

## **Bible Sharing**

“Bible Sharing”, a way of doing Bible study in groups, was developed in South Africa and has recently spread in Germany. “Bible Sharing” makes it possible for all group members to actively participate on an equal footing - regardless of their educational background. “Bible Sharing” encourages people to connect the biblical text with their lives and gives space to the free work of the Holy Spirit.

The “Bible Sharing” method consists of seven different steps, five of which have liturgical character. In this way all participants may experience that talking about a biblical text includes a spiritual dimension.

### **First step: Inviting God**

Through prayer, a hymn or in any other liturgical way God is invited to be present. This can be prepared by one of the group members.

### **Second step: Reading the scripture passage**

The passage is first read aloud, with the others just listening (no one is to follow the text in their own Bibles); only afterward it is quietly read again by everyone. By now all participants should hold the printed text in their hands.

### **Third step: Listening to words**

From the passage, participants choose words (single words or sentence parts or short sentences) which are important for them. One by one people read these words aloud in a prayerful manner. No explanations and no comments are given. Then the entire passage is read again, either aloud or quietly.

### **Fourth step: Silence**

Participants take about five minutes time to listen to God in quiet and to meditate the text.

### **Fifth step: Sharing**

Participants tell the group why they have chosen certain words or sentences, what they discovered in the text, what they find important, what they wonder about, what they acclaim, what they feel angry about, what associations they have, what thoughts and experiences have come to their minds. Statements should be brief. At this step, there must be no direct responses from others and no discussions. The group leader must be concerned about it.

### **Sixth step: Conversation**

Which aspects of mission are mentioned in the text? How does the text speak to the participants about their church and their mission? How may that be with partners in Germany? To what kind of engagement concerning mission does the text encourage the participants? It may be useful for the emerging group discussion to be chaired by a leader.

### **Seventh step: Conclusion**

Through a prayer or any other liturgical form the Bible Sharing session is summarized and concluded. Here again, it may be good to choose ways and methods in which all can actively participate.

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