

*discover the Treasure
encounter God
be shaped by the Message*



GOLD

Notes on Tutoring

An introduction for GOLD Project Tutors

Flexible open learning courses from
the **Group-based Open Learning Discipleship** Project

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***The Group-based Open Learning Discipleship (GOLD) Project,
Stockton House, Stockton Avenue,
Fleet, Hampshire GU51 4NS
www.goldproject.org***

CONTENTS

Contents

Contents.....	2
1. The GOLD Project.....	1
a. Introduction.....	1
b. Course Units Offered.....	1
c. The Need.....	1
d. How GOLD Project Courses Work.....	2
e. Methodology.....	3
f. Intended Outcomes.....	4
g. The Distinctive Features of <i>The GOLD Project</i>	4
2. THE TUTOR'S ROLE.....	5
a. Mentoring/discipling.....	5
b. Application.....	5
c. Practicalities.....	5
d. Group Tutorial Meetings.....	6
e. Dealing with Conflicting Viewpoints.....	6
f. Prayer Partners.....	7
g. Potential Tutors.....	7
3. ASSESSMENT.....	8
a. Forms of Assessment.....	8
b. Summary of Assessment.....	9
c. Moderation of Assignments/Exams.....	9
d. Awards.....	10
4. TUTOR RESOURCES.....	11
a. Tutors' Workshops.....	11
b. Advertising and Promotion.....	11
c. Tutor Support.....	11
d. Reimbursements.....	11

1. THE GOLD PROJECT

a. Introduction

The Group-based Open Learning Discipleship (GOLD) Project offers courses that are designed to be accessible even if people have no previous theological study as well as to encourage students to engage with the Bible at a deeper level. The courses have something for students whether they feel called to involvement in different avenues of ministry and mission in the local church or if they simply want to work out how to live more effectively as a Christian in daily life whether at home or in workplace and society.

The courses focus on developing foundational knowledge of the Bible and interpretation and also provides skills for effective involvement in local Christian leadership, enabling them to engage in disciplined self-study, biblical interpretation, listening to others, evaluating different points of view, expressing one's own view and writing short assignments.

b. Course Units Offered

Old Testament

Discover God's Ancient Story: Genesis	5 Blocks
Foundations of God's Covenant Community: Exodus to Deuteronomy	5 Blocks
Historical Books of the Old Testament	10 Blocks
Worship and the Psalms	10 Blocks
Prophecy in the Old Testament	10 Blocks

New Testament

Encountering Jesus and the Kingdom (1): Mark and Matthew	5 Blocks
Encountering Jesus and the Kingdom (2) Luke and Acts	5 Blocks
Discover Life: The Gospel of John	5 Blocks
Foundations of Love and Hope: Letters of John and Revelation	5 Blocks
Discover Christian Living (1): The Letters of Paul (Part 1)	5 Blocks
Discover Christian Living (2): The Letters of Paul (Part 2)	5 Blocks

Christian Studies

Introduction to Christian Theology	(10 Blocks)
Introduction to Christian Ethics	(10 Blocks)
Introduction to Church History	(10 Blocks)

c. The Need

The ministry and mission of the local church in the UK is increasingly being carried out by ordinary people who have neither the time nor the opportunity to attend residential theological colleges. Many such people are involved regularly in the teaching ministry of the church, including teaching Sunday School, leading Youth Ministries and house groups, and preaching. However, most have little or no training to equip them for this

task and sometimes even lack basic knowledge of the historical biblical teaching of the church.

