

SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR

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CLASS SCHEDULE

SECTION 1 – SMALL GROUPS AND THE SHEPHERDING HEART OF GOD

SECTION 2 – DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF SMALL GROUPS

SECTION 3 – ASSESSING AND PRAYING FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP'S NEEDS

SECTION 4 – PREPARING A SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

SECTION 5 – SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS

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SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Pray for 1 hour about your role as a shepherd.

- Take an hour and get away to pray about what it means to shepherd and lead God's people.
- Allow the weight of the responsibility to force you to your knees in dependence; likewise allow the joy of shepherding to overwhelm your heart with thankfulness for what God is allowing you to do.
- Journal some thoughts about what God is teaching you.
- To be completed after section one.

2) Current Evaluation of Your Small Group

- Evaluate your small group. What are the goals for your small group? What components currently comprise your small group? What is the purpose of your individual small group?
- If you are in a small group, talk to your current small group leader about these questions. (The goal is not to be critical but to learn from his/her example).
- If you are not in a small group, use a small group from the past and talk to someone who has led a small group before.
- If you are leading a small group, evaluate your own group.
- Turn in some notes about what you observed and learned.
- To be completed after section two.

3) Study Notes and Teaching Outline

- Prepare a small group discussion/lesson.
- Turn in your study notes and lesson plan.
- This assignment will help give you a sense of what it takes to prepare a small group discussion.
- To be completed after section four.

4) Philosophy of Your Small Group

- Write a 1–2 page paper explaining a biblical philosophy of small groups.
- The goal of this assignment is to help you process the material in your mind and give you a reference guide to refer back to when leading a small group.
- To be completed at the end of the seminar.

SMALL GROUPS AND THE SHEPHERDING HEART OF GOD

I) Introduction:

- The purpose of this seminar is to equip you to shepherd and lead a small group.

Goals of Seminar

- 1) Help you understand your role as a small group leader.
- 2) Help you develop a biblical philosophy of small groups.
- 3) Equip you to teach and facilitate through God's word in a small group setting.
- 4) Prepare you to assess the spiritual needs of your small group.
- 5) Help you learn how to pray for your small group.
- 5) Give you some practical application for leading a small group.
- 6) Help you develop the next generation of small group leaders.
- 7) Challenge and encourage you to grow in your love and worship of the Lord through the responsibility and privilege He has given you as a small group leader.

Misconceptions of small groups

- Small groups are just for accountability.
- Small groups are my mini-preaching times.
- There is only one way to do small groups.
- It is some super spiritual thing to be a small group leader.
- There are no qualifications for leading a small group—you just do it.
- Small group leading is just getting together once a week with people and talking.
- Becoming a small group leader means you have to function like a pastor.
- If I just have the right plan, my group will be perfect.
- Small group leadership does not take much preparation.
- Small group is a time where everyone goes around the circle and shares what they think the passage means.

Spiritual leadership is... “knowing where God wants people to be and taking the initiative to get them there by God's means and God's power.”

—John Piper, *Brothers We are Not Professionals*

II) The Heart of a Shepherd

God loves His people and He will work through His chosen leaders to take care of them. At the core of any small group is God's heart towards people. We need to recognize the great privilege and responsibility God has given us. We need to take our job seriously recognizing we are dealing with souls. This should be a joy to our hearts as we depend upon the Lord to work through us.

- The Shepherding Heart of God
–Ps 23
- Jesus is our shepherd and He is the example of the perfect shepherd.
–Jn 10:11–18
- As under-shepherds we are to follow His example, seeking to care for people as He does. We do not in anyway replace Christ as Shepherd in people's lives; rather in our shepherding we seek to direct people to Christ. This is why leadership is so important in small groups!

“The more a leader invests his life in people, the more effective that person will be in the Lord's service.”

–John MacArthur, *The Book on Leadership*

“People, not programs, were on Paul's mind as he came to the end of his life. People are the most vital resource any leader can cultivate.”

