



CONNECT GROUP
**LEADER
GUIDE**



CONNECT GROUP LEADER,



Thank you so much for committing to serve God in this vital capacity. In a large and vibrant church like Mobberly, our Connect Groups help us seem smaller and more personal as we share truth, care and attention. Your role as a leader is so important in the “big picture” of what we are trying to accomplish in our mission. As you plan, prepare and pour into those who are in your Connect Group, I hope that you will remember that you are serving God in everything you do.

This Connect Group Leadership Guide has been put together to help equip you for your task. I hope that you will take the time to read through the structure, priorities and tips to help you succeed and grow a thriving Connect Group. Although this guide is not exhaustive, it is succinct in information to help you. As always, our staff is here to help equip and lead you in any way we can.

I am so thankful for all of our Connect Group leadership and your love for the Lord, others and the desire to continue to learn and develop your ministry to your group. Again, we appreciate your leadership, eagerness to follow leadership and honor God through your service. Let’s all continue to **discover, own and lead!**

Until Jesus comes...
You are loved,

Brandon Watson
Connect Pastor

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THE PURPOSE OF CONNECT GROUPS AT MOBBERLY

MISSION

People leading people into a life-changing, ever-growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

STRATEGY

We accomplish our mission through a three-fold strategy:

- 1 Worship:** Declaring God's glory together in worship
- 2 Connect:** Engaging in biblical community
- 3 Serve:** Reaching out to others by serving locally, nationally and globally

WE VALUE

- **Biblical Truth:** Upholding God's Word as the standard for all decisions, actions, and relationship (John 17:17, 2 Timothy 3:16)
- **Personal Transformation:** Growing in absolute dependence on God every day (Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 3:18)
- **Family Discipleship:** Combining the influence of church and home (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)
- **Generational Connection:** Nurturing intentional relationships among multiple ages and backgrounds (Psalm 78:4-7)
- **Gospel Urgency:** Launching people to live sent lives to change the world (John 20:21)
- **Sacrificial Commitment:** Excelling in giving God our very best (Romans 12:1, Colossians 3:17, 23)

ACTS 2:42-47 (CSB)

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. 44 Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. 45 They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

PURPOSE

Connect Groups at Mobberly are where people do life together in the context of biblical community. It is in groups that we live out the ever-growing component of our mission statement by studying God's word, sharing life experiences, serving along side and caring for one another. As we meet in these groups we are personally challenged to discover, own and lead.

PRIORITIES FOR CONNECT GROUPS

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

Authority is “the right or power to command obedience or belief.” God’s sovereign, universal, and eternal reign over the entire universe evidences His authority (Ex. 15:18; Job 26:12; Is. 50:2). He establishes His purposes in time and does all things according to His will (Dan. 4:34-35; Eph. 1:11). All authority on earth and in heaven comes from God alone. His providential direction over the events of history demonstrates His authority. The Bible is an extension of God. It’s His Word and it carries authority. As Wayne Grudem put it, “The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.”

Titus 2:1 says, “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.” This verse reminds us of the importance and responsibility we have in teaching. Let’s communicate and teach what the Word of God says and not add opinion or anything contradictory to its message.

May we teach **obedience** to the Word of God which is perfectly inspired and communicated through the Bible. Our people need to know how to read it, study it, memorize it, apply it, make life decisions in accordance with it and trust it as absolute truth. Just as food is to the physical body, Scripture should be the spiritual nutrition of every believer.

Finally, our people need to depend on the Holy Spirit to teach us, using God’s Word. Some of the ways the Holy Spirit can do this is in individual quiet times with Him and as a community of believers studying and living out His Word together.

PRAYER

We should continue to grow in our individual prayer lives and the outflow of that brings forth a stronger corporate prayer. 1 Timothy 2:1 says, “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people.” We have a command and responsibility to have prayer as the starting point and foundation of our lives. We must pray without ceasing and stay in communication with our Lord and King. Make sure you pray for your group daily and pray together every chance you get.

Create a culture of genuine, worship-based prayer that leads to personal worship and repentance, dependence upon the Holy Spirit, and Kingdom impact through spiritual warfare and intercession.

AUTHENTIC BIBLICAL COMMUNITY (RELATIONSHIPS)

Defined by our love, care, consistency, worship, authenticity and fun – and involves everyone. Everyone has the responsibility to the group pursuing an active role, such as consistency in attendance, and in creating an inviting environment by greeting, following up and reaching out to guests and other group members.

LOVE

“Let us love in truth and deed, and not merely in word.” (1 John 3:16-18) Love which is not sacrificial is not really love.

CARE

The Bible says that God has made the body of Christ in a special way so that the members can care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:24-26). Your Connect Group is a smaller expression of the larger local body of Christ, and you are called to care for each other like you would care for yourself. Look for practical ways to meet one another's needs. Keep an intentional focus and pay close attention to what's happening in the lives of your Connect Group members. Follow up on something that was shared, write an encouraging note, bring a meal, help with an errand or find a way to assist in times of crisis.

CONSISTENCY

The early church, pictured in the book of Acts, met daily to encourage each other and worship together. Hebrews 10 tells us not to neglect meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, while chapter 4 tells us to exhort one another daily. A clear scriptural admonition exists toward long-lasting relationships and deeply consistent presence in the lives of others. Occasional or infrequent gatherings do not capture the spirit of the text.

WORSHIP

The early church spent its time engaging in celebration of the Lord and the remembrance of the gospel through the means of grace which were provided. We therefore find it essential for biblical community to be about the pursuit of the Lord through prayer, serving, singing, reading and teaching of the scriptures (Acts 2:42-47).

AUTHENTICITY

People who gather together and yet do not truly know each other cannot rightly be called a community. The Bible commands the confession of sin, struggles and praises, which is evidence of a life of transparency. This characteristic also bears with it a commitment to engage in the proper

means of fighting back sin for the good of the sinner, the health of the body and the glory of the Lord. Oftentimes such a dedication to put sin to death includes the proper and godly use of the steps of discipline as outlined in Matthew 18.

The goal is to have safe Connect Group environments where accountability, vulnerability, worship, nurture, vision-casting, learning, goal-setting, prayer, encouragement, transparency and authenticity are cultivated. Healthy relationships and families are a priority, with the community of believers involved in supporting one another.

FUN

Just because community requires serious intentionality doesn't mean that it can't be a lot of fun! There is definitely a time to laugh together (Ecclesiastes 3:4). The old adage that says, "A family that plays together stays together" can also be true about your Connect Group. Take time to find out what each other likes to do and enjoy those things together. Take a weekend retreat together to a fun place or find a fun activity in town that everyone can participate in. For groups with children living at home, periodically host events that involve the whole family. Creativity is an expression of love and a great way to intentionally pursue each other is to get creative in how you have fun together.

MISSIONAL LIVING

Simply put, missional living is how we accomplish and live out the church's vision and mission. Mobberly exists to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and is fully grounded in scripture with relevant, practical application for Christian living in our modern-day world. This firm foundation strengthens us spiritually and allows us to grow deeper in our faith, in our love, in our relationships, and in our ministries at Mobberly.

OUR MISSION:

**PEOPLE LEADING PEOPLE INTO A LIFE-CHANGING,
EVER-GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST.**

Compelled by love and obedience, the goal is to equip each person to adopt the posture, thinking, behaviors and practices of a “missionary,” who engages and influences others with the gospel message, both in their community and to the ends of the earth (in word and deed).

MULTIPLICATION OF REPRODUCING DISCIPLES

(Inside/outside of Connect Group meetings)

True discipleship happens when we are pouring out life and truth (gospel, scripture, the Christian Life) into people until they grasp it and then go and do the same with someone else. Use the opportunity of Connect Groups to identify those who will be faithful, available, accountable and teachable in a discipleship group and meet with them outside of your Connect Group time. Pour into them until they can do the same with others. (For more information, please refer to the Disciple-Making Quick Start Guide)

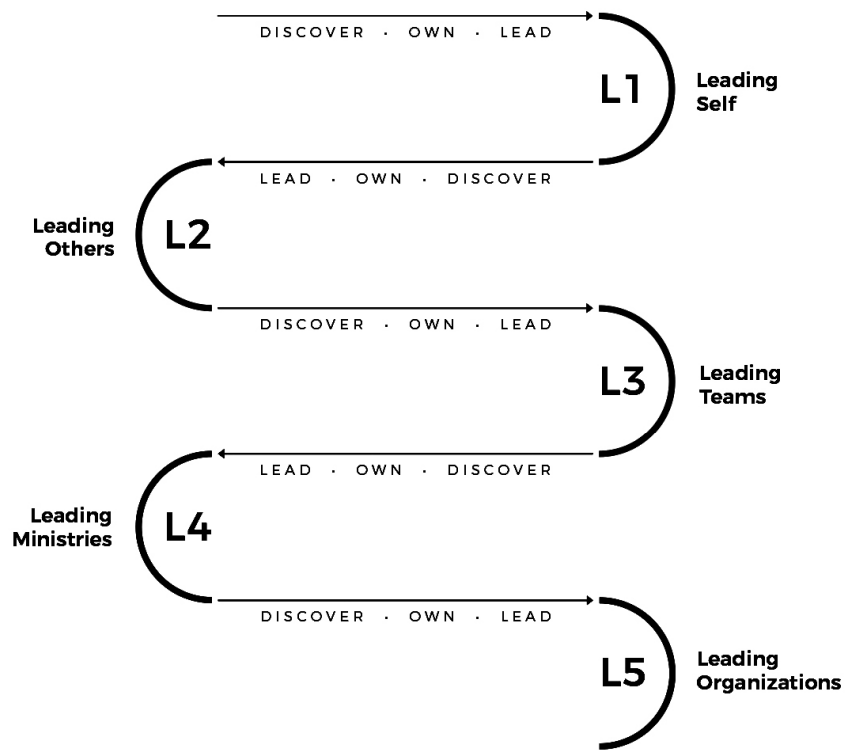
Mobberly's goal is to see the Great Commission fulfilled by smaller groups of Christ-followers, compelled by the gospel and Christ's command, actively working together to engage peoples for the purpose of making disciples who make disciples. This requires identifying, building and enabling key leaders.

*(Note: the goal is making disciples,
not just converts)*

**Go,
therefore,
and
make
disciples
of all
nations...**

Matthew 28:19 (CSB)

PEOPLE LEADING PEOPLE



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

No matter what you are doing: teaching, outreach, mission, caring for others, social/fellowship planning or prayer, we need to train and help others to take the torch and run. Training and equipping should occur, not just to supply a substitute teacher, but with the purpose of raising up future leaders. True leaders develop other leaders and provide opportunities to practice real leadership.

Mobberly’s own Leadership Pipeline was introduced during the fall of 2019 in the “Momentum” sermon series.

Together, as leaders that develop and grow, we should be able to answer these questions; “How can I help others, and myself, continue growing as a leader?” and, “How can we continue to DISCOVER, OWN and LEAD at each level?”

If we are to grow and live out the mission of the church, we should constantly be raising up leaders that are investing in other leaders. Each one of us is called to lead and our hope is that,

together, we will be challenged to discover and grow into the next level of leadership into which God has called us.

Everyone has a next step, whether a Connect Group leader, attender or guest. Let’s stay intentional on developing leadership!

More information on Mobberly’s Leadership Pipeline will be coming soon.

STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE AND RESOURCES

Our God is incredibly generous. He is generous with grace, forgiveness, resources, finances and creation. Everything belongs to God. Again, everything belongs to God. How do we use that to further His Kingdom? What would happen if we began to truly believe that?

FOR EXAMPLE, DO WE ALLOW GOD OWNERSHIP OVER:

OUR TIME

Nothing is more valuable than the time we pour into others. People hunger for quality time in a world that is becoming less personal in nature.

OUR FINANCES

The way we steward God's provision can be such a blessing and meet a timely and specific need. Be a cheerful giver! God always has a way of multiplying the blessing!

