



Small Group Ministry Skills
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Lesson #1: How To Have A Great Life Group!

How many of you want to have a GREAT LIFE Group? No one in his right mind wants to be part of a mediocre group, or a dead group, or a negative group. It is possible for a group to deteriorate and become dull, disillusioning, and drab. This is where skillful leadership is required. No other single factor has as much importance as leadership, in either killing or nourishing the group. In this lesson we will discuss some practical ways to build, maintain, and lead GREAT LIFE Groups.

I. Become a Great Leader

- A. As goes the leadership so goes the nation, or so goes the church, or so goes the group. If your group is not going like you want, look at yourself as the leader!
- B. Get your heart totally committed to successfully leading your group (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Your group will only be as committed as you are because leaders set the pace.
- C. Be diligent and study (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:12-16).
- D. Relax, enjoy yourself and have fun. YOU set the emotional tone for the group more than anyone else.
- E. Think through questions ahead of time, and resist answering your own questions. If questions are difficult for you to develop, work through the Training Manual, pp. 22-24.
- F. Allow people freedom to think, but keep them on the subject.
- G. Encourage questions but refer them back to the group to encourage total participation.
- H. NEVER embarrass anyone. If you do, everyone will feel embarrassed. If you have a problem that needs to be handled with an individual, handle it away from the group privately.
- I. Listen to what people are really trying to say. Restate the question if necessary to get clarification.
- J. Let the Bible speak for itself. Remember, it *always* has more authority than you do!

II. Nurture a Great Host

- A. Start LIFE Group #1 after a multiplication with introductions, and go through the "Ministry of Hospitality" lesson, even if everyone has gone through it before.
- B. Ask the host publicly if there are any specific things that we should be aware of (furniture, antiques, parking, food, etc.). Ensure that your group members always respect and honor the hospitality that is being offered them.
- C. Ask the host to let us know immediately if there is something that needs attention.
- D. Praise the host and give a round of applause.



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- E. Ask your host periodically how things are going.
- D. Encourage your host with cards of thanks.

III. Encourage Great Initiative

- A. People want to serve God and other people. That is where they find fulfillment, and recognition. As a leader, it's your job to help people express their gifts for the good of the group and the body as a whole.
- B. Get with your ministry people in the group, and nurture their gifts and make suggestions on how they can do their ministries more effectively.
 - *Check your Tele-care ministry and see if there are things that need attention. You might suggest that they call one or two people a day, just to offer encouragement, or to pray with someone over the phone. Suggest ways to do this.
 - *If someone in the group offers a suggestion for a fun night or activity, never discourage their idea, even though it may not be the best for the moment. *"That's a great idea, Joe. Perhaps we could work on that in the future together. I have a suggestion for a more urgent work that I could really use your help on if you are available."*
 - *Hospital visitation for members of your group is very important. If you as the leader can't visit your group member, get the Tele-care or Benevolent person to inform your entire group so that hospitalized person can be ministered to.
- C. As a great leader, you will help people feel useful. Your ministry is to serve, and encourage your group members to be effective in their service and ministry.

IV. Develop Great Comradery

- A. Speak in terms of "we". It is not *your* LIFE Group.
- B. Use shy members for special projects, and develop friendships.
- C. Create times with your members away from the group meeting just to "hang out."
- D. Send cards of appreciation to your members, or ask one of your group members to do this.
- E. Open the meetings with prayer requests, sharing time for struggles or good news.
- F. Sing songs if you are comfortable or if you have someone who can lead.
- G. On the first meeting of a new Group, ask everyone to share "What do you want to see our LIFE Group accomplish this year?"
- H. Create a team spirit with all of your members.



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Lesson #2: Basic Skills For Leading A Small Group

The success of a small group depends largely on its leadership. The leader is the primary key to making the group experience happen in a healthy, fun, and meaningful manner. He or she is the guide, facilitating the interaction and moving the session toward its intended objective.

Overbearing leadership or leadership that is "limp" can be fatal. Small group leaders must enjoy their ministry and feel comfortable in it.

