

# BSF Weekly Rhythm and New Discussion Methods

For those who are new to the group, here's some useful information about how we work.

I use BSF's “new” discussion methods including the “3 question method”. You may be more used to the traditional question method where we go through and discuss the BSF questions one-by-one every week. That’s okay, too; some groups still do this. But the new methods are a little different. As they say, “this isn't your father's BSF, anymore” – actually, it’s better. Certainly, it’s more open and less regimented.

But let me back up a bit. Here's the weekly rhythm of how the study schedule works for each lesson:

1. First, read the entire passage for the week in the Bible of your choice.
2. Then answer the BSF questions each day. This is your homework and preparation for discussion.
3. On Monday evening, come together to discuss the passage and lesson (details below).
4. On Tuesday, view the Teaching Leader’s BSF lecture video (you'll need it for the first couple of questions for the next week). In face-to-face in-person groups, this will be Monday evening, also.
5. Then read the published BSF notes on the lesson (you’ll need this for next week’s questions, too). You can do this earlier during the week, but do it *last* so it doesn’t bias your answering the questions.
6. After that, on Tuesday or so, it's about time to move on to start the next week's lesson.

When come together on Monday, we don’t go through the questions one-by-one; we simply have a conversational, group discussion about the lesson and passage. The questions are homework to prepare you for the discussion; they’re not an end in and of themselves. I won’t be grading your papers. We’ll just be discussing the passage, informed by our homework of doing the questions. After all, this is the *Bible Study Fellowship* not the *Question Study Fellowship*. The questions and answers are needed, but with the new methods, are just preparation. We won’t be reading them out in class.

The “new” discussion techniques that we’ll be using include several methods that we’ll blend as needed. The primary one of these is the “3 question method”. This is a good approach for doing *any* Bible study: here, on your own, or in any group. I highly recommend it. It goes something like this:

For each passage or section, ask –

1. What the passage *says* – facts
2. What the passage *means* – what you learned, especially what you learned about God and secondarily what you learned about yourself
3. *Apply* it to life – how does it apply to today’s world and to you? What will you *do* about it?

I’ll be facilitating the discussion (and participating in it), but I won’t be teaching or lecturing. This is about you and the group, not about me. You will be leading the discussion among yourselves at least as much as I will. And there’s usually no right or wrong. Again, I won’t be grading anything.

Needless to say, when it comes to personal stuff, “what happens at BSF stays at BSF”. It’s safe within the group. We’re free to discuss because we don’t share such things outside the group. But of course, it’s fair to take what you learn of God and Scripture and share it outside the group; just not the personal stuff.

That’s about it. If it’s new to you, you’ll get used to it after a bit. Most people like it. If you have questions about it, please ask.