

A Bible Correspondence School

Operating a Discover Bible School by mail is a simple procedure. However, it requires dedication and perseverance by the team that runs the school. A regular flow of corrected answer sheets and new lessons between the instructor and the student must be maintained.

- **Prayer Ministry:** A prayer ministry to pray over the lessons and students is essential. As students study, they are asked to make decisions. The power of the Holy Spirit working in the life of the student is vital to combating Satan’s plan of resistance. Power comes by prayer.
- **Student Motivation:** Many students will enroll and then drop out after two or three lessons. A successful Discover Bible School must employ a number of motivational tools to encourage students to continue to study.
- **Visitation:** There must be provision in the system for contacting and/or visiting students at regular intervals. There are certain points in the order of lessons where students are asked to make decisions. At these points, a visit—or at least some personal contact—is essential.

DEBUNKING A MYTH

Myth: The correspondence method is a postal mail method with no visitation.

Truth: The correspondence method includes visitation. There are designated suggested times to make visits, with the goal of developing personal Bible studies with the student. Visitation is an essential part of the correspondence method.

SETTING UP YOUR BIBLE SCHOOL

1. Rent a Post Office Box Do not use a street address or your church name for the address of your Discover Bible School. The address should be similar to this: Discover Bible School PO Box 000 Anytown, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code

2. Acquire Needed Equipment • A computer and printer. • An online Student Record System (SRS) is available through the Voice of Prophecy. However, if you choose a “hard copy” system, then acquire a three-ring binder/notebook with an alphabetical separator to file the Student Record Sheets. • A postal scale. • Tables for correcting Answer Sheets, and for stuffing envelopes and other activities. • Access to a copy machine. • A pigeonhole/slot setup for the storage of the Guides and Answer Sheets. Most office supply stores have these.

3. Order Other Supplies • Get your Bible lessons. This chapter is based on using the Discover Guides. Nevertheless, the principles outlined in this chapter can be used for any set of Bible lessons designed for correspondence. • Window mailing envelopes for the Bible School to send lessons to the students. • Return envelopes for the students to use to return their Answer Sheets. • Postage stamps. • A rubber stamp with your Discover Bible School address on it. • A rubber stamp that reads “For a Friend.” • Labels on which to put each student’s name and address. • Labels with your Discover Bible School address.

4. Procedures • When you receive a request for Bible lessons from someone, enter their name in your online Student Record System (SRS) or in your notebook record system. (A sample Student Record Sheet is included in this chapter.) • Print three labels of the student’s name and address: one for Answer Sheet #1, one for Answer Sheet #2, and the third one for future use (reminders, invitations, etc.) • Place in a window mailing envelope with your Discover Bible School return address on it (either have it printed on the envelope, or use a printed label, or use a rubber stamp). Then follow these steps: a. Insert a welcome letter from your Bible School. b. Enclose Discover Guide #1 and Answer Sheet #1. Affix the student’s name and address on the Answer Sheet so that it will show through the window of the envelope. c. Include a return envelope with your Discover Bible

School address printed on it. d. Pray for the student before mailing each Discover Guide and Answer Sheet. e. Mail the lessons to the student. f. Pray daily for the student.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU SEND THE FIRST GUIDE OR TWO AND YOU RECEIVE NO RESPONSE?

There are several approaches to follow. Not all Bible Schools have experienced the same results even when using identical methods. Try each of these to determine which is best for your ministry area. Make sure you include an introductory letter with Guide #1. This will increase enrollments. Also, consider offering DVD lessons if printed lessons do not appeal to a student.

Sample letters are included in this chapter.

Approach #1

1. Mail Guide #1 and Answer Sheet #1 with a letter of welcome and a return envelope enclosed. 2. Wait approximately 14 days. If you do not receive Answer Sheet #1 from the student, automatically send out Guide #2 and Answer Sheet #2 along with a letter explaining that they should return the Answer Sheets, but keep the guides. 3. If you do not hear from the student within four more weeks, follow up with one of these options: • Mail another reminder letter • Make a visit • Call his or her home • Send an e-mail 4. If your Bible School budget can afford it, place a postage stamp on the return envelope when you do the second or third mailing. This is an incentive for the student to mail the Answer Sheet back.

