

Outline

Chapter 3 - 1

Study Societies

Introduction

1. Scripture
2. Confessions - Church Order - Forms
3. Goals
4. History
5. Communion of Saints
6. What are we to study?
7. The discussion
8. Boards / Leadership
9. Preparatory study
10. Consistory involvement
11. Visits to societies
12. Evaluation

## BIBLE STUDY SOCIETIES

### Introduction

The Church of Jesus Christ lives from the Word of God. This Word equips God's people for every good work. Daily the members of the congregation have to submit to the Word and so let the Lord work in them through His Holy Spirit (Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 38). "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work " (2 Tim 3:16-17). Bible study is a vital part of congregational life. This study takes place on a personal level, in the homes of the members, but also on a congregational level, by means of the study societies. This chapter deals with the Bible Study Societies.

### 1. Scripture

The Word of God is unique. It is unique because of its origin,-- it comes from God,-- and because of its contents, --it speaks of the gospel of salvation--. The apostles speak about the Word with many wonderful expressions. They call the Word:

- The Word of God - Rom. 9: 6
- The Word of promise - Rom. 9:9
- The Word of wisdom - 1 Cor. 12 : 8
- The Word of reconciliation - 2 Cor. 5 : 19
- The Word of truth - 2 Cor. 6 : 7
- The Word of life - Phil. 2 : 16
- The Word of Christ - Col.3:16
- The Word of the Lord - 1 Thess. 4:15
- The Word of righteousness - Heb.5:13
- The Word of prophecy - 2 Pet 1:19

The Word comes from God and thus has absolute authority. Believers are to forsake all creatures rather than do the least thing against the will of God. They are to worship the Lord in no other manner than He has commanded in His Word.

Isa 30:8

Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness.

2 Pet 1:19-21

And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

1Thes 2:13

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

2 Tim 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Rev 1:11

which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

The people of God need this Word in order to know God and live in the salvation He gives.

John 5:39

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,

John 8 : 51

I tell you the truth, if any one keeps my word, he will never see death.

Rom 15:4

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

The gift of the Holy Spirit enables the members of the church to understand the Word of God. The Word of God is clear.

Ps. 119 : 105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

1 Cor 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

We believe that the Holy Scripture fully contains the will of God and that all that man must believe in order to be saved is sufficiently taught therein. The whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in it at length.

Deutr. 6 : 6, 8-9

These commandments that I give you this day are to be upon your hearts. ... Tie them as symbols on your hands, and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deut 17:19

It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees

The Bible uses the word "meditate" in connection with God's Word. We must take time to learn how the law of God applies in our lives. To love the LORD is to love His Word.

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything that is written in it.

Ps. 19:14

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Ps. 119:15

I meditate on your precepts, and consider your ways.

Ps. 119:23

Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees.

Ps. 119:27

Let me understand the teaching of your precepts, then I will meditate on your wonders.

Ps. 119:48

I lift up my hands to your commandments, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.

Ps. 119:78

May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause; but I will meditate on your precepts.

Ps. 119:148

My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.

God's Word addresses the people of God, and each child of God within this communion. The study of God's Word has to be done within the communion of the saints.

Eph. 3:17-19

so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love which surpasses knowledge, -- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

2 Pet 1:20

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

## 2. Confessions/Church Order/Forms

### 2.1. Belgic Confession

The Belgic Confession begins with several articles in which we confess the authority, necessity, sufficiency and clarity of God's Word.

Art. 2

Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word as far as is necessary for us in this life, to His glory and our salvation.

Art. 3

We confess that this Word of God *did not come by the impulse of man, but that men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God*, as the apostle Peter says. Thereafter, in His special care for us and our salvation, God commanded His servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit His revealed word to writing and He Himself wrote with His own finger the two tables of the law.

- Art. 5 We receive all these books, and these only as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation and confirmation of our faith.
- Art. 7 We believe that this Holy Scripture fully contains the will of God and that all that man must believe in order to be saved is sufficiently taught therein. The whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in it at length.

## 2.2. Heidelberg Catechism

The Heidelberg Catechism refers indirectly to the need to study God's Word. The pertinent parts are underlined.