I. Five necessary characteristics of successful group leaders.

- A. Enthusiasm:** The word "Enthusiasm" comes from a compound Greek word, *En* (in or with) and *Theos* (God). Therefore, enthusiasm means, "God in or with us." God is not dull or boring, so the person who has God in him, will not be dull or boring. Nothing is more contagious than being around someone with enthusiasm. It is the conviction that anything is possible if God is with us.
- B. Dedication:** The leader must be dedicated to the ministry of the word and prayer, and must be committed being a successful group leader. *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*
- C. Spirit-led life:** Leaders of small groups must demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5:22-23). Evidence of the Holy Spirit working in and through a surrendered life comes through daily fellowship with the Spirit in the Word and prayer.
- D. A life worth imitating:** Paul encourages us to *"Pay close attention to your life and your doctrine ... for as you do, you will ensure salvation for yourself and those who hear you"* (1 Timothy 4:16). Leaders always live more in a fish bowl than regular members, and as a group leader, your life will be under close examination by those you teach. That's why training and certain qualifications are necessary for successful leaders.
- E. Time and means:** There must be adequate time available in the leader's life to give to leading and developing a successful group. You are doing much more than simply leading a group discussion once a week. You have been entrusted with a ministry to fulfill.

II. Principles of successful group leadership

- A. Lead in love:** Successful leaders are those who love people, and who let people know they are loved. Leaders in the kingdom earn the right to lead by demonstrating love. The small group should become a place of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. This is the "L" in LIFE.



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B. Follow-up: The success of a small group is not only gauged on what happens in the meeting, but what happens between the meetings as well. The leader is the connecting point for the group members. Absent members must be contacted to

prevent feelings of disconnection. New Christians in your group must be matured, nurtured, and protected. Your ministry is to lead the way in follow-up, for both new and older disciples.

C. Keep learning: Good small group leaders do not need to know all the answers. The best leaders are those who keep the attitude of a learner. Handle tough questions by asking the group to share together or refer the question to more research. Practice the principle of learning together.

D. Solve problems creatively: Any time you work with people, there will *always* be problems that need solving. *Smooth sailing does not a mariner make*, Within every problem lies opportunity. Don't shy away from problems, but look for creative ways to solve them.

E. Ask for help: When a leader is confronted with a need in his or her life, they should feel free to ask their group or others in the ministry for help. Helping others with their problems starts with leaders showing how they handle their own problems. Good leaders admit their need for help.

F. Be tuned in: The leaders of a small group must depend on the Holy Spirit and His sword, the Word of God. They must see themselves as instruments through which the Spirit can freely minister. Time must be spent in study, prayer, and meditation before and during the group meeting for the direction God wants the group to follow.



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Lesson #3: Developing and Keeping a Healthy Group Atmosphere

Introduction

A vital factor in seeing your small group grow is setting and maintaining a proper atmosphere. This begins by carefully selecting the right location that is conducive for good group dynamics. It should be free of interruption and allow for the meeting to be as uplifting and edifying as possible. The leader should work closely with someone who can serve as the host or hostess whose task it is to see that an atmosphere of love and acceptance is maintained.

There are some important principles that the leader should follow beyond just maintaining a good physical atmosphere. These will give the group a quality of excitement and energy.

I. New members being added to the group

New members being brought into the group will keep it alive and growing. The minimum goal of each group is 2 families brought to Christ per year. A common problem for small groups is that they tend to become *ingrown*. This is unhealthy and can lead to the death of your group. Groups should have a close heart-to-heart fellowship, but this can become a danger if the members get so comfortable that they don't want to bring in anyone new or if they are resistant to multiplication. Each time someone new is brought into the group, it brings a new dynamic and life.

Here are some things to practice to keep your group from becoming stagnant:

- A. Keep an empty chair in your group meeting for the new person you expect to come and as a reminder to everyone that you intend to grow and multiply.
- B. Pray over your "Lost Sheep" list at each meeting.
- C. Assign people on the list to group members for inviting to the group.
- D. Plan a social event or fun time to make contact and establish credibility with new people.

II. Hang loose

The leader needs to maintain a relaxed spirit in the group. Here are some points to remember in keeping this atmosphere:

- A. Be honest and open, not afraid to discuss or consider other points of view. We are not afraid of discovering truth.
- B. Accept yourself as a person of worth so that you can reach out to others and make them comfortable with who they are. You shouldn't expect others to be perfect, and you shouldn't expect yourself to be perfect, although this is our aim as disciples.



