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## **Train & Multiply™**

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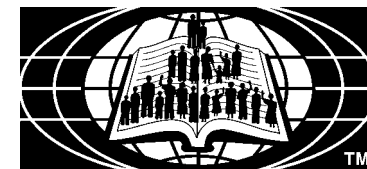
# **How Small Groups can Help your Church**



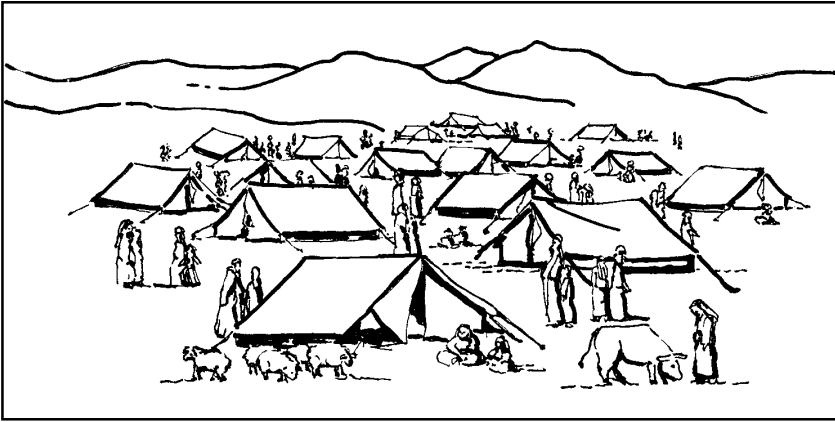
**Pastoral Leader Training Booklet**

# **44**

**Train & Multiply™**



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Read Exodus 18:13-27.

The people of Israel were many thousands. And Moses tried to deal with everyone's problems personally.



## NOTES

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5. Mark what should NOT be done in small groups:

- ☐ do not serve refreshments at every meeting.
- ☐ do not invite just anyone to preach.
- ☐ do not talk about personal business matters.

6. Where should a small group meet?

- ☐ in the leader's home.
- ☐ in the home of a member or friend.

## PRACTICAL WORK

- Go over the items you have marked while doing this study and put them into practice, to initiate and edify groups in your church.
- Prayerfully write your plans in the following space.

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Moses' father-in-law corrects him...

What you are doing is not good. Let me give you some advice...



Jethro explains to Moses that if he goes on dealing with everything himself, both he and the people will be worn out. Jethro suggested that the people be divided into groups, each with its own leader and judge.

Moses followed this wise advice, which benefited both himself and the people.



Moses' situation is common to all growing groups. The time comes when one person alone can no longer deal with the needs of all the people. If the leader cannot divide his tasks and delegate his responsibilities, the work will stagnate and the leader himself will be worn out physically, mentally and spiritually through overwork.

In any church, once membership grows beyond the number one shepherd can care for, the people receive less and less care.

This is why God wants us to organize our churches into smaller groups.

These groups help with (mark the needs of your church):

- ☐ PASTORAL CARE, because the members will receive more personal, direct care, within a more intimate group.



2. Of the following activities, mark those which the members of the groups should practice more:

- ☐ Love each other: John 15:17.
- ☐ Serve others: Galatians 5:13.
- ☐ Encourage to good works: Hebrews 10:24.
- ☐ Forgive patiently: Colossians 3:13.
- ☐ Correct in love: Colossians 3:16.
- ☐ Console one another: 1 Thessalonians 4:18.
- ☐ Edify one another: 1 Thessalonians 5:11.
- ☐ Exhort to obedience to God: Hebrews 3:13.
- ☐ Pray for each other: James 5:16.
- ☐ Bring unconverted friends: 2 Timothy 4:5.

3. What is the basic ministry of small groups?

- ☐ Listen to the leader when he preaches.
- ☐ Evangelize, and build each other up, in love.

4. Bible study in a small group should be which of the following:

- ☐ the same as a sermon or Sunday school class.
- ☐ easy for everyone to take part and discuss.