Approach #2

1. Mail Guide #1 and Answer Sheet #1 with a letter of welcome and a return envelope enclosed. 2. Wait three weeks. If you have not received Answer Sheet #1 back from the student, then call them on the telephone or make a visit. 3. Your approach can be something like this, "Hi, I am _____ with the Discover Bible School. You requested our free Discover Bible Guides a month ago. We sent them to you in the mail and I am calling to make sure you received the guide. Do you remember receiving them?" If the answer is "yes," then respond, "Very good. I am glad you received them. All you have to do is read through the study guide, fill out the Answer Sheet, and mail only the Answer Sheet back to us in the enclosed envelope. Do you have any questions? (Wait for them to respond.) I will look forward to receiving your Answer Sheet." 4. If the person does not remember receiving the Discover Bible Guides, if you are visiting them give them the guide and answer sheet. If you are calling on the telephone, then tell them you will mail the guides again and they should receive them within a few days.

REMINDER LETTERS

1. Whenever a student fails to return an Answer Sheet to the school for more than one month, a Reminder Letter should be sent to the student. 2. A call to encourage the student to continue studying the guides is even more effective than a letter. But a visit is the best! 3. Once a month, go through the Student Record Sheets and note any students who have not sent in an Answer Sheet for one or two months. Address envelopes for the Reminder Letters when going through the file.

MAILINGS

1. With the exception of Guides #1 and #2, all Discover Bible Guides are mailed two at a time. 2. Each mailing should include: • The corrected Answer Sheet. • The next two Discover Bible Guides with Answer Sheets. • A return envelope. • Periodically, other items can be included, such as radio and television logs, enrollment cards stamped “For a Friend,” a special letter sent with the last two guides, etc.

GRADING LESSONS

1. Never put a grade less than “Good” on an Answer Sheet, even if the student answers all the questions incorrectly. They have done their best. Write a short note encouraging them to keep studying. 2. If an answer is wrong, do not mark it wrong. Simply circle the correct answer. 3. If they have done well, write a brief encouraging note of praise by hand on the corrected Answer Sheet, such as: “You are doing a great job!” or “Keep up the good work!” The student needs to know their instructor is their friend. 4. Follow this grading system (Answer Keys for the Discover and Focus on Prophecy Guides are included in Chapter 14 of this handbook): All correct Perfect 1 or 2 incorrect Excellent 3 incorrect Very Good 4 or more incorrect Good 5. Each time you receive and grade an Answer Sheet, enter information on the student’s individual record sheet, noting any new information they share with you. On the back of the record sheet is a place to record the student’s answers and responses to the decision questions. This information is valuable to the visitation teams. (This applies to the online Student Record System as well as the three-ring binder/notebook.) 6. It is essential that the person who corrects the Answer Sheets write personal notes to the student. More students will finish the course, accept Christ, and be baptized if the person correcting the Answer Sheets faithfully forms a friendship with each student. 7. When processing Answer Sheets by mail or by personal delivery, promptness in returning the corrected Answer Sheets to the student is essential to keep up a student’s interest and momentum. 8. Mailing Schedules for the Discover and Focus on Prophecy Guides are included in this chapter.

COUNSELING BIBLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

When students write letters asking questions, the letter writer needs to answer these in a clear and simple way. You can enclose a pamphlet that goes into more detail if necessary. Many students will write letters telling of their personal problems and ask for advice. It is important not to give your personal opinions. You don’t want to be responsible for a person making a wrong decision in his or her life and then blaming you. Most people feel better just telling you their problems, and in doing so, many times the person figures out his or her own solution. Remember, the best response you can give is to simply point the student to the Bible and Bible promises. You can always encourage them to talk to a pastor or professional counselor.

When getting letters from a student, the Bible Instructor must depend upon God and always be on the alert. There are many hurting people, and God can use us to help heal their wounds. When we help people with their personal needs, we strengthen their desire to accept Jesus into their lives.