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- C. Learn to be shock-proof; not judgmental, harsh, or over opinionated. Practice the rule of accepting the person while not necessarily agreeing with them. Jesus was a *friend of sinners*, and we should also be.
- D. Work to maintain an atmosphere of love, allowing the Holy Spirit the freedom to work.

III. Have a good sense of humor

Good clean humor and laughing together is a wonderful benefit to your group. People today are stressed out and need to be able to relax and release the tensions of life.

Proverbs shows the value of humor, "*A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones*" (Proverbs 17:22). *TIP:* The internet is a great place to find good clean jokes or quotes.

- A. Humor releases tension
- B. Humor relaxes the body
- C. Humor rests your spirit
- D. Humor renews your heart
- E. Humor reorients your life's perspective

IV. Keep things descent and orderly

A group meeting that is left to chance or is unruly will soon die or drive good people away. There are several things that can disrupt a group meeting and ruin a good atmosphere. Here are some of them and some suggestions for handling them.

A. Unruly children. If you are blessed with having children at your group, they can get out of control and disrupt the meeting if not controlled properly. This can be especially true with the children of new Christians or visitors. Here are some suggestions for handling this:

- *Hire a baby-sitter and have the parents of small children pitch in to cover the cost
- *Employ your child care ministry to teach the children a Bible class in a bedroom, or a basement room
- *Purchase some coloring books and *soft toys* for children to entertain themselves.
- *Instruct the parents individually about how to train their children to be obedient and polite in a group meeting. Many parents are embarrassed by the conduct of their small children and this is one of the reasons they don't come. Your help will usually be greatly appreciated.

B. Habitual latecomers. If your regular members come late all the time, get with them in private and encourage them to come 10 minutes early. Let them know they are wanted, needed, and loved, but coming in late is a hindrance to the atmosphere of the group and is offensive to some people. Of course, if a person comes in late because he gets off work just before the group, this is perfectly



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acceptable and understandable, but being late simply because of poor planning or lack of discipline is unacceptable.

Lesson #4: Leadership Team Of A Small Group

Introduction

The success of any organization is determined by the success of the leadership. The success of a small group, which we call a LIFE Group, is no different. This lesson covers the roles, the functions, and the focus of the LIFE Group leadership team.

I. The Roles of the LIFE Group team

- A. **Leader:** This person is a fully qualified and appointed Life Minister, and is ultimately responsible for the LIFE Group. This person ensures that the group does what is necessary to fulfill the purpose and balanced ministry of the group as a whole.
- B. **Assistant Leader:** This person assists the leader in various functions of small group operations. The assistant leader can be an apprentice, or a fully trained and appointed Life Minister.
- C. **Host:** This person is an extremely vital member of the team. The host can set the tone and atmosphere for the entire group. The spiritual gift of hospitality must be present in the host or host family. Choose and work with your host carefully.

II. The fourfold function of the LIFE Group leadership team

- A. **Shepherd:** The leadership team is the primary means of caring for every member of the congregation or prospects associated with that group.
- B. **Facilitate:** Someone must assume the responsibility for the LIFE Group meeting. While it is generally the leader, the assistant leader can facilitate any given meeting at the request of the leader. Sometimes, sharing the facilitating function on alternate weeks is a good idea. Don't lecture, facilitate the learning, discovery, and application process.
- C. **Support:** The facilitator of any given meeting must have a strong support person or persons. This support person helps keep the discussion moving and on target. The support person should sit across from the leader and help people be drawn into the conversation.
- D. **Recruiter:** New people being brought into the group will keep it alive, vibrant, and growing. All members of the leadership team become part of the recruiting team. They set the tone for the rest of the members in the group. If the group is not inviting new members and studying with non Christians, the leadership team needs to focus outward and get the momentum going.



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II. The fourfold focus of the leadership team

- A. **Evangelism:** Groups must stay focused on outreach. The group needs to do regular "check ups" to ensure it stays "seeker friendly." One new family brought into the group every six months is a reasonable minimum goal. Experience shows that a congregation is happier, healthier, and more vibrant with a constant flow of new Christians being added. People tend to focus on the positive things when growth is occurring.