OUR MARRIAGES

Marriage is God's union, not ours. We have been given the responsibility of honoring Him by nurturing and growing, and we must be faithful in giving back.

OUR HOMES

God has blessed us with a roof over our head and He wants them to be a place of peace, ministry and love. How can we use that home to build His kingdom?

OUR RELATIONSHIPS

God has called us to live in the context of community and not neglect gathering together. In these relationships we are called to love, care for, encourage, exhort, forgive and pray for one another.

OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, WORKPLACES & THIRD PLACES

(Such as coffee shops, gyms, clubs, teams and school organizations). These places are our mission fields. God has placed us there as missionaries to build relationships and be a light with His gospel. We must actually get to know our neighbors, co-workers and those God has placed before us by investing in real relationships with them.



DOING LIFE TOGETHER

In Acts 2:42-47 we read about a committed, tight-knit community that not only took care of each other's needs, but also intentionally knit their lives together. The first church understood the power of doing life together and was blessed by the Lord with incredible depth and numerical results.

Let's face it, people hunger for true genuine community. Sadly, it's a rarity in today's culture, but it shouldn't be for the church. We have God's Word that shares with us examples of what this should look like and provides guidance for living it out.

*In the book *The Purpose-Driven Life*, Rick Warren writes...*

“God intends for us to experience life together. The Bible calls this fellowship ... real fellowship is so much more than just showing up at services ... It includes unselfish loving, honest sharing, practical serving, sacrificial giving, sympathetic comforting, and all the other 'one another' commands found in the New Testament.”

GROUPS CAN DO LIFE TOGETHER IN CREATIVE, FUN WAYS, HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES

- Game nights
- Neighborhood prayer walks
- Serve in the Preschool/Children's area
- Celebrate Birthdays
- Monthly service/missions
- Go to a concert
- Group runs/walks/bike rides
- Park clean-up
- Christmas caroling
- Help a group member move
- Have a cookout/BBQ
- Couples' date night
- Go to an Escape Room
- Go to a baseball/football game
- Bake cookies and take to First Responders
- Miniature golf
- Lunch together after church services
- Serve in Elevation on a Wednesday
- Team up and be greeters at the church
- Picnic at Williams Lake

GOING DEEPER

The most overwhelming piece of feedback we get from Connect Groups is the desire to go deeper, have more in-depth discussions about life and to have solid accountability. It is our hope to see this happen, but rarely, if ever, does it happen in a larger group or in a mixed group setting. If you hunger to have deeper connections/conversations with accountability, we suggest the following:

1. Find a consistent time where you can meet outside of a co-ed setting. Guys meet with guys, ladies meet with ladies. This does not replace your current Connect Group meeting, but provides an opportunity for conversations that intentionally go deeper with accountability questions, mutual support and encouragement. Trust and confidentiality are crucial in these settings.

2. Immerse these meeting times in grace and truth. Avoid letting these times become narcissistic, self-improvement regimes that turn grace into law. The finished work on the cross is where any good in us comes from, and we need to constantly remind each other of that fact. Our obedience to Christ is driven by His love for us, the power of His salvation and the example He set for us to follow. The goal of accountability is devotion, not duty. Don't share opinions. Allow scripture, the Spirit and biblical authority to be your guide.

3. Be there for each other. Galatians 6:1-2 says, "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

4. Confess sin and pray for each other. James 5:16 tells us, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." Satan wants us to keep our sin hidden, and he wants us to justify it. Pastor Tommy Nelson made a revealing statement when he said, "Sin always 'looks better' in the dark." Hidden sin will always reveal itself in more devastating ways later.

5. Put on patience and practice forgiveness (Colossians 3; Proverbs 19:11). We are imperfect people continually being molded and shaped by a perfect God. We are blessed by God's grace and mercy. Likewise, we desire this from others. Inasmuch as we hunger for this, it is imperative that we put this into practice with others, particularly as we relate to those we walk with in discipleship relationships.

6. Spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). Not only should these relationships deepen with one another and lead us into a greater understanding of the truths of God's Word, but through them we should challenge one another to step up in serving sacrificially in our church, community and family.

7. Ask direct and probing questions that require indisputable honesty. Accountability is worthless if there is not honesty. Confessing sin is painful under the weight of pride, but it also gives the indescribable feeling of freedom.

Here are several questions you might want to consider asking during this time (See Disciple-Making Quick Start Guide in Resources):

- Where have you been finding joy?
- Have you stayed pure this week (physically, mentally and visually)?
- What's an area of your life in which you need encouragement?
- What has God been teaching you?
- What have you been praying about?
- What have you been reading in scripture?
- What's one thing you want to work on this week?
- With whom have you shared your faith this week?
- How have you invested in leading your family (spouse/kids) this week?
- Have you lied about any of your answers today?

8. Do life together. Find times to have fun together in between meeting times. In order for you to continue developing deeper relationships and trust, you have to know each other better. Meeting together and hanging out takes a real commitment and sacrifice. If applicable, find ways to involve each other's families from time-to-time as well.

9. Don't gossip or gripe. Remember these meeting times are not venting sessions for throwing someone else "under the bus" or talking about others behind their back. Stand firm on making sure this does not happen in your group.

10. Be trustworthy. What is said in the group needs to stay in the group unless it involves someone hurting themselves or hurting others. Don't ask someone else to do something you are not willing to do yourself.



LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

Your role as a Connect Group leader is vital to carrying out Mobberly's mission. As a leader, you set the tone for what members and guests experience each time the group gathers. Though many different roles exist for leaders within the Connect Group, the following expectations apply to all leaders:

Lead by example: live above reproach, be committed to God's Word, serve alongside your group, practicing responsible transparency, praying for your group, participating in fellowship, caring for one another, and leading out in love.

Arrive early and come prepared to carry out your responsibilities. Keep in mind that guests are often the first to arrive.

Create an environment that is welcoming to guests and members. Consider ways to encourage each member to be involved in creating this environment. Go the 2nd mile to connect with guests during and after Connect Group time.

Practice the ministry of attendance by being present whenever possible.

Train someone as a backup to carry out your responsibilities.

Ensure that your responsibilities are covered during your absence.

Respect confidentiality.

Conduct yourself in manner worth of the gospel, publicly and privately. Exercise caution in your use of social media.

Seek to protect the unity of the group by quickly resolving matters of conflict according to biblical principles.

Help others discover their spiritual giftedness (Appendix J).

Exercise extreme caution in providing counsel to group members. No one expects you to be a counselor in matters that exceed your expertise or comfort level. Mobberly's Hope Road and Thrive! Ministries serve as excellent resources in meeting difficult needs.

Participate in scheduled Connect ministry training and equipping sessions.

Communicate information to your Mobberly Area Minister or the Connect Pastor about upcoming changes including leadership recruitment, meeting cancellations, space needs, etc.

Avoid negative remarks, gossip and pointed remarks about the church, staff leadership, members, guests and Connect Group leadership.

Follow the leadership of Mobberly's Connect Pastor and Connect ministry team.

Be a faithful and cheerful giver, supporting the ministries of Mobberly through your tithes, offerings, time and talents.

Respect the views of Mobberly Baptist Church and abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages at small group gatherings. (Romans 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:12).

CONNECT GROUP ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Establishing a leadership team is essential to the health of your Connect Group. Each Connect Group should begin with a Teacher, Group Administrator, and Prayer Coordinator. As the group grows, involving others in leadership will serve to strengthen the group as others share in the load and increase their ownership within the group. Please ensure that leaders you plan to enlist are not only Connect Group members but are members of the church as well. (For more information, see Phases of a Connect Group for suggestions)

Mobberly Area Minister is a staff member of the Connect Ministry team that provides ongoing oversight to the Connect Group within a specific demographic related such as age, life-stage or gender.

TEACHER/CO-TEACHER

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: shepherding, teaching

Develop a weekly lesson that communicates biblical truth and leads to life application and transformation through an interactive Bible study.

Maintain sound doctrine according to the teachings of Mobberly Baptist Church and the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message (Appendix O). It is critical to allow scripture, **not opinion**, to serve as the basis of every lesson.

Recruit a co-teacher to share in the responsibility of developing lessons and teaching. (All teachers and co-teachers must be approved by the Connect Pastor.)

Secure a qualified substitute when absent, first asking your co-teacher, then a qualified member. Be sure to notify your area minister. Make plans to do this well in advance of your planned absence.

Communicate regularly with your Mobberly Area Minister or Connect Pastor.

Help those in your Connect Group discover, own and lead out in their faith.

GROUP ADMINISTRATOR

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: administration, shepherding, encouragement, mercy

Lead off weekly Connect Group meetings by communicating information on upcoming events, serve opportunities and prayer needs. In doing this, you help support and communicate church initiatives and events on behalf of the church and staff leadership.

Lead all group members to intentionally greet guests and create a welcoming environment.

Enlist according to spiritual gifts (Appendix J), equip and encourage the leadership team.

Meet at least quarterly with your Connect Group leadership team to communicate vision, evaluate opportunities for improvement and plan for future events and Share opportunities.

Communicate regularly with your Mobberly Area Minister or Connect Pastor.

Help those in your Connect Group discover, own and lead out in their faith.

Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence. Group Administrators must be approved by your Mobberly Area Minister.

Early on in the formation of your Connect Group, the Group Administrator will need to fulfill the responsibilities of Secretary, Share Coordinator, and fellowship planning until such a roles and responsibilities are delegated.

PRAYER COORDINATOR

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: intercession, encouragement

Pray consistently for the needs of guests, members and leaders.

Organize a network of prayer support through email or group messaging apps, such as GroupMe.

Model confidentiality and integrity. Maintain confidence and gain a clear understanding of what information can be communicated to the group.

Lead the charge for church-wide prayer initiatives such as serving as a Watchman on the Wall or in the Intercessory Prayer Room.

Work with Mobberly's prayer ministry to communicate weekly prayer needs.

Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence.

At the launch of the Connect Group, fulfill the responsibility of Care Group Coordinator until a person is enlisted to fulfill these responsibilities (work in conjunction with the Group Administrator in the enlistment process).

CARE GROUP COORDINATOR & CARE GROUP LEADERS

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: mercy, encouragement

Contact each member on a regular basis through calls, texts, personal notes or visits.

Implement an action plan for following up with members and guests that are absent for three or more weeks.

Identify support needs such as providing meals, caring for children, visiting members in the hospital and providing for other practical needs during times of sickness, death or other crisis situations.

As a Connect Group, praying for one another is essential. However, it is crucial to maintain confidentiality and gain a clear understanding of what information can be communicated to the Connect Group.

Contact the church at 903.663.3100 in the case of a hospitalization, death or critical need. Keep in mind that there is an on-call staff member that can be reached after hours and on weekends at this number to respond to such needs.

Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence.

As the Connect Group grows, enlist additional Care Group leaders to share in this responsibility (1:10 ratio of Care Group Leaders to group members).

SHARE COORDINATOR

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: evangelism, encouragement

Reach out to guests by introducing them to other Connect Group members, invite them to sit with you and encourage them to partake in class lunches and fellowships.

Coordinate guest follow-up.

Encourage Connect Group members to participate in Go Share training and outreach visits.

Rally guests and members to serve in Go Share events and upcoming opportunities.

Work with the Serve office to pick an approved local mission partner. Coordinate this effort until such time that a Missions Coordinator is enlisted.

Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence.

SECRETARY

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: administration, helps

Complete weekly attendance records.

Obtain contact information from all guests by having them complete guest registration card.

Provide information on chronic absentees to the Care Group Coordinator or Group Administrator for ongoing follow up and encouragement.

Communicate information on additions, drops, transfers and changes to membership information such as addresses, phone numbers and email addresses to Connect Ministry Administrative Assistant.

Assist in distributing announcements and materials provided in Connect Group notebooks.

Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence.

Request nametags or replacements for members of the Connect Group on the attendance roster.

MISSIONS COORDINATOR

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: evangelism, helps, administration

Work with the Share Coordinator and Serve office to pick an approved local mission opportunity.

