

## Leading a Small Group Preparing a Lesson

**#1:** Do the lesson yourself! You can't lead a good discussion and point a group toward life-changing application if you haven't studied and applied the material.

**#2:** Prepare to lead the lesson. Go back through it and think about how to help the group discover and apply the truths of the lesson. Here are four steps that will help you prepare to lead the lesson.

### *Step One: Pray*

No matter how confident you feel in your ability to lead a group, continually ask God to guide you in your planning and implementation. You can plant a seed and water it, but God must cause the growth. You can prepare a brilliant lesson, but God must change lives. Spend time asking God to change you and the people in your group. Ask Him for wisdom and direction as you prepare. It's possible to spend hours preparing for your group time, but bottom line, it's God who uses His Word and Spirit to work in and through you.

### *Step Two: Summarize the Lesson*

In your own words, state the central truth of the lesson so you can grasp the key issues. "I think the central truth of this lesson is \_\_\_\_\_."

*Example: Christ Died for sinners.*

### *Step Three: Determine Objectives for the Lesson*

Write out some basic objectives in light of the central truth of the lesson. A simple way to do this is answer these questions:

"At the end of this group, I'd like my group members to **know** \_\_\_\_\_."

*Example: Christ died personally for them.*

"I'd like my group members to **feel** \_\_\_\_\_."

*Example: Grateful for this gift.*

"I'd like them to **do** \_\_\_\_\_."

*Example: Trust in His death solely for their right standing before God.*

### *Step Four: Choose Good Questions*

Select questions and activities that will help group members discover and apply the truths of the lesson. Think of specific examples you can share from your own life. Focus the lesson on the objectives you determined in step 3. Keep in mind that you want to help them discover and apply the truth themselves. See the handout on Asking Questions to learn how to direct the discussion.

After you get a good grasp on the lesson, you can choose the various elements which make up your meeting, such as icebreakers, relationship building activities, and prayer.

## Leading a Small Group Planning the Session

Think about a small group you liked. What made it enjoyable? Your leader probably did some fun things to help members get to know each other. You might have spent time praying. You studied the Bible. Think through the following issues as you plan each session:

What is the purpose of this group? What are the needs of this group? What are you trusting God to do in this group?

### ***One: Interaction with Each Other***

This is relationship-building time. It may include icebreakers or some other form of sharing time or fellowship. A relationship building time is crucial for any group, even if group members know each other. The leader can use a question, or icebreaker, that will help everyone get to know each other better. It's important for the leader to choose an activity that fits in to the time allotted for fellowship. Never underestimate the importance of creating an atmosphere where people feel at home. You'll find that food often helps. It makes people feel more comfortable. Jesus taught 90 percent of the time in the context of a meal.

### ***Two: Interaction with the Word***

This is when the group studies and applies God's Word together. Most leaders see this as the real meat of the group. Interaction with the Word is central, but sometimes the other sections of the group session make the time in the Word come alive.

### ***Three: Interaction with God***

Spend time praying. As a group grows together, prayer increases in importance. A new group usually won't feel comfortable praying together. So, you can share briefly about prayer, discussing why we pray or how to pray. Give them time to warm up to group prayer. You could pray for the group meeting and maybe ask a more mature member to pray at the end of the meeting. Some groups, even though they are made up of young believers, enjoy sharing prayer requests with each other. This helps the group bond together and helps their faith grow as they see God's answers. The prayer time might become the group's favorite time.

### ***Four: Information About Upcoming Activities***

This lets your group know what's happening in the ministry so they'll have opportunities to meet new people. In this portion you communicate any details about events going on during the next week or two. You could also include a teaser for next week's topic to motivate them to come back. For example, "Next week we'll look at how to break out of old sin patterns."