- B. **Discipleship:** A LIFE Group can help each other in the group by sharing the life of Christ with each other, and helping each other be more Christ like. Disciples become like their teacher, and the ultimate teacher should be Christ (Luke 6:40). Help each other with practical application of Biblical principles, commands, and attitudes.

- C. **One another care:** Leaders should ask, "Is each member and visitor in my group being adequately cared for?" "Do I know their needs?" "Do *they* feel loved, cared for, and needed?" "Is the group involved in helping to meet these needs?" "Am I setting the tone in my group for mutual care?"

- D. **Service:** Calvin Coolidge said, "No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave." Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom (Matthew 20:28). You might consider some service project as a group, such as helping a widow, visiting a nursing home, helping a single mother, or taking her kids fishing. Serving keeps the group balanced by helping members focus on the needs of others.

III. Balance your entire team

- A. Within each LIFE Group there are several ministries present (Leader, Assistant or apprentice, benevolence, host, prayer, and child care). Continue to nurture and encourage these ministries and keep your group balanced. Healthy cells, multiply. A healthy body is made up of healthy cells. Keep the cells healthy and growing, and the body will continue to be healthy and will grow.

- B. A group remains healthy when its leadership team is healthy. As the leaders go, so goes the group.



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Lesson #5: How To Run A Small Group Meeting

Introduction

Running or facilitating a small group meeting can be exciting and easy, especially if the leader follows some guidelines. There are 17 principles for Successful Home Cell Groups that we examined in the LIFE Group training manual (pp. 16-18). These principles are the basis upon which successful cell ministries around the world use. When these principles are followed, small groups are healthy and will thrive over a long period of time.

I. Before the meeting

- A. Keep in mind the total time the meeting will last. Generally, 1 hour to 1 1/2 hour is a good time.
- B. Start and end on time. This keeps people comfortable, because people like things that are predictable. This is especially important for visitors.
- C. Have an unwritten agenda in your mind of what you hope to accomplish. Never lead small group meetings unprepared or flat footed, and never try to "wing it."
- D. Endeavor to balance the three necessary elements for an effective meeting: Sharing, prayer time, and Bible study & application.

II. Sharing time

- A. The more people participate, the more they will feel like a family. It builds bonds.
- B. Keep the sharing time in balance with the other elements of the meeting. If your group deteriorates to a one hour "rap session", it will soon deteriorate.
- C. Sharing time may consist of the following:
 1. Welcome and guest introduction.
 2. Ice breaker activity (e.g. "My favorite flavor of ice cream is...")
 3. Good news sharing, or reports of answered prayer.
 4. Appreciation of one another
 5. Share the news of people who became Christians recently
 6. Worship or singing
 7. Announcements
- D. Sharing time = approximately 15 minutes

III. Prayer time

- A. Prayer is simply talking to God in easy, natural, conversation. It may be short sentences of praise or brief requests. Don't be flowery.



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- B. Never force someone to lead a prayer if he is uncomfortable.
- C. Ask for people to share prayer requests, and ask the prayer servant to share any answered prayers this week.
- D. Keep the A-C-T-S-S of prayer in mind (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication, and Submission).
- E. Time = Approximately 10 minutes.

IV. Bible study and application

- A. This section demands your committed preparation. Never attempt to lead a group discussion without first committing serious study time before the lesson. You owe it to God and to those you are helping to learn. There is no excuse for poor or sloppy preparation in this area.
- B. This element of the small group meeting will usually take the most time. Yet, it too must be kept in balance with the other activities so as to keep the relational and ministry aspects of your group alive.
- C. Application of the Bible occurs generally as the group members dialog together over the lesson questions. Specifically, the application questions point to a personal level. "How do I apply this lesson to my personal life?"
- D. Time - Approximately 30 minutes.

V. Closing Prayer

- A. Close the lesson with prayer and ask God to help the members apply the truths to their lives.
- B. Always try to end on time.
- C. Time = Approximately 5 minutes.

VI. Total meeting time = one hour.



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Lesson #6: Good Group Dynamics

Establishing and maintaining a good dynamic in your group is an ongoing challenge as a successful leader. Sometimes a group is disorganized, and this bewilders people. Some groups are dominated by one or maybe two people, and this isolates people. Some groups become dull or "flat", and this discourages people.

Every group will experience some ups and downs, and that is normal and healthy. The purpose of this lesson is to help you be aware of good group dynamics, and how to capitalize on the strengths and weaknesses of your own group.

