

IDEAS FOR GETTING YOUR BIBLE QUIZ TEAM STARTED

First, determine if Bible Quizzing is the right ministry for you and your youth.

Please understand that I am a huge fan of Bible Quizzing. I've been involved with quizzing for more than 30 years as a quizzer, coach, quizmaster, and quiz director. (more than that if you count the years I was the cheering section for my older brothers' teams.) I know my Bible Quizzing experience is largely responsible for my development as a leader, pastor, teacher, and public speaker. Not to mention many of my best friendships.

However, I will not propose to you that Bible Quizzing is the 'save all' youth ministry. It has its strengths and weaknesses much like any other ministry.

Its strengths are:

- ◆ Bible Quizzers learn God's word well. It is all about God's Word.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers often develop into leaders because they internalize God's word as they learn it.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers learn to speak and pray in front of people.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers have the opportunity to develop relationships with many other quizzers.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers have fun while doing something good for them.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers have lots of opportunity to apply the lessons they learn in quizzing.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers get to compete and learn good sportsmanship.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers are active in jumping and moving around. Its good for high energy kids.
- ◆ Bible Quizzers develop connection with people and other leaders across the CGGC.

Its Weaknesses are:

- ◆ Bible Quizzing does require students to read and study, which might be difficult for students with learning disabilities. (Although many have succeeded and done really well.)
- ◆ Bible Quizzing is a decent time commitment as it lasts throughout the school year and includes traveling to competitions.

If you decide that quizzing will work with your group, then you need to find leaders and quizzers.

Each quiz team consists of 2-5 people, grade 6-12, and needs a coach. Good Coaches like youth, love God's word, are willing to travel with the kids, hold weekly practices, are well organized, and are willing to teach God's word and prayer to their youth. Coaches may also be responsible for fundraising depending on how your church operates. If you have more than one team, it is often helpful to have a head coach who directs things while the others assist. Many teams also recruit other adults to help drive, help with fundraisers, host quiz parties, or fill in as a coach or helper at a quiz.

Along with finding leaders and quizzers, you will need to gather materials.

There are many study aids available to quizzers. Most teams purchase scripture portions for each quizzer and leader. A Scripture portion is simply a small book that contains just the material we will be quizzing over for the year. Some also come with helpful resources, charts, or concordances. (Cost \$2-\$10 depending on type) You will also want to familiarize yourself with the rules of quizzing and you can download a free copy of our rulebook from the CGGC website. Additionally, most teams purchase some sort of quiz question resource to use at practice. Acmequiz.com is a great site to order from.

From, Acmequiz.com you can download a computer program that will supply you with thousands of questions for the year, and from which you can also make actual 20 question quizzes, memory verse lists, and other helpful resources. (Cost ~\$10.)

You will also need to get connected to your regional coordinator to participate in regional quizzing.

Currently, Bible Quizzing exists year round in Indiana, Ohio, Allegheny Region (Western PA), and the Eastern Region (Eastern PA and MD.) These regions all quiz year round with quiz competitions occurring about monthly from Nov.-May. Some regions require registration fees. All regions are looking for more teams. (Contact me at anytime to be put in touch with your local region's directors.)

All teams within these regions, as well as in any other part of the country, are also welcome to participate in National quiz events. Currently, there are two national events. In March or April there is a fun retreat often held at Camp Sunrise Mountain, (the Allegheny Region Church camp where PA, MD, and WV all meet.) And the National finals are held every July. These events do have required fees. National events are a great opportunity for quizzers to connect with youth, leaders, and pastors from various states. The National finals are also a nice finale to a full quiz season. The quizzing is intense, and then in the evenings we have lots of fun playing games, hanging out, worshipping, eating, and doing devotions together.

So you get your leaders, your quizzers, your connection with your region, THEN WHAT?

To make quizzing work throughout the year, schedule a regular quiz practice time. Many teams meet Sunday evening, and/or Wednesday evening. Most teams practice between one hour to three hours a week together, covering about a chapter of material a week. (Quizzers who excel will also study on their own throughout the week.)

Each quiz practice should have three parts, (at least): Bible Study, Prayer Time, and Practice Questions. You can also include games, food, or any other activity that you choose. *But why Bible Study, Prayer, and Practice Questions?*

Bible Study is vastly important if quizzing is to have any long-term purpose. As any top quizzer will tell you, the fame and glory of being number one fades very fast. The real reason to participate in quizzing is to learn God's word and see it become real in your life. To do this, quizzers need to understand what they are reading and how it relates to their lives. Consider buying a Bible Study book, writing your own Bible Studies, or talking to other quiz teams about how they do it. (Depending on the year, your Bible quiz director might even make Bible Studies available to you.) And don't fret if you don't get to drill practice questions for very long—the reality is that the more a quizzer understands of the material, the more options they have for answering correctly anyway.

Prayer is vastly important because it is a way in which we connect with God. It's how we communicate with him and him with us. Everyone who desires to walk with God, must learn to pray to him and listen to him through prayer. Additionally, every Bible Quiz begins with a quizzer praying out loud. So quizzers must learn to pray out loud.

Drilling practice questions is simply a way of reinforcing the material that they have already learned through Bible study. Plus it helps quizzers learn to hear the questions, recognize key words, and get a feel for when and how to jump.

Also consider teambuilding opportunities.

Quizzers tend to spend a great deal of time together at practice and in traveling to quizzes. It all goes a lot smoother if they learn to like and appreciate each other. Consider these options for team building:

- * Get team shirts: have them design their own, or decorate their own.
- * Have your team do a service project together.
- * Get your team together for a social event or an extra long practice that includes more social activities.
- * At the end of the season, award each of your quizzers a special personal award for something they did or accomplished, or for something fun that happened, something memorable.
- * Make your kids a devotional calendar using the quizzing material for the season.
- * Create a team cheer.
- * Help your kids set individual realistic goals for their quiz season (i.e. I will learn one memory verse, or I will get at least two questions right and one wrong this season.)
- * Give your whole group a seasonal goal (i.e. among the group of us we will memorize chapter 12.)

* Create Overall team Goals.

(Pastor Dave Williams says there are three goals for every Bible Quizzer:

1. To Glorify God in all you do and say.
2. To have fun and include others in that fun.
3. To do your best.)

Pray and lead your teams as God Directs you!
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