



LEADING YOUR GROUP 101

Before you meet, confirm everyone knows the details of when and where. As the leader, consider the roles needed for your group. Do you need a host? Are you relationally strong or do you need help? If you need help here, consider immediately tapping into the gifts present in your group. Involve others early and often in various roles.

Start on time whether or not all members have arrived. Be polite but honor the time of those present and briefly welcome those who are late with enough to help them feel valued and to get on the same page.

Encourage participation. When someone shares, validate the point, ask others to contribute, or build on the thought. Remember, what is celebrated is repeated.

Allow silence after a question is asked so others have a chance to reflect on the question, formulate their thoughts, and for some to work up the courage to speak.

Remember, many of us have different personalities. Some are internal processors (process information by thinking it through) and some are external processors (process information by talking it out). It may be helpful to remind the group of this. Don't expect every group member to share the same amount.

Avoid belittling by making someone feel they had the "wrong answer." The goal of the group is biblical conversation that moves to life integration. If someone is "wrong", take time before correcting to ask a question of the group based on the passage to see if it will autocorrect. Gently point out from the passage what is said. Avoid being legalistic and assuming you are right, make sure the "correction" is not a preference but is from the Scriptural context being studied.

Confidentiality is imperative to develop a deep sense of belonging. Do not share with others what is shared within your small group time. Remind others to do the same.

Prayer in response and application of your study is suggested, and clarity for how your group will handle prayer requests should be stated and varied. Ideas:

- Use the passage being studied that day for a prayer prompt. "How can we pray for you in light of what we just studied?"
- Have someone take notes on prayer requests so that mid-week, a text follow-up can continue the prayer.
- Ask for updates on specific prayers in the weeks after a request is made.
- Pray as a whole group, but sometimes consider breaking into smaller groups of 3-4 so more people can share and be prayed for.