I. Establish an atmosphere of love and encouragement

- A. Practice mutual edification (Romans 14:9).
 - 1. Seek to build each other up. Affirm one another. Build healthy self-esteem in each member. This makes people want to come and share their encouragement.
 - 2. Caring for one another is a natural byproduct of small groups. The leader, assistant and host need to set the example in how they express love and care for each other.
- B. Encourage everyone in the group.
 - 1. Make each person feel important. Let them know that their ideas and comments are valued.
 - 2. Avoid focusing advice on just one member of the group. This is not a counseling session.
- C. Respond lovingly to a need expressed ... immediately
 - 1. Pray immediately when a need is expressed. If the need is important enough, then pray for it before going on to other requests.
 - 2. Teach by example. When you as the leader have a need, share it and ask the group to pray for you. You always are more approachable when you are transparent with your life and your own personal needs.

II. Seek to gain everyone's participation in the group

- A. The leader is a facilitator, not a teacher or lecturer.
 - 1. "Play dumb." The leader should not respond to every question.. You must allow the group members to give their input.
 - 2. Don't be afraid of silence. Sometimes the leader must be quiet and wait for the members to formulate their response to a question. It may be necessary to rephrase a question and ask different people their opinion to get the pump primed.



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3. Make your Bible study time like exploring a cave. Don't stand at the entrance of the cave and tell people what YOU see inside. You should be a tour guide. Take them in and let them explore for themselves.

4. If you have difficulty gaining everyone's active participation, it may be necessary and advisable to introduce the lesson and let everyone know that this is a discussion group. You will be going around the room and asking each person what their view is on particular questions etc. This may help get the ball rolling.

B. How you arrange the seating makes a difference.

1. Sit in a circle. Arranging the seating in a circle allows everyone to feel included.

2. Have everyone at the same eye level if you can, though this may not be all that important in a group that is comfortable with each other.

3. Try to have only one extra chair. Avoid having several empty chairs, and add chairs as needed. A feeling of closeness is lost if the group members are seated too far apart. If the group is having difficulty with spontaneous discussion, try seating everyone closer together

C. Everyone is encouraged to participate but no one is required to speak, read, or pray.

1. Don't hog, don't hide. Encourage everyone to share, by going person to person, or by asking individual people their view. This is a good way to encourage shy people to speak, and an excellent way to prevent an aggressive person from hogging all the conversation. "That's a good point, Joe. Mary, what do you think about the same question? Why?"

III. Handle problem people in a positive way

A. Handle problem people away from the group in a one-to-one basis.

1. No dumping permitted. A disturbed person cannot be allowed to become the center of attention in the group. Make it clear that everyone is loved, but that no "dumping is permitted" NOTE: this is not to say that a regular person who comes and who may be unusually upset should be pushed aside. Minister to genuine needs immediately as a group.

2. Refer troubled people to a support group, if one is available, which might better meet their needs.

B. Don't allow people to confess other's faults.

1. No gossip. Don't talk about people outside the group.

2. Focus on helping those in the group by asking "How can we pray for you?"

C. Don't allow doctrinal discussions that are divisive or argumentative.

1. Tell them, "I'll be happy to discuss this with you after the meeting"

2. Or suggest, "I'll go with you to the preacher or some other competent teacher about that issue if it is important to you. Don't discuss divisive things in the group!"

D. Don't allow any one person to do all the talking.



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1. Don't give frequent eye contact with the talker.
2. Have the talker sit next to you perhaps, not across from you.
3. Intervene with, "That's a good point Pete, Sally would you read the next verse for us..."

Lesson #7: Managing Disruptions and Problems

Every small group will have its share of either disruptions or problems. The leader must be prepared to handle these quickly and effectively.

I. Common problems

1. Latecomers
2. Children
3. Divisive topics
4. Telephone calls
5. Disturbed members
6. Overly talkative members
7. Quiet members

II. General principles for leaders

- A. The leader must keep a positive attitude and be flexible. Remember, "*Smooth sailing does not a mariner make.*"
- B. Anticipate and prepare to meet problems with confidence.
- C. Keep your aim to make the group mutually edifying.
- D. Learn to respond and not react to people or problems
- E. If you need to confront, do so immediately, kindly, and appropriately.
- F. Try to never surrender your leadership to a problem.
- G. Have realistic expectations of the group.
- H. Periodically remind the group of the guidelines or governing principles.
- I. Seek counsel from other group leaders, from the leaders' meeting, your coach, or other competent church leaders.
- J. Trust God.