- Q/A19. From where do you know this?  
From the holy gospel, which God Himself first revealed in Paradise.  
Later, He had it proclaimed by the patriarchs and prophets,  
and foreshadowed by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law.  
Finally, He had it fulfilled through His only Son.
- Q/A 94. What does the LORD require in the first commandment?  
That for the sake of my very salvation I avoid and flee  
all idolatry, witchcraft, superstition,  
and prayer to saints or to other creatures.  
Further, that I rightly come to know the only true God,  
trust in Him alone, submit to Him with all humility and patience,  
expect all good from Him only,  
and love, fear, and honour Him with all my heart.  
In short, that I forsake all creatures rather than do the least thing against His will.
- Q/A 122. What is the first petition?  
*Hallowed be Thy Name.* That is:  
Grant us first of all that we may rightly know Thee,  
and sanctify, glorify, and praise Thee in all Thy works, in which shine forth Thy almighty power,  
wisdom, goodness, righteousness, mercy, and truth.  
Grant us also that we may so direct our whole life -- our thoughts, words, and actions -  
that Thy Name is not blasphemed because of us  
but always honoured and praised.

## 2.3. Canons of Dort

The Canons teach us that we need to use the Word of God for it is the means by which the Lord works in us. The Canons also use the term "meditation." Again the pertinent parts are underlined.

- Chapter 1, Article 16  
Some do not yet clearly discern in themselves a living faith in Christ, an assured confidence of heart, peace of conscience, a zeal for childlike obedience, and a glorying in God through Christ; nevertheless, they use the means through which God has promised to work these things in us. They ought not to be alarmed when reprobation is mentioned, nor to count themselves among the reprobate. Rather, they must diligently continue in the use of these means, fervently desire a time of more abundant grace, and expect it reverently and humbly.
- Chapter 1, Article 12  
The elect in due time, though in various stages and in different measure, are made certain of this their eternal and unchangeable election to salvation. They attain this assurance, however, not by inquisitively prying into the hidden and deep things of God, but by observing in themselves, with spiritual joy and holy delight, the unfailling fruits of election pointed out in the Word of God -- such as a true faith in Christ, a childlike fear of God, a godly sorrow for their sins, and a hungering and thirsting after righteousness.
- Chapter 3/4, Article 17  
The almighty working of God whereby He brings forth and sustains this our natural life does not exclude but requires the use of means, by which He according to His infinite wisdom and goodness has willed to exercise His power. So also the aforementioned supernatural working of God whereby He regenerates us, in no way excludes or overthrows the use of the gospel, which the most wise God has ordained to be the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul.
- Chapter 5, Article 10  
This assurance is not produced by a certain private revelation besides or outside the Word, but by faith in the promises of God, which He has most abundantly revealed in His Word for our comfort; by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God; and, finally, by the serious and holy

pursuit of a good conscience and of good works. And if the elect of God did not have in this world the solid comfort of obtaining the victory and this unfailing pledge of eternal glory, they would be of all men the most miserable.

Canons of Dort, 5, Art. 14

As it has pleased God to begin this work of grace in us by the preaching of the gospel, so He maintains, continues, and perfects it by the hearing and reading of His Word, by meditation upon it, by its exhortations, threatenings, and promises, and by the use of the sacraments.

## 2.4. Forms

### Form for Public Profession of Faith

First, do you wholeheartedly believe the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian Church? Do you promise by the grace of God steadfastly to continue in this doctrine in life and death, rejecting all heresies and errors conflicting with God's Word?

### Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons

To do their work well as shepherds of God's flock, the overseers should train themselves in godliness and diligently search the Scriptures, which are profitable in every respect, that the man of God may be equipped for every good work.

## 3. Goals

The goal of congregational Bible study is:

- to know God and glorify Him;
- to grow in faith, love and hope;
- to be equipped to function as prophets, priests and kings;
- to strengthen the communion of saints.

As overseers our task is to encourage the congregation in this.

## 4. History

The history of the Bible study societies as we know them today can be traced back to the 18th century. In 1768 a young men's society was established in Basel, Switzerland. In the fifty years that followed many more were established, especially in Germany and Switzerland. The goal of these societies was to visit the sick and the poor, to evangelize and do Sunday school work. The first young men's society in the Netherlands was established in 1851 in Amsterdam, not by the Secession churches, but within the State Church. Many others were organized soon after.

