

HOW TO SELECT CURRICULUM

The truth is, a study won't make or break your group experience. The study is like a roadmap for your group meetings. It's not everything, but without it your meetings will lack a clear direction. Great studies push you to answer the question, "How does this information change the way I relate to God and to others?" As long as a study serves as a springboard into a discussion about practical application there are a wide variety of resources you can use in your group.

When studies goes on longer 6-8 weeks, they tend to drag. The goal is never to finish or do every part of a study. It's to dig into the areas that challenge you and your group members to grow. Don't feel pressure to answer every question at each group meeting. Pick the ones that resonate with you or that will challenge you and your group members to apply what you're learning. Limiting a study to 6 parts doesn't mean you have to choose studies that are 6 parts or fewer. So if a study has more than 6 chapters, figure out a way to limit it to 6 weeks. Either read 2 chapters each week or pick the 6 chapters that are most helpful in terms of personal application. As the group's leader, you'll need to work through the materials ahead of time so you can figure out which parts of the study will most benefit your group.

Here are three areas to think about as you're selecting a study . . .

1. Relationships: The 3 Vitals Relationships are Intimacy with God, Community with Insiders, and Influence with Outsiders. It is important for group members to grow in each of these relationships and rotating studies that focus on each of them is a way to facilitate that.

Helpful Hint: If your group is starting out, begin with Intimacy with God or Community with Insiders.

2. Topics: There may be topics that consistently come up in the lives or conversations among your small group. Pay attention to those topics and when it's time to select the next study, you will have a few topics to select from.

Helpful Hint: You can ask your Groups Director, another small group leader, or go to www.groupleaders.org website to look for studies that focus on that topic.

3. Growth: As a leader, you may be able to see areas that your group members need growth in that they might not be able to see yet. Where would you love to see the women in your group grow? A few options could be spiritual disciplines, reading Scripture, making wiser choices, relationships?

Helpful Hint: When you identify the growth area, find studies that focus on that area in different formats so the group can select the format although you have narrowed down the topic. You might select a book, bible study, book of the Bible, or sermon series to offer as options for your group to select from.