–John MacArthur, *The Book on Leadership*

A) The Ministry of a Shepherd

1. The Shepherd Watches Over His Sheep

- Heb 13:17
–Context of overseers
–The shepherd watches over the souls of God's people
–The shepherd will have to give an account before the Lord.
- Ezek 34:6,12,13
(Note the context of this passage in Ezekiel 34)
–The shepherd knows where his sheep are.
–The shepherd knows the status of his sheep.
- Paul's example:
–Paul knew the spiritual condition of his people.
–Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, etc.

“He watches that his sheep do not wander away. He watches to make sure that they get everything they need to eat and drink. He watches the weather in case they will need shelter. He watches for enemies to prevent any attack. Shepherding involves constant watchfulness. Otherwise, the sheep get lost or hurt.”

—Philip Ryken, *City on a Hill*

Practically:

- Get to know the people in your small group.
- Know how they spend their time and who they spend their time with.
- Pay attention to what is going on in their lives.
- Watch how they respond to different situations.

Note:

- ⇒ Your job is not to become the spiritual policeman of their lives. The goal is to learn how to best love and care for them. Often, they will not even be aware that you are paying attention.

2. The Shepherd Guides His Sheep

- Ps 23:2–3
 - The shepherd guides them to green pastures and quiet waters.
 - The shepherd makes his sheep rest.
- Ezek 34:12,13,16
 - The shepherd brings the sheep back to safe land.
- Ezek 34:15
 - The shepherd leads his sheep.
- 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1
 - The shepherd is a model.

Practically:

- Your people will learn from your example.
 - Have vision for the spiritual development of your small group and for the individuals in your small group.
 - Take them there—don’t just tell them where to go.
- Examples: How to study the Bible, how to pray, evangelism, service, etc.

3. The Shepherd Protects His Sheep

- Ps 23:3–4
 - The shepherd is near his sheep.
 - The shepherd brings comfort to his sheep.
- Ezek 34:12
 - The shepherd gets his sheep out of troubled places.

Practically:

- Know the enemies and dangers in your people’s lives (doctrine, friends, temptations, school, work, events, money, etc.).
- Protect them from wolves.
- Teach them to be rooted in the truth.

4. The Shepherd Feeds His Sheep

- Ps 23:1–2
- Ezek 34:14
 - Give them food they can eat.
 - Feed them with the truth of God’s Word—take them to the Lord for spiritual nourishment.

5. The Shepherd Loves His Sheep

- Ps 23 (context of entire psalm)
 - The shepherd has a relationship with his sheep.
- Jn 10:15
- Jn 15:13
- 1 Jn 4:9

Practically:

- Love is our motivation in shepherding. If we do not shepherd with love, then we have missed the heart of God in shepherding.
- Tell your people you love them.
- Find ways to express care for them.

B) The Responsibility of a Shepherd

Take this Job Seriously! God loves His people and has entrusted them to your care as an undershepherd!

- Hebrews 13:17
 - You keep watch over souls
 - You will give an account for your leadership
- Ezekiel 34

C) The Dependence of a Shepherd

You are dependent upon God.

–Jn 15:5

It is only as a spiritual leader depends upon God that he is empowered to be a tool in God's hand.
Apart from Christ we can bear no fruit!

God causes all growth.

–1 Cor 3:7

You are God's chosen instrument to use for His glory.

–1 Cor 3:5–9

–Eph 2:10

–1 Cor 4:1–2

–2 Cor 13:4

Enjoy watching God work!

DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF SMALL GROUPS

“In order to be effective, the group must have a clear direction. More specifically, the *leader* must have a clear direction... Without a clear understanding of its purpose, your small group will wander here and there without any sense of mission” (Mullery, *Why Small Groups*).

2 Types of Small Groups

- 1) Strong Leadership Model
- 2) Weak Leadership Model

There are two primary reasons why small groups fail.

- 1) Lack of a biblical vision
- 2) Lack of leadership

As a small group leader you need to have a biblical philosophy so you can effectively lead your people.