Within the Secession churches there was unease with regard to these societies, because they were too much wrapped up in community work, rather than study the Bible. Yet they did not reject the idea that the members of the church come together to study. In 1888 a young minister, Rev. Vonkenberg, started an organization within the Reformed churches for young men with the aim to prepare them for their future task as member of the church and citizen of the country. Instead of reaching out, his set-up stressed building up and preparing for adulthood. This was a welcome and healthy change. Many young men and women received their training at these societies. An additional benefit of these societies was that they also provided an alternative to the growing attractions of worldly entertainment. These societies have been a blessing to the churches. It did not remain limited to young men and women, the organization of men and women societies followed.

However, over time the emphasis shifted more and more from biblical to societal and political issues. Study of the Bible and the Confessions went to the background. After the Liberation of 1944 when new organizations had to be set up, the need for and goal of Bible study societies was discussed as well. The task of preparing and equipping believers for their task in church, state and society was maintained, but the main focus was again placed on the study of God's Word. The goal of these societies was understood as studying the Word of God in view of the whole service which God demands from us (Art.7 B.C.). This explains our current practice of the study societies as we know them

## 5. Communion of Saints

Bible study must be done personally. It must be done within the family, but also within the congregation. These three do not exclude but rather complement each other. The one will support the other. Good personal Bible study will benefit the family and the study societies. The other way as well, good study societies will greatly benefit personal and family devotions. The opposite is true too. When there is a lack of participation in Bible study the question is in place how much time is dedicated to family or personal devotions. When the study of God's Word is important in someone's life, then this also shows in being a living member of the congregation.

At times the question is asked why Bible study societies are necessary. Isn't personal Bible study sufficient? In response to this we have to keep in mind that the Bible calls the congregation a body. We need one another. If that applies to material and social things, then certainly also to Bible study. Our mind set is not only, what do I get out of it, but also, what can I give to others. In addition, we have to realize that the Word is not a gift to individuals, but is given to the church. I receive it personally as part of the communion. Since we receive and learn about the Bible within this communion, we must also study the Word within this communion. In this way we can together with all the saints, grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ (Eph 3:17-19). In 1 Corinthians 12 we read about the many gifts which the Spirit works in the congregation.

- 8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,
- 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,
- 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,\* and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

These gifts have all one source.

- 4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.
- 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.
- 6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.
- 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

These gifts are to be used within the communion. We can help each other understanding the richness of God's revelation. We are also called to encourage one another

- 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.
- 12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.
- 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.
- 14 Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.
- 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.
- 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.
- 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?
- 18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.
- 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be?
- 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

In Romans 12 we come across the same teaching

- 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.
- 4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
- 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.
- 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;
- 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

To be part of the communion shows the love we are called to show (Romans 12 : 9; 1 Cor. 13).

The communal element comes out in another way as well. We are not the first to read and search the Word of God. Previous generations have studied the Word as well. We may benefit from their work. We receive this benefit in the confessions. In them previous generations have summarized the doctrine of God's Word. They did this in situations in which they had to defend the truth against false teachings. We need the confessions in our Bible study. They can help us in the proper understanding of God's Word, they can also help us to detect and reject heresies.

## **6. What are we to study?**

The history of the study societies shows that this question can be answered in different ways. Under influence of Pietism and Methodism the societies were formed to reach out and save unbelievers. In itself this is a wonderful goal, but the Reformed churches rightly saw that in "reaching out" the emphasis was less on "building up" the believers and the church. In the beginning of the 20th century the stress was on building up. The problem was, however, that theories and opinions of people as to how to build up our lives and live as believers became more important than the Bible itself. The Liberation of the 1940ies rightly redirected the societies to studying the Word of God.

To say that our goal is to study to Word of God needs further explanation. The complaint can be heard at times that the study societies are boring because questions are asked about details and words, whereas the larger picture is forgotten. "I get nothing out of it" is at times the excuse for not going. Should we not study in a different manner, or discuss contemporary topics? To approach the Word in a purely intellectual attitude is indeed not right. God's Word directs our daily lives. But it is equally wrong to reduce Bible study to only deal with those topics that we find interesting. We need to study the Word of God in order to live from this Word every day. The Catechism reminds us that faith is knowledge and confidence at the same time. To only look at the knowledge aspect or at the personal impact breaks apart what belongs together. The more we study God's Word the more we come to know our God and the more we come to know ourselves. That is part and parcel of loving and serving the Lord with heart, mind and soul.