III. Preempt common disruptions

- A. If your group meets in a home, ask that the phone be placed on a recorder if possible.
- B. Always anticipate latecomers by setting empty chairs within easy access. Quickly welcome them, but keep moving on in the discussion. Don't stop when people come in.
- C. Ask the host to be prepared to handle outside interruptions.



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- D. Arrange for children to be cared for at a different location if they are overly disruptive. A variety of arrangements can be made such as a common child care provider or rotate child care among the adults. The ideal situation is for the children to behave, and actively participate in the group discussion with the adults.

IV. Do not allow divisive discussion

- A. Doctrinal and political debates will polarize the group. Don't allow either to take place.

V. Handle EGR's quickly and lovingly

- A. An "EGR" is a person for whom "Extra Grace is Required." They are people with either deep emotional problems or who are highly dysfunctional. In a group setting, they will usually become the center of attention if allowed. The leader must show love, yet make it clear that inappropriate dumping, behavior, or conduct cannot be allowed in the group setting. If not handled immediately, the group could be ruined!
- B. Talk to EGR's aside from the group
 1. Let them know that you want to help them but your group may not be the best place for them.
 2. Refer them to professional counseling if needed, or a recovery type support group.
 3. Take advantage of supervision or coaches if needed.

VI. Managing the Conversation

- A. Gently ask quiet members to offer their opinions or do a round where each person is asked to respond.
- B. Speak to talkative members privately if they have a tendency to dominate the conversation.
- C. Caution: When talking to someone about a problem or confronting anyone for any reason, you must be extra careful to control your tone, gestures, and voice. Never make a person feel like they are being attacked. "Joe, I know that you are anxious for our group to grow, and your enthusiasm is really great, but can I offer suggestions that may help our group grow?" Wait for Joe to say "YES". This then gives you permission to offer your suggestion and Joe will not take it defensively!
- D. If you are having problems getting and keeping the discussion moving, you may need to spend extra time getting a clear mental picture of the lesson, and create your own questions from the suggestions in your group training manual.
- E. Creating stimulating, productive discussion which helps people discover the truth for themselves is an art that you should never assume comes easily!



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Lesson #8: How To Develop Effective Leadership

Requirements For Small Group Leaders

- I. They must be consistent in living a Christian lifestyle with a daily commitment to prayer as a top Priority. (1 Timothy 4:11-16; Acts 6:3-4).
- II. They must catch the vision of the church, be loyal to the leadership and be committed to accomplishing the great things God has called us to do (Hebrews 13:7).
- III. They must be dependable and accountable to one another and to those placed in leadership (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
- IV. They must be led by and controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:14-17; Galatians 5:21).
- V. They must be committed to training (2 Timothy 2:2)
- VI. They must work faithfully to build up the group numerically and each member spiritually. Look at the imperatives in First and Second Timothy that deal with Timothy's relationship to the local body.

The Life of a Small Group Leader

- I. A group leader is a guide (Numbers 27:15-17)
 1. It is a vertical relationship: *May the Lord... appoint a man over this community.*
 2. It's a horizontal relationship, *One who may lead them out and bring them in (cf. 1 Peter 5:1-4).*
- II. A group leader does not seek self-exaltation (Matthew 23:2-12).
 1. It is not a matter of position - *Don't love the place of honor... the more important seats!*
 2. It's not a matter of title - *Don't be called Rabbi, father... Teacher!*



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3. It's a matter of lifestyle and servant hood. *The greatest among you will be your servant.*

III. A Group Leader nurtures (Psalm 78:70-72; John 21:15-17)

Jesus makes a distinction within the flock

1. Feed my *lambs*
2. Take care of my *sheep*
3. Feed my *sheep*

Jesus is not interested in how much profit the sheep can produce for him, but that their needs are taken care of. Nurturing the flock will bring us closer to our Lord than anything else we do. It helps us understand the caring heart of God for us as his people. We will learn to avoid the human tendency to be attracted to the "beautiful people or successful people or popular people" We will see each person as unique, deeply loved by Christ, with special capacities to minister to the redeemed and the lost alike.

