

WHAT ABOUT SMALL GROUPS?

(Kaikohe CF Leadership - 12/3/94 - EKB)

The Purposes of Small Groups

1. Small groups develop real loving relationships, friendships, a sense of belonging, significance and loyalty.
2. They help build strong foundations in God, of faith in His Word and to achieve goals of spiritual maturity.
3. They enable each member to participate in the ministry of the Holy Spirit by using the gift(s) they have been given by God to minister to others. *1Pet 4:10, Rom 12:5-8, 1Cor 12:8-10, 12:28, Eph 4:11,12.*
4. The members encourage one another to reach out and share the Gospel with friends, neighbours, contacts and see people come to Christ, *Lk 5:10.*
5. They enable prayer to become effective, fervent and in the Spirit and Truth, *Jam 5:16.*
6. There is worship to the Lord in Spirit and Truth, *Jn 4:24.*
7. They give opportunity to share openly and honestly about struggles, failures and victories, *Jam 5:16.*
8. Members develop leadership skills and ability.
9. Members learn to make corporate decisions and act together as a whole group.

Preparation for Small Group Meeting,

1. Leader and assistant to meet beforehand and pray over every aspect of the meeting.
2. Leader seeks God in prayer to know the way the Holy Spirit intends to work in worship, prayer, testimony, ministry in the Spirit, sharing the Word etc.
3. Each member should prepare by daily prayer and reading the Word to be a minister of life in the Spirit to others in the group, *Jn 7:37-39, 1Cor 14:26.*
4. Each group member needs to make sure his/her own personal relationship with God is right, *Ps 66:18, Is 59:1,2.*
5. If there are offences or broken relationships move quickly to remedy these according to God's Word, *Mat 5:23,24, Mk 11:25,26.*
6. Keep full of the Holy Spirit, *Eph 5:18,19, 1Jn 2:27, 2Cor 3:6, Jn 6:63.*
7. Come in faith expectancy, *Ps 62:5,* to see God move in power, *2Tim 1:7.*
8. Plan your week carefully so that you can always be at the small group.

Principles of Leading a Small Group.

1. Keep the aims of the small group clearly in focus for everyone.
2. Encourage each member to do the necessary preparation to be an effective contributor in the life of the Spirit.
3. Have a clear goal of what you believe the Holy Spirit wants to achieve but be open to adjustment as the meeting progresses.
4. Draw out each person to participate without embarrassment. Initiate a point and wait for others to respond with experiences and testimony as they feel at liberty to do so. Do not be afraid of silences as you wait.
5. Trust God to move powerfully by His Spirit, and expect this, *Ps 62:5.*
6. Limit the group size to 10 or 12, unless the Lord directs otherwise.

7. As a leader, be alive, warm, free in the Spirit and trust God so that He is the One who is at work.
8. Watch for “red herrings” and steer around them.
9. As a leader be confident in the Lord, encouraging and positive.
10. Remember we are in a spiritual battle, *Eph 6:10-18*. Engage in “spiritual warfare” beforehand and “clear the ground” for the Holy Spirit to move, *Jam 4:7*.
11. Listen to each contribution and do not hurry on to something else. Be relevant and sensitive to people’s needs. Let a testimony of need come forth fully until its impact is felt, then move into spontaneous prayer and intercession as the Holy Spirit leads, *Jam 5:16*.
12. Be open to spontaneous singing and praise, *1Cor 14:26*.
13. Encourage openness, honesty, humility and lead the way by sharing difficulties, struggles, faults, failures, trials and victories.
14. Rely on the Holy Spirit for Word of Knowledge, Prophetic Words of Encouragement and Discernment.
15. Where possible have a note outline of basic points to be considered which people can take away as a reminder.
16. Suggest some areas of prayer and preparation for the following week and a key verse for memorising.
17. Be free to move venue from home to home if this is desired and acceptable.
18. Pray earnestly for each small group member during the week.

Special Interest Groups.

Small Groups may form around special interests or tasks, e.g. Music, youth, intercession, ladies, men, solos, pre-school mums, street outreach, ethnic groups, elders, deacons, new Christians, foundations of faith, children, outreach, marriage enrichment, craft, evangelistic outreach to neighbourhood, “Christianity Explained”.