We note is as we live in a time in which people evaluate things in terms of their function. Bible study is good and worth doing when it does something for me. If it doesn't do anything for me, it is not good. This is why some people quit going to study societies when they get nothing out of it. Thus, you arrive at a very pragmatic attitude towards Scripture. The result is that meetings deal with topics rather than Bible books. It may seem attractive initially, but after a while there are no topics left and the discussion tends to center around the opinions of the participants. In addition, this attitude goes against what we believe about the authority of Scripture. It is not whether I get something out of it that is the norm, but what God is telling to us. It may take effort and time to learn what He is saying. Systematically studying the Bible leads much further in this regard. We gain further knowledge about God and His Word and so are strengthened in our faith and equipped for service. This approach does require more work, but is much more rewarding.

There are many Bible Study booklets on the market. Many of these come from an evangelical background. They employ the interactive method of study. This means that the study guide leads one through the chapter and asks questions. In answering these questions one comes to understand the message of the chapter. In itself such a method is not wrong, and we can learn a lot from it. The problem can be in the kind of questions that are asked. The evangelical focus is regeneration and what makes a believer happy. Thus the questions tend to use the Bible stories as examples for us. Our feelings and experiences take centre stage, rather than the great deeds of the Lord in His covenant with His people.

In conclusion we see that it is to be recommended to study a Bible book. As we study we must not be too quick to look at how the believer can work with this, but first consider what God is saying in this passage. We study the Word to learn more about God and his Work. This in turn helps us to know ourselves, as His children and gives us direction as to how to serve and glorify Him.

## 7. The Discussion

Systematically working through a chapter or a passage is more helpful than random questions. Here are some steps to consider to stimulate a discussion. Some of these steps (1 - 3) can be done prior to the meeting, some of them (4 and 5) during the meeting.

### Step 1

Read the passage as a whole.

Can be helpful to do it in different translations.

Formulate the main point in short .

### Step 2

Look at the context

- within the whole Bible (e.g. Old or New, Where in history?)

- the book, letter

who wrote it, when, why

what is its literary character

use an outline of the book/letter (Study Bible)

### Step 3

Divide the chapter in sections

Most translations/Study Bibles help you.

do not make these sections too long

do not make them too short. Look for:

change in thought, scenery, spokesman or address

This is an important step. In doing this you get a handle on the chapter. In discussing the individual verses do not lose sight of the overall picture. In the discussion it would be good to follow and discuss the sections one by one.

### Step 4

Look at each section

Ask questions such as:.

- what does it say? Do I understand all the words, customs?

- what does it mean?

- are there other passages that connect to this one? (O.T⇒ N.T.)

- what about the confessions?

- how does this apply to us?

- how does this function?

- are there related topics?

### Step 5

Formulate your thoughts, conclusions.

In your presentation follow the division

Conclude with look at:

How does the Lord use this chapter:

to know Him and His work, to know ourselves and to serve Him

## 8. Boards/Leadership

Leadership is an integral part of the functioning of a society. Involved and dedicated board members will stimulate a society. Such leadership shows in that the board is fulfilling its task according to the Constitution and in that the board upholds the Constitution. This implies that they must be aware of the contents of the Constitution. Boards must have regular meetings in which decisions can be made. Decisions about meetings and materials should not be made at the last minute. If a Board is sloppy and lacks commitment in its work the whole society will lack commitment.

Leadership is also important at the society meetings. The person who chairs must be well prepared and give good leadership to the discussion. It is the task of the chair to see to it that the discussion does not go in circles, that all speak in due order, that questions are answered by the members. A good meeting is one where members can listen to each other and help one another in understanding and applying the passage.

### **9. Preparatory study**

An important requirement for a good meeting is preparatory study. This is where much is lacking. It is not unusual that quite a few members have not even read the passage that will be discussed, let alone have studied an outline. The result is a lack of questions, and a shallow discussion. This is part of a larger picture involving personal and family Bible study. We live in a society that wants to be entertained and demand instant results. Bible study requires input and learning to ask the right questions. As overseers we do well to pay attention to this because what will happen to the church when the study of God's Word recedes to the background. Especially the fathers carry a great responsibility in this regard, since it their task, according to the Bible, to instruct their children. This instruction is always geared to daily life, as the book of Proverbs shows clearly. To meditate is to study how the law of God concretely applies in our lives. The father has to teach his children to ask the proper questions of the text. See further section 1-9, Family Worship.