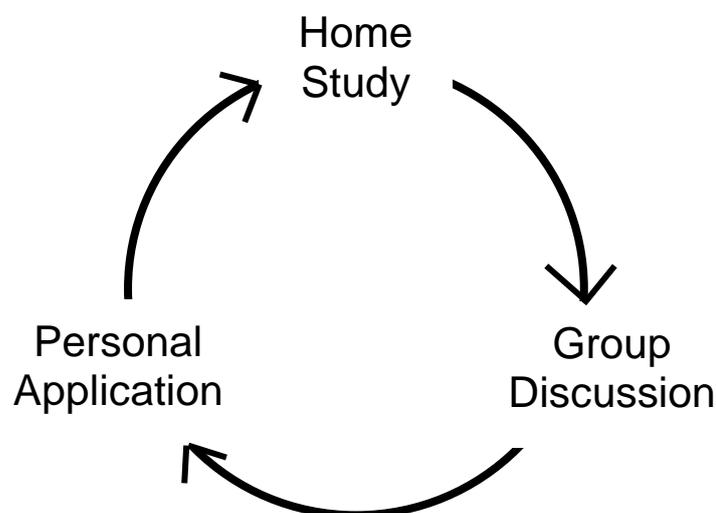
In addition to the informal involvement of ordinary people in the ministry and mission of the church, there are an increasing number of forms of ministry which are officially recognised by local congregations as well as by denominations. Many congregations, especially in rural areas, are looking to means of ensuring that the ministry continues without depending on paid clergy. Non-formal entry into ordained ministry is becoming common within the Anglican church. Alongside this, there is an increased use of recognised Lay Ministers to lead weekly services. In growing congregations, there is often a need to appoint recognised people for specific areas of ministry and mission such as ministry among the young and old.

Furthermore, the church has begun to rediscover that its mission in the world is primarily carried out through the daily lives of the congregation members who lack either the skills or the confidence to live out their faith in the contemporary world. Such people could become far more effective if they were equipped properly for this purpose. Faced by complicated ethical issues in family, workplace and society, people can easily abdicate their Christian responsibility to proclaim the good news in their daily lives.

This means that there is an increasing need to equip Christians for mission and ministry that cannot easily be met by formal residential training.

d. How GOLD Project Courses Work

Using an Open Learning method that has been proven throughout the world as an effective method of discipleship and leadership training, *GOLD Project Courses* provide demanding but approachable study of essential Christian topics. The study method is founded on three very important pillars:



Notes on Tutoring

The students study on their own using specially prepared interactive study texts and they interact with a group of fellow students under the guidance of a tutor. All students can expect to gain increased confidence in understanding and interpreting the Bible and the ability to assess and evaluate different opinions. We are confident that students will also learn how to apply the Bible more effectively in their lives and witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Home study with specially prepared study texts provides:

- a way into serious, first-hand study;
- focused, relevant feedback to give confidence;
- a way of checking that material has been properly understood;
- the chance to note points of disagreement or of further interest;
- an effective way to learn the discipline of regular study.

The **Group Tutorial** provides a place for students to:

- express their ideas in their own words – try them out on others – safely;
- learn to agree - and disagree - with others;
- share personal experience and learn from it;
- form strong relationships with other Christians;
- grow in confidence and trust their own judgments;
- plan and work together on the basis of their theological thinking.

The purpose of GOLD Project courses is that they should transform the lives of those studying. **Personal Application** is encouraged in three areas:

- discipleship, learning to follow Jesus in daily life;
- ministry, using skills and gifts to build up other members of the body of Christ;
- mission, sharing the love of Christ in the world through word and deed.

e. Methodology

The *GOLD Project* course materials make use of various theories in adult education. Here are some of the basic principles behind how the materials are structured. Students learn best:

- when they are given an overview of the subject and know the learning outcomes of what they are to study.
- when information is presented in small manageable sections.
- when they are able to interact with what they learn and when they are actively involved in the learning process.

- when they are immediately able to check (and if necessary correct) what they have learnt.
- when they can learn at their own speed.
- when they are able to reinforce their learning in discussion with their peers/colleagues.
- when they are tested on what they have learned.
- when they have opportunities to reflect on their learning.
- when they are able to apply their learning to real-life situations.

Our materials have particularly been designed to be accessible to those who are not used to academic learning. At the same time, the content is designed to stretch even those who have a life-time knowledge of the Bible.

f. Intended Outcomes

The GOLD Project seeks to encourage students:

- *to grow in their knowledge of God;*
The purpose of the programme is to develop Christian maturity in Christ (Colossians 1:28). Personal and corporate spiritual growth is an essential aspect of the programme.
- *to develop gifts and skills for the building up of the body of Christ;*
The programme focuses on developing skills for the benefit of the local church (Ephesians 4:11, 12).
- *to pass on what they have learnt to others;*
Communication of what is learned is an essential feature of the programme (2 Timothy 2:2).
- *to be actively involved in the mission of the Church in the world;*
The programme seeks to encourage students to apply their learning to contextually appropriate forms of Christian mission (Matthew 28:18-20).

