

# VIDEO 1: INTRODUCTION

Elly Marroquin

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Share with the group why you decided to become a small group leader.
2. What fears or apprehensions come to mind when thinking about leading a small group?
3. What skills do you possess that you feel will help you confidently lead your small group?
4. What skill do you think you can learn to help you confidently lead your small group?

# VIDEO 2: STARTING A SMALL GROUP

Christian Rodriguez

Starting a small group can feel overwhelming. However, by focusing on the most essential things, all of the to-do list items can come into focus.

Whether you are new to starting a small group, getting ready to begin a new small group trimester, or have been leading a small group for years, Christian Rodriguez gives some good spiritual and practical insight on tools to implement when starting a small group.

## STARTING A SMALL GROUP

1. Prayer- God has called you to lead, so pray about what God would have for your small group
  - Your prayers have power (James 5:16, ESV)  
Your prayers help your small group through hardships (Ephesians 6:18, MSG)!
  - Your prayers help prepare you for the will of God for your group (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, ESV)!
2. Ask the question: Who are my people?
  - Ask God what specific people He is asking you to reach and lead.
  - Who has God given you a passion for? i.e. An empty nester feeling called to lead a young adults group or a young professional feeling the burden to reach college students
3. What is your small group mission?
  - Think about one sentence that encapsulates what God has asked you to do with the people he has called you to reach.
  - That mission becomes the culture of your group and should be consistently repeated.
4. Take stock of your resources
  - What are your strengths and weaknesses?
  - What does your availability look like and what time can you set aside for your small group?
  - What responsibilities can you share with others in your small group?

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. How can you implement the practice of praying for your small group into your everyday life?
2. Take a few moments to think about those who you are most passionate to see come to know Jesus. Share your thoughts with the group and then pray that the Lord would help you reach these individuals through your small group.
3. Have you developed a small group mission statement? Take 5 or so minutes to craft a draft. Once you have completed this draft, find a partner and share.
4. What weaknesses or limitations do you have? Are these things someone in your group could eventually assist with? i.e. Is hospitality a weakness? Consider asking your church if someone would be willing host your group.

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# VIDEO 3: CREATING AN EXPERIENCE

Rod Whitlock

Helping guests or new life group attendees feel a part of your small group family is important as you look to grow and eventually multiply your small group. This can be in part accomplished by creating a positive first-time guest experience. In the third training video of this series, Rod Whitlock shares some simple ideas to help new people feel right at home, want to come back to your small group, and look forward to the following week.

## CREATING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP:

1. Make an introduction
  - Determine your church's system for small group invitation and master it!
  - Personally invite people to join your small group.
  - Always be prepared with all the information someone may need to attend your small group.
  - **OVERCOMMUNICATE!** It may take a few touch points of communication for someone to come to your small group i.e. in person invitation, text message, and a social media post.
2. Prepare for your small group
  - Make sure the room is prepared
  - Consider seating, lighting, temperature, food, etc.
  - Prepare Spiritually
  - Be prepared for the actual small group time
3. Welcome people
  - Greet them at the door
  - Learn names
  - Anticipate guest's questions i.e. where the bathroom is located
  - 1 Peter 4:8-10
4. Follow-up
  - Create a plan for follow-up
  - Consider meeting with small group members or guests outside of small group time

## GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Discuss your church's system for inviting people to small groups. Make sure you are familiar with it and ask your group leader questions, if necessary.
2. What are some creative ways to invite people from your church or community to your small group?
3. Imagine it is your first time at a small group. What questions might you have? Write these down and then answer them based on the small group you lead. Let this be a guide for you as you welcome new people to your small group.
4. What are some ways you can follow-up with people in your small group whether they are new or long-time attendees?

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# VIDEO 4: BEST PRACTICES

Elly Marroquin

As a small group leader there are some universal best practices that will help you successfully lead a small group such as creating a plan, maneuvering awkward moments, and creating space for the Holy Spirit to impact people's lives.

In part 4 of this video series, Elly Marroquin walks you through these best practices to help you confidently lead your small group.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

### 1. Create a plan

- Creating a plan helps you to develop continuity between meeting times, stay focused, be creative, and be confident.
- Six questions to guide your planning process
  - What passage of scripture will we be discussing?
  - What is the main idea/theme/objective?
  - What is your call to action?
  - What activities do I want to use?
  - What resources and items will I need?
  - Am I evaluating my plan before my small group time?

