

Bible Program Plan¹ (2 Tim 2:1-2)

Introduction

Purpose is to strengthen assemblies and believers by

- preaching Christ and the gospel to saved and unsaved alike
- building up believers by teaching
 - o the fundamentals of the Christian faith
 - o the fundamentals of Christian living
 - o the Word of God
- teaching principles that characterize a healthy assembly

The Goal

- To see unbelievers come to faith in Christ
- To produce mature, fruitful believers who have a deep love for Christ and the Word of God
- To produce healthy, biblical assemblies that are Christ-centered, Bible-focused, and Pilgrim in character

Program Structure

- This is only a general guide, should be adjusted (tweaked) to meet various needs
 - o The local assembly in each generation is responsible to teach and to practice and to pass on “the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.” (Jude 3 NET)
 - o Mature believers should find ways to disciple younger believers in these truths
 - o At times, assemblies ought to co-operate together to effectively pass on these truths.
 - o There are important topics **NOT** on this list. Some topics would be taught as they come up in the Word of God
- Recommendations
 - o Organize the program 5-7 times per year
 - o Each program should have 3-5 sessions AND a session for questions/comments
 - o Casual/informal atmosphere, with food provided
 - o **Millennials or Generation Y** (born around the years 1981-2000) are more receptive than previous generations to **learning that exists as a function of a meaningful relationship.**² (Showing interest and care, listening to students)
 - o This generation likes to be able to ask questions and have discussion
 - o **Post-Millennials or Generation Z** (born around the years 1996- 2015) are consumers of technology, do a lot of research online. They long for human interaction, whether over the internet or face to face. Short videos and presentations work well with this group and should be considered in a Bible Program.
 - o Continual reminders of upcoming meetings via email, phone and personal encouragement

¹Notes from Mark A. Swaim, 2017. These notes have been tweaked by brethren from 8 different countries. The Krakow Bible Program ran from 2007-2019. This document is an attempt to organize the program into a curriculum that can be used in other places. It is only a guide. It can be tailored to be used in a Home Bible Study, an assembly Sunday School, a discipleship program etc. (Revised 02 2018; 05 2018; 02 2020)

² Full quote: “Because young adults think differently than their parents and grandparents, churches may need to think differently if they are to reach them. Rather than communicating through dogmatism, which they tend to reject, we need to work through relationships. Millennials are more receptive than previous generations to learning that exists as a function of a meaningful relationship.” Nathan Hoff in “Israel my Glory” 09/2017

The basics of Christianity

God the Father

- His Character

God the Son

- His Names: Jesus, Emmanuel, Rabbi, Christ, Logos, I Am, Son of God, Son of Man, Son of David...
- Christology: His deity, humanity, Lordship (John 1; Phil 2; Col 1; Heb 1-2; Matt 3-4)
- His Person: Virgin Birth. Sinless life, death, resurrection, exaltation, 2nd coming
- His Work: As Savior, Shepherd, Prophet, Priest, King

God the Holy Spirit

- In the Old Testament
- In the life of Christ
- Work of the Holy Spirit today (including, but not limited to the following):
 - o The baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)
 - o The Filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
 - o The gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - o Biblical verses unbiblical teaching on the Holy Spirit

Salvation

- Creation and Fall of Man
- What is the gospel?
- Heaven and Hell (Eternal life and Eternal Punishment)
- Human Nature, Sin, Righteous works, Repentance, and the Cross
- How to preach or share the Gospel messages from passages in Scripture
- Assurance of Salvation
 - o Eternal Security
 - o Evidence for faith (apologetics)

Sanctification

- The Work of Sanctification
- Characteristics of a Genuine Believer
- Romans 5-8
- Spiritual growth and discipleship
 - o Baptism (a symbol of salvation, identification, and union with Christ)
 - o The Preeminence of Christ in the believer's life
 - The Christ-centered life of the believer
 - Abiding in Christ (John 15)
 - o The importance of the Word of God (Psalm 119:11)
 - o The importance of the pilgrim life
 - United with believers, set apart for Christ
 - Living in the world, but not of it
 - Separate (set apart) from sinners
 - o The importance of prayer
 - o Spirit beings (Angels, Demons, Satan) and Spiritual Warfare
 - o How God guides a believer (searching for God's will)

- Marriage, Relationships, and the Family
- Biblical Counseling (depression, grief, addiction, overcoming the reign of sin...)