Before We Begin...

There are two primary goals for small groups that must be mentioned before details can be examined.

➤ Glorify God

Small groups exist to bring glory to God. They are doxological in purpose, just like everything else in the Christian life (1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17; Col 1:16)

➤ Know God

We glorify God through growing in knowledge of Him. Small groups are not primarily about getting to know people. This most certainly is a bi-product of a small group, but the primary purpose of a small group is to know God. All events, components, and relationships within a small group should point believers in this direction. (Jer 9:23–24; Phil 3:7–11)

Know God in Your Mind

–Col 3:1–4

Know God in Your Heart

–Ps 119:11

Know God in Your Actions

–Eph 5:1

While these areas all bleed together, it is important to cultivate the mind (learning to think about truth); the heart (learning to meditate upon truth) and actions (learning to live God's truth). You cannot leave one of these areas out!

A) Biblical Foundations for Small Groups

1. Misconceptions about Small Groups

- Small groups are just weekly events where Christians gather to hang out.
- Small groups are just for accountability—everyone goes around the circle and tells about their week.
- Small groups are my “mini–preaching times.”
- There is only one way to do small groups/every group should be run the same way.
- Small groups require little effort to make succeed.
- Leadership and leadership training is not important in small groups.
- If I just have the right plan, my small group will go perfectly.
- Small groups are about everyone sharing what they “think” the passage means to them.

2. Are Small Groups in the Bible?

You cannot find the concept of small groups *as we know it today* in the Bible. There is not a model or methodology, nor a formula or command for small groups in the local church. What we do see in the early church is groups of believers gathering together for various reasons.

- Acts 2:40–47
- Acts 5:42
- Acts 8:3
- Acts 20:20
- Acts 12:12
- Acts 17:11

What we see in Scripture is believers gathering at different times for different purposes. Some of these were formal church gatherings while others were just believers getting together.

While there is never a direct command in Scripture to have “small groups” in the church, there are numerous commands in Scripture instructing believers how to care for each other. These commands all stem from the idea of biblical fellowship.

➤ What is fellowship?

- Literally...“a sharing of common ground.”
- For believers, our common ground is Jesus Christ (1 Jn 1:3)

MacArthur on fellowship:

“It is life touching life to bring blessing and spiritual growth.”

–*The Body Dynamic*

3. Examples of Biblical Commands Related to Fellowship (The One–Another’s)

- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Rom 12:10; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Give preference to one another in honor (Rom 12:10)
- Accept one another (Rom 15:17)
- Admonish one another (Rom 15:14; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14)
- Be united with one another (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Serve one another through love (Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 4:10)
- Show forbearance to one another in love (Eph 4:2)
- Be kind to one another (Eph 4:32; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Be tender–hearted to one another (Eph 4:32)
- Forgive one another (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13)
- Speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19)
- Teach one another (Col 3:16)
- Encourage one another (1 Thess 5:11, 14; Heb 3:13; 10:25)
- Build one another up (1 Thess 5:11)
- Help one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be patient with one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be hospitable to one another (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9)
- Be sympathetic toward one another (Rom 12:15; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Restore one another (Gal 6:1)
- Bear one another’s burdens (Gal 6:2)
- Be humble toward one another (Phil 2:3; 1 Pet 3:8; 5:5)
- Look out for one another’s interests (Phil 2:4)
- Confess sin to one another (James 5:6)

B) Biblical Philosophy of Small Groups

1. What is the purpose of small groups?

Small groups are a chosen application to obey biblical commands that can not be easily accomplished in the larger context of the local church. They provide an extension of pastoral care, deeper accountability, more intimate fellowship and give opportunity for believers to utilize their gifts to serve the Body of Christ.

2. Factors Contributing to the Need of Small Groups

- 1) Large numbers do not allow for easy application of biblical commands.
- 2) Not all biblical commands given to the church can be accomplished in a formal worship service or on a Sunday morning.
- 3) Our cultural setting makes interaction with other believers more difficult. (We don’t live near each other).
- 4) Biblical fellowship requires purposeful intentional time.