# SUMMARY TEST

1. Mark the characteristics that the leader of a small group should have, to be able to lead his group:

- ☐ Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ Pray for all members of his group.
- ☐ Be enthusiastic and encouraging.
- ☐ Be dependable, responsible and punctual.
- ☐ Be faithful in church attendance.
- ☐ Obviously love his family and other people.
- ☐ Study and explain God's Word well.
- ☐ Tithe joyfully.
- ☐ Be good at getting other members to help in pastoral tasks.
- ☐ Visit members of the group.
- ☐ Be discreet (not a gossip).

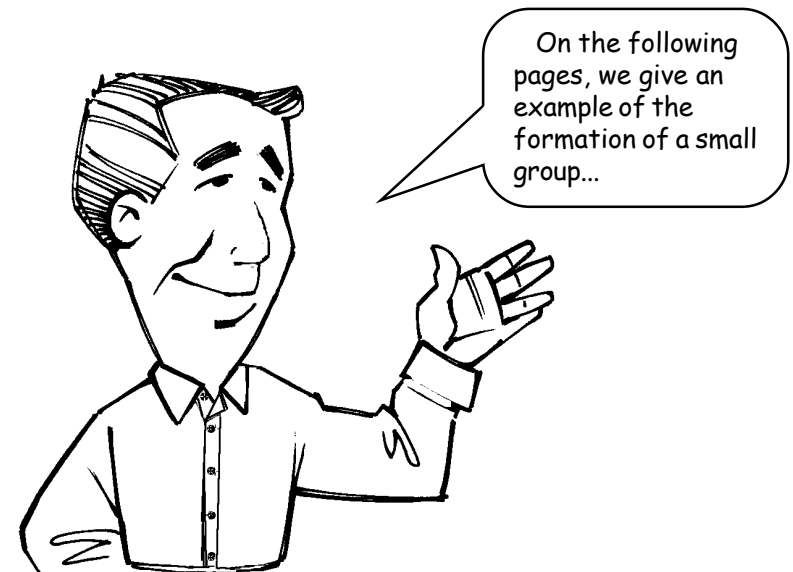
The leader of a small group should have all these characteristics.  
Which of these should you develop more?

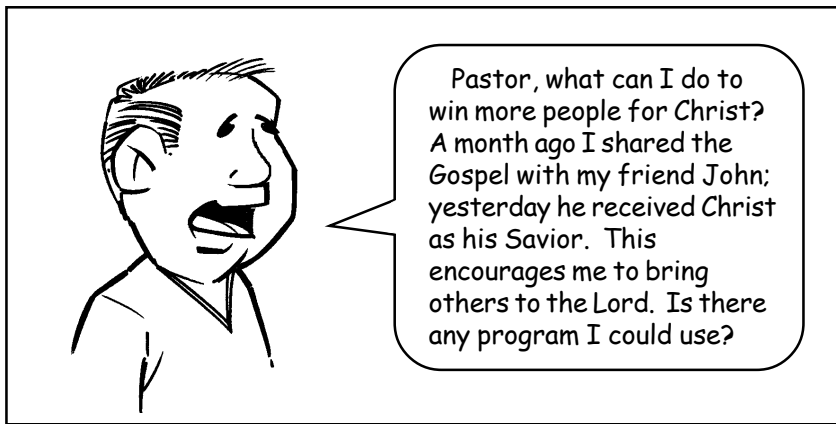
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- ☐ EVANGELISM, because with smaller numbers, it is easier for everyone to evangelize, and to accept new members in a group where everyone knows each other.
- ☐ TEACHING, because all the members take part in the studies, instead of just listening to a sermon.
- ☐ TRAINING NEW PASTORAL WORKERS, because it is far easier to prepare and observe new leaders in small groups, where the opportunities for service are unlimited.





- Give. (Matthew 25:14-46, Luke 12:13-21, Luke 18:18-25) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet numbers 3 "Cheerful Giver" and 29 "Seek First the Kingdom of God."
- Make disciples. (Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 5:1-11, John 15:5-17) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 7 "How to Make Disciples."