The Lord's Coming

- Prophecy, end times, last things
- Distinguishing Israel and the Church
- The Rapture

The Church

Universal Characteristics

- The Scriptures as the only guide
- The Church is separate from the world
- The unity of the Church
- The head of the Church
- The purpose of the Church
- The Pilgrim Church: Christ-centered, Bible-centered, Pilgrim in character
 - o Tracing the history of such movements from the 1st century

Local Characteristics

- What is a biblical or NT assembly?
 - o Principles found in Acts 2:42
 - o Gathering to be with Christ
 - o Autonomy and interdependency
 - o Christ centered Churches
- Teaching in the Assembly (The apostle's doctrine)
- Fellowship with Christ and with one another (the Table of the Lord)
 - o Relationship between local churches (Unity and Separation)
 - o What the New Testament says about fellowship
- Worship and the Lord's Supper (The Breaking of Bread)
- Prayer and the assembly (Showing dependency on Christ)
- The headship of Christ (the authority of the local assembly)
 - o The *symbols* of headship (distinct roles)
- Priesthood of all believers and the role of men and women
 - o Everything in an assembly should **not** be done by one man or a few men
 - o The practice of the priesthood of **all** believers should be evident in **all** our gatherings:
 - Multiple teachers, participation
 - Active and true fellowship with all
 - o Priesthood extends to all believers, not just men.
 - Thus, given the roles within the assembly, we are to find ways to encourage men and women to use their gifts in and out of the assembly in practical ways so it can be evident that the assembly is vibrant, and all, within and without, can see that each member is important and contributing in some way to the assembly.
 - o What is the role of a male priest
 - o What is the role of a female priest
- Plurality of Elders and Deacons (Servant / humble Leadership)
 - o The challenge and responsibility of passing responsibility to the next generation

- Importance of Evangelism and Missions
 - o Good works and the Church (serving others)
 - o The call of the church to help the poor, the outcast, the oppressed (to exhibit the character of Christ in this world)
 - o Fishing in new places (Finding new opportunities to witness for Christ)
- Assembly Discipline (Ministry of reconciliation)
- The need for Revival and the lessons of History
 - o Personal revival
 - o Revival in the Word of God
 - o Characteristics of Biblical revival
- The Problem with generations
 - o The local assembly is not a social club. It is a body, a living organism
 - o Principles of gathering cannot change. We have no right to change them. But style, culture, circumstances, structures do change and will change (what time and how long our meetings should be or how to arrange the meetings; whether we should have a Sunday school or midweek meeting or musical instruments or type of music)
 - o Cultural issues (such as marriage, post-modernism, etc.) affect the Church and need to be addressed.
 - o Difficulties between generations are not often the result of doctrine, but over style. There is a need for teaching in this area so that our gatherings are based on unchanging biblical principles, and there is freedom in style and structure
- The problem with human institutions / organizations
 - o Men try to control the assembly
 - o Organizations do the work that the assembly is responsible to do
 - o The difference between biblical and political ecumenicalism

The Word of God

Overview of Scripture

- Major themes in Scripture
- Major characters in Scripture

Overview of Old Testament and the books of the Old Testament

- Includes Christ in the Old Testament
- Includes teaching on the Tabernacle
- Includes teaching on the Offerings (Leviticus 1-5) and the Feasts of the Lord (Leviticus 23)
- Includes the Wilderness Journey

Overview of New Testament and the books of the New Testament

- Includes the life of Christ
- Includes the record of the beginnings of the Church and geographic spread of Christianity
- Includes the letters of the New Testament and book of Revelation

Systems of interpretation

- Hermeneutics (how to study the Bible)
- Dispensationalism and other systems of interpretation
- False teaching / divisive doctrines