3. Goals of Small Groups

- a. Extend pastoral care.
–Heb 13:17
- b. Cultivate deeper accountability.
–Heb 10:24–25
–Col 1:28–29
- c. Encourage more intimate and personal fellowship.
–Jn 13:34–35
- d. Provide opportunity for believers to serve and practice spiritual gifts.
–Rom 12:1–8
–1 Cor 12
–1 Pet 4:10

Other Benefits

- Provides opportunities to learn and discuss the Word of God.
- Provides opportunities to pray with other believers.
- Provides opportunities to develop spiritual leadership.
- Provides opportunities for “Titus 2” discipleship relationships.

C) Biblical Components of Small Groups

What do you do in small group?

The components of your small group should be those things which best aid the fulfillment of the goals mentioned above. These can normally be narrowed down to five areas: 1) The Word of God; 2) Prayer; 3) Fellowship; 4) Worship; and 5) Service. There are several other components involved in small groups, but these represent the core elements.

1. The Word of God

➤ Examples from Scripture

- Acts 2:42
- Acts 17:11
- 1 Tim 4:13

➤ The Word of God as the overarching guide for everything we do in small groups.

- Ps 119
- 2 Tim 3:16
- Josh 1:8

➤ The Word of God as a specific component of a small group

- Col 3:16
- Heb 4:12
- 1 Pet 2:2

2. Prayer

➤ Examples from Scripture

- Acts 2:42
- Acts 4:24
- Jas 5:16

➤ More Examples from Scripture—from the Ministry of Paul

–Paul Modeled Prayer

- Eph 1:15–23
- Eph 3:14–21
- 1 Thess 1:2–10

–Paul Requested Prayer

- Col 4:3
- 2 Thess 3:1

–Paul commands Prayer

- Col 4:2
- Eph 6:18
- 1 Thess 5:17

Prayer is often one of the most neglected components of small groups. It is often tacked on at the beginning and at the end. Sometimes a couple of people pray for the requests of others, but often time runs out, and the group does not devote time to prayer. A small group is not just a prayer group, but prayer should be a vital component of your small group.

Ways to incorporate prayer into a small group

- Plan time to pray
- Pray through a passage of Scripture
- Break into smaller groups to pray
- Pray numerous times throughout the small group
- Study prayer
- Take prayer requests and pray that night

3. Fellowship

Examples from Scripture:

–Col 1:28–29

–Acts 2:40–47

The “One Anothers”

–See list above

Ways to facilitate fellowship

- Accountability time
- Share testimonies
- Get together outside of group
- Encourage transparency
- Ask the “hard questions”
- Serve each other

4. Worship

The term worship is used here in the technical sense of spending time in worship i.e. singing, prayer, praise, etc. While our entire life should be lived in worship (Rom 12:1–2), small groups provide the opportunity to take a break from the busyness of life and focus specifically on God in worship. This by no means replaces corporate worship, but it can be a tool to greatly refresh the soul.

Examples from Scripture:

–Acts 2:47

–Eph 5:19

–Col 3:16

Ways to facilitate worship

- Singing
- Praying through a passage
- Times of meditation
- Reading Psalms
- Keeping a list of God’s attributes
- Reading/singing a hymn
- Sharing answers to prayer requests

5. Service

Examples from Scripture

- Acts 2:43–46
- Gal 5:13
- Phil 2:1–4
- Mt 5:13–16

Service can take place in a wide variety of settings. It might include serving and caring for members within the group or members within the church. Your small group could do service projects or serve in the local community as a means of outreach.

D) Developing a Biblical Purpose for Your Small Group

1. What goals do you focus on and what components do you emphasize?

There is no one prescribed way to lead a small group. Small groups can take on numerous forms and functions. The job of the small group leader, with the biblical goals in mind, is to see the needs of the small group, assess its spiritual maturity, and then develop a specific purpose for his/her individual small group.