Coordinate serve opportunities through your Connect Group's approved mission partner.

Promote the Connect Group's adopted mission partnership and serve opportunities on a regular basis.

Utilize sign-ups to effectively serve the Connect Group's mission partnership and serve opportunities.

Contact the Serve office at 903.663.7337 to provide updates and receive support as your Connect Group serves together.

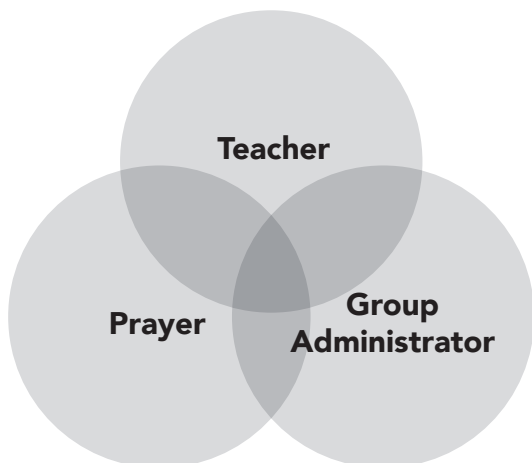
Train someone else to learn this role, share in the responsibility and to fill in during your absence.

CONNECT GROUP LAYOUT & PHASES

Launching a new Connect Group at Mobberly is exciting and serves as a reflection of a church that reaches others by connecting in biblical community. There is potential for great momentum for connecting with new members and guests in the early phases of a group. With such growth can come pressing demands as leaders find themselves carrying an increasing load of care and administrative needs. “Jethro told Moses, you can’t do it all.” (Exodus 18:13-27)

It is essential that as the Connect Group grows, you prepare to let go and share the load with faithful men and women. Both teachers and group administrators play a key role in helping members discover, own and lead out in their faith. Carefully observe where members are in the process of owning their faith. Help them take that next step of moving from ownership to leadership within your Connect Group.

The following phase system is a suggested growth plan for leadership development.



PHASE 1

(1-9 MONTHS)

Roles needed to launch a new Connect Group: Teacher, Group Administrator and Prayer Coordinator:

These first months are critical to developing a healthy Connect Group through building intentional relationships that portray the principles within Acts 2:42-47. The early church was devoted to one another as they intentionally invested in the relationships with one another by growing together spiritually, providing support and encouragement, meeting heartfelt needs and sharing in the joys of Christian fellowship. By concentrating on deepening your relationships within the Connect Group, you will grow closer to one another and to those yet to be welcomed into the group as it forms:

Don't hold on to leadership responsibilities tightly. Rather, welcome others to share in the leadership of the Connect Group. Start simple by asking someone to be a greeter at the door, welcoming and meeting others. Alternatively, you might invite someone to share in leadership by planning a class event, mission opportunity or to meeting a care need.

As the group grows, begin to enlist, equip and encourage new leaders. This is a good time to identify a Care Group Coordinator and work toward having one care leader for every 8-10 people.

Plan regular fellowship events where the Connect Group gets to know one another at a deeper level.

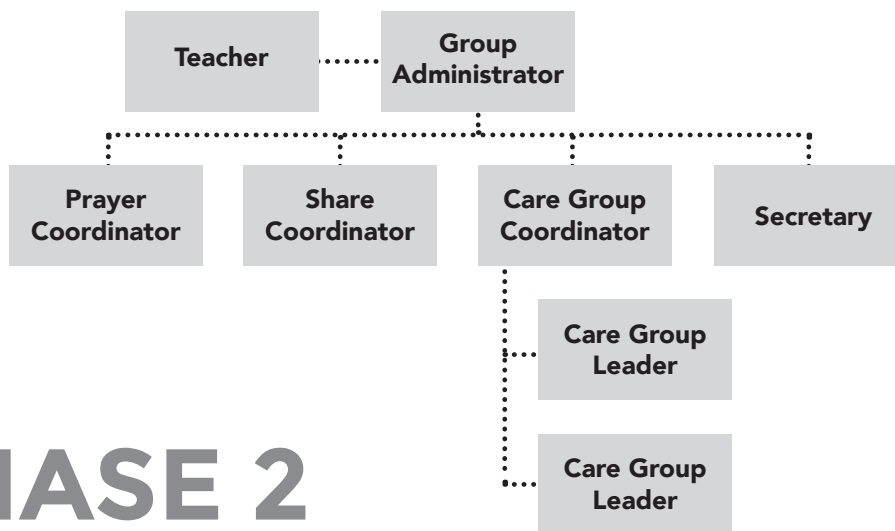
Pray for one another and identify ways to follow up on care needs. Sometimes it's as simple as a message to another member or a guest. In other instances, practical supports such as meals, caring for kids or helping with a household need may be required.

Exercise discretion when communicating with members of the opposite sex.

Guard the unity of the group. If issues come up, don't let them fester. Practice patience and forgiveness as you work toward reconciliation and restoration. Seek to gain an understanding of the root cause of the problem.

Seek the counsel of your Mobberly Area Minister when you struggle to resolve a difficult situation.

Have fun.



PHASE 2

(10-18 MONTHS)

Now that you have built a strong foundation for your Connect Group, you will want to look for ways to encourage others to serve in leadership roles.

Expand your leadership base by developing a Care Group structure with leaders providing an ongoing ministry of support and encouragement to the members of the group. Keep in mind a ratio of 1 Care Leader for every 8-10 members.

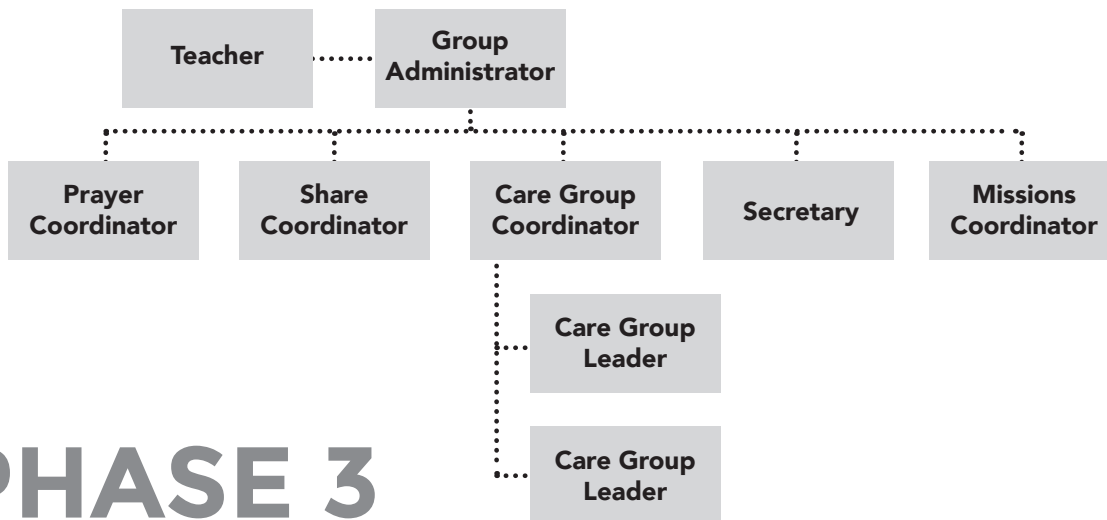
Delegate the responsibility of taking attendance, registering guests and maintaining up-to-date class member contact information to the Secretary.

Identify an Share Coordinator that will encourage members to sign up for Go Share, where they will be equipped to share their faith through hands-on training.

Work with Mobberly's Serve ministry to identify a local mission partner that your Connect Group can support on an ongoing basis through serving on-site, meeting practical needs by collecting items, hosting fellowships, sharing the gospel and personal testimonies.

Foster biblical community consistently within your Connect Group. Do not lose focus on pouring into the lives of Connect Group members or in the priority of helping guests feel welcome and connected.

Continue to cultivate new leadership by providing opportunities for members to exercise the use of their God-given gifts and talents.



PHASE 3

(18-24+ MONTHS)

As your Connect Group matures, continue to think about its depth of leadership. Additionally, at this stage of group development, you'll want to focus attention outward by considering how the group is serving, sending and multiplying.

Continue to enlist and equip additional leaders for your Connect Group.

Identify assistant leaders (apprentices) that will backfill key roles and responsibilities such as the Group Administrator, Teacher, Share Coordinator, Prayer Coordinator and Secretary.

You may consider additional optional roles such as a Missions or Fellowship Coordinator.

Invite others to join in the planning of group fellowships and events.

Prayerfully look for opportunities to send leaders out to serve or to launch a new Connect Group.

Seek out opportunities for your Connect Group to serve alongside Mobberly's local, national and international ministry partners.

NOTES



APPENDICES

Helpful information
for your Connect Group

TEACHER TIPS

HANDLING CONFLICT & DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

As a teacher, you contribute significantly to Mobberly's mission of people leading people into a life-changing, ever-growing relationship with Jesus Christ. With this comes tremendous blessings and responsibilities. The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." It is essential that God's Word permeate your life before you teach it to others. A teacher is first a student of scripture, and second, a student of those they teach.

TEACHING RESOURCES

Numerous teaching resources are available to aid in lesson development such as RightNow Media (Appendix K), Lifeway Christian Resource teacher quarterlies, books, commentaries, DVD resources and Dr. Steve Armstrong's lesson plans <https://biblestudiesbysteve.com/>.

Contact your Mobberly Area Minister for more information and to obtain curriculum approval.

KEEP IN MIND THESE PRINCIPLES AS YOU PREPARE TO TEACH:

Never stop growing, so that you may teach from your overflow.

Plan ahead. Start reading the biblical text early in the week.

Identify key points that you want to incorporate into the lesson.

Pray that God would provide you with insight into the passage that is true to its original context and meaning.

Develop a file of illustrations that help convey biblical truths.

Spend time developing questions to ask that spark dialogue. Avoid closed-ended questions so as to that help participants develop a deeper knowledge and application of the Word.

Be a student of those in your Connect Group. Learn about their background, spiritual understanding, needs, struggles and passions.

Practice sensitivity to the needs and struggles individuals face within the Connect Group. Don't build a teaching series around an issue unique to one individual. Conversely, do not skirt around scriptures dealing with such difficult issues.

Vary your teaching approach (lecture, discussion and video clips).

Think beyond the information that you share to a deeper level of participant life-transformation.

AS YOU TEACH:

Welcome the input of Connect Group members by acknowledging them as they participate.

Look for those who initiate discussion. Be cautious about calling on members who are typically quiet to read aloud, pray or answer questions, as some are not comfortable participating in public.

Be sensitive when the Connect Group goes off script and on a tangent – this may be how the Holy Spirit is directing the discussion. If the tangent becomes trivial, refocus the group with a question that ties back in to the study.

Encourage people to be real, but not raw. Redirect gently as needed to avoid inappropriate over sharing.

Don't be afraid to admit when you don't have an answer. Invite them to share their thoughts and encourage each other to take a deeper look at what scripture says over the next week.

Don't let doctrinal issues become divisive.

Don't allow one person's problem to be the continual focus of the Connect Group's time together.



TEACHING HELPS

Contributor:
Dr. Wayne Jacobs

Teaching and leading an adult Connect Group is somewhat like herding cats – only through the help of the Lord can you enjoy the journey. In teaching adults, prepare your lesson early and try to read over it every day for at least a few minutes. As you spend time with the Lord each day, you will gain new insights through other scriptures, daily events, things you are reading and time spent talking with others.

Think through your material as if you were the class: what questions would you ask, what material is really interesting, what is difficult to understand, and what is the connection between the content of the material being discussed and what is going on in the lives of those in your Connect Group.

Ask your class to participate in each lesson. For example, give them verses to read on small sheets of paper, have multiple questions ready to ask and try to identify those in the class who might be interested in answering. Pause during the lesson often to ask about how they are processing with the information and if they have any insights to share and always be ready to chase a rabbit, when necessary. Don't always look for the right answers. Work with the answers you receive. If you only acknowledge those answers you perceive as right, the class will slowly stop participating.