Other themes for small groups to study (write your ideas):

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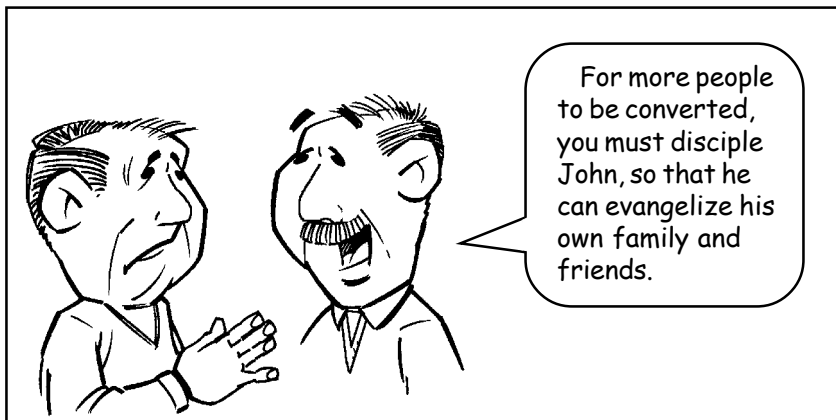
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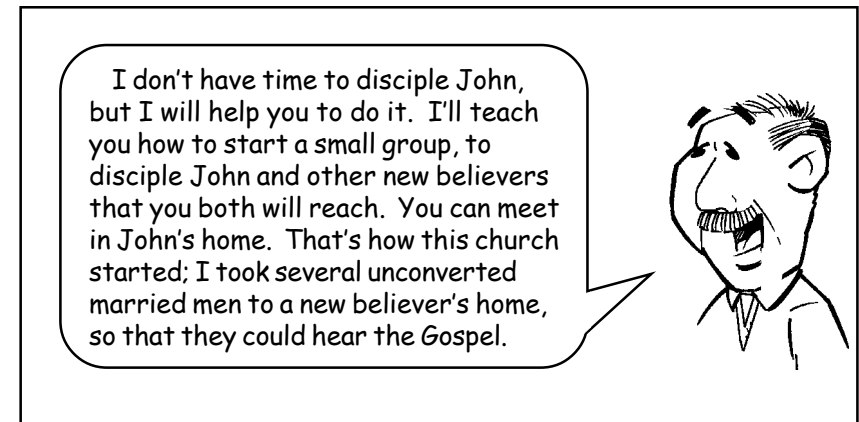
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- ☐ Mobilize new believers to obey Jesus Christ. If the members are new, they first study Bible accounts of Jesus' basic commands. You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 7 "How to Make Disciples."

Examples:

- Repent and believe. (Luke 24:13-53, John 3:1-21)
- Be baptized. (Matthew 3, Acts 2:37-42)
- Love God and others (Luke 10:25-37) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet numbers 19 "Loving New Christians" and 21 "My Neighbor."
- Share in the Lord's Supper. (Matthew 26:17-29)
- Pray and feed on God's Word. (Matthew 4:4, Luke 18:9-14) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 6 "Family Prayers."



Stephen discusses this with his wife, and both pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following week they visit the new believer John's home, and explain the plan to him.



They have their first meeting, and Rex brings many of his family members. During the week they invite others, and eight adults come to the following meeting.



Enthusiastic, Stephen goes to see the pastor.

