

Basics of Small Group Ministry

Church is (a).

- Hospital – It is the sick that needs a doctor, Jesus came to seek and save the lost. (Matt. 9:12-13)
- Family – We are spiritual brothers and sisters and the Church is God's Household (1 Timothy 3:15)
- Christ's Body – We are arranged just as the Holy Spirit has determined (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:11-12,18)

Small groups are.

- A Family Clinic – everyday issues and problems are dealt with
- Nuclear Spiritual Family – These are the parts of the family that we are closest with
- A Small part of Christ's Body – The small group and the universal Church are all Christ's Body. I.e. – The believers met from house-to-house and in the Temple courts (Acts 2:46)

Group Goals within the Church.

- Growth & Life change.
 - Growth both numerically and spiritually = make disciple-makers!
- "Empty Chair" concept. Keep an empty chair to remind everyone to invite their friends and family.
- Always look to start new groups.
 - This means we need to raise new leaders that can make disciples that can mentor new believers that can share the gospel.

Time split into Three Parts: Fellowship & Prayer, Worship and Interactive Study. 1/3, 1/3, 1/3

- Fellowship and Prayer:
 - Tools needed: Journal and pen
 - Suggestion: Eat a meal together, or at least spend the first 15 minutes or so allowing everyone to visit with each other.
 - If many new people are together – play a game.
 - Important! Prayer time is a time for each person to have time to express their needs so that we can bear each other's burdens. (Gal. 6:2)
 - If group is larger than 6, then divide into smaller groups so that each person will have time to talk freely.

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- Always spend some time praying for the lost, leaders in the Church, and for God's guidance.
- Everyone must write down the requests of everyone else in the group so that they can pray from them throughout the week.
- 3 Strands: Eventually help group develop "3 Strands" prayer and accountability strategy based on Ecclesiastes 4:12.
 - During the week, these 3 people are required to meet once in person or over cell phones to discuss their prayer needs and to pray for the lost.
- Praise & Worship.
 - Various tools available. Karaoke DVD's, various instruments, Youku.com videos, A cappella, MP3's, etc.
 - Delegate this responsibility
 - Try to use no more than 2 new songs each week.
 - Offering as worship: How offerings are distributed is up to the churches and small groups.
 - This should be decided in advance.
 - Some churches chose to have 50% go to ministry of the small group and 50% go to the ministry of the larger church (this also depends on church model. i.e. – cell church, house church, muchang church, life groups, etc.)
 - At least 2 people should manage this (not necessarily the leaders) so that they will be above reproach. Ex. Paul wanted to be sure he did everything right in the eyes of God and men while delivering an offering and took "pains" to ensure this. This included having other brothers along for the journey. (2 Corinthians 8:19-21, especially verse 21)
- Interactive Study
 - Guide & train, not preach
 - Interact
 - Let people speak and set limits so that extroverts don't take up all of the time. Everything done in orderly way. (1 Corinthians 14:40)
 - Ask open ended questions
 - Always invite new people
 - Keep it obedience based. One main reason we learn the Word of God so that we can obey it and be blessed. (James 1:25)

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Leadership.

- Shepherds, not pastors in the traditional sense. (1 Peter 5:2-3, Acts 20:28)
- At least 2 per group.
- Responsible for the group.
 - Makes hospital visits, does basic counseling, church discipline, etc.
- Responsible to make new leaders and disciples
 - Delegates as many responsibilities as possible
- Must fit basic Biblical requirements to be a leader. (Separate Training)

Ground Rules.

- It takes 7 “positive” statements to counteract every “negative” statement.
- If anyone demeans himself, then he has to then compliment himself.
- Church is a “safe” place. Nothing shared in the group is to be talked about with other people outside of the group.
 - Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)
 - Say only what is useful for building others up according to their needs (Ephesians 4:29)
- Mutual Submission (Ephesians 5:21)
- Build each other up (Ephesians 4:16)
- Love each other (John 13:34)
- Serve each other (1 Peter 4:10, Galatians 5:13)

Host Home.

- Preferably not the leader’s homes so that others can contribute.
- Hospitable (Romans 12:13, 1 Peter 4:9)
- Responsible for snacks and sign-in sheet
 - Snacks could be paid for from offerings to keep from being a burden
 - Sign-in sheet is simple: Number in attendance, new people’s names and contact info for leaders to use, study content (Bible reference), date and location.