### 2. Lead through awkward moments

- Let's examine a few scenarios or personality traits that may lead to awkward moments in your small group:
  - The Conversation Dominator: Never discourage people from participating. Instead have a private conversation encouraging them to help you involve others in discussion.
  - The Shy Small Group: Silence is not always bad; sometimes people need time to process. Consider using open-ended questions or even pairing people for discussion as an alternative to large group discussion.
  - The Over-sharer: Always thank people for their contribution effectively validating them. Then guide those in your small group to respond either with prayer or examining the scripture. A private conversation may also be necessary as you seek to pastor that individual.
  - The Challenger: Be careful not to escalate an authority confrontation. Remind everyone that we are to build one another in discussion. Let them know you would be happy to have a conversation with them at another time to address the concern they raised. Consider bringing a pastor into that conversation.
- Remember you are not alone! Your church leadership is there to support you as a small group leader.

# VIDEO 4: BEST PRACTICES

Elly Marroquin

## 1. Create spirit-filled moments

- Pray that you would be open to the Holy Spirit's prompting and leading in your small group as you plan (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17, ESV; Galatians 6:2, AMP).
- Plan a time for prayer in your small group. People should come to your small group expecting to pray!
- Create space to seek the gifts of the Holy Spirit for individuals in your small group (1 Corinthians 4:1).

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

### 2. As a group, create a mock plan for a small group by answering these six questions:

- What passage of scripture will we be discussing?
- What is the main idea/theme/objective?
- What is your call to action?
- What activities do I want to use?
- What resources and items will I need?
- Am I evaluating my plan before my small group time?

### 3. Have you ever led or been a part of a small group and encountered a conversation dominator, a shy small group, an over-sharer, or a challenger? How did you or the leader respond? Was the response positive or negative? How could the response be improved?

### 4. How do you plan to incorporate prayer into the routine of your small group?

### 5. Have you experienced the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Take time as a group to seek the Holy Spirit's gifts.

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# VIDEO 5: DIVING DEEPER INTO SCRIPTURE

Saehee Duran

Using and teaching scripture in your small group is a vital component of making mature, Christ-following disciples. However, scripture teaching and discussion can often lead to people asking difficult questions in your small group. Pastor Saehee Duran gives us some helpful tips for using scripture in our small group and guidance for confidently and humbly responding to difficult questions.

## DIVING DEEPER INTO SCRIPTURE

1. The Bible needs to be a priority in your small group
  - Only 1 out of 5 Americans have read through the entire Bible.
  - True discipleship cannot be done without engaging the Bible. It completes us (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
  - The scriptures contain timeless truths that are relevant for today (Psalms 119:105, ESV).
  - No curriculum or book compares to the Bible
2. You are not just a discussion leader; you are a spiritual mentor
  - Discussions are great for community building, but they cannot be your only tool.
  - Discussion must be balanced with biblical engagement.
3. How do we engage with scripture during small group?
  - Leading a small group does not require a bible degree. It requires a love for the Bible and the courage to engage it even when you do not know everything.
  - When preparing for small group and reading a passage of scripture ask yourself...
    - What did this passage mean to the original reader?
    - How does this passage point toward Jesus?
    - What does this passage have to do with the people I minister to in my small group?
  - If someone asks a question you don't know the answer to, don't guess. Let them know you will study it and get back to them. Consult a mentor or pastor.

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. What plan or strategy do you have for prioritizing scripture in your small group?
2. What fears do you have when it comes to engaging the bible in your small group?
3. Have you ever been asked a question about the Bible that you did not know the answer to? How did you handle it? Would you handle it different in the future knowing what you know now?
4. Complete the following group activity together.
  - Read Luke 2:41-52 as a group. Answer the following questions about the passage. Consult outside resources if necessary.
    - What did this passage mean to the original reader?
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# VIDEO 6: GOAL SETTING

Christian Rodriguez

Just as we set goals for our work, life, and family, we must also set goals for our small group as we seek to lead people to Jesus and disciple them. But what good are goals if we do not evaluate them?

In this small group training video, Christian Rodriguez gives some practical tips for creating effective and useful goals, evaluating those goals, and examining the overall effectiveness of your group.

## SETTING GOALS FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP

### 1. Set goals for your small group

- When crafting your goals, begin with the end in mind (Ephesians 4:11-13, NIV).
- When creating goals, use the acronym SMART.
  - S- Specific
  - M- Measurable
  - A- Attainable
  - R- Results-based
  - T- Time-bound

### 2. Consider Scope and Sequence

- Does your curriculum align with the goals you have set? If you are using good curriculum, it should align and help guide your goals
- When examining the curriculum, you use, ask yourself...
  - Are there any key doctrines missing?
  - Does your curriculum cover a multitude of scripture?
  - Are controversial or difficult topics covered? Or does the curriculum only cover what is comfortable?