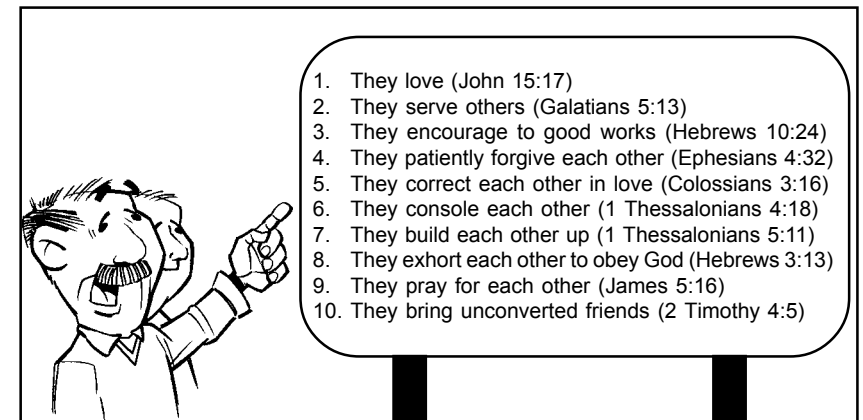


- ☐ Cultivate peace and tranquility in the home.  
(1 Corinthians 7:1-17, Ephesians 4:17-32, 1 Peter 3:1-7)  
You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 56 “My Family.”
- ☐ Raise children so that they love and serve the Lord.  
(Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Proverbs 22:6, Mark 10:13-16, Ephesians 6:1-4, Colossians 3:20-21) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 56 “My Family.”
- ☐ Marry, with the assurance of having a happy marriage.  
(Genesis 24, Proverbs 18:22, Mark 10:1-12, 1 Corinthians 7, Ephesians 5:22-33) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 56 “My Family.”
- ☐ Help society to achieve justice with love. (Book of Amos, Exodus 20:1-23:13, Romans 13:1-13, Ephesians 6:5-9) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 36 “Church and Society.”
- ☐ Send missionaries to areas where it is difficult to enter.  
(Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 15:20-21, 2 Corinthians 10:14-16) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 55 “Missionary Manual.”



- ☐ Counsel to reconcile believers who are divided.  
(Matthew 5:21-26, John 15-17, 1 Corinthians 1:10-16, Philippians 2:1-11) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 39 “Counseling With Care.”
  
- ☐ Correct rebels and the disorderly without condemnation.  
(Matthew 18:15-22, Galatians 6:1) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 39 “Counseling With Care.”
  
- ☐ Have a clear conscience and peace with God.  
(Romans 3:9-5:21 several studies, Hebrews 8:1-10:25 several studies) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 39 “Counseling With Care.”
  
- ☐ Know the will of God when making decisions. (Psalms 32:8, Psalms 119:105, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 26:3-4, Romans 8:14)
  
- ☐ Pray with greater assurance that God hears. (Matthew 6:5-15, Luke 11:5-13, Luke 18:1-14) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 13 “How to Pray.”
  
- ☐ Discover and minister with one’s spiritual gifts. (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4:1-16) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 60 “Spiritual Gifts.”

The pastor writes down for Stephen what the members of his group should do. Little by little, they will put this into practice.



The pastor visits Stephen to encourage him. He tells him:





Stephen follows his pastor's advice. He studies Acts. His group continues to meet, and calls itself "Acts Two," because of their goal of witnessing to Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Other heads of families are converted and bring their families to the group.

## SOME SMALL GROUP STUDY THEMES AND ACTIVITY GOALS

Mark the subjects that would be edifying at this time to practice or study:

- ☐ Resolve conflicts in the home. (Ephesians 4:25-2, Ephesians 5:21-6:4, Philippians 2:1-11)
- ☐ Make a family budget, to control family finances better. (Luke 14:28, Romans 13:5-8, Philippians 4:11)
- ☐ Prepare young people for relating to the opposite sex. (Proverbs 5:1-23, 1 Corinthians 7, Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)
- ☐ Help the victims of addictions: alcoholics, smokers, drug addicts, etc. (Psalms 37:5, Psalms 7, Proverbs 1:7, Proverbs 23:29-35, Isaiah 40:11, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 5:18, 2 Timothy 1:7, Hebrews 10:23-25, Hebrews 13:5-8, 1 John 4:18) You might use Pastoral Training Booklet number 39 "Counseling With Care."

Stephen, as the leader of a small group, regularly visits the families in their homes, to encourage them and to help with their more personal spiritual needs.



Stephen also meets with the pastor weekly, for help in planning his meetings. They pray together, and jot down some concrete plans for the small group.

#### 4. Bible Study

Apply the Word to each person's life and ministry. (All answer questions or participate in some way.)

#### 5. Plans

The leader jots down the plans for evangelism, or other ministries, for each member, couple or family. He reviews them when reports are given at the next meeting.

#### 6. Serve Communion (with your church's authorization).

#### 7. End With a Song and Closing Prayer



## EVANGELISM GOALS (FOR STEPHEN'S GROUP)

- Visit and witness to our relatives in the area and our closest friends.
- Then we help converted heads of households to evangelize their families.
- Help others in the group to develop leadership skills and begin new groups.

