. Discussing opinions, not the Bible**

Try to discourage the group from constantly discussing what *they* think instead of looking at what the Bible says. Some people will think they know what the Christian message is when they have never read the Bible or heard faithful Bible teaching. We need to show that the Bible often says something very different to what most people think.

When someone gives an answer to a question, you can ask the whole group: 'Can we find that in the Bible passage?' or 'Where can we find that...?' Be gentle about this—we don't want to embarrass people—but be persistent. You could lighten things up with a bit of humour—'Oh-oh—we're going to have to ask THAT QUESTION again!'

### **b. Getting sidetracked**

Of course there is a time and place for people to share their opinions and ideas but make sure it is kept in its place. If there are subjects that members of the group want to discuss that are taking you away from the main arguments, then write the subjects down and discuss them after the session. This means that you won't dismiss important questions, but neither will these subjects dominate.

### **c. 'Teacher talks too much'**

The leader should be careful about talking at the group all the time. The temptation may be to preach at the group members instead of encouraging them to look at and

think about the Bible for themselves. The Downloads will provide an opportunity for people to hear teaching. The questions are designed to encourage them to think and talk things through, under the guidance and encouragement of the group leader.

## Discouragements

Everyone who runs a group like *Jesus and You* encounters discouragements, and there will always be a need for perseverance, both with the big project of introducing people to Jesus and with the individual people in your group.

A large part of perseverance is to keep praying for all those involved in the *Jesus and You* group. Keep praying for the guests. Pray too for the Christians involved and for boldness in teaching the gospel.

We need to understand and remember:

God is faithful in using people like us, weak though we may be. He **will** save people.

The work is urgent. There is no other way people will be saved. They must hear the gospel.

### a. Turning down an invitation

There can be all kinds of negative responses, from outright refusal through wariness and suspicion to avoidance.

***If people refuse outright***—there is not much you can do except continue to pray and look for further opportunities. Don't be too discouraged. Remember, Jesus told his parable of the sower to show that there are many different responses to God's word, but the point is that we must carry on sowing the seed.

***Don't assume the worst***—there might be a genuine reason why someone can't come on this particular occasion. This why it is worth doing something like *Jesus and You* regularly and frequently.

***People may be wary because they don't know what to expect.*** This is where an 'Introducing *Jesus and You*' session can be very helpful (see 'Planning the first *Jesus and You*: Think about a meal' above).

### b. Erratic attendance

It can be very discouraging when guests miss a number of sessions and the group is made up of different people every week. It adversely affects the dynamic of the group and the impact of the material since each session builds on the previous one. That's why you need to encourage people to come to all four sessions. But for all kinds of reasons this doesn't happen. Here are some options to consider:

Organising a *Jesus and You* group regularly means you can always encourage someone to come to sessions they have missed or to start again.

Sometimes it will be best to re-arrange the time of the next session for the whole group.

Why not organise a one-to-one catch-up session?

### c. The group doesn't gel

Sometime this can matter more to group leaders than to the people in your group, who have different expectations and often seem not to notice any problem. However, the fact that the guests don't take to each other can inhibit discussion, which affects both the amount of work that the leader has to do, and the effectiveness of the course.

It can be very helpful to set up an informal 'buddy' system in your *Jesus and You* group. Assign a Christian to look after each guest, build a relationship with them and follow them up at other times.

**d. Disagreements**

Don't be alarmed if people disagree, and sometimes strongly, with what they learn in *Jesus and You*. Your group should be a safe environment in which these views can be expressed and constructively challenged, with the gospel penetrating their viewpoints.

Very often, people who react strongly to the message reveal that they are becoming insecure and doubtful about beliefs and assumptions they have previously been comfortable with. Sometimes you can remove the sting of this insecurity by allowing someone to express themselves, but then moving gently on.

**e. No one becomes a Christian**

After all four sessions, people should understand something of the Christian faith, but conversion usually doesn't come so easily, especially bearing in mind that some guests are less 'ripe' than others. An atheist may start to question his beliefs by the end of the course. A

nominal Christian may realise she has never properly understood the Christian message. But, importantly, they are moving in the right direction.

Ideally, as your guests have become used to listening to and thinking about the Bible, you want to continue getting them into God's word, so now is the time to start thinking about and planning options that you can offer when *Jesus and You* ends.



## What next?

At the end of *Jesus and You*, you will reach the point of challenging people to trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The Christian message demands a response, and we need to communicate that very clearly. Now what do we do about it?

There are three different responses that will determine three different subsequent courses of action.

***The person who trusts Jesus for the first time***—this person needs discipleship and an opportunity to learn further from the Bible, either in a group or one-to-one. This needs planning NOW—before you have started *Jesus and You*—or it will not happen.

***The person who has made progress but stays on the fence***—these people need more of the same (a second go at *Jesus and You* or a further evangelistic group) until they get off the fence.

***The person who rejects the message outright***—it is important to follow up these people with friendship and further invitations. It is also important to try to understand just what it is that is making that person reject the good news of Jesus Christ.

You need to highlight these three responses to the people in your group, but make sure they understand that the last two are actually the same. There are only two positions that someone can take after hearing the Christian message—belief, shown in repentance and faith, or rejection.

In all of this be frank but not pushy. Give people an opportunity to respond but don't harangue them. Note: this is where a testimony might be very helpful (see DVD).

## Now it's time to get going...

You can download a specific Leader's guide for *Tales of the Unexpected* at your friendly neighbourhood Good Book Company website:

UK: [www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk)

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