BASIC RULES WHEN ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- Don’t over-answer. Make your answers brief.
- Avoid answering questions in a controversial way.
- Avoid arguing—allow the Holy Spirit to convict them.
- To further explain difficult subjects, enclose an appropriate tract, but don’t bury students with literature. The lessons themselves already represent more reading than some people do.
- Treat each correspondent as a valued friend.
- Always stick to the positive.
- Don’t discuss subjects ahead of the lessons. Tell the student their question will be answered in a future lesson if that’s the case.
- If there is evidence that the student is under conviction, have someone visit them

as soon as possible. Talk to your pastor about the student. • Pray daily for your students and ask God for wisdom and guidance by the Holy Spirit as you work with your students.

TIPS TO HELP CORRESPONDENCE STUDENTS CONTINUE

Do the following to keep correspondence students studying, such as: • Returning Answer Sheets immediately. • Placing a stamp on the return envelopes sent to the student, which is helpful in motivating the student. • Forming a friendship with the student. • Letting the students know you are praying for them, and asking for prayer requests. • Inviting the student to take another Bible course when they complete the current course, and if possible, enrolling the student in personal studies or a small group using the Bible course. Chapter 6: A Bible Correspondence School | 38 • Asking the Prayer Ministry Coordinator to have the church members pray for the students. Praying over the lessons when they are ready to be mailed. (Visitation and perseverance are essential.)

SUGGESTIONS WHEN MAKING A VISIT TO AN INTERESTED STUDENT

When using Discover Bible Guides or other Bible lessons, visit students and deliver the following booklets personally rather than sending them by mail: • After lesson #12, give them Peace Above the Storm (Steps to Christ). • After lesson #18, give them a booklet on keeping the Sabbath. • After lesson #26, give them a booklet of your choice that seems appropriate. If you cannot find the person at home when they complete the Discover Guides, send a letter with the last two lessons. A sample letter is included in this chapter. A visit is always best.

WATCH FOR DECISIONS

When a student makes a major decision, such as wanting to accept Christ, requesting baptism, or wanting to keep the Sabbath, always notify the DBS Coordinator and/or your pastor to make sure that appropriate visits are made.

DIPLOMAS AND GRADUATIONS

The Voice of Prophecy will issue a diploma to those who complete the Bible course. Contact the Voice of Prophecy to receive diplomas for your students. A Diploma Request Form is included in Chapter 12 of this handbook. Some of the students who complete the course will choose to attend a graduation service at the church or other venue if one is scheduled and you invite them to attend. This is an excellent way to have a student attend your church for the first time.

GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP

It is extremely important to enroll the graduate in another Bible course. Enroll the student in another correspondence course, in a small group Bible study, or in DVD presentations. Personal Bible studies are best, especially for follow-up. A plan that works well with graduates of the Discover Bible Guides is to have them study the Focus on Prophecy Bible Guides. Another good choice is to make DVDs available to the graduate. If you have not used the Revelation Speaks Peace DVDs with the Revelation Speaks Peace Bible Guides, offer them to the students. Feel free to use a set of DVDs of your choice. The DVDs may be left with the student, played while you are present, or used in a small group setting. Along with the DVDs, supply the student with the Revelation Speaks Peace Bible Guides on the subject of the DVD. The Revelation Speaks Peace Bible Guides ask questions then give Bible texts where the answers can be found. The student then looks up the texts and writes the answers in the spaces provided.

Discover Bible Guide Mailing Schedule

The following is the order to follow when using the Discover Bible Guides. You can adapt these mailing guidelines to use with any set of lessons you choose for your Discover Bible School.

This mailing schedule may be duplicated and posted in the Bible School mailing area.

1. Discover Guides are mailed First Class in a carrier envelope with the student's address on the Answer Sheet showing through the window of the envelope. A "carrier envelope" refers to the outer envelope used to deliver a direct mail package.
2. **For both Mailings 1 and 2**, an address label must be printed and placed on the Answer Sheet so it will show through the window of the envelope.
3. **For Mailings 3 to 15**, use the address on the corrected Answer Sheet to return the Answer Sheet and send more Guides and Answer Sheets to the student.