IV. A group leader protects (Acts 20:28-32)

1. The word *overseer* in this text means to *inspect, look carefully into, a watchman, guardian.*"
2. The group leader asks, "What can I do to help this person be closer to and more useful in his service to God?"
3. Remember, every single member of Christ's body is a minister and is to be guided into the ministry which flows from the spiritual gifts given by God's Spirit.

V. A group leader cares for needs (Ezekiel 34:1-16)

Note what false leaders do:

1. Only take care of themselves.
2. Eat, clothe themselves with wool, kill the choice animals.
3. Don't strengthen the flock, heal the sick or bring back strays.
4. They rule harshly and brutally.

Result: sheep are scattered and wandering and no one cared!

Notice what good leaders do:

1. Take care of the flock
2. Strengthen the weak
3. Heal the sick
4. Bind up the injured
5. Bring back the strays



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6. Search for the lost

Notice what the Good Shepherd will do

1. He will look after His sheep
2. He will rescue His sheep from all the places they have wandered.
3. He will gather His sheep out from all the nations and countries of the world.
4. He will bring His sheep into their own place and pasture them there.
5. He will search for the lost, bring back the strays, bind up the injured and strengthen the weak.
6. He will destroy the sleek and the strong
7. He will do all of this with justice.

So, what do small group leaders do?

1. Retrieve rather than abandon, and rescue rather than reject.
2. Our prayer life will increase in scope and in power as we continually go to our Lord for wisdom, power and direction.

VI. The group leaders *equips* priests for service (1 Peter 2:2-5, 9-10; Ephesians 4:11-16).

1. A priest stands between a holy God and his fellow man. He is a channel and Christ's activity flows through him (Col. 1:24-29). Therefore, he must be holy and royal. His hands which touch God must be *holy hands*. When facing persons in need, those hands belong to the King, and they are *royal hands*.
2. Note the term "being built" in this passage in 1 Peter. Effective priests are not born mature. Gradually, they will mature from one level to another. The ministry of a group leader is an equipping ministry for building up the believers who are the priesthood of God.
3. In Ephesians, we learn that the job description of shepherds and evangelists is to "*Prepare God's people for priestly works of service*." It's not the job of a shepherd or teacher to shelter the flock, but to lead it into ministry.

VI. A Group leader *relies* on the Lord for all resources (Luke 10:3-9).

1. Jesus must have scared them to death when he told them they would be like "lamb among wolves." How many lambs does it take to kill a wolf? Lambs must always trust the Shepherd for protection.
2. You never have a conflict of interest in a battle. The warriors rally around the mission.
3. They weren't to take extra clothes or money. They were to trust their Master to provide power for the encounters they would face.

VII. Conclusion

1. Remember that as a leader, you are in essence "shepherding and equipping" God's people who have been entrusted to you because you are reliable.



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(2 Timothy 2:2).

2. Teach them. Shepherd them. Nurture them. Lead them. Care for them. Equip them. Be an example to them.

Lesson #9 Crucial Principles For Successful Small Groups

1. Keep the group in balance

All L.I.F.E. Group meetings should center on the study of God's Word. The participants should come away with an understanding of three crucial concepts each week:

- A. What does the Bible say? (Observation)
- B. What does the Bible mean? (Interpretation)
- C. What does the Bible say to me? (Application)

We are interested in more than just acquiring Bible knowledge. We want everyone to know how the truth of the Bible is going to make a difference in his life.

2. Participation is the key to success

The leader is not the authority or the teacher, but rather is to act as a facilitator and guide. The arrangement of people will make a difference in the way people participate. The best way is a circle.

Don't pressure anyone to pray, read, or speak. The leader should be able to help even the most timid person to see that he, too, has something to offer, but without pressure.

3. Make prayer an important part of every study

A suggestion is to assign one person in the group to write down prayer requests and keep a diary of the prayers of the group. As the prayers are answered, date them and thank God for answering these prayers as He has. Just a word of instruction, in mixed groups the men should lead the prayers (1Timothy 2:8).

4. Respond immediately to an expressed need



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There is something very unloving about letting a person hang when he has just shared a deep concern in his life or if the study has deeply convicted him.