2. Your Job as a Small Group Leader

- Assess needs and maturity.
- Develop a purpose.
- Establish a plan to carry out that purpose.
- Set personal, individual, and group goals.

The question small group leaders need to be able to answer is not just what to do but why do it!

All the Lord asks for is faithfulness—1 Cor 4:1–2

“Let a man regard us in this manner as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.”

ASSESSING & PRAYING FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP

I) Assessing the Maturity of Your Small Group:

“Ministers therefore, must be observant of the case of their flocks, that they may know what is most necessary for them, both for matter, and for manner, and usually the matter is first to be regarded, as being of more importance than the manner.”

—Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*

In order to effectively shepherd those God has placed in your small group, you need to know them. Each person and each group has different needs. Your responsibility is to assess the needs of those you are ministering to in order to most effectively lead them.

- Prov 27:23
“Know well the condition of your flocks; and pay attention to your herds”
- 1 Cor 3:1–2
“And I brethren could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed even now you are not able...”

Side Note:

- Isn't this judging them?
- Be patient—this takes time!

A) How to Assess the Maturity of Your Small Group:

A) Pray for God's Wisdom

- a. Paul's Example
—Paul constantly prayed for his people.
- b. Daniel's Example
—Dan 9:3
- c. James' encouragement
—Jas 1:5

B) Search the Scriptures for God's Standard

- a. 1 Jn 5:13
- b. Heb 4:12
- c. Ps 119

B) Practical Questions to Ask about Your Group:

- 1) Do they understand the Gospel?
- 2) What do they share about in their testimonies?
- 3) What are their prayer requests?
- 4) What are they learning in their devotional time?
- 5) What are they spending their free time doing?
- 6) How do they act around people and what do they talk about?
- 7) Beware of background issues:
 - Parents, siblings
 - Environment
 - Church history and involvement
 - Activities involved in
- 8) How transparent are they?
- 9) Do they take God's Word and apply what it says?
- 10) Do they express a humble desire to know God?
- 11) How old are they? Spiritually? Physically?

C) Practical Help for Knowing Your Sheep:

- 1) Spend time with them.
- 2) Do things they like to do.
- 3) Don't shrink back from asking hard questions.
- 4) Be transparent.
- 5) Be honest about your intentions.
- 6) Meet with them individually.
- 7) Seek a discipleship relationship.

II) Praying for Your Small Group:

“Epaphras greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers.”

–Col 4:12

Your greatest responsibility is also your greatest need! You must pray for those in your small group. Prayer reflects an attitude of the heart, dependence upon God. There is no greater leadership you can provide to those in your small group than to pray for them. God is the one who changes all hearts and causes all growth (1 Cor 3:7). Therefore, we need to humbly go before Him in prayer asking that He would grant wisdom and grace to do our job and that He would work in the lives of those in the group.

“The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”

–Proverbs 15:29

“Loving leadership is incomplete without intercessory prayer.”

–Alexander Strauch, *Leading with Love*

“The spiritual leader should outpace the rest of the church, above all in prayer.”

–J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*

A) The Content of Prayer

While there are many things we can and should pray about, the Lord has revealed the priorities of His heart in the pages of Scripture. He has given us both instruction and examples pertaining to the content of our prayers.

➤ Pray Biblical Prayers

- Pray for them to know Christ.
–Eph 1:15–23
- Pray for them to be filled up to all the fullness of God.
–Eph 3:14–19
- Pray for them to live a life worthy of their calling.
–Col 1:9–12
- Pray for them to be comforted and strengthened in every good work and word.
–2 Thess 2:16–17
- Other Model Prayers.
–Dan 9
–Mat 6:7–14

➤ Pray with Thanksgiving.

We get so consumed with all that *needs* to be done, that sometimes we forget to stop and enjoy all that God has *already* done.