## TRAINING GOALS

- Prepare John as assistant teacher.
- Help the parents to read Bible stories to their children and have individual and family prayers daily. Prepare John to lead the group studies and discussion. Take the new believers to services in the mother church.
- As he grows give John more responsibility, until he can lead all the work of the group. Then he might form another group, or continue to help lead the original one.

## PASTORAL GOALS

- Begin at once to teach Alice to counsel women. Help the K. family to be reconciled. Counsel Michael to give up alcohol.
- Train workers to counsel others.

This way, starting with Stephen's initial enthusiasm, a small group is established, which grows until it becomes a home group or cell - that is, a tiny church within the mother church.

Now, let us examine some reasons why this group succeeded.  
To summarize, in Stephen's case we see the following basic elements.

## ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES AND ELEMENTS



If you want to form small groups, follow these guidelines.

## SUGGESTED ORDER FOR THE MEETINGS OF A SMALL GROUP

The order and items are optional. Adapt them to the occasion and practices of your church.

### 1. Opening

Pray and sing praises.

### 2. Reports

Ministry carried out by members of the group, and prayer requests.

### 3. Prayer and Personal Attention for Each one

(If the group is large, divide into smaller groups to pray, with two to six persons each. Pray for the requests of each one, and for the sick. During this time, counsel those with problems.)

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

Pastor: (Asks members of the congregation) Will you, members of the church, support brother... (name of the new leader) in his ministry, and pray for him constantly?

All: Yes we will, with God's help.

Pastor: (If the new leader's group is already formed.) And you who are members of the group, do you promise to cooperate with... in the ministry of the group, obeying the Word of God which he will teach you, and work together in love with each other to fulfill your respective responsibilities?

Group Members: Yes we will, with God's help.

Pray for the new leader and his group; commend the members, their leaders, their ministries and growth to the Lord. (If it is your church's custom, lay hands on the new leader.)

## **Capable Leadership**

Stephen, beginning with his enthusiasm and faithfulness in evangelism, under the wise direction of his pastor, proved to be a hard-working, humble and capable worker.

## **Natural Growth**

Stephen's group was born naturally out of his enthusiasm and a real need. It was not a group set up artificially by rules and regulations, or personal whim.

## **Clear Purposes**

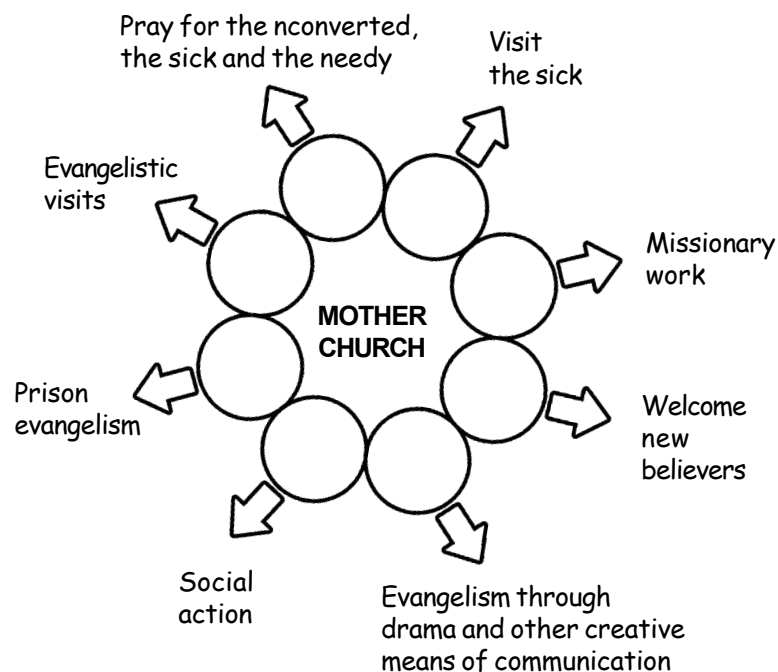
What Stephen's group does varies according to need, but their main goals are to evangelize and care for each other in love.

## **Cooperative Pastoral Care**

Stephen serves a group in harmony with the mother church and its pastor. The latter does not see Stephen as a rival, but rather, encourages and teaches him to be more fruitful.

