

# **Slater Bible Study method**

From Autumn 2017 Webinars for Central Plains Mennonite Conference

*Practical Tips for Leading Bible Study* by Keith Slater

Instructions: Choose your scripture text. It is best to keep it short and to take your cues from the text on where to start and stop. Brainstorm possibilities under each heading below. From this material, you will prepare a Bible study on your chosen scripture text. On the second page is a sample Bible study using this method.

Possible themes for this Bible study (brainstorm possible themes that would grow from this passage)

Observation questions (what does the passage say?)

Interpretation questions (what does the passage mean in context?)

Application questions (how is the meaning of the passage relevant to us today?)

Optional: things you would like to look up before leading this study

## Sample mini Bible study for Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12

Theme of this Bible study (what area of application will the study focus on?)

Leading group Bible discussions

Observation questions (what does the passage say?)

1. Draw a picture of the scene described in vss. 2-11.
2. Describe the ways you see the people interacting with and responding to the Scriptures in this passage.
3. Who is listening and responding? Who does the “others who could understand” (vs. 3) refer to?
4. Describe all the things that Ezra and the other leaders do to help facilitate these responses.

Interpretation questions (what does the passage mean in context?)

1. What are the Levites doing in vs. 8? (Hint: consult different translations, study Bible notes, etc.)
2. Why do you think the people respond with weeping (vs. 9)?
3. The author tells us that the people “understood the words that had been made known to them” (vs. 12). What are the results of this understanding?
4. What are the activities of individuals and of the community in responding to God’s word in this passage (see especially vss. 9-12)?

Application questions (how is the meaning of the passage relevant to us today?)

1. As you reflect on the activities of the leaders and the people in this passage, compare and contrast what you do in leading your own group, and how people respond. What are some things you could do more of, or less of, or differently, to help your group to interact with the Scriptures more deeply?

A few things I’d like to look up before leading this study

- Who is Ezra (vs. 1), and what is his training?
- What is the background of Nehemiah, the governor (vs. 9)?
- What training and experience might the Levites have (vs. 7)?
- What is the water gate (vs. 3), and does it have any special importance?
- Is there any significance to the first day of the seventh month (vs. 2)? If so, is it relevant to understanding this event?