

## **SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING PREPARING THE LESSON**

### **2 Timothy 2:15-16**

**Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.**

As small group leaders we have a great responsibility to present the Word of God correctly to those within the small group. This point was more clearly driven home to me when our small group began a study on praying for our children. We chose a book, and as I began to read through the first lesson it became clear that the author was not using her Scripture references accurately.

For example, at one point in which she was referring to the power and authority that Christians have in Christ over the enemy she used this Scripture reference, "...one can put a thousand to flight and two can put ten thousand to flight." (Deuteronomy 32:30) A red flag shot up in my mind, so I decided to grab my Bible and check out the verse for myself. This verse actually says "How could one man chase a thousand, or two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, unless the LORD had given them up?"

It does not take a seminary graduate to see that the author had clearly misused the Bible text in an effort to support a point she was trying to make. Among other errors, she used only half of the verse and also took that partial verse out of context. By reading the entire verse it is obvious that those being put to flight are the Lord's people and not the devil and his demons. Furthermore, by reading the verses that surround the misused Scripture it becomes even more evident that this text is not about beating up on the demonic realm but rather the consequences that befell Israel when the nation was unfaithful to the Lord. So how can we avoid making similar mistakes?

Keep it in context—Avoid pulling a single Bible verse out to make it say what you want it to say. Read it in the way it was written, what do the verses that precede and follow it reveal? Let the Word speak for itself.

Scripture interprets Scripture—Use other Bible passages to help you understand or gain a broader perspective of the Scripture you are studying. God's Word is the best source we have for understanding God's Word.

Approach it with prayer—Prior to beginning your study time ask God to open up His Word to you. We should pray as the psalmist did in Psalm 119:18. that God would open our eyes to the wonderful things in His law.

Listen to the Holy Spirit—Part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to lead us into the truth, John 14:26 says, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." We need Him to teach us the deep truths God has for us in His Word.

Outside resources—Using other references such as commentaries can be very helpful when putting together a lesson. However, we must be careful to use these as a supplement and not a replacement to the other four steps. It is much more important to have God speak to us through His Word and His Spirit regarding a Bible passage than it is to hear from another person.

### **Outside Resources**

- Exhaustive Concordance
- Dictionary
- Bible Commentary
- Bible Encyclopedia
- Different Bible translations
- Study or Topical Bible
- Books that relate to the subject of your study