g. The Distinctive Features of *The GOLD Project*

- Bible-focussed curriculum (covering the major portions of both the Old and New Testaments)
- Hands-on interaction with biblical texts
- Regular local group tutorials
- Accessibility of workbook for those not used to academic study (see Methodology above)
- Discipleship focus at this level

2. THE TUTOR'S ROLE

a. Mentoring/discipling

The primary purpose of the programme is to enable maturity in Christ (see above), through serious Christian study. This is a process of discipleship in which we are all involved. The tutor plays an important role in:

- facilitating discipleship within the study group;
- enabling students to help other members of the group to grow in their own faith;
- encouraging students to make use of their gifts and to learn to appreciate the diverse gifts, abilities and experiences of their fellow disciples;
- encouraging students to reflect on what their study means for their own ministry and mission involvement.

This is a wonderful privilege as we see people grow in their knowledge, skills and the ability to discern God's calling in their lives.

b. Application

Application is the test of the usefulness of the programme. Students should be encouraged to think through the implications of what they are learning for their own faith and also to share their learning with others. Putting what they have learnt in their studies into practice in their own context of mission and ministry is what this programme is all about. Again, it is the tutor who is key to this process of application.

c. Practicalities

If the above claims are not to be an empty boast, the tutor will have to do his or her job well!

Tutors are responsible for overseeing all aspects of a local study group, including:

- familiarising themselves with the material to be studied each week;
- preparing for the group tutorial with the help of a Tutor's Guide (specific to each course);
- facilitating the group discussion during the tutorial meeting (ensuring that all students are accommodated and included);
- collecting and marking quizzes, learning activities and the Final Assignment (guidelines for marking are provided in the Tutor's Guide for each course);
- keeping records of attendance and marks;
- recognising and acting on academic and pastoral needs of students;
- following up students who do not attend.

d. Group Tutorial Meetings

The tutor should read through the relevant section of the Tutor's Guide well before the Tutorial and plan the meeting. A pattern that has worked well in practice is:

1. Look at the Aims and Outline of the Block's Study and ask students if the aims have been fulfilled.
2. Clear up problems of misunderstanding, factual questions, etc.
3. Ask members of the group what the most important questions are. Note them down.
4. Discuss. It is the tutor's job to:
 - a. make sure everyone takes part: encouraging the diffident, restraining the bold.
 - b. act as a discussion facilitator, not a lecturer. Answer questions but don't expound on them.
 - c. keep an eye on the clock: see that the most important questions are discussed and that the tutorial closes on time.
 - d. discern when an unexpected topic is important enough to allow extra time for it.

e. Dealing with Conflicting Viewpoints

One of the most difficult tasks as a group leader is to allow students to express very different ideas without making anyone feel bad. If a very wild idea crops up, ask the rest of the group to comment and allow a discussion to take place, making sure no-one is made to feel they should have kept quiet. It is sometimes worth exploring wild ideas with the group to ensure that they have understood the gist of the material under discussion. The group should feel safe for people to explore their ideas together. It's often possible to pass over a wild or inaccurate contribution and concentrate on taking the discussion further in a specific area.

Having recognised that each person's opinion is to be valued, there are times when you as a tutor will, nevertheless, come across opinions that are clearly mistaken, incorrect or wrong. If you really think that an idea needs to be corrected try to comment positively first, it will help. Try to ask people how they came to their conclusion and especially whether they think it reflects a Christian perspective or whether it is simply their own opinion. If you are discussing a biblical book, you might like to ask them how whether their opinion agrees with the biblical account that you are studying. Perhaps you can ask others in the group whether they agree with the opinion of their fellow student (though make sure this is handled sensitively).

Some groups have found it helpful at the beginning of each course to sign a 'group learning agreement' which sets out some shared values and

Notes on Tutoring

principles for the group to adhere to. If conflict becomes an issue within the group, the Tutor can refer back to the learning agreement that was made at the beginning of the course. A sample group learning agreement is supplied in most of our Tutor Guides.

