

Jump Starting Impromptu Bible Studies

by Mike Gahan

It's Sunday morning. You had a jillion things to do this week. You didn't get that Bible lesson prepared for your youth group. Don't panic! Here is a quick way to start an impromptu Bible Study.

First, you need a deck of scripture playing cards. You can purchase these through Christian Book stores or buy them online.⁽¹⁾ Each card has a different scripture verse on it. For example, the "3 of hearts" may quote Genesis 6:10 Noah had *three* sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.



Start by shuffling the cards a couple of times. Tell your group that you have a special deck of cards. Explain to them that each card has a different Bible passage on it. Next, spread the deck out while holding it in your hands. Make sure you hold the deck face down so that no one can see any of the cards. Ask one of the youth to pick any card. Then asked them to hold up the card so that everyone can see it and tell the group what the card is. Then, ask the youth to read the Bible passage aloud. I usually asked them to repeat reading it again for effect.

Now, ask the youth these questions, "What is this verse saying to you? How do you understand it?" Open up the questions to the whole group for discussion. Now here is where you get a chance to get creative. Depending on the card selected, you may get an assortment of answers. This will give you an opportunity for digging deeper or perhaps to introduce a related bible topic. Experience has taught to me to focus on a single verse. I might share a story or a testimony that

relates to the verse. Or sometimes I may not get much of a response. In this case I usually thank the youth for reading it and then ask another youth to pick a card from the deck and read it. Finding a youth to pick another card is never a problem. In fact my experience has been that most if not everyone in the group will want to pick a card. Because of time constraints I usually ask for no more than 3 volunteers. I do this at the beginning to help avoid disappointing the youth by not giving everyone a chance to pick a card.

One thing I try to remember to do is to remove the Joker from the deck, if you have one. The Devil is the Joker in the deck I use. I usually remove this card from deck since most youth don't like drawing this one (a good sign). But that still leaves 52 lessons that can be taught.

There is something magical about randomly picking a card that has a message on it. For some youth it may be likened to reading their fortune from a Chinese fortune cookie. For others it could be imagined to be a personal message for them from GOD.



Regardless of their motivation for wanting to pick a card it can be a great way to stimulate interest and jump start a Bible Study in a juvenile facility.

(1) <http://www.christianbook.com/> online retailer