When you get on God's agenda for your lesson, the Holy Spirit can move in ways that really meet the needs of your class. The more your Connect Group is engaged, the more they will get out of it. Be mindful of starting and stopping times. Your Connect Group members want you to know their time is valuable.

When entering your class, look to see who is present and absent. Spend time talking to as many people as possible at the beginning and the end, always being mindful to try to speak to everyone over a period of weeks of meeting. Use prayer sheets from your class to follow up with members during the week and encourage others to do the same. Keep in mind those in your class who are the most engaged, as they are likely to become the next leaders. Work to foster those skills in them as often as possible. Encourage others to come alongside you and teach a lesson or two if they express an interest. If you have prayer warriors or socially adept people in your class, encourage them to use their skills in those areas. Most people will not respond to a general call to help but will be likely to consider a request to serve when it comes personally from their leader who affirms their skills and gifts.

Most importantly, pray. Pray for receptive hearts. Pray for spiritual insight. Pray for walls and barriers to be broken and moved. Pray for Scriptures to come alive. Pray that you will be used to minister to others. It is a joy and a privilege to serve in Mobberly's adult ministry. Thank God for that privilege and for His work in your life.

8 HELPFUL TIPS FOR THOSE WHO WRITE THEIR OWN STUDIES

By Rick Lowry

Used with permission of the author.

Knowing how to ask good questions is one of the key elements of a successful small group. Questions are what transform a small-group lesson from a lecture into an interactive setting—which should be our goal as group leaders.

Below are a few guidelines for writing and asking good questions. I began to think about this subject a number of years ago as a result of reading Karen Lee-Thorp's book *How to Ask Great Questions*. The book inspired several of the ideas below, and is still a helpful addition to any small-group leader's library.

1. GOOD QUESTIONS CREATE A CONVERSATION

And they create those conversations without putting anyone in the spot. You don't want our small-group members to feel like they are in school, taking a test. You also don't want a scenario where you are the learned teacher asking all the questions, and the group members are under pressure to know the answers you expect from them. That is not a healthy learning situation.

In contrast, some of the best discussion questions solicit input from everyone present. The best example of this is to ask people what they think. There is no wrong answer to the question, "What do you think?" "What do you think Jesus means when He says, 'Sell your possessions?'" "Was He talking to you and me? What's your opinion?"

Of course, as a leader, you will sometimes know what the Bible actually teaches about this—you're not supposed to be void of knowledge or opinions. But you want to gently steer the group toward the answer Jesus gives. Allowing people to discuss questions and process the answers themselves improves their rate of retention. It's also a good idea to remember that your knowledge or opinion may not represent the full scope of a passage or verse.

2. GOOD QUESTIONS FOCUS ON ONE THING

Make sure your questions are focused and clear. Here's a poor example of how to address a topic: "What did Jesus mean by 'You are the Light of the world,' how did his disciples respond, and how should we today respond to this statement?" Instead, break those questions down to make them more clear and focused:

- What did Jesus mean by "You are the light of the world?"
- How did Jesus' disciples respond to his announcement about being the light of the world?
- How should we today respond to Jesus' statement to be the light of the world?

Rather than asking a multi-layered question, it's best to ask just one simple question and wait for responses before asking the next thing. Well-focused questions also serve as a tool to keep bringing the group back around to the subject at hand. Small groups are notorious for getting off the subject, and clearly worded, pin-pointed questions help a group leader avoid this problem.

3. GOOD QUESTIONS CAN BE UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYONE

As a group leader, you want to keep the questions simple enough that everyone has a reasonable chance of knowing what you mean the first time you say it. So, the following won't work very well: "In light of the current theological debate about millennial views, which is prevalent in many seminaries—and other places as well, many books having been written about this from the premillennial, postmillennial and amillennial positions—how do you think we should respond to this debate in the church, in the our homes, in schools, and at the government level?"

It would be much better to ask, "How much should we care about the end times?"

4. GOOD QUESTIONS SAY WHAT THEY MEAN

Let's say you're studying 1 Corinthians 11—specifically, the passage about women wearing head coverings. It's not a good idea to ask, "Is Paul saying something true here?" This is the Bible, after all—of course he's saying something true! It's better to ask, "Is Paul saying something here that applies to women today?"

That may seem like a subtle difference, and it is. But it shows how important it is not to get lazy when you write discussion questions.

5. GOOD QUESTIONS ARE OPEN-ENDED

A person can answer "yes" or "no" without engaging his or her brain. On the other hand, an open-ended question compels people to think about the facts of a text, or the situation. We utilize this principle in everyday life. Over dinner,

if I say to my children, “How was school today?” they will respond “Fine.” And we’re done. But if I say to them, “Tell me something interesting that happened today at school,” they have to focus on a specific incident, and I can get them talking. The same thing applies in group discussions.

6. GOOD QUESTIONS INVOLVE EMOTIONS

There is more to studying the Bible than intelligence, and there is more to discussing the Bible than intellect. Group leaders need to involve people’s emotions, and questions are a great way to do just that.

Some good examples would be:

- How do you respond inwardly to these claims Jesus makes?
- How do you feel about these teachings on love?
- How do you react to that truth?

7. GOOD QUESTIONS DEAL WITH PEOPLE’S INTERESTS

Sometimes it’s good to connect a Bible study question with the current interests and passions of your group members. Not every time, of course, but sometimes. Here are some possible examples: “Dave, you’ve been a college athlete. How do you react to Paul saying, ‘I buffet my body daily’?” “Several of you have read the Left Behind series. How do you think it lines up with what John is saying here in Revelation?”

8. GOOD QUESTIONS ARE SOMETIMES ANSWERS TO OTHER QUESTIONS

In any small-group setting, people usually direct questions to the group leader. Even if you’ve done a good job of establishing that you are a co-learner and don’t have all the answers, people will still direct their questions to you most of the time.

So, in response, it is often a good idea to answer their questions with a question of your own. Like: “What do you think about that?” or “Anyone here tonight have ideas about the answer to that?”



APPENDIX B

GROUP ADMINISTRATOR TIPS

Among the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 is the gift of administration. The role of the Group Coordinator involves guiding the Connect Group to a common goal and destination. Group Administrators work in direct conjunction with the Teacher and Connect ministry team to provide leadership, vision and direction to the Connect Group that aligns with the Mobberly's mission and vision.

The Group Administrator is like an orchestra leader. As the orchestra leader needs to be familiar with each instrument, they lead musicians to play in harmony with one another. So also, a Group Administrator needs to have a solid understanding of the various roles within the Connect Group and provide leadership in a way that allows each to work in harmony with one another.

As the Group Administrator, you will set the pace for what happens during the Connect Group's scheduled meeting time. Carry this out in conjunction with the Teacher to ensure there is ample time for the lesson. Give consideration to the time needed for announcements, prayer, occasional testimonies and Bible study. At times, there may be requests by ministries to share with your Connect Group. All requests should be directed by and communicated to you through your Mobberly Area Minister or the Connect Group Pastor.

The role of the Group Administrator involves a balance of being detail-oriented and understanding the big picture of people and processes of the Connect Group ministry. Communications, delegation and encouragement are all vital to the success of this role. Don't hold on tightly to ministry responsibilities; share the load with others.

An effective Group Administrator helps members discover their giftedness. They lead members to own their responsibility to serve God and others within the Connect Group and in other ministries. Finally, they mobilize members to lead in celebrating what God is doing in and through their lives.

THE ROLE OF THE CONNECT GROUP COORDINATOR:

ENLISTING - Consistently be on the lookout for potential leaders. Consider people's giftedness as you seek to fill various roles within the Connect Group. Visit with the person being considered about the need, share the position description and ask the person to pray about serving in such a role.

EQUIPPING - This is particularly important early on as others serve in this ministry. However, opportunities to grow never cease. Look for continued opportunities to offer practical tips, resources and helps along the way as your team carries out the ministry of the Connect Group. Personally participate in and encourage your team to be involved in periodic Connect leadership training opportunities.

ENCOURAGING - Value each contribution to the Connect Group, personally and publicly. Catch them doing things well and be specific about the contribution they make to the Connect Group.

Strive for excellence in your Connect Group by setting high expectations for your leadership team, following up on responsibilities that have been delegated and creating an environment that is welcoming and supportive to all members and guests.

Plan with your leadership team. Meet at least once a quarter to plan for ministry opportunities, care needs, prayer needs, share opportunities, discipleship strategies, mission and fellowship opportunities. Use formal planning times and in-

formal communication structures to carry out the needs of the ministry within the Connect Group on an ongoing basis.

Provide support and assistance to the teaching team by working in conjunction with your Mobberly Area Minister to secure curriculum resources and enlist assistant teachers for the Connect Group.

Finally, keep things fun!

APPENDIX C

PRAYER COORDINATOR TIPS

There are a number of examples of the New Testament church praying with and for one another with great effect in the Kingdom of God. These believers prayed continually (Acts 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:17), powerfully (Acts 12:5-7; 16:25-26), for boldness (Ephesians 6:20), for healing (James 5:14) and for each other (James 5:16). Prayer was as natural to their life together as breathing is to the body. Our Connect Groups are together and empowered by the prayers members pray for each other, for Mobberly Baptist Church and for God's Kingdom work. Intimate and transparent relationships are built on prayers for each other.

The Prayer Coordinator is vital in facilitating the prayer ministry of the Connect Group. They lead by example in praying, facilitating opportunities for all to pray for each other and in keeping the prayer needs of the group and church before the members of the Connect Group.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Pray consistently for the needs of guests, members and leaders.

Organize a prayer support network through email or a group texting app, such as GroupMe. Avoid posting this information on social media.

Help ensure appropriate confidentiality among the members of the Connect Group. Though praying for one another is essential, it is crucial to maintain confidentiality and gain a clear understanding of what information can be communicated to the Connect Group.

Lead the charge for church-wide prayer initiatives and work with Mobberly's prayer ministry to communicate weekly prayer needs.

Train future Prayer Coordinators by sharing in the responsibilities and allowing them to fill in during your absence.

Invite the Connect Group to state what they are asking of God and solicit the group for specific requests.

Encourage the Connect Group to form requests around God's promises and purposes stated in the Bible (Hebrews 6:12-15; 2 Corinthians 1:20-22).

Realize that many times prayer requests become opportunities for us to understand other's circumstances and to seek wisdom and guidance in your response.

When appropriate, restrict your prayer time to giving thanks for specific help or to praising God for His character and His deeds. It can help to begin a time like this by looking at a particular passage of scripture (Psalms 63, 91, 103, 145).

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Watchman on the Wall

As a watchman stands guard for the protection of his city, these prayer warriors commit to praying for one hour, every week, at the same time, for God to move mightily through Mobberly. A person's hour on the "wall" is spent in the privacy of his or her home, office or wherever he or she may be at the chosen hour. For more information, contact prayer@mobberly.org.

Intercessory Prayer Room

The Intercessory Prayer Room provides ways for members to be active participants in the prayer life of Mobberly and to provide outreach and prayer support for our Mobberly family, community and the world. A rotation of intercessors commit to praying for one hour every week at the same time on campus from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m., seven days a week.

Submit Prayer Requests

Call 903.759.PRAY or use the form at mobberly.org/pray

Pastor's Prayer Time (Men)

Hospitality Room, Sundays, 7:15-7:45 a.m. Men of all ages, from teens to senior adults, gather to pray with staff for the Worship Gatherings across our campuses and church plants, and for the many ministries God is working in through Mobberly.

Prayer for Revival (Men)

Worship Center, Tuesdays, 6-6:45 a.m. A time for men of all ages to pray for revival in our church and nation

Prayer Shawl Ministry (Women)

A ministry in which women meet monthly to crochet and knit shawls for those who are critically or chronically ill or homebound. While they crochet and knit, they pray for current and past recipients of the prayer shawls. Contact the Women's Ministry office at 903.663.7345, or email womens@mobberly.org for more information.

