

## BeADisciple Study App Group Formation Guide

The goal of this guide is to provide small group leaders with tips on forming a meaningful and enjoyable small group on the *BeADisciple Study App*. To begin, ask yourself the following question:

As a leader (or co-leader) — What would you gain by taking on the role of leading a small group study?

One reason people lead is because they value the small group experience and love inviting others into that experience. Some identify leading a small group to be part of the gifts and graces that fit their own sense of calling.

Write down your own reason for leading:

Start recruiting your group by building a list of potential participants.

Remember, your weekly group meeting can be in person or online with the built-in Zoom feature, so member location is not an issue. Leaders typically fill their prospect list with people they would like to be in a small group with and people they believe would like to participate. Build your list larger than the group size you hope to have. Not everyone will be able to participate. A good-sized group is between 10 and 14. When you have a few people committed, they may have suggestions of others to invite. Church membership is normally not a requirement. Some groups have a theme, such as men or women only, young mothers, college friends, coworkers, church leaders, or youth.

Write down a list of potential participants:

When setting up your study's weekly meeting, you may wish to gain some commitments to the group before choosing a day and time that works for the majority. Go to the app and set your day and time for your weekly gathering.

Day:            Time:            Study:

When asking people to join, be ready to share the name and nature of the study. All the information about each study is available at [www.BeADiscipleApp.com](http://www.BeADiscipleApp.com) and in the app.

In your conversations with prospective participants, you may have some persons who readily wish to join. If your congregation promotes the studies, you may have some people who contact you ready to join. This is great. Just guide them to the enrollment process. Do clarify the nature of the study so they can make an informed commitment to the group. Then ask, "Is there anyone you would like to have in this group with you?"

In some conversations, you may have people who are hesitant. *This is normal. Be curious and supporting.* Start with some questions focused on what benefits might come from being in a group:

- *What experiences have you had participating in small groups in the past?*
- *What do you feel you would gain by being in a small group study?*

Often people share a desire to make closer friendships or simply to be in a fellowship. Some are interested in the study's content and want others to share the journey with them for discussion and accountability purposes. If you feel that the person really would like to be in your group, then lean into whatever hesitations they have holding them back.

Some common hesitations are time, money, and insecurity. The goal in the next part of your conversations is not to force or coerce someone to be in a group, but to explore their concerns. We want to make sure these concerns are addressed, and they are making a well-informed decision.

- **Time.** When a person says they don't think they have the time, some possible questions to ask are: *How much time do you think it will take? How do you usually make time for new activities that are important to you? Because all the study materials are on audio on your phone, are there any activities you could do while listening to the study? For groups meeting on Zoom, will it help with your time concerns that you don't have to travel to the meeting?*
- **Money.** When persons are concerned about the cost, make sure they know the price. Remind them that this includes all the content, the Bible, the app features, and the Zoom meeting link. For many in the U.S., the price will not be a problem. For those for whom the cost of the study is a barrier, we have set up a scholarship function whereby your church or an individual can cover the costs for another person. This function is most helpful when inviting someone from a different country, or a student, or anyone you would like to support financially.
- **Insecurity.** Concerns in this area may take the most careful conversation and may be the most important. Rarely will someone say, "I'm too insecure to be in a small group." But they may say:
  - *I just don't know enough about the Bible to be in a group.*
  - *Church people have hurt me in the past and I just don't think I could be in a group.*
  - *I don't think I would fit in.*
  - *Are you sure they would want me?*
  - *I am not very tech savvy—do you think I can do the study in this way?*

When you invite someone personally to be a small group with you, they know they are wanted, will be included, and belong. Most people desire to find a place where they can share openly and be accepted. They desire to learn and be in the community. This is the invitation you are offering.