In all this, the following guidelines may be helpful:

- It is more blessed to listen than to speak!
- Everyone should feel safe to raise their own questions and struggles.
- The early disciples often gave the 'wrong' answer when Jesus asked them questions.
- If it's not really necessary to correct it, then don't.
- Use your discretion and pray!!

f. Prayer Partners

Some tutors have found it helpful to encourage specific people to pray for the group as they study. We would encourage you to do the same. Find at least one person (preferably a group) who are committed to seeing people grow in their faith and in their ministry skills and ask them to commit time to pray for your group. Keep them updated with any (non-confidential) testimonies as well as the progress of the group. It is also helpful to find someone who will pray specifically for you in your role as tutor.

g. Potential Tutors

Always be on the lookout for potential tutors. Those who are able to assist the learning of others and who contribute to the group in a positive manner can be encouraged to think about tutoring and you can work with them and recommend them for additional training. The best tutors are often those who have been through the programme and know what interactive group-based open learning is all about.

3. ASSESSMENT

a. Forms of Assessment

The assessment for this course takes four forms:

Self-Testing: At the end of most lessons there is a section which reviews the material that we hoped students would learn. These self-test review sections are not marked by anyone, but students will find that if they do them, they will be surprised at how much they have learnt.

Group Quizzes: Each tutorial begins with a short quiz as a fun way to encourage students to remember what they have learnt. If they have done their work and have tried the self-tests, these quizzes should not be difficult.

The quizzes test that the students know what is in the biblical text and that they understand some of the key ideas in the course. Encourage all students to take part in the quizzes as far as possible (even if they are not wanting to gain credit).

The mark gained in the quizzes forms part of the final mark (25%) for the course.

The quizzes are provided in the Tutor's Guide for each course.

Group Participation: Students are required to attend group tutorials and to contribute to the discussion by studying the lessons required, by listening to the views of others and by learning to express their own understanding of what they have studied. Students who fail to attend 70% of the tutorials will not normally be allowed to submit their *Final Assignment* for assessment.

Learning Activities and Final Assignment: Those who want to take their learning to a deeper level can complete the regular *learning activities* and write a *Final Assignment* of 1000 words.

a) The *learning activities* at the end of each block are testing that students have the ability to synthesise, analyse and apply their learning. The purpose of these *learning activities* is to help students grow in confidence and skills so that they can attempt the *Final Assignment*. The tutor will give constructive feedback on each *learning activity*, but these do not count towards the final mark (guidelines for feedback on the *learning activities* are given in each Tutor's Guide). This means that people have the opportunity to develop skills throughout the course without being penalised.

b) The *Final Assignment* will form the main component (75%) of the final mark for the course and will require evidence of some additional

Notes on Tutoring

reading. The tutor marks the *Final Assignment* based on guidelines given in the Tutor's Guide.

b. Summary of Assessment

Ungraded Assessment: (Evidence of Participation: Not part of final mark)

- Attendance required (not less than 70%)
- Group Participation (unmarked but required): a positive contribution to discussion, including:
 - ability to express and defend a position;
 - ability to listen to and appreciate the opinions of others;
 - active encouragement of the learning of others in the group.
- Learning Activities testing skills of interpretation and application.

Graded Assessment

Quizzes and Short Assignments

- Short answers testing knowledge of biblical and theological content.¹
- In our 10 Block courses, there are often short assignments instead of quizzes

Final Assignments and Final Exams

- In most of our courses there is a significant piece of work testing some skills in reflection and application.
- Most courses have a final assignment. In some cases, this is part of a group project.
- Some 10 Block courses have a final exam instead of an assignment.

c. Moderation of Assignments/Exams

In order to support tutors and encourage you in marking as well as to help us provide a level playing field for students in different groups, tutors are asked to send a sample of the final assignments or exams for each course. The normal pattern is for tutors to send us a copy of the assignments with the highest, lowest and middle marks. If only one or two students submit the assessment, we ask you to send all the assignments. Moderation is different from second marking. We are not seeking to re-mark your work, but to enable you to feel confident in the marking that you have done and in the process as a whole.

We will seek to return assignments and exams to you with our comments as soon as possible.

¹ In the Five Block courses, the quizzes are for 10 marks each (50 marks divided by 2 = 25% of final mark)

d. Awards

The GOLD Project will award three types of Certificate to students who have engaged with our courses. None of our Certificates are presently accredited by any external body.