Moms in Touch (Women)

Join the worldwide community of moms praying for our kids and schools in more than 140 countries and all 50 U.S. states. For more information go to momsinprayer.org.

God has listened; he has paid attention to the sound of my prayer.

Psalm 66:19 (CSB)

APPENDIX D

CARE COORDINATOR TIPS

We are introduced to over 50 “one another” verses inside the New Testament. We are called to love one another deeply (Romans 12:10), to serve one another (Galatians 5:13), and carry one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). Not only does our love and care for one another make a difference in our lives, as a giver and a recipient, but sacrificial care for one another conveys the gospel message that Jesus has changed our lives.

We all need help with the basic events of life: the birth of a baby, a tragic accident and hospitalization, the death of someone close, loss of a job, etc. Typically, your Connect Group is relationally closest to the needs of its members.

As a leader, you coordinate care and in so doing, you help foster deeper relationships. Initially, you may need to speak with the person in need to determine whether you should mobilize the Connect Group, or ask another individual to help facilitate communication in the situation. In a crisis, the leader is responsible to insure that care is being provided. This does not mean that the leader is the only one providing the care, or even organizing the care. In fact, if you provide all of the organization and care, you deprive the Connect Group of practical ways to help them build relationships.

Care Group Coordinators provide oversight to the overall care process within the Connect Group. As you structure Care Groups, consider enlisting additional Care Group Leaders to meet the needs of a growing Connect Group. A recommended ratio is one Care Group Leader to every 8-10. This structure provides a means of regular and consistent follow up with the members assigned

to each Care Group Leader. Care Group Leaders offer support, encouragement, assistance to meet the needs of members and help communicate information about upcoming Connect Group and church-wide opportunities. As we meet care needs, we want to encourage the freedom of one member ministering to another as the Holy Spirit leads.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

When assigning Care Groups to leaders maintain a healthy balance of regular attenders, frequent absentees and individuals with a higher level of care needs.

Show up! Don’t underestimate the importance of your presence.

Listen and be slow to speak. Help them feel valued and resist the urge to say something profound.

Contact your Care Group members at least a couple times a month. Learn what works best for them. Vary your approach in connecting with those in your group. Text messages work great for providing information, but look for ways throughout the year to interact through a phone call or in person.

Learn about your Care Group member’s family, work, interests and unique needs. Make it a point to pray for these and follow up regularly.

Send a card. This has become a lost practice and can be powerful in its reach.

Consider gathering together with your Care Group over a meal. It will be a good way for them to connect with others on a more personal basis.

Celebrate the joys of life such as birthdays, anniversaries or special recognitions, and stand close beside through life's crises. "A friend loves at all times; a brother is born for adversity" (Proverbs 17:17).

Communicate needs to the Connect Group regarding a death, illness, job loss or family crisis. Enlist others in the Connect Group as needed to meet these needs. Remember to practice confidentiality.

Schedule meals following family births, deaths and hospitalizations. Websites such as takethe-mameal.com and mealtrain.com serve as great resources for organizing meal schedules.

Help a member move.

Meet a financial need in a time of genuine hardship.

Organize a work day where there has been an extended illness.

Provide childcare for a parent who cannot afford it, or has no one there to help.

Bring a basket of snacks to the family during a surgery or an extended hospital stay.

Provide a much needed break for the family by sitting with a member in the hospital or at home.

Be proactive and creative.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

There will be times where the needs of a Connect Group go well beyond the Care Group's ability. First, reach across the Connect Group to meet this need, but remember Mobberly has many available resources for you to call upon (See Appendix M – Mobberly Resources).

CARING RELATIONSHIP LEAVES LASTING IMPRESSIONS

(A MOBBERLY EXAMPLE)

Contributor: Katie Yoder



On April 6 of this year, lightning struck a tree by our home. The tree quickly plummeted on to the roof of our house, igniting a fire that spread fiercely. Fortunately, our family of seven was

not home. When we arrived at the

scene, family and friends were there to greet us, and unbeknownst to them, provided a peace for us in the tragedy.

We were without a home, without belongings and the presence of the enemy was recognizable. I spoke with my Savior about these feelings as I drove away from what I once called "home." When I retrieved my Bible and beloved journal the following day, I found a note I'll forever cherish. "Through him, all things hold together (Colossians 1:17)," was written with compassion and sensitivity by the Longview Fire Department. The firefighter added, "Praying for you. -LFD." This was the first glimpse of many that my God will sustain us through this grief.

Within a day, our family had a new place to call "home," a small rent house loaned by my husband's supervisor. Two days later, our "vacation home" became completely furnished by our children's ministry, Connect Group and the contributions overflowed from our church family. Our closets are full of clothes donated by people we love and people we've never met. Our beds are donated, the sheets that keep us warm; and the towels we use each day were given to us by our church family, family and friends. The love of Jesus flowed into our lives in a more profound way as we continue still to reflect on the scripture, "Through him, all things hold together."

The local news stations and Longview News Journal learned of the inspirational message left in my Bible, and the beautiful words rang through social and local media. "How great is the goodness you have stored up for those who fear you. You lavish it on those who come to you for protection, blessing them before the watching world" (Psalm 31:19). As our small community watches, my God is glorified, and my heart is full.

Our Connect Group, our children's ministry where we serve and our youth group that serves our own children have surrounded us with the love of Jesus. Please understand my reference to "showing the love of Jesus" as true, genuine and sincere actions done at His command.

It happened time-and-time again, as I have been in a state of loss a few times in my adult life. The walls of my temporary "home" are filled with large frames, containing cards of encouragement and scripture. We are both spiritually and physically surrounded by God's grace.

Connect Groups are raw with one another. We pray together for specific needs with no judgment. We build one another up, texting questions and prayers throughout the week. The Connect Group physically shows up with hands and feet, ready to serve. "The church is being the church."

Forests burn down, but are able to grow back.



“Our tears can be seeds that will grow into a harvest of joy because God can bring good out of tragedy.”



APPENDIX E

SHARE COORDINATOR TIPS



The Share Coordinator is the liaison between the Share ministry team and their Connect Group. The Coordinator will receive training and emails throughout the year to communicate to their Connect Group as they promote church-wide share events, individual class share opportunities, Go Share equipping classes and local mission opportunities.

Coordinate guest follow-up: Work with the Group Administrator or Secretary to get names of guests and follow up with them via phone call, text, email or in person. (Enlist others to assist)

If you are also serving as the Connect Group's Missions Coordinator:

Work with the Serve office to select a local mission partner. Encourage your class to have one project each quarter of the year with this mission.

For example, taking needed supplies and sharing the gospel or having someone share their testimony.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

This role does not require you to make an announcement each week or to complete weekly tasks. During certain times of the year, our church body will have more Share opportunities than other times.

Read your emails to know what to share with the Connect Group.

Jan LaJoie, Minister of Evangelism and Outreach, will provide you with information to promote and pass along. She is always available to assist you and can be reached by phone, 903.557.0178 or email at janl@mobblerly.org.

Provide enough time for your group members to plan ahead so they can participate in the collection of items or money for the local mission you have selected.

Pray each week that God will help you see His heart for others.



APPENDIX F

MISSION COORDINATOR TIPS

The Missions Coordinator provides oversight and support to the Connect Group that aligns with Mobberly's local, national and international mission partnerships.

The following are a few suggestions that may help you carry out this role in your Connect Group:

Work in conjunction with the Serve ministry office to identify local mission opportunities for your Connect Group to support through prayer, giving and hands-on ministry. Additionally, you might consider working with the Serve ministry office to identify a church plant to adopt.

Identify specific resource needs, prayer needs and practical helps associated with the local missions organization that your Connect Group adopts. Help move your group from awareness to action.

Consider identifying a few times a year that your Connect Group collects items for the local mission partner that you'll have adopted. Items might include food, personal hygiene items, clothing, diapers and more. Encourage group members to shop together for these items, as this becomes a wonderful time of community building. Don't forget to share the gospel as you go.

Invite someone from the local adopted mission to speak in your Connect Group. Always coordinate such efforts with your Group Administrator and the Teacher. If you are supporting one of Mobberly's church plants or international affiliates, you may want to invite the church planter to speak in your Connect Group or at a fellowship when they are in the area.

Encourage the church planter and their family by identifying ways that you can pray for the church plant and their family. Sending a periodic care package or gift card is another way to show your Connect Group's love and support.

Encourage your Connect Group to go together on one of the Mobberly sponsored mission trips. Being on mission together strengthens the bond that exists among members of the group.

Provide enough time for your Connect Group members to plan ahead so they can participate in the collection of items or donating money for the local mission you have selected.

Pray regularly that God will help you see His heart for others.

SERVE

APPENDIX G

MISSION-MINDED CONNECT GROUPS

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) applies to every believer, therefore it applies to all in your Connect Group. Through the combined gifting of committed individuals (1 Peter 4:10), your group can become good stewards of God's grace.

AS YOU ARE TOGETHER, TALK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN SERVE:

- **The local body of Christ (Galatians 6:10)**
- **Other believers (1 Peter 4:10)**
- **Non-believers (Luke 19:10)**
- **The poor and needy (James 1:27, Proverbs 14:31)**
- **People in other nations (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19)**

“Missional fruitfulness comes from a heart gripped by God's greatness and enthralled with His grace...our goal is to lead groups to get on our faces before God and then get on our feet for His mission.” – Trevin Wax

Gospel-centered teaching draws people to action and service, just as Jesus embodied in His life, death and resurrection. God gave us His Word so that we can be fully equipped to do His will. Pray for one another to be effective in ministry and service, and pray with one another that God would use you to build His kingdom.

HERE ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR HOSPITALITY AND BECOME MORE MISSIONAL:

IN GROUP

1. **Studying God's Word** – Until the members of your group truly grasp and absorb God's Word, repeatedly recounting missional commands might not produce active traction in the group for serving. Keep truth in front of them.
2. **Adopt a ministry** – Mobberly's Serve team has local, national and international opportunities to serve. Contact the Serve office for options and decide as a group what you are passionate about.
3. **Serve together instead of meeting** – Pick strategic days where your group can serve one of the local mission opportunities in lieu of a class meeting. Relationships will deepen and excitement builds when first-time servers whet their appetite.

AT HOME

1. Cook an extra meal or dessert and give it to a neighbor.
2. Host a coffee and dessert night.
3. Organize and host a ladies' craft night.
4. Organize an effort for neighbors to help take care of elderly in neighborhood.
5. Become a regular at your neighborhood pool/park.
6. If you have a skill, let neighbors know that you can use it to help them for free.
7. Host a movie night and discussion afterwards.

8. Start a walking/running group in the neighborhood.
9. Start hosting a play date weekly for other stay-at-home parents.
10. Organize a carpool for your neighborhood to help save gas.
11. Have a front yard ice cream party in the summer.
12. Throw a holiday block party.
13. Start a neighborhood Facebook group.
14. Ask longtime residents to help you learn about the neighborhood.
15. Offer to babysit neighbors' kids so they can have a date night.
16. Take your neighbors a card and baked goods on their birthday.
17. Host a sports game watching party.
18. Prayer walk your neighborhood. Greet and chat with neighbors when you see them.
19. Simply invite someone to church with a verbal invite or an informational piece/card.
20. Be a regular presence at community events and engage others.
21. Try to go to the same checker at the grocery store/department store to build a relationship.
22. Have a yard work day and offer to help each other with projects.
6. Have your Connect Group bring lunch to their workplace once a month.
7. Create a regular time to invite co-workers over or out for coffee.
8. Make a list of your co-workers' birthdays and find a way to bless them that day.
9. Make every effort to avoid gossip in the office. Be a voice of thanksgiving, not complaining.
10. Find others that live near you and create a car pool.
11. Offer to throw a shower for a co-worker who is having a baby.
12. Offer to cover for a co-worker who needs off for something.
13. Start a regular lunch out with co-workers (don't be selective on the invites).
14. Organize a weekly or monthly pot luck lunch.
15. Ask someone who others typically ignore if you can grab them a soda/coffee while you're out.
16. Be the first person to greet and welcome new people.
17. Make every effort to know the names of co-workers and clients along with their families.
18. Visit co-workers when they are in the hospital.
19. Go out of your way to talk to your house-keeping staff whom are often under-appreciated and overlooked.
20. Invite your co-workers in to the service projects you are already involved in.
21. Work hard to reconcile co-workers who are fighting with one another.
22. Keep small candy, gum, or little snacks around to offer to others during a long day.
23. Lead the charge in organizing others to help co-workers in need.
24. Simply invite someone to church with a verbal invite or an informational piece or card.