Mailing 1 Guide #1 and Answer Sheet #1 (imprinted with address of school)
Welcome Letter
Return Envelope

Mailing 2 Guide #2 (Mail 14 days after mailing Guide #1)
Answer Sheet #2
Return Envelope
Advertisement for Disclosure and Discovery Mountain

Mailing 3 Corrected Answer Sheet #1
Guides #3 and #4 + Answer Sheets #3 and #4
Return Envelope
Enrollment Card
(Rubber stamp "For a Friend" on the card, or on a sticky note, and affix it to the card.
Some schools place a card in every mailing with a sticky note affixed.)

Mailing 4 Corrected Answer Sheet #2
Guides #5 and #6 + Answer Sheets #5 and #6
Return Envelope
Include Pamphlet: Steps to Peace in Life

Mailing 5 Corrected Answer Sheets #3 and #4
Guides #7 and #8 + Answer Sheets #7 and #8
Return Envelope

Mailing 6 Corrected Answer Sheets #5 and #6
Guides #9 and #10 + Answer Sheets #9 and #10
Return Envelope
Enrollment Card (Rubber stamp “For a Friend” on the front.)

Mailing 7 Corrected Answer Sheets #7 and #8
Guides #11 and #12 + Answer Sheets #11 and #12
Return Envelope

Mailing 8 Corrected Answer Sheets #9 and #10
Guides #13 and #14 + Answer Sheets #13 and #14
Return Envelope
Peace Above the Storm
NOTE: It is preferable to deliver Peace Above the Storm in person to the student.

Mailing 9 Corrected Answer Sheets #11 and #12
Guides #15 and #16 + Answer Sheets #15 and #16
Return Envelope

Mailing 10 Corrected Answer Sheets #13 and #14
Guides #17 and #18 + Answer Sheets #17 and #18
Return Envelope

Mailing 11 Corrected Answer Sheets #15 and #16
Guides #19 and #20 + Answer Sheets #19 and #20
Return Envelope
A book on the topic of the Sabbath. (Contact the VOP for a suggested book.)

Mailing 12 Corrected Answer Sheets #17 and #18
Guides #21 and #22 + Answer Sheets #21 and #22
Return Envelope

Mailing 13 Corrected Answer Sheets #19 and #20
Guides #23 and #24 + Answer Sheets #23 and #24
Return Envelope

Mailing 14 Corrected Answer Sheets #21 and #22
Guides #25 and #26 + Answer Sheets #25 and #26
Return Envelope

Mailing 15 Corrected Answer Sheets #23 and #24 + Answer Sheets #25 and #26

Include a Focus on Prophecy Enrollment Card or Lesson #1 of Focus on Prophecy and ask the student to return Answer Sheet #1. Automatically enroll them.

NOTE: It is preferable for the person who visits the student to deliver the filled-in Answer Sheets #23 through #26, rather than sending them by mail.

Focus on Prophecy Mailing Schedule

The following is the order to follow when using the Focus on Prophecy Bible Guides. You can adapt these mailing guidelines to use with any set of lessons you choose to use in your Discover Bible School.

This mailing schedule may be duplicated and posted in the Bible School mailing area.

1. Prophecy Guides are mailed First Class in a carrier envelope with the student's address on the Answer Sheet showing through the window of the envelope. A "carrier envelope" refers to the outer envelope used to deliver a direct mail package.
2. **For both Mailings 1 and 2**, an address label must be printed and placed on the Answer Sheet so it will show through the window of the envelope.
3. **For Mailings 3 to 11**, use the address on the corrected Answer Sheet to return the Answer Sheet and send more Guides and Answer Sheets to the student.

Mailing 1 Guide #1 and Answer Sheet #1
Welcome Letter
Return Envelope

Mailing 2 Guide #2 and Answer Sheet #2 (**Mail 14 days after mailing Guide #1**)
Return Envelope

NOTE: Send out Guide #2 two weeks after mailing Guide #1. If you have not received Answer Sheet #1 back when you mail Guide #2, put in a note stating you are looking forward to receiving their Answer Sheets.