The Bronze Certificate

The Bronze Certificate will be awarded to those who have successfully completed the equivalent of six month's full-time study (60 credits). To be eligible to receive the Certificate, students should have completed the assessment requirements for one of the following:

- i. Three GOLD courses consisting of 10 Blocks – each worth 20 Credits.
- ii. Six GOLD courses consisting of 5 Blocks of study – each worth 10 Credits.
- iii. A combination of i. and ii. amounting to 60 credits.

The Silver Certificate

The Silver Certificate will be awarded to those who have successfully completed the equivalent of one year's full-time study (120 credits). To be eligible to receive the Certificate, students should have completed the assessment requirements for one of the following:

- i. Six GOLD courses consisting of 10 Blocks – each worth 20 Credits.
- ii. Twelve GOLD courses consisting of 5 Blocks of study – each worth 10 Credits.
- iii. A combination of i. and ii. amounting to 120 credits.

The Gold Certificate

The Gold Certificate will be awarded to those who have successfully completed the equivalent of eighteen month's full-time study (180 credits). To be eligible to receive the Certificate, students should have completed the assessment requirements for one of the following:

- i. Nine GOLD courses consisting of 10 Blocks – each worth 20 Credits.
- ii. Eighteen GOLD courses consisting of 5 Blocks of study – each worth 10 Credits.
- iii. A combination of i. and ii. amounting to 180 credits.

4. TUTOR RESOURCES

a. Tutors' Workshops

As part of our commitment to equipping you for the task of tutoring, we plan to have regular tutors' workshops. These are an opportunity to spend some time reflecting on our role as tutors and also to share with one another. We will seek to make known the dates and times of these workshops well in advance so that you can plan to attend them.

b. Advertising and Promotion

Website: We try to keep our website up-to-date: www.goldproject.org

Brochures: Hard copies of these can be ordered from the office. Soft copies are available on the website.

Sample Lessons: We are producing sample lessons that can be given to church leaders and potential students. These may need to be explained, so that people understand how to use them. These can be ordered from the GOLD Project office. They are also available on the website.

Posters: On request, we can produce some posters that can be used to advertise where courses are running with details of the local contact.

Taster Sessions: Where there is a potential group, we are willing to run 'Taster Sessions' to encourage those who are interested to come and experience a sample lesson and a tutorial.

c. Tutor Support

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mail info@goldproject.org or by phone.

The following people have also agreed to answer specific questions that may arise during your group tutorials:

- Old Testament – Mike Butterworth - mikebutterworth@waitrose.com
- New Testament – John Nolland - j.nolland@trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk
- Tutoring – Gay Carpenter - gay.carpenter@icloud.com

Please do feel free to contact Mike, John or Gay about any issues in these areas. You are, of course, still most welcome to contact me.

d. Reimbursements

We are grateful for the considerable work that tutors put into the programme on a voluntary basis. Our programme is only able to function at the present cost because of the considerable commitment of people to give their time voluntarily to the building up of God's people. However, we do not want you to be financially burdened as a result of tutoring. We are

happy to reimburse reasonable expenses that you may have related to the programme. These include:

- **Postage** (including the return of unused course books)
- **Travel** to and from one Tutors' Workshop per year and for events that we invite you to attend. Travel will be reimbursed according to the GOLD Project's normal expense policy.

Please do not hesitate to ask about such reimbursements.

The GOLD Project offers courses for anyone who:

- wishes to grow in knowledge of God and understanding of the Christian faith;
- is committed to systematic, disciplined and in-depth personal study;
- is ready to learn from others in small discussion groups;
- is willing to make use of God-given gifts for mission and ministry in the local church.

The courses are designed to be accessible to those who have no previous theological study as well as to those who want to engage with the Bible at a deeper level. The courses are suitable for those who feel called to involvement in different avenues of ministry and mission in the local church as well as those who want to work out how to live more effectively as Christians in daily life whether at home or in workplace and society.

For more information, contact:

The GOLD Project
Stockton House
Stockton Avenue, Fleet
Hampshire GU51 4NS
01252 614323
info@goldproject.org
www.goldproject.org

<https://twitter.com/GOLDiscipleship>

<https://www.facebook.com/groupbasedopenlearningdiscipleship/>