AT WORK

1. Instead of eating lunch alone, eat with other co-workers and learn their story.
2. Get to work early so you can spend some time praying for your co-workers and the day ahead.
3. Make it a priority to encourage someone does good work using spoken words and hand written notes.
4. When you make your lunch, bring extra snacks to give away to others.
5. Bring breakfast (donuts, burritos, cereal, etc.) once a month for everyone in your department.

TIPS FOR LEADING GROUPS

CHICK-FIL-A'S EXTREME SERVICE MAKEOVER – GOING THE SECOND MILE

Dan Cathy (CEO), shared a verse from the Matthew 5:41, “If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.” At Chick-fil-A, they’ve put that verse into action with an “extreme service makeover,” going the extra mile to provide amenities not common in a quick-service restaurant, like offering fresh ground pepper to patrons dining in or staff offering to carry heavy trays for moms with small children, helping them get settled and coming back to check on them often.

And they give free rein to their operators to get creative in surprising customers with a little something extra. For example, in Virginia, one franchise offers expired chicken nuggets to pet owners (don’t worry – the nuggets are still good; just past the few hour freshness hold time).

“If you want to make a difference, step over the line and into that second mile, because magical things happen there,” said Cathy. “There’s joy and fun and reward in that second mile.” Intrigued? Then you probably want to know what’s in Dan Cathy’s Leadership Toolkit:

1. A baton. “Success is about succession,” said Cathy. “Everyone needs to think about who’s going to carry the baton after us. The relay race is won not by the four fastest runners, but by the team that gets the baton around the track first. The most dreadful noise to a runner is that of the dropped baton. The same holds true in business.”

2. Oxygen mask. “Put your oxygen mask on first in case of an emergency,” said Cathy. “Remember to take care of yourself. Leaders have to take care of ourselves if they’re going to help others be at their best.”

3. Jar of Jif peanut butter. “When you break the freshness seal in a can of Jif peanut butter, you get a wonderful aroma, like you’re standing in a peanut factory. That fresh aroma emphasizes how we need to focus on staying fresh in our thinking. And in order to stay fresh, we’re going to have to do some unconventional things,” said Cathy. “The best way to think outside of the box is to get outside of the box – get out and travel and have a look around.”

4. Roll of toilet paper. “Little things can make a big difference,” said Cathy. “Think about the toilet paper in a fancy hotel, and how it’s always folded up for you there on the roll. It’s always such a pleasant surprise when you see that. Build your own repertoire of little surprises.”

One of the many benefits of creating surprising, fun and rewarding experiences for Chick-fil-A customers is that their customers tweet about them, talk about them on Facebook or blog about them to followers. “That’s important today because of social media – people have big, big microphones,” said Cathy.

Other nuggets of wisdom from Dan Cathy:

- “Fall in love with your work and you’ll never have to work a day of your life.”
- “Enrich your life and in turn, you’ll enrich the lives of others.”

8 HABITS OF EFFECTIVE SMALL-GROUP (CONNECT GROUP) LEADERS

PRACTICAL TIPS TO TAKE YOUR SMALL GROUP FROM GOOD TO GREAT

By Dave Earley

Why do some small groups grow and multiply and others don't? Is there some activity or set of activities a small-group leader can do to increase the probability of the group growing and multiplying? If so, are these activities beyond the reach of the average leader? Will it take years of training to master them? Or is there a set of activities that are attainable and realistic that any small-group leader who wants to grow and multiply can put into his or her weekly schedule?

I believe I have an answer to these questions. I have had the privilege of leading small groups and coaching group leaders for 25 years. It began when, as a 16-year-old, several friends and I started lunchtime Bible studies at our high school. They "accidentally" grew and multiplied. In college, I started a discipleship group that spread over the campus. During my summers, I started groups in little towns in England and in high rises in New York City. After I graduated, I started groups in rural Virginia. Then, I was hired to train, write curriculum for, and oversee 300 small-group leaders at a large Christian university. Later, I started a group in my basement that grew into a church with over one hundred groups.

Some of these various groups grew and multiplied; others didn't. Through the years, I've noticed the long-range effectiveness of leaders revolves around simple habits that those leaders practice outside of the group meeting.

Many leaders sincerely want to grow and multiply their groups, but they're not sure how. They work on finding better icebreakers or asking better discussion questions. While these are valuable things, the real key to growing and multiplying a cell group lies in the practice of eight personal habits.

Several years ago, I wanted to show the leaders I was coaching them in exactly what it would take for them to be highly effective. By studying cell ministry and thinking through my own experience, I came up with eight regular practices that seemed to make the difference between effectiveness and ineffectiveness.

I began asking the leaders I coached to adopt these habits and build them into their weekly schedules. Without exception, those who used these habits became highly effective leaders who grew and multiplied their groups. Those who didn't, didn't.

What was especially interesting was that gifts, personality, and experience were not as important as commitment to the eight habits. Leaders who did not have the gift of teaching or those who had not been Christians for a long time but who followed the eight habits still became effective. Leaders who tended to be quiet or had never led before but practiced the habits were growing and multiplying their groups. The eight habits made the difference.

AFTER TEACHING THESE HABITS FOR SEVERAL YEARS, I HAVE COME TO SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS:

1. The eight habits work. Following the eight habits of an effective small-group leader makes all the difference between mediocrity and greatness, between stagnation and multiplication. Following them will produce growth, develop future leaders, and add to what God wants to do.

2. The eight habits are universal. They apply to all cultures and all types of groups. They are foundational principles that work for any type of group and any type of leader. They are usable with any group of people whatever their age, race, gender, or socioeconomic status. They can be lived in the inner city or on the farm. They work for those on a college campus, those in a foreign nation, and those in the suburbs of the U.S.

3. The eight habits have broad application. One beautiful fact is that they are essentially the same habits that produce effectiveness for coaches of small-group leaders, directors, and small-group pastors. Once a leader incorporates them, he or she has the foundation for moving up the levels of small-group leadership.

4. These habits are easy to understand and remember. I have seen small-group leaders' eyes light up as their mentors explain the eight habits to them. Leaders nod their head and say, "Yes. I see. That's simple enough. It's just common sense."

5. These habits are doable. This is the best quality. Any leader can put them into practice, if he or she invests the time. When small-group leaders hear the habits explained, they nod, saying things like, "This is just what I have been looking for. Now I have a clear course to follow. I can do this."

6. The eight habits are realistic. Most leaders can fit them into their busy schedules. It doesn't take a spiritual giant or someone with unlimited time to do them. These eight habits are attainable goals for all cell leaders.

7. The eight habits are motivating. Upon learning them, leaders burn with passion to put them into practice. The eight habits are challenging, but not overwhelming.

The eight habits can take a small-group leader, and those under him or her, to a new level. Whether an apprentice leader, a novice small-group leader, a seasoned leader, a coach of group leaders, a director of a district of groups, or a pastor of a large small-group ministry, these eight habits will work and lead to fruitfulness and multiplication. You'll also experience greater fulfillment in your ministry.

The eight habits of effective small-group leaders are:

1. Dream of leading a healthy, growing, multiplying group.
2. Pray for group members daily.
3. Invite new people to visit the group weekly.
4. Contact group members regularly.
5. Prepare for the group meeting.
6. Mentor an apprentice leader.
7. Plan group fellowship activities.
8. Be committed to personal growth.

To learn more about these eight habits, see the book *8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders*, Dave Earley, Cell Group Resources, a division of TOUCH® Outreach Ministries, <http://www.touchusa.org>. Used with permission. Article found at: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/spiritualformation/8-habits-of-effective-small-group-leaders.html?start=2>

50 TIPS FOR LEADING GROUPS

By Vince Antonucci

Leading a small group study is an amazing way to make a difference with your life. Small group Bible studies are powerful vehicles for catalyzing life change and spiritual growth. Perhaps the idea of leading Bible studies for small groups sounds exciting but also intimidating. Maybe you've never done it. Or it could be that you've led a group but feel like you could be more effective.

I led my first small group twenty-two years ago as an intern at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky. I was psyched, passionate, and petrified. I wanted my group to be great, but knew very little about successfully leading a group.

I've led a group most of the thousand weeks since, and I've picked up a lot of ideas and lessons on effective small group leadership. I thought I might help you by sharing some of what I've learned. Here are 50 tips.

TIPS LEADING UP TO YOUR GROUP'S FIRST MEETING

1. Pray! A successful group will be a God thing, so pray that God blesses your leadership and helps your group to be everything He has in mind.

2. Confirm the details with your potential attendees, even if they already know. Send an email clearly letting everyone know the details. For instance:

"Our group starts this week. We're meeting this Wednesday at 7:00pm at my house. You don't have to bring anything other than a Bible. Here's my address (include the address where you will meet). Here's my phone number in case you

have any questions or won't be able to make it (include phone number)."

3. Before people show up, turn on every light on the floor of the house where they'll be entering and your group will be meeting. Making it bright will create a warm environment.

4. Before people show up, turn on some background music. Coming into a house with music playing is more inviting. Make sure to turn the music off once you're ready to begin your meeting.

5. Before people show up, have your couch/chairs set up in a circle and ready to go.

6. Greet people at the door with a big smile. Let them know that in the future they can come right in.

7. You may want to consider using name tags for the first meeting, especially if your group is fairly large.

8. Have food and a variety of beverage options. You don't have to make the food fancy, but you do need to have food. Food makes people feel comfortable and promotes interaction and conversation.

9. Once you're ready to begin, start with a good icebreaker question or game. Most people will be nervous to talk in group, and getting everyone to

say something early on will make it much easier for them to say more later. Start with something easy to answer question like, “What’s your hometown and your favorite thing about it?” or “What’s your favorite restaurant?” or “Who is the most famous person you’ve ever met, or almost met?” An icebreaker game would be something like “I Never” (sometimes also called, “Never Have I”).

10. I often start my group meetings with a quick icebreaker game AND an icebreaker question. Doing both may take up ten of our ninety minutes, but I think it’s worth it. Creating a fun, open environment where we’re interacting and laughing together will pay big dividends later in helping people to feel connected to and able to open up to each other. For the icebreaker question, I usually try to think of one that connects with and leads into the topic we’ll be studying that night. (So, for instance, if we’re looking at a Bible passage about marriage, I might ask, “Who is your favorite all-time TV family, and why?”)

11. For the first meeting, keep the study fairly short and light, if you do a study at all. You might just have each person share a (short version) of their story. (“Why don’t we each take 2-3 minutes to tell a little about ourselves so we know who we’re in group with? Tell us a bit of your background, maybe family, maybe job, maybe spiritually.”)

12. In that first meeting, you definitely want to share the purpose of the group and your vision for its future. Things like: In this group we’re going to accept each other where we’re at. We’ll love and never judge. Confidentiality is also a value in this group. What happens in group, stays in group. We’re going to grow closer to each other and to God.

13. In the first meeting, I cast a vision for multiplication. I talk about how we’re all going to love this experience and wonder why we didn’t get in a group sooner. And we’re going to want others to experience what we are. That’s why our church needs more and more groups, so everyone can

get in one. In light of that, one of my hopes for this group is that future leaders will be developed so future groups can start out of ours.