- Eph 1:15–16
- Phil 1:3–5
- 1 Thess 1:2–10

B) The Heart behind Prayer

➤ Pray with Expectation

- Jn 14:13–14
- Jn 15:7,16
- Eph 3:20–21

- Pray Often and Diligently
 - Col 1:3
 - Col 1:9
 - 1 Thess 3:10
 - 1 Thess 5:17
- Pray with Affection
 - 2 Tim 1:3–5

C) The Work of Prayer

- Schedule time.
- Make a prayer list.
- Pray specifically for members in your small group.
- Get together to pray with them and for them.
- Pray for different people different days.
- Pray that your heart would be transformed in prayer for your group.

Preparing a Small Group Discussion

One of the most difficult parts of leading a small group is knowing what and how to discuss the truth that you have studied. It is one thing to understand the truth in your own mind and heart but it is much more difficult to clearly communicate that truth to others in a discussion format. You can be a great student of the Word and have incredible notes, but if you cannot communicate the ideas to those in your group then you cannot effectively shepherd them.

I) Developing a Lesson Plan:

Formulating a lesson plan is just a formal way of saying know what you are going to say before you get to group. Different people will do this in different ways, and ultimately you will need to find what works best for you. Some people need to write everything out, and early in the process this is encouraged. Others just need some brief notes. Neither is better nor worse. It simply depends on what you need to do in order to be an effective teacher and facilitator of God's Word. Forming a lesson plan will take time, but the reward of being able to lead a good discussion and watching people learn and wrestle with the truth of God is worth the effort, and even more important, it is honoring to the Lord.

Before you Begin...

- Review
- Pray

A) What to Teach/Discuss

1. Teach Biblical Truth

We have no authority or truth in any of our own ideas therefore we need to allow the Word to speak. What we focus on should be founded upon the truth of the Bible.

- Books of the Bible
- Topical Studies
- Christian books

Note: Interpretation must come before Application! We must understand what the Bible says before we can apply it.

2. Develop a Lesson Plan

a. What is a Lesson Plan?

Your lesson plan should take you from the starting line to the finish line of your small group. It should include everything from how you will cover the topic, what you will emphasize, and what questions you are going to ask to facilitate discussion.

b. Why write a Lesson Plan?

c. The Danger of a Lesson Plan!

Remember...you are ministering to people in a small group, not giving a lecture or seminar!

B) Writing a Lesson Plan

1. Introduction

- a. Get them interested.
-Answer the “why” question. Why is this text/truth so important for us?
- b. Review application from the previous meeting.
- c. Ask, how does this topic build on the topic from the previous meeting?

Note: Remember—you are not preaching a sermon, so your introduction does not need to be an elaborate or fancy illustration. The goal of your introduction is to help focus them on biblical truth and why it is important that their hearts and minds become engaged in what you are covering.

When Using a Bible Passage

- Read the passage
- Make observations and ask questions
- Review context
- How does this fit into the context of the book?

2. Establish the main idea you will cover
 - a. Books of the Bible
 - What is the authorial intent of the passage?
 - b. Topical Studies
 - What is the topic you are covering?
 - c. Christian Books
 - What is the chapter or section of the book about?
3. How are you going to work through your material?
 - a. Decide how you are going to approach your discussion.
 - If using one passage of Scripture are you going to...
 - Go verse by verse
 - Take a general overview
 - Deal with the main points
 - Hit some key issues
 - If teaching topically...
 - What Scripture are you going to use?
 - How are you going to build your argument?
 - If using a Christian book...
 - What are you going to emphasize?
 - What Scripture will you talk about or read?

Note: You can't tackle everything!

- b. Decide when to teach and when to ask questions.
- c. Develop questions to ask.
 - Questions need to be thought through ahead of time.
 - Look for specific answers.

Note: It is significant to plan this out beforehand for two reasons:

- 1) Know what you are going to say.
 - 2) Listen to what others say.
- d. Think through your transition points.
 - How are you going to work from one idea to the next?

e. What specific details are you going to give?

- Word Definitions
- History
- Cross References
- Context
- Cross References

f. When will you bring in application?

