

Handling Statements That Don't Line Up With Scripture

Question: If someone in our small group discussion is way off base on a belief, should we correct them?

The answer is yes, BUT, first consider if this is a non-negotiable foundational belief or a secondary issue.

A secondary issue is one that the Bible is not clear about, therefore it is open to various interpretations. Examples would include things such as whether baptism should be by submersion or sprinkling, deciding to let your kids trick-or-treat, whether dinosaurs existed, drinking alcohol, listening to secular music, the list goes on! **We should agree to disagree** and instead promote unity within the body on the core beliefs all Christians profess.

What is an issue that should be corrected? One that Scripture is very clear on; hard line, non-negotiable beliefs upon which the very foundation of Christianity depends.

[Non-negotiable Foundational Beliefs](#) [This is a link to BACC Core Beliefs]

The Authority of Scripture	The Church
The Trinity	Eternity
Salvation	The Great Commission
The Person and Work of Jesus Christ	Humanity and Sin
The Father	The Holy Spirit

As a leader, you need to know and agree with these core beliefs, and be able to teach, exhort and correct erroneous beliefs about these fundamental positions. BUT, most importantly, **correct with love and gentleness**. Do you have a Bible verse to share for each of these? Let Scripture do the convicting!

Example of a belief that is in contradiction of Scripture and the gospel:

- They do not believe Jesus is the only way to heaven, that good people can also be saved apart from the work and person of Jesus.
- They do not believe that Jesus is God
- They believe that people are basically good and sin isn't a big deal because we're just human after all.
- The Bible is outdated because it was speaking to ancient cultures.

Please remember that you should NEVER ARGUE with someone in your group, nor should members argue among themselves.

If a core Biblical belief is being debated, gently correct, diffuse emotions and offer to meet with that person over coffee to discuss at more length. You can always ask your coach for help, maybe the three of you meet for coffee. But don't let a core belief go uncorrected.

*"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage **with great patience and careful instruction.**" 2 Tim. 4:2*

Here is one example of how you could handle a situation like this:

Say to the whole group: *Let's dig into this together. What Bible verses can you all think of that speaks to that?* And **let the whole group be a part of setting things straight by using the Scripture.** Stepping in with your knowledge as well and mingling it with theirs. It softens the correction and makes it a gentle rebuke instead of an embarrassment to that individual.

You have then cleared it up for the entire group not letting an unbiblical statement stand yet saving that person's dignity while keeping her wanting to come back to study to learn more.

The next step is a one on one follow up after small group. Maybe a chat over coffee or lunch if she is willing and interested. That would be where you could ask her some questions and find out where she is at in her spiritual journey.

Also, if the question is "over your head" there is nothing wrong with saying *"That is a great question and I don't know the answer but I will be happy to check with our leadership and get an answer and get back to all of you next week."*

The next step after that is to take it to your coach or Jody. If we don't have the answer we will go to the pastors on staff and do our best to get you an answer to the question in a timely manner.