14. Some groups, in the first meeting, establish a group covenant that outlines expectations for the group. It can be helpful, though I have not personally done that, because I am usually dealing with pretty unchurched non-Christians (because of the nature of the ministry of my church). What I do is ask everyone to make the group a priority, and to let me know if they won’t be making it. I also emphasize that we will always practice acceptance and confidentiality.

15. Leave some time at the end of your first meeting for prayer requests. Let everyone know that each week there will be an opportunity for them to share good things that we can celebrate together or things that require prayer.

16. Don’t make anyone pray the first night. In the future, as people become more comfortable, you can challenge them to step out of their comfort zone, but don’t push too hard too fast.

17. End your group on time, or early. When the group time officially ends, don’t force people out. If they linger and mingle for a while, that’s a great sign the group is getting off to a healthy start.

TIPS RELATED TO LEADING YOUR GROUP BEYOND YOUR FIRST MEETING

18. Don’t try to be perfect. When you meet someone who acts like they’re perfect, does that impress you? No! At best, it makes you feel like you can’t relate. At worst, it makes you suspicious. People aren’t looking for perfect; they’re looking for real. Be real. Show some vulnerability. That will endear you to your people.

19. You don't need to have all the answers.

You may feel like, since you're the leader, you need to have an answer for every question. You don't. People will understand if you say, "I don't know. Let me try to find out the answer to that question this week." Not only will they understand, they will admire your humility. It also may inspire them to think they too could lead a small group.

20. Don't be too formal. Don't run your group like a business meeting. You are creating a spiritual family, and your meetings should have a fun, comfortable feeling.

21. Allow a little messiness. Families are messy, right? Well, my family is a little messy. Families are messy because people are messy. In group we don't want to put on a veneer of spiritual perfection that makes everyone feel like they can't be real and admit their weaknesses and fears. Messiness can be intimidating, but it's a breeding ground for grace.

22. View the people in your group as friends and family – not just group members. I know, I've already said that. I'm trying to make sure you don't miss it!

23. Do things outside of group time. When you take the group outside of your meeting night and outside of your living room, relationships will grow deeper, faster. People probably want to meet outside of group time, but need you as the leader to initiate it. So have everyone go out for ice cream, or meet at the park for a cookout on Saturday, or ... you name it.

24. In addition to social events outside of group time, you may want to have your group serve together. One possibility is to mention your desire for your group to serve together after a couple of meetings, and solicit ideas for where you might serve. Or you can look for serving options in your community and then bring your suggestions to the group.

25. One issue with doing things outside

of group night, in our fast-paced overly-busy society, is that people may say they want to but don't have the time. One way of overcoming that issue is to do your non-meeting get-togethers on your group night. So instead of meeting for your normal living room Bible study, maybe six times a year you meet at a homeless shelter where you serve dinner together.

26. With serving together outside of your group time, you can start small.

Instead of making an ongoing commitment, try something one time, just to give people a taste and to set the precedent for your group. You could wrap gifts at Christmas time, or ask your church what you could do for them.

TIPS RELATED TO HAVING FOOD AT YOUR GROUP MEETINGS

27. The first night of the group you should supply the snacks. But on that first night, or sometimes the second night, I usually establish a snack sign-up sheet or schedule. I have people take turns bringing the food, telling them it doesn't need to be amazing. Having people bring food increases their ownership and gives them another reason to show up on their nights.

28. By the way, giving out other rotating (or established) roles can also create ownership and increase attendance consistency. You may want to set up a rotation of who is going to lead the icebreaker game or question, or who records the prayer requests and emails them out.

29. Make sure the snacks are accessible. If you put the food in a room that is hard to get to or out of the way, they may never get touched.

30. Let people know if they are coming straight from work and need to bring dinner with them it's not a problem.

TIPS RELATED TO LEADING THE BIBLE STUDY / GROUP DISCUSSION

31. A small group setting lends itself to group discussion, not to a lesson. People tend to learn better when they are actively involved, and sitting in a circle makes a lesson feel awkward and a discussion feel natural.

32. Your job, as leader, is to facilitate a discussion that gets everyone involved. When I train small group leaders I tell them to think of a pinball machine. In the group discussion, the pinball is who is talking. Your role is to be the flipper. In pinball you don't score points when the ball is touching the flipper, and in a small group "winning" happens when people are thinking and talking, not when you're lecturing.

33. If possible, it helps for people to be able to read the questions, not just hear them.

34. Ask open ended questions. If you've been provided questions and they are not open-ended, rewrite them! A question like, "Do you think Peter was right in doing that?" will lead to an answer like, "No" and will not create a conversation. So, instead ask, "What's a better way Peter could have handled this situation?" or "Why do you think Peter acted like he did?" or "When have you been in a situation like Peter's, and how did you respond?"

35. When you ask a question, expect silence. It will feel like forever, but in reality, be three or four seconds. Wait patiently. People need time to process the question and formulate an answer. They may need time to muster up the courage to talk out loud. Be comfortable with the silence.

36. If no one speaks, even after you allow silence, you will be tempted to give the answer to your question. Don't do it! Ask the question again, but in a different way. Rephrase it, which gives people more time to continue thinking, and the

new way you're asking it may lead to an answer they hadn't come up with.

37. Don't get in the habit of giving the final answer at the end of each question's discussion. If you do, it will seem like there was a "right" answer you were waiting for and, since no one gave it, you are.

38. You can occasionally share your thoughts and opinions, but don't be the person who talks most.

39. Speaking of that person who talks the most: If the amount they talk is reasonable and not an issue, great. But if the person is always the first person to answer every question and dominates the conversation, that is not great. You may want to try, when you ask a question, saying something like, "Let's hear from someone who hasn't talked yet." Another strategy is to talk to the person outside of group and say something like, "I love how much you participate. I wish everyone felt as comfortable sharing with the group as you do. But some people don't. For some people it's difficult to talk. Actually, I wanted to ask you to partner with me in helping other people to participate more. If you cannot be the first person to answer the questions, just kind of hold back, that will give the more quiet people more of a chance to get their nerve up and say what they're thinking, instead of taking the easy way out and just letting you and me talk."

40. And, speaking of the people who won't talk: One way, again, to try to engage them is to say, "Let's hear from someone who hasn't shared yet." After your group has been meeting a while and you feel confident it won't freak them out, you can even ask them a question directly, "Sally, what are you thinking? Seems like you might have an idea you want to share..." You may also want to encourage that person outside of group, "I love it when you share. You have such good things to say."

41. Prepare for the group time. Read the questions beforehand and think through the conversations you want to have. But remember, you don't need to have all the answers, and should not give all the answers.

42. If you have a leader's guide you're using, don't feel compelled to ask every question. If the conversation is great and means you won't be able to get through all the questions, that's fine.

43. Try different types of studies:

- a. Video Driven – “talking head” style.
- b. Video Driven – “cinematic” style, like *The End Of Me* or *God For The Rest Of Us*.
- c. Pick a book of the Bible and read through it together.
- d. Read a biblically founded book together, like perhaps *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg.

TIPS RELATED TO MAKING YOUR GROUP NOT BE ALL ABOUT YOU

44. If you have someone with some potential, let him (or her) try leading. Give a bit of coaching beforehand (you could even use this article) and encourage him to give it a shot.

45. Encourage your group to meet in your absence. If they don't, it gives the impression the group cannot exist without you. If you don't have anyone who is ready to lead a Bible discussion, then have the group meet for a game night, or to go out for ice cream, or watch a movie.

46. Eventually get the group out of your house. Someone else being the host will make the group less centered on you. You might try moving it to a different home every few months.

SOME FINAL TIPS

47. You're going to have to figure out the “kid issue.” Depending on the age and the number of kids, you may need to provide babysitting. I've done babysitting in the same house as the small group (but in a different room) and in a different nearby house. With older kids who can safely entertain themselves, you may not need babysitting. Having group members bring their kids will help their kids grow up making God and church involvement a priority!

48. Remember that your ultimate goal is to build deep, intentional community with each other, all centered around growing faith in God.

49. Pray for your group regularly! This has to be a God thing.

50. Have your group pray for your group! Send out prayer requests or have your group write down 3 prayer requests and encourage everyone to pray for each other daily.

Overwhelmed? Don't be! These are just tips, not rules. Every group is unique. That being said, all groups have room to improve, so hopefully you've pinpointed a couple of tips that can help yours!

More article found at: <https://cityonahillstudio.com/50-tips-for-leading-a-small-group/>

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APPENDIX I

HOME CONNECT GROUP TIPS

The core functions of teaching, prayer, group administration and care will be similar between on-campus groups and off-campus home Connect Groups. However, the number of leadership roles within a home Connect Group will typically be fewer due to space/size limitations the group will experience. Additionally, there are some other notable differences. You'll find the following FAQ's helpful in addressing the unique aspects of home groups:

ARE THERE ANY ROLES THAT ARE UNIQUE TO A HOME CONNECT GROUP?

Yes, these groups will need to add the role of a home host/hostess. This individual or couple should have the gift of hospitality and the ability to open their home to the group on a regular basis. Typically, the host home will provide refreshments and maintain a supply of paper goods. Paper goods, for your group meeting, can be picked up in The Bridge or The Johnson Building (Building B). It is a good idea to have a backup home for times when the host home is unavailable.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT FOOD?

A meal brings people together and creates an atmosphere of fellowship for the Connect Group. This is one of the great benefits experienced by home groups. Home Connect Groups have used a variety of approaches for meals including:

Pot luck – everyone brings something and you get what you get.

One person/couple brings the entire meal.

You'll prepare a meal less frequently but when you do, you have a greater level of responsibility.

Rotate assignments with one person providing the entrée, one person bringing a salad or vegetable and yet another, dessert. The next week, responsibilities shift. As the group grows, some get an off-week with no responsibility for bringing food.

Appetizers and desserts only.

Give consideration to food allergies and dietary restrictions.

HOW DO WE REACH PEOPLE?

Though the church will include your group in the Connect Group brochure and on the church website, the disadvantage you will face is that people cannot inquire about your group on a Sunday morning and immediately attend. Effective strategies that have helped home groups grow include:

Invite people that serve in other ministries on Sundays that prevent them from connecting with others, such as: children's, youth, greeting and worship responsibilities.

Reach out to people that you know from your neighborhood, workplace or an organization.

Ask the people around you in the Sunday Worship Gathering you attend what Connect Group they are a part of, and if they have not connected to a group, invite them to yours.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDCARE?

Child care reimbursement is available for off campus adult Connect Groups to pay for a sitter that the family independently hires during their regularly scheduled weekly Connect Group meetings. Reimbursement vouchers are available through the Connect ministry office.

HOW LONG SHOULD A CONNECT GROUP MEETING TIME BE?

This is largely up to the group. However, most groups will meet about two hours.

A typical schedule might look like this:

6 – 6:15 p.m. - Members arrive

6:15 – 7 p.m. - Fellowship meal

7 – 7:15 p.m. - Prayer and announcements

7:15 – 8 p.m. - Bible Study

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CONNECT GROUP RUNS OUT OF SPACE?

Home Connect Group growth will be limited by the size of the home's living and dining space. When a Connect Group consistently pushes against these limits, this is a good time to consider launching a new group with existing members of your group. Alternatively, you might find one of the Connect Group members has a home that could facilitate the growth of the group. Finally, if neither of these serve as a viable option for the Connect Group, communicate this with your Mobberly Area Minister so that we can stop promoting the group in the Connect Group brochure.



WISDOM FOR HOME CONNECT GROUPS

Contributors:
Rick & Cindy Carr

When hosting a home Connect Group it is key for all involved to understand the importance of committing to prioritize consistently attending in order to: study God's Word, meet to plan and in meals together. Our gatherings usually center on food, so we do a weekly potluck and sometimes create a theme to gather around.

Another key element is to strive to keep an updated and accurate roster. One of the ways to stay up-to-date on where people are in attending and their commitments is to set up gender-based group texts. Our group's women utilize group texting to share emergencies, prayer requests, coordinating meeting needs (e.g. meal trains) and absentees.