If you do not receive back Answer Sheets #1 and #2 within six weeks, call or visit the student. If calling or visiting is not a good option for you, then write the student a note encouraging them to return the Answer Sheets.

Mailing 3 Corrected Answer Sheet #1
Guides #3 and #4 + Answer Sheets #3 and #4
Return Envelope
Prophecy Enrollment Card (Attach a sticky note or stamp the card stating "For a Friend")

Mailing 4 Corrected Answer Sheet #2
Guides #5 and #6 + Answer Sheets #5 and #6
Return Envelope
Advertisement for Disclosure and Discovery Mountain

Mailing 5 Corrected Answer Sheets #3 and #4
Guides #7 and #8 + Answer Sheets #7 and #8
Return Envelope

NOTE: Include prophecy enrollment cards marked “For a Friend” with each of the remaining mailings. Don’t forget to include notes to the students telling them you are praying for them and encouraging them to study.

Mailing 6 Corrected Answer Sheets #5 and #6
Guides #9 and #10 + Answer Sheets #9 and #10
Return Envelope

Mailing 7 Corrected Answer Sheets #7 and #8
Guides #11 and #12 + Answer Sheets #11 and #12
Return Envelope

Mailing 8 Corrected Answer Sheets #9 and #10
Guides #13 and #14 + Answer Sheets #13 and #14
Return Envelope

Mailing 9 Corrected Answer Sheets #11 and #12
Guides #15 and #16 + Answer Sheets #15 and #16
Return Envelope

NOTE: Guide #15 is on the topics of the mark of the beast and the change of the Sabbath. Give the student a booklet on the topic that best fits with their questions and readiness.

Mailing 10 Corrected Answer Sheets #13 and #14
Guides #17 and #18 + Answer Sheets #17 and #18
Return Envelope

Mailing 11 Corrected Answer Sheets #15 and #16
Guides #19 and #20 + Answer Sheets #19 and #20
Return Envelope
Discover Bible Guide Enrollment Card

NOTE: Make personal contact with the student. Deliver the diploma and Booklet #21 (Prophecy Summary Booklet). If you are unable to contact the student in person, call them. If you are unable to visit or reach the

student on the phone, mail Booklet #21 and their diploma to them. It is preferable to have the student to attend a graduation at your local church and receive the diploma at the church. Always invite the student to enroll in another Bible course or view a set of Revelation Speaks Peace DVDs or another series.

STUDENT RECORDS

It is vital to keep up-to-date records on the progress of the student. This includes Bible lessons completed, decisions made, literature/booklets given, etc. The suggested system to use is the online Student Record System (SRS). To access the SRS, please do the following: Go to the Discover Bible School information website at info.bibleschools.com (username and password: vop). Under the “Resource” tab select “SRS Student Record System.” If your school does not use the online system, then you need to use the printed Student Record Sheet system described below.

KEEPING RECORDS ON A STUDENT RECORD SHEET

When you receive a Bible study request from a student, fill out a Student Record Sheet for them. The pages that follow are copies of the Student Record Sheets for Discover and Focus on Prophecy. Duplicate as many copies as you need. Punch holes in them, and each time you fill one out for a new student, put it in a three-ring binder/notebook with alphabetical separators.

When enrolling a student, all the information about the student should be entered on the Student Record Sheet. The record should be updated each time a student completes a lesson. A record should be kept of lessons mailed or delivered; personal information about the student; decisions for Christ, keeping the Sabbath, and/or baptism; comments by the student; telephone calls; written contacts; and personal visits with the student.

Protect Your Identity

It is important for you to take the necessary precautions to protect your identity and yourself. Either use your local church PO Box or obtain a PO Box specifically for your Bible School. Obtain a free Google Voice phone number or get a phone line and recording specifically for your Bible School. All Discover Bible School Representatives can use this same telephone line. Also create an email address specifically for your Discover Bible School purposes. Do not give out your personal address, email, or phone number.