### 3. Think multiplication

- Size should not be the goal. The goal should be multiplication.
- Identify who in your small group could become a small group leader and invest from the beginning.
- Keep your small group attendance between 8-16 people. When your small group exceeds 16, someone from your group should start another small group!

### 4. Evaluate your group's goals

- Are you accomplishing your small group goals?
- As you continue to develop as a leader, are you evaluating your own leadership and how it may be affecting your group's goals?
- Invite others to evaluate your leadership and small group. Sometimes an outside perspective can help you improve as a leader and group and ultimately, help you accomplish your group's goals.
- Be sure to have accountability as a leader. This accountability can help you accomplish the goals you set. Don't do it alone! Be humble and ask for help in achieving your goals (Proverbs 11:2, ESV).

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1. Create a goal for your small group using the acronym SMART.
  - Specific-
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2. Evaluate the curriculum you are using. Use it as a group to answer the following questions:
  - Are there any key doctrines missing?
  - Does your curriculum cover a multitude of scripture?
  - Are controversial or difficult topics covered? Or does the curriculum only cover what is comfortable?
3. Discuss ways to identify future small group leaders within your group. What can you do as a leader to develop future small group leaders?
4. What is the value of accountability when setting goals?

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# VIDEO 7: LEADING FROM A FULL CUP

Rod Whitlock

As a small group leader, you should be leading from a full spiritual cup. What does that mean? As a leader, you must be spiritually prepared to overflow into the lives of others. Leaders cannot lead effectively if they themselves are dry spiritually.

Rod Whitlock walks us through some practical tools to help leaders stay spiritually full and overflowing. By practicing spiritual disciplines and establishing accountability, we can all be better leaders and examples to those we are discipling.

## LEADING FROM A FULL CUP

1. What is leading from a full cup?
  - You must be spiritually prepared to overflow into the lives of others. You cannot come to your small group as a leader empty.
  - To be a leader, we must know how to follow. We must learn how to follow Jesus.
  - It is not a matter of how much time we spend with Jesus, but rather that we consistently spend quality time.
  - When you walk into your small group, you want to be prepared to minister to as a small group leader. This comes out of the overflow of our time with Jesus
  - Things are better caught than taught. People will want to emulate what you do as a leader. If you want your small group attendees to spend time with Jesus, then you must spend time with Him yourself.
2. What is your plan?
  - How are you going to make sure you are spending time with Jesus? Develop a plan to spend time with him just as you would a spouse, family member, or friend.
3. Who is your accountability?
  - Plans can be hard to follow. Find someone to share your plan with and give them the freedom to keep you accountable.
  - Give your accountability partner the permission to ask any question to help you grow as a leader (James 5:16, NIV).

## GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Take a few moments and do an internal spiritual inventory. Are you spending consistent quality time with Jesus? Share with someone sitting close to you.
2. Take 10-15 minutes, put on some worship music, and spread across the room. Seek Jesus and ask Him what He would have you do as you seek to spend more time with Him.
3. What strategies have you used to spend more time with Jesus throughout your day?
4. How can you encourage people in your small group to spend more time with Jesus?

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# VIDEO 8: CONCLUSION

Elly Marroquin

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Share with the group your number one takeaway from this small group training series.
2. What questions do you still have after completing this small group leader training series?
3. What is one big dream you have for you small group?
4. Pair/group up or as one big group pray for each small group leader.

# VIDEO 8: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Additional Small Group Leader Resources:

- [360man.ag.org](http://360man.ag.org)
- [Church Multiplication Network](#)
- [Equip Women: Leadership Training Units](#)
- [Bible Engagement Project](#)
- [Momentum Training Series](#)
  - [Including Children with Disabilities](#)
  - [Sticky Lessons - Learning That Lasts](#)
  - [Leaving a Spiritual Legacy - Model, Mentor, Message](#)

## Curriculum Suggestions:

- [Asking for a Friend Series: The Bible, Sexuality, and Life](#)
- [Asking for a Friend Series: Who is the Holy Spirit?](#)
- [Faith Case: League of Investigators](#)
- [Journey through John: Men's Discipleship Resource](#)
- [Men.ag.org \(200+ free discipleship lessons\)](#)
- [Bible Engagement Project: Listen Curriculum](#)
- [Radiant Life](#)
- [Tru Fire](#)