

Revision 1.1	Dated 4/29/04 <b>Rev. 6/7/04</b>
Maintenance and oversight by: President Vice President	Created and reviewed by: Dick Lewis Robbin Mackenzie Larry Hicks Brendan McMillan Bobbi Shaw

### **The Purpose**

The BCF believes the authoritative guidebook for all of life is the Holy Bible, the living Word of God and that all BCF Bible studies focus on God's Word as the source of direction in their lives. Paul writes in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy that the Word of God is the source of godly wisdom and the basic building block to equip believers for every good work:

*2 Timothy 3:15-17 "and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 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."*

The writer of Hebrews states that the Word of God is not a dead and lifeless document but is alive and active and will be the true judge of our motives:

*Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."*

Luke labels the Bereans as noble-minded for their desire to verify the teachings of others by examining the Scriptures. Many came to faith because the Bereans confirmed the truth of the teachings.

*Acts 17:11-12 "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men."*

One major goal of the BCF studies is to help build up believers in their faith and to help non-believers find faith in Christ.

*Romans 10:17 "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."*

Therefore, the BCF stands on the Bible as the ultimate source of instruction and does not endorse or encourage the use of any other book, guide or reference

material. However, the BCF recognizes there are Study guide books and Christian topical materials which can be used to facilitate and evoke discussion of God's Word and His love, grace, and forgiveness in our lives. As Paul states in Philippians:

*Philippians 4:8-9 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."*

### **Definition of Study Materials**

For the purposes of this document, "study materials" are defined as both published materials that are used by the leader as the principal basis for the group study and published materials that will be purchased by or distributed to group members.

Examples of "study materials" would include fictional works such as Pilgrim's Progress, author testimonials such as Ragamuffin Gospel, and study scripture book or topical guides such as Navigators NavPress and IV Press study guides. The Board reserves the right to waive review requirements for commonly known materials or to distinguish between categories of materials.

### **Study Materials not requiring BCF review**

Bible dictionaries, concordances, word studies, maps, diagrams and similar material that are used by Study leaders in the preparation and presentation of their studies are not included in the scope of this document

The BCF desires to have a formal process in place to review study materials.

1. To ensure study materials uphold the Scriptures as the only true statement of God's plan for redemption.
2. To ensure study materials are consistent with the BCF statement of faith.
3. To create a review timeline for Bible study materials and receive input from the leader and Bible study participants prior to the material's use.
4. To create a formal feedback loop for leaders and group members to share the results of using the materials with the BCF Board.

### **Review Timeline**

Study leaders will need to begin the review process in time for books to be ordered and received in advance of the start of the first lesson in the new study topic or focus. Allow at least three months for this process (see timeline below). This provides opportunity for the Board to meet twice before the new study begins. At the first Board meeting, the study leader will present study materials to board members for review. At the second meeting, the Board will vote on the materials. An accelerated process could take place in two months allowing for

## BCF Bible Study Materials Review Policy

just one Board meeting, if the study leader provides Board members with review materials at least two weeks prior to a Board meeting in which a vote can occur. The Board can opt to establish an emergency review procedure if there are special circumstances that dictate an expedited review cycle.

Book order times vary greatly. Study leaders are responsible to determine the estimated time for the books to be ordered and received.

<b>Timeline for review of study materials</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Three months prior to start of new study (allow for two Board meetings prior to need)	<p>Study leader purchases and reads a personal copy of the proposed materials.</p> <p>Study leader requests agenda item be added to next board meeting.</p> <p>Study leader can opt to submit a brief summary of proposed material/book to the Board for review prior to the actual Board meeting. This would give members an opportunity to consider the material prior to the Presentation and do research, get outside input and pray about the materials. If an accelerated review time is required, that allows for only one Board meeting, provide materials at least two weeks prior to the meeting.</p>
Board meeting #1 (two months before start of new study; or one month before, if material has been reviewed by the Board)	<p>Study leader and any group members appear before the Board to submit materials for review ("Review Presentation").</p> <p>Board votes on materials or determines if additional review is needed. If additional review is warranted, the Board will appoint a 3-person review team.</p>
Board meeting #2 (one month before start of new study)	Board hears review team findings and takes a vote on the new study materials.
Post Review	Study leader orders bulk materials after review.
Post Study	Study leader reports to Board on the use of materials and makes recommendations on future use in other groups.

### Review Presentation

Prior to the Review Presentation, study leaders should obtain a personal copy of the proposed study materials, read them in their entirety, be prepared to answer the questions listed below, and any additional questions that may be asked regarding material content.

At the review presentation, the study leader will bring a sample copy of the materials and any ancillary materials such as workbooks, leader's guide, etc.

The study leader will be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Have you read the materials in their entirety?
- Who is the author?

## BCF Bible Study Materials Review Policy

- What is the theme of the book or materials?
- What is the format of the study materials? Topical? Verse-by-verse? Other?
- Is the material consistent with BCF's "Statement of Faith"?
- Is there anything potentially controversial that you found in the materials?
- Does the material teach a different gospel than what Jesus taught his disciples?
- Does the material point to God's Word as the ultimate authority?
- What would be the format of how the materials are to be reviewed in the Study, e.g., a chapter a week?
- What would be an estimated time of completion?
- Is there any other information that you feel needs to be presented about the materials?
- Are there any members from your group that have read the book and would like to inform the Board of their thoughts?

Note: At the Review Presentation, Study Group members may make comments to the Board on proposed study materials. The number of people commenting and the length of their remarks will be governed by the time constraints of the Board meeting and other agenda items.

**NOTE: Post Study Review of Materials - Will be approved separately after further review.**