Service is vital to the growth and unity of the group. Serve monthly and eat together after. Another way to come together on campus is to serve in preschool together as a group. This is such a help to our age-graded ministry in meeting an ongoing need, and we are serving together while imparting truth back into families.

Host missionaries or others who lead organizations and allow them to share about the work they are doing. This keeps being 'mission-minded' relevant and at the forefront of each attendee's mind.

It is key for leaders of off-campus groups to work at knowing what is happening on campus and in the community and sharing it with their group.

Following up with those who miss, are sick or pull away is an important facet of off-campus groups. Since we are not physically on campus, many

staff will not know when someone is struggling. By developing a strong follow-up and care system, we are able to minister to and help in the assimilation process so that no one falls through the cracks.

Stay in the Word! Don't stray or buy into what people think. Have a purpose and invite others into it.

APPENDIX J

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The following list of spiritual gifts relate closely to the roles and responsibility of those that serve as leaders in a Connect Group. This is intended to serve as a practical guideline for the enlistment of new leaders.

ADMINISTRATION

(1 Corinthians 12:28) – The gift of administration is the God-given ability to understand what makes an organization function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the group or organization. This person is characterized as thorough, objective, responsible, organized, efficient and conscientious.

ENCOURAGEMENT

(Romans 12:8, Acts 15:30-32) – The gift of encouragement is the God-given ability to present words of comfort, consolation and encouragement so as to strengthen or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith. This person is characterized by being positive, motivating, reassuring, supportive and trustworthy.

EVANGELISM

(Ephesians 4:11, Acts 14:21) – The gift of evangelism is the God-given ability to effectively communicate the gospel to nonbelievers so they respond in faith and move forward toward discipleship. This person is characterized by sincerity, candidness by being influential and confident.

GIVING

(Romans 12:8, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8) – The gift of giving is the God-given ability to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and generosity. This person is characterized as resourceful, responsible, charitable, stewardship-oriented and disciplined.

HELPS

(Service; 1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 9:36) – The gift of helps is the God-given ability to accomplish practical and necessary behind-the-scenes tasks, which frees up, supports and meets the needs of others. This person is characterized as loyal, willing, reliable and dependable.

HOSPITALITY

(1 Peter 4:9-10, Romans 12:13) – The gift of hospitality is the God-given ability to care for people by providing friendly reception, food, and lodging. This person is characterized as friendly, gracious, inviting, caring and warm.

INTERCESSION

(Romans 8:26-27, Colossians 4:12-13) – The gift of intercession is the God-given ability to consistently pray on the behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results. This person is characterized by being an advocate, sincere, trustworthy, spiritually sensitive and a burden-bearer.

LEADERSHIP

(Romans 12:8, Hebrews 13:17) – The gift of leadership is the God-given ability to cast vision, motivate, and direct people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God. This person is influential, persuasive, motivating, a visionary and goal-setter.

MERCY

(Romans 12:8, Matthew 25:34-40) – The gift of mercy is the God-given ability to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then demonstrate actions to meet those needs. This person is characterized as being caring, empathetic, kind, compassionate, responsive and sensitive.

PROPHECY

(Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:10) – The gift of prophecy is the God-given ability to reveal God's truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance or edification.

SHEPHERDING

(1 Peter 5:2-4) – The gift of shepherding is the God-given ability to assume long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of an individual or small group of Christ-followers by nurturing and guiding them toward ongoing spiritual maturity. This person is characterized by being relational, influential, nurturing, guiding and supportive.

TEACHING

(Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:28-29) – The gift of teaching is the God-given ability to understand, clearly explain, and apply the word of God in such a way that it is clearly understood by others. This person is characterized as being disciplined, perceptive, analytical, articulate and teachable.

APPENDIX K

RIGHT NOW MEDIA VIDEO STREAMING

The customizable video library for every person in your church. Equip families. Resource groups. Develop leaders.

Right Now Media offers:

- Streaming library of Bible study videos that inspires faith every day of the week.
- Resources for your people 24/7 through content that encourages individuals, families, and leaders.
- More than 20,000 biblical videos, available from any device
- Strengthen your Connect Group with easy-to-find resources that help them grow in their faith.

ROKUS IN THE BRIDGE

All Rokus for use in the Bridge are now in the cabinet located behind the door of the resource room. There is a drawer for each Roku, cables needed and instructions. Please sign out the Roku each time you use it and replace it in the drawer after each use. Too many were walking away. Please keep the location of the Rokus among classroom leaders. Thank you for your understanding.

ROKU INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove contents from bag. These should include ROKU Streaming Stick, USB power supply, and remote control.
2. Locate the input plate on the wall or cart in your classroom. Insert the ROKU's HDMI cable/connection into the HDMI Input.
3. Use the provided USB power supply to plug the ROKU in the nearest available power outlet.
4. Turn on the display and change the input to HDMI. The ROKU should now be shown on the display.
5. Use the ROKU remote control to open the Right Now Media app. It should already be logged into the Connect Group account. If this is not the case you'll need to log in using the following credentials. **Username: cg@mobberly.org**
Password: mobberly1
6. Once you're logged in, you can proceed to search for and play your curriculum.
7. After using, please return the Roku to its proper drawer in the Resource Room and sign the "Sign-Out sheet" indicating you've brought it back.

APPENDIX L

BOOKS & RESOURCES

CARE

The Care Effect: Unleashing the Power of Compassion by David Crosby (New Hope Pub., 2016, ISBN: 978-1-59669-471-2)

CHURCH BELIEFS & VALUES

The 2000 Baptist Faith & Message,
<http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>

CONFRONTATION

Challenging Others to Change by June Hunt (Hendrickson Publishing marketing, 2013, ISBN 978-1-5963-6688-6)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Peacemaker by Ken Sande (Baker Books, 2004; 978-0-80106-4-852)

EVANGELISM

Tell Someone by Greg Laurie (B&H Publishing Group, 2016, ISBN:1-4336-9014-4)

Steps to Peace with God Gospel Tracts
– Available through serve office.

GOING DEEPER

Disciple-Making Quick Start Guide:
<https://mobberly.org/dmqsg/>

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

SHAPE Spiritual Gifts Assessment,
mobberly.org/shape

Personality Tests (aid in communication and identifying areas of gifting for group members:

- The Myer-Briggs Type Indicator
- Disc Assessment

MISSIONS & SERVING

When Helping Hurts by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert (Moody Publishers, 2012, ISBN:0-8024-0998-9)

How to be a People Helper by Gary Collins (Tyndale House Pub., 1995, ISBN: 978-0-8432-1385-8)

PRAYER

How to Develop a Powerful Prayer Life
by Dr. Gregory Frizzell (Master Design, 1999,
ISBN: 978-1-9302-8500-2)

TEACHING

Gospel-Centered Teaching by Trevin Wax (B&H Publishing, 2012; ISBN: 978-1-4336-8172-1)

Teaching to Change Lives by Dr. Howard Hendrick (Multnomah Books, 1987; ISBN 978-1-59052-138-0)

Disciple-Making Teachers by Josh Hunt (Vital Ministry Books Group Publishing, 1998; ISBN 0-7644-2031-3)

APPENDIX M

MOBBERLY HELP RESOURCES

HOPE ROAD COUNSELING MINISTRY

To schedule an appointment, 903.252.4673 or go to hoperoadcounseling.org for more info.



HOPE ROAD COUNSELING

Counseling services offered:

- Individual
- Premarital
- Marriage
- Pastoral
- Coaching
- Family
- Group

THRIVE!

Celebrate Recovery

(Mondays in The Crossing; meal at 6:30 p.m.)

Adult Groups (contact Thrive offices for semester offerings, date and times)

- Grief Share
- Divorce Care
- Adoptive Moms

- Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregivers
- Trust Based Relational Intervention and Trauma Informed Care

Children & Youth Groups

(contact Thrive offices for semester offerings, date and times)

- Grief Support
- Freeway for Teens
- TBRI for Kids

FAMILY SERVICES MINISTRY

On Tuesday mornings Gregg County residents can apply for assistance with eviction notices, utility shut-off notices, gasoline, as well as hearing about a life-changing relationship with Jesus. Mobberly members can receive financial and spiritual support from this ministry as well.

A dedicated team of lay members receives, processes, and counsels with the people God sends through the Family Services ministry. Resources for this ministry are provided through the annual Ministry Action Plan, direct contributions to benevolence, and an annual church-wide rummage sale.

If you need financial assistance, call 903.663.3100.

APPENDIX N

EAST TEXAS & LOCAL HELP/RESOURCES

If you are recommending this resource to someone you or your Connect Group are ministering to, you will need to research the entry requirements and qualifications with that person.

Below is a starting list of resources to get you started:

SHELTERS & SAFE HOMES

Women's Center of East Texas (safe house for abuse victims and children; bi-lingual; counseling services for women & children clients)

House of Hope (women only; temporary)

Hiway 80 Women & Children (temporary unless in program listed below)

Newgate Mission

REHABILITATION & RECOVERY PROGRAMS (RESIDENTIAL)

Hiway 80 Men's New Creation Program (6-month program)

Hiway 80 Women's New Direction Program (9-month intensive)

Sonshine Lighthouse (12-month recovery/re-entry program; women and children)

House of Disciples (12-month men's recovery/re-entry program)

Graciously Broken Ministries (12-month women's recovery/re-entry program; no children)

Rahab's Retreat & Ranch (12-month trafficking/sex-trade recovery program; women and children)

Refuge of Light (safe home for teen victims of human trafficking)

Family Pathways (single parent families housing & program)

FOOD DISTRIBUTION & RESOURCE CENTERS

East Texas Veterans Resource Center

Longview Community Ministries (family services, food, financial assistance, RX assistance, Dental/Medical assistance, Special needs, Meals with Love, Learning Lab)

Longview Dream Center (food and clothing assistance, senior box program, life-skills classes)

Mission Marshall (university and college student service, food pantry, faith & financial classes, mock interviews)

Buckner Children & Family (foster care & adoption, senior living, family hope center)

Legacy Closet – clothing, diapers, etc. for foster/adopt children

Beds of Hope – bunk beds for children (must have CPS case worker assigned)

Harvest Outreach (food distribution)

Salvation Army (emergency financial assistance, food/nutrition program, music/arts program, men & women's ministries)

Hallsville Outreach Center (food, clothing and utilities)

Churches with assistance programs:

Longview Baptist Temple, New Beginnings
Calvary Baptist, Oakland Heights

PREGNANCY & RIGHT TO LIFE CENTERS

Hannah House (pregnant women 18+; providing adoption or parenting options)

Mercy Manor (pregnant women 18 and under; providing adoption or parenting options)

C.A.R.E. (Abortion Care & recovery for men and women)

Expectant Heart (pregnancy test, educational classes, career training, spiritual encouragement)

Marshall Pregnancy Resource Center
(pregnancy tests, options counseling, abortion education, adoption information, parenting support, abortion recovery)

MEDICAL

Wellness Pointe (behavioral, dental, family medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, optometry, BCCS Texas)

Alpine COC Compassion Clinic (care for hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, thyroid disease, and asthma/COPD, RX assistance)

Community Health Care (mental health/assistance)

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

Matthew 25:40 (CSB)

BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE 2000

I. THE SCRIPTURES

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. GOD

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attri-

butes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. GOD THE FATHER

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. GOD THE SON

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven

and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms

51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. MAN

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. SALVATION

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12;

15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14;

2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. THE CHURCH

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen

Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. THE LORD'S DAY

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come

and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. LAST THINGS

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. EVANGELISM & MISSIONS

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus

Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. EDUCATION

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by

the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. COOPERATION

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches.

They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. THE CHRISTIAN & THE SOCIAL ORDER

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death.

Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. PEACE & WAR

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be

separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. THE FAMILY

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates

to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

NOTES

**People leading
people into**
a life-changing,
ever-growing
relationship with
Jesus Christ.



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