

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Meeting Date: _____

Text of Scripture: _____

FELLOWSHIP TIME (15–30 Minutes)

Make sure to provide ample time (and snacks!) for people to have unhurried conversations with one another.

TIP: Have 1–2 different group members bring a snack to share each meeting.

LOOK BACK (5–10 Minutes)

Choose one of these questions for the entire group to share and discuss together:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> What stood out to you from the sermon this weekend? | <input type="checkbox"/> What have you been reading and learning in Scripture recently? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How has God shown you his grace recently? | <input type="checkbox"/> Has God shown you a sin that you need to repent of? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What has God been teaching you about himself recently? | <input type="checkbox"/> What have you been asking God for lately? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What has God been teaching you about yourself recently? | <input type="checkbox"/> Who have you been sharing your faith with? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> What is one way you want to grow in godliness? |

Have one person pray for what we just talked about and for God to guide your time in his Word.

LOOK UP (20 Minutes)

Read the passage together and discuss. This is a time for dialogue, not monologue — make sure no one (including you) dominates the conversation. You can use the following questions to help you get started:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you know about the context of this passage? (Who, what, where, when, why, how)• What are some key words or phrases that are repeated or emphasized?• Does this passage make any kind of argument? What is the author trying to convince his readers of?• Do you see any connecting words (for, because, and, but, etc.)? What do they mean? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there anything in the passage (words, topics, phrases) that you don't understand?• How would you summarize this passage in one or two sentences?• What does this passage teach us about God?• How does this passage point to or rely on the finished work of Christ?• Is there anything in this passage that's difficult for you to believe? |
|--|---|

LOOK AHEAD (20 Minutes)

How should this passage change our lives? Discuss how we can apply this passage.

You can use the following questions to help you get started:

- How does this passage help you trust God?
- What truths do you need to believe in this passage?
- What lies do you need to stop believing that this passage corrects?
- What commands or examples are in this passage?
- What sins are revealed in this passage that you need to repent of?
- *** Who is a non-Christian you want to share your faith with this week?

PRAYER TOGETHER (10–20 Minutes)

Close your time by sharing requests (especially for the lost) and praying for one another.

You can pray around the circle, break up into pairs, use P.R.A.Y., or anything else.

HELPING PEOPLE KNOW JESUS AND MAKE HIM KNOWN IN DC AND AROUND THE WORLD.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP

• FACILITATE FELLOWSHIP:

- Make sure to provide ample time for people to arrive, hang out, and fellowship.
- You can facilitate fellowship by introducing people to one another.
- You can model good fellowship by asking good questions.

• SERVE PARENTS:

- You can serve the parents in your group by making sure you have a childcare plan in place. You can simply rotate group members watching the kids in another room.
- If your group only/mostly has very small babies, then you don't need another space, but you can lead your group to not be distracted. Make sure parents don't think they or their kids are a burden.
- Make sure to provide a space in your home for mothers to nurse or help their kids calm down (a clean, quiet, dark bedroom is fine — just make sure there's a good place to sit)

• LEAD A GOOD CONVERSATION:

- Small groups are not a time for "teaching." Small groups are for dialogue, so make sure the Look Up time never becomes a monologue.
- If someone in your group is dominating the conversation, try to include others by asking them questions by name (e.g., "Bob, what do you think of XYZ?"). If this is a pattern (someone ALWAYS dominates the conversation), you can address the issue one-on-one after a meeting: "I really appreciate your insights and I'm glad you always come prepared and ready to share. For the next meeting, could you try to speak up less? I want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to share, and not everyone is as confident as you."
- If conversation is slow...
 - Embrace the awkwardness. Silence isn't bad and if you always jump to fill it, then no one else will.
 - Ask group members for feedback after the meeting. (Example, "How could I lead this group better?" "Are there better ways I could have asked that question?")
 - Encourage some group members to come prepared and invite them to be quicker to speak up. Most likely, people in your group have a lot to say and your specific invitation can help them feel more confident.

• IDENTIFY AND TRAIN LEADERS:

- How to find leaders in your group...
 - Understand the urgency. As people come to know Christ, your group will grow and multiply. Who will lead the new group?
 - Understand what you're looking for. When looking for leaders, we usually look for the most knowledgeable person; the person who talks the most or has the most insightful comments. Instead, we should be looking for the most prepared person. Knowledge and confidence can be taught, but discipline and love for the group can't be. What group members consistently come prepared, having completed the reading and ready to discuss?
- How to train leaders in your group...
 - Show them the tools. Give them a copy of this meeting guide and ask them to follow along during a meeting. (You're showing them that leading a group isn't hard!)
 - Start small. Give them this meeting guide and ask them to lead one portion of the group. Give them feedback one-on-one after the meeting.
 - Ask them to lead a full meeting when you're present. Give them this meeting guide and walk them through it beforehand, make sure they have a plan for each portion of the meeting. Give them feedback one-on-one after the meeting.
 - Have them lead a full meeting without you. Sick or traveling? You have a substitute!