### **10. Consistory involvement**

The Bible study societies are run by the members and not by the Consistory. Members of the congregation are free to organize a Bible study society. The overseers can stimulate it, encourage it, but it remains the responsibility of the members of the congregation. The link between the consistory and the study societies is the fact that the members of the society are under the supervision of the elders. This supervision is not to be seen in the sense that the Consistory is in charge of the societies, but rather that the Consistory must see to it that the members remain faithful to the promises made at public profession of faith. Besides supervision, the overseers must also encourage the societies. To fulfil its task the elders would do well to acquaint themselves with the work of the societies. Not only should elders attend Bible study societies, they should also be aware of what is happening in other societies. The home visits will benefit from this as well. If an elder visits a meeting of a Bible society he should not be afraid to be part of the discussion, though he has to realize that he is a guest.

Especially when it comes to the Young Peoples, the elders should be aware of what is happening. This shows the younger members that the elders take interest in their work and want to encourage them. Some consistories has one elder assigned as a liaison with the Young Peoples. The task of a liaison could include the following:

- to have contact (formal and informal) with the Boards;
- to report to the Consistory about the year's schedule;
- to report three times per year to the Consistory on the progress in the societies (in September, January and May);
- to report concerns of the Y.P. to the consistory and the other way around;
- to inform the ward elders (before home visits start) which young people are member (he receives a copy of the attendance list);
- to be available for help and advice;

The overseers can stimulate this work at the home visits. If the family or some of its members do not attend study societies the elders do well to find out what the reasons are. This will then also lead to a discussion on the need for Bible study, personally, as family and within the church. Interdenominational Bible study is to be rejected. The elders must also warn against study material that is not in harmony with the Reformed Confession (See Art. 27 Church Order). This is no minor detail in a time in which books and

videos of all kinds of religious stripes can be easily obtained and heresies can enter our homes by means of religious radio or tv stations.

Members who do not go to study societies will have their excuses. Elders should not be afraid to question these. There can be valid reasons. It can also be that people will hide behind these excuses. Does this mean that Bible study is compulsory? Believers have to study the Word of God, yes. To do this in the setting of the Society is very helpful and important, but not mandatory. However, one who loves the Word and thus loves the church, would want to study the Bible within the communion of saints.

## 11. Visits to societies

If elders visit the study societies, the following points could be used to facilitate the reporting:

### 1. General information

- Which society did you visit?
- How many members were present and absent?  
If quite a few are absent, ask the leader whether this happens more often.
- What was the topic?

### 2. Discussion

- What can you say about the essay? How did it function in the discussion?
- What can you say about the participation of the members?
- Can you notice that preparatory study had been made?
- What can you say about the discussion?
  - How did it deal with the main lines and the details?
  - How did it try to apply the passage to daily life?
  - How are other scripture passages used?
  - How are the confessions used?
  - Which other sources of information are used?
- If the discussion did not go very well, can you indicate how come?
- What can you say about the functioning of the leadership?
  - How does the chairman lead the meeting?
  - Is there opportunity for all to speak?
  - How does he conclude discussion?

### 3. Format

- What can you say about the order of the meeting?
- What can you say about the way the members dealt with each other?
- What can you say about the relationship between members and chair?
- Was the meeting properly opened and closed?

### 4. Contact

- Did you speak with the chairman or some members of the Board after the meeting?
- Are there special concerns which they want to bring to the Consistory?
- Are there special requests for the Consistory?

**12. Evaluation**

1. Part of evaluating is surveying the current situation.
  - How many study societies are there?
  - What percentage of the congregation is involved?
  - How often do the societies meet?
  - What are they studying this season?
2. Do we agree on the Scriptural basis and the goal of Bible study?
3. How do you evaluate the overall functioning of the societies? Is there commitment to the work of the societies? What can we do to improve participation? Try to be specific.
4. Does the Consistory show sufficient interest in this work? Explain. Is this matter addressed on home visits? How? What is the reaction? In which areas could we improve and how? Try to be specific.
5. Do we agree on the need and importance of Bible study? Are the office bearers attending Men's Society? If not, Why? What is the function of the study of God's Word in your life?
6. Are there items which need follow up? Why? How will we go about it?