## OTHER POSSIBLE MINISTRIES FOR SMALL GROUPS IN THE CHURCH

These small groups, the majority of which are like Stephen's, have a pastoral and evangelistic function. They can also be formed in relation to a ministry or special purpose. There are many possible ministries for small groups in the church.



Pastor: Will you accept your pastor's and your church's supervision in the fulfillment of this ministry, under their authority?

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

Pastor: Will you pray regularly for every member of your group, and give time to each one, to counsel them for their spiritual growth?

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

Pastor: Will you mobilize every member of your group to work in some ministry, for the edification of others?

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

Pastor: Will you train other capable believers as assistant leaders, to share with you the responsibilities of your group, and so that in future they may lead their own groups?

# THE PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND COMMITMENT OF THE NEW LEADER OF A SMALL GROUP

A new leader should promise, before God and the members, to fulfill his responsibilities. The following series of questions can be used, or you can make up your own affirmation.

Suitable readings for commissioning are Ezekiel 34:1-16, Titus 1:5-9.

Pastor: (Ask the new leader, who stands before the congregation.) Do you promise, with God's help, to serve as an example, in your Christian conduct and biblical teaching, for the members of your group?

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

Pastor: Will you obey God's Word with the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in this pastoral ministry?

New Leader: Yes I will, with God's help.

In the following list, mark those ministries that your church needs now.  
(Mark any number.)

- ☐ Groups that EVANGELIZE.
- ☐ A group for SINGLES to deal with their needs.
- ☐ A group from the SAME AREA, profession, age or interests, who evangelize and disciple their contacts.
- ☐ A rehabilitation group for ALCOHOLICS OR DRUG ADDICTS.
- ☐ A group to minister to the BLIND, THE DEAF, or those who have some other limitation or HANDICAP (physical, psychological, or emotional).
- ☐ A group for members of a RACIAL MINORITY, or a differing culture.
- ☐ A group for PROFESSIONALS or for STUDENTS.
- ☐ A group which presents BIBLICAL DRAMA to evangelize or edify the church.
- ☐ A group for SOCIAL ACTION.

- ☐ A group which devotes itself to intensive and specific PRAYER.
- ☐ A group for those who are MOURNING the loss of a loved one.
- ☐ Groups of people with SIMILAR PROBLEMS.
- ☐ A group who visit the SICK, at home or in hospital.
- ☐ A group who visit ORPHANAGES.
- ☐ A group for YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES, to study matters related to marriage and establishing a new home and life together.
- ☐ A group of NEW BELIEVERS who need to be built up in the faith.
- ☐ A group for CHRISTIAN MUSIC where they learn to play musical instruments, or to sing.
- ☐ A group which ministers to the lonely or invalid ELDERLY.
- ☐ A group that prays for FOREIGN MISSIONS and finds out how to send missionaries to neglected fields.

- Remember to acknowledge birthdays and special family events.
- As soon as possible, delegate responsibilities within the group, and prepare others to share responsibilities. The ideal is that some of them should mature until they can lead their own groups. This way, the church grows in an orderly way.

It is a big responsibility to be leader of a small group, and it is good to officially recognize the ministry, in the presence of the whole congregation. Here is an example of a brief ceremony that could be part of a service.





- Having said this, DO NOT permit outsiders, unknown or self-appointed preachers to have influence in the group. There is no lack of people who want a platform for their ideas. The group leader must guide the meeting with this in mind.
- Provide two kinds of meetings — regular ones for worship and edification, and occasional ones for meals or other social activities.
- Do not discuss business or politics during formal meeting time. Never discuss faults of persons not present. Keep small group worship serious. Many home groups center it around the Lord's Supper.
- Give personal attention to those with needs. The greatest need for some may be to serve in some ministry.
- Pay special attention to interpersonal relationships. Don't allow conflicts to be prolonged, and ensure that members who disagree, are reconciled in love.
- Make sure families, including children who can participate, take part in the groups.

- ☐ A group who PLANT NEW DAUGHTER CHURCHES.
- ☐ Groups led by COUNSELORS who help people with problems.

Among the ministries that you have just marked, what will be the goals of the next groups that you form? (It could be a combination of two or three goals.)