- The end of your time
- Throughout the Bible study

g. Analogies, examples, illustrations

- Use selectively and when appropriate
- Know your audience

4. Application

a) Focus on one to three main points. Don't overwhelm them.

b) Be sensitive to issues that come up in the course of your discussion.

c) Be transparent to share what you have learned. It is a good model for them to see the Word transform your life. At the same time, don't make it a "mini me" show sharing everything you have learned. Share what is appropriate and helpful.

d) Be genuine.

e) Challenge the mind and heart.

f) Get practical.

- Daily life implementation
- Specific applications
- Set realistic goals

g) Trust the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

5. Conclusion

- Wrap up main points, review application, and introduce next week.
- Give assignment (if applicable).

Sometimes in the providence of the Lord He changes everything. Other issues come up, questions need to be dealt with, and crises happen in people's lives. Remember, small group is a place to minister to people. Be flexible with your small group and your lesson plan. Your lesson plan is meant to help you minister to people more effectively, not bind you onto a strict tract.

II) Leading A Bible Study Discussion: Teaching and Facilitating

Teaching vs. Facilitating

- Teaching: Explanation—giving answers

- Facilitating: Discussion—guiding answers

A) Teaching and Facilitating

Both teaching and facilitating are necessary in leading a small group discussion. The hard part is determining when to teach and when to facilitate discussion. Plan this out ahead of time, and yet at the same time, be flexible to the interaction of the group.

1. Don't think of yourself as only a teacher or only a facilitator.
2. Get people involved as much as possible.
3. Allow them to answer their own questions.
4. Make them come up with answers from the Bible.
5. Help them take ownership of truth in their hearts and minds.

B) Questions Asking

1. Think through your questions ahead of time.
2. Make sure your questions are clear and understandable.
3. Build questions off of other questions.
4. Don't make your questions too complex.
5. Avoid asking more than one question at a time.
6. Look for specific answers to certain questions and yet be open to learn.
7. Don't be afraid of asking controversial questions.

C) Types of Questions

1. “Yes” and “No” Questions
2. Open and Close Ended Questions
3. Rhetorical Questions
4. Thinking Questions
5. Factual Answer Questions
6. Leading Questions
7. Building Block Questions
8. General to Specific/ Specific to General Questions
9. Synthesis Questions
10. Application Questions

D) Answers

1. Wrong Answers
2. Right Answers
3. Semi-right answers
4. No answer at all

SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS

A) Shepherding Issues within Small Groups

1. Crisis with a group member
2. Conviction of sin (individual)
3. Tiredness (group)
4. Tiredness (individual)
5. Lack of intimacy with God/ Apathy (group)
6. Parents
7. The Bad Nights!
8. Questions that you don't know the answer to
9. Debates/Disagreements between you and a group member.
 - Wrong answers (when a person does not want to be wrong)
 - Doctrinal Issues
 - Interpretation Issues
 - Application
10. Debates between members of the group.
11. Tangents
12. The dominant group member or "talker"
13. The "Silent One" who does not participate

14. Distractions

- Within the group
- Outside the group

15. Someone sharing too much with group (inappropriate for group)

16. No one sharing

17. Teach something wrong

18. If a group member does not like you or respect you

19. Dealing with different maturity issues in your group

20. Confidentiality in small groups

B) Helpful Hints for Small Groups

- Meet in a comfortable environment.
- Make sure you can see all the people in the group.
- Sit in a way in which people can see each other.
- Deal with hard questions after group (if possible and if appropriate to wait).
- Be prepared!!!

C) Different Ways to Lead a Small Group

1. Break into smaller groups (if you have a large “small group”)
2. Observations and questions
3. Have students lead or teach
4. Assignments
5. Teach and apply—group activities to apply what you’re learning
6. Serving as a Group
7. Pre-written questions (handouts)
8. Individuals or small group within group teach a section of the text
9. Pray through the text
10. Study through it together (teach them to study)
11. Activities, skits, actions to illustrate point (with youth)