

INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion is more than a Bible study. It is a biblical pilgrimage that reveals Christ's amazing love for us. As you begin this journey, here is what you will need to get started.

Materials Needed

1. *No Greater Love* workbook – Contains engaging study questions (with session summaries, home reading assignments, and talk notes) and responses to the questions.
2. *No Greater Love* book – Contains text that will be used for the home preparation of each session.
3. A Catholic Bible – We recommend *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible*.

Every participant, study leader, and small-group facilitator will need their own workbook, book, and Bible.

4. *No Greater Love* video presentations (five 30-minute sessions) – Filmed on location in the Holy Land, these engaging videos provide comprehensive teaching and commentary on Christ's passion. (Available online and on DVD.)

These materials can be purchased at ascensionpress.com or by calling 1-800-376-0520.

How the Study Works

Every session in this study includes four essential steps, which are designed to fit together and build upon each other. Following these steps in order will allow you to get the most out of each session.



Step 1: Home Preparation

NOTE: There is no home preparation required for Session One.

Each session begins with personal study that involves reading Scripture and answering a series of questions that will help you understand and think more deeply about what you have read. Some questions will include additional readings from Ed Sri’s book *No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ’s Passion* to help you dive deeper into the content.

We recommend that you allow at least 90 minutes to complete the reading and answer the questions for each session. We also suggest that home preparation be done in several sittings over the course of a week. This will help you create a habit of daily Bible reading and prayerful meditation.

Note: Although the responses to the questions are provided in the back of the workbook, the richness that comes from individual insights can be lost when participants view the responses prior to the discussion. Your small-group facilitator will incorporate the points made in the responses section during your discussion time when you meet.

Step 2: Small-Group Discussion

One of the richest parts of a Bible study is the small-group discussion. During this discussion, you and the other members of your small group will have the opportunity to share the insights you gained by reading the Scripture passages and answering the questions at home. This small-group discussion will allow you to obtain a richer understanding of these readings and will help you apply them to your life. Trained facilitators will guide the small-group discussions and keep them on track. Be sure to follow the “Ten Commandments of Small-Group Discussion” on page 5.

Step 3: Video Presentation

Edward Sri wraps up each session with a video presentation that offers unique insights and profound connections to help you gain a deeper understanding of Christ’s passion and its relationship to the Catholic Faith and your life, with a special emphasis on ways to apply what you have learned to your life.

The study leader will conclude the session with the prayer provided at the end of each session.

Step 4: Review of Responses

The final step—reviewing the responses at the back of this workbook—is done at home prior to beginning the reading for the next session. These responses will help you read the Scripture passages for the next session in the proper context.

For the richest study experience, complete these steps in order: **(1)** Read and answer the questions; **(2)** discuss them in your small group; **(3)** view the video presentation; and **(4)** review the responses.

For more information about how to plan and promote a Bible study and how to facilitate a small-group discussion, visit ascensionpress.com or call 1-800-376-0520.

Session Outline

Each session in this workbook has the following sections.

1. Session Questions (used during Step 1: Home Preparation and Step 2: Small-Group Discussion.)
 - A. Establish the Context
 - B. Read the Story
 - C. Take a Deeper Look
 - D. Application
2. Session Talk Notes (used during Step 3: Video Presentation)
3. Session Responses (used by facilitators to prepare for Step 2: Small-Group Discussion and by participants at home in Step 4: Review of Responses)

What to Do for Each Session

1. Welcome and Introduction (10 minutes)
2. Small-Group Discussion (40 minutes)

Note to Study Leaders: There is a shorter small-group discussion for the first week. This way you can use the additional time to divide participants into small groups of eight to twelve people, ensure that everyone has the study materials, and explain how the study works. Each small group should be led by a trained facilitator.

3. Video Presentation (30 minutes)
4. Closing and Prayer (5 minutes)

Getting the Most Out of This Study

This study will help you understand Christ's passion in a new way. The "head knowledge" you gain will help you grow in "heart knowledge" as you follow up on what you have learned. The Bible will always remain a mystery, though, and that is part of the beauty of it: We can never exhaust the treasures of Scripture. Fortunately for us, the Bible is not a subject to master; it is a place to encounter the living Word of God.

Whenever you open your Bible to read, start with prayer and place yourself in God's presence. You might take Samuel's prayer as your own: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10).

When you read, adopt an attitude of listening. Try not to treat Scripture as a text, but as a personal message from God. What is he saying? What does it mean? And what does it mean for my life? If you come to the Word focused on having an encounter with the Lord, he will speak to your heart, and you will be transformed.

Responses to the questions are provided in the back of this workbook to help facilitators prepare for the small-group discussion and for participants to review after the small-group discussion.

Participants should not review the responses for each session until after the session is completed. Although it might be tempting to look at these responses in advance, it is important to wait for the following reasons:

1. Bible study is not about simply watching a video presentation or reading a Bible commentary. It is just as important to immerse yourself in the Word of God itself and engage it with your heart and mind. The questions in this study are designed to draw you into the Scriptures so that the Word of God will be planted and grow in your heart. Reading a response written by someone else may satisfy your mind for a moment, but it will not result in the kind of growth that will occur if you attempt to answer the question on your own first.
2. The success of a small group depends on a good discussion. A group of participants who have spent time pondering the Scripture passages on their own will have more varied insights to discuss.

When you follow the steps of this study as intended, you will explore the Word of God in different ways: in the reading, the small-group discussion, the video presentation, and, finally, in the responses. Follow these steps over time and you will be more than fed; you will learn to feed yourself.



Ten Commandments of Small-Group Discussion¹

1. Enjoy yourself!
2. Speak with respect and charity.
3. Do not ridicule or dismiss what others say.
Keep comments positive.
4. Come prepared.
5. If you were not able to prepare, let others speak first.
6. Stick to the topic and questions at hand.
7. Start and end on time.
8. Allow silence. Give people a chance to think.
9. Listen to others without interrupting.
10. Keep personal matters within the group.

¹ Adapted from Thomas Smith's original "10 Commandments of a Small Group."