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Remember the need for CAPABLE LEADERS, NATURAL GROWTH (built on needs and relationships), CLEAR GOALS and COOPERATIVE PASTORAL CARE. Please think of the next home group that will be started.

1. What will the specific purpose of this group be?

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2. Who will lead it?

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3. Who will teach and supervise the leader?

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4. What other aims will the group have?

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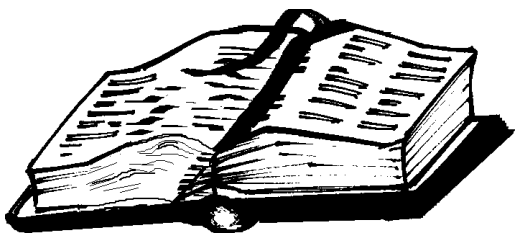
## SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR LEADERS OF SMALL GROUPS

- Unless no other home is available, it is normally better not to meet in the leader's house. It can meet in different homes, especially of unconverted friends who invite you.
- Place the chairs in a circle, to make it easier for all to take part; it gives a greater sense of intimacy.

Note: For more ideas about group meetings, review the Pastoral Training Booklet 12 "The House Church."

- We recommend giving offerings. After ministry expenses are met, normally the money is entrusted to the treasurer of the mother church.
- Avoid formal preaching. Help all, including children, to develop a ministry to edify others—to pray, exhort, console, counsel, correct, instruct or help. Allow free discussion; two or three persons might talk with each other. Do not force shy visitors to talk. The Holy Spirit will help your group provide total pastoral care this way.

- ☐ At a new group's first meeting, clarify what the group's purpose is (the ministry they will have, and the results they want to achieve).
- ☐ Help all to cooperate to achieve the group's aims. Your group also helps other groups do things in which they are weak.
- ☐ Help the group to reproduce in new groups. Commission the new leaders that you have prepared, to start new groups with as many of your members who care to join them.
- ☐ Inform the pastor or senior elder about the progress made by your group (conversions, activities carried out, results achieved, helpers being trained, people who have left, suggestions for the coordination of all groups, problems which require more specialized help, etc.)
- ☐ Provide books, or assign Bible readings, for members, according to their needs.



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MAIN PASTOR TOWARDS THE GROUP LEADERS

Much good happens in the groups when the pastor or senior elder of the church cooperates in the preparation and training of their leaders.

If you are the pastor or senior elder of the church, mark any activities that you plan soon to carry out, so the groups grow in maturity, numbers and responsibility.

- ☐ Pray constantly for all group leaders.
- ☐ Ask new leaders to publicly affirm their commitment to fulfill their responsibilities, and pray for them, dedicating them in this ministry. This might include the laying on of hands.
- ☐ Help the leaders to establish goals and make plans for their groups, and to evaluate their progress.
- ☐ Provide, and show them how to use, Bible studies that meet their group's needs.

- ☐ Provide special training sessions to prepare the leaders to counsel people with different problems.
- ☐ Help the group leaders to encourage participation in the meetings and ministry of all members, by asking questions about the studies and ministry, and planning together.
- ☐ Have a special group for new believers, to disciple them for obedience to Christ, to discover their needs and spiritual gifts, and to prepare them to join or form another group. You can use Booklet 7 “Following the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- ☐ Help every church member to join a small group that will meet their needs and mobilize them in some ministry.
- ☐ Help those members who move to another area of town, to begin another group there.
- ☐ Help every group leader to organize so that each group reproduces itself in new groups (especially when the original group has more than about fourteen adult members).
- ☐ If a group begins to stagnate, reorganize them so that members can join different groups, or begin again with a different ministry, leader or goal.

- ☐ Help each leader to train one or two helpers who will later start other groups. It is best for these new leaders first to serve as apprentices in the parent group.
- ☐ Help the leaders to listen to, and deal with members’ current needs.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEADERS OF SMALL GROUPS**

Mark the responsibilities that you consider important for leaders of groups in your church (any or all of them):

- ☐ Pray constantly for every member of the group, and disciple them so that they grow in Christ.
- ☐ Plan carefully every activity and meeting.
- ☐ Help every member of the group to have an edifying ministry to others, according to their spiritual gifts.
- ☐ Help every member of the group to have a vision, establish goals, and make plans for ministry.