5. Encourage everyone in the group

Each person must be made to feel that his or her ideas and questions are important. Non Christian visitors as well as Christians can make "bad" or inappropriate comments. It's OK for them to make these comments because you know where they are spiritually then. The key is to encourage everyone, even if a statement needs correcting.

6. Control the discussion

Don't allow divisive doctrinal discussions to occur in the L.I.F.E. Group. Arguments will destroy people. Train your team of workers in the L.I.F.E. group to be aware of others beliefs, especially when you have non-Christian visitors. Don't cut down denominations or allow abusive comments to go unchecked. We are trying to attract and build people with positive teaching and encouragement. Caustic or uncontrolled "rabbit chasing" has little benefit and can even be detrimental.

7. Encourage a team spirit of encouragement

A L.I.F.E. Group is a team helping each other be everything they can be for God. We want to help build healthy, positive spiritual lives in one another. The leader sets the tone for mutual encouragement.

8. Follow-up on members between meetings

Those who are absent are to be called and encouraged. The L.I.F.E. Group leader is expected to know where his people are at all times.

New people are called in friendship and invited to participate. Regular attendees are called and given a word of appreciation. The leader or his designate should contact each person assigned to his L.I.F.E. Group each week.

9. New members brought into the group will keep it alive and growing

If the group is not evangelistic, it is not accomplishing a balanced ministry. We always want our groups focused outward on the lost. Some suggestions for equipping your group in bringing visitors are:

1. Set the example as a leader.
2. Have cards printed for your group that list the location, and time and encourage each member with the "one a day challenge" (everyone invite one person every day!).



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3. Pray every meeting for God to lead you to people with open hearts.

4. Have an "empty chair" always present as a reminder that there is supposed to be a precious soul in that chair next week and every week.

10. Handle problem people away from the group on a one-on-one basis

A disturbed person cannot be allowed to become the center of attention in the group. The L.I.F.E. Group leader must lead, making it clear that they are loved, but "no dumping permitted". We are not talking about the "bear one another's burden" problems that we all have, but are addressing specific emotionally problem people that can destroy a group. EGR's (Extra Grace Required) people will be part of the church. If these are in your group, hand them to a group specifically designed to minister to their needs or to the church leadership.

11. Don't allow people to confess other people's faults

Confessing sin and asking for prayers is healthy and commanded. However, we are not to confess someone else's sins. Don't permit this behavior in your group.

12. Don't allow one person to do all the talking

If one person persistently does all the talking, perhaps a statement such as, "thank you for your comments. Now let's hear what someone else has to say." Or, "Let's continue with our lesson." If one person dominates the conversation all the time, talk to them alone before the next study and gently correct the situation.

13. Keep learning: don't have all the answers

We do not expect leaders to have all the answers, but they do need to be learners. The best leaders are the best learners.

14. Maintain a relaxed, but organized atmosphere in the group

Set the tone for honesty and openness that is not afraid to discuss or consider other's point of view. You need to be organized and lead, but not lording it over and controlling the group. If you concentrate on your own personal development, people will follow. If you "force" your personality and your leadership, people will think you are incompetent and will not willingly follow.

15. Have a good sense of humor

According to Proverbs 17:22, laughter relaxes tension, relaxes our bodies, rests our spirit, renews our hearts, and reorients our life's perspective. Flippancy is unacceptable, good humor at the right occasion is excellent. Caution: If you have to



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try to be funny, you aren't!

16. When you have a need in your own life, ask your L.I.F.E. Group for help

The best leaders are those who keep admitting that they need the help of others. We are all part of the "one another plan". If you need prayers, if you've sinned and need to confess something for prayer, do it! Your actions will set the example for others to follow. If you "fake it" your group will do the same. If you are genuine, real, and honest, your group will become like you.

17. When you need help from the leadership of the church or from others... ask for it!

We are team players and are helping and supporting one another. There will be times when all of us run into things we may not be equipped to handle, so ask for help.



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Lesson # 10 How To Make Disciples

I. What Is Discipling?

DISCIPLING: is the process by which a Christian with a life worth emulating commits himself to a few individuals who have been won to Christ with the goal of maturing those new believers in Christ, and multiplying himself into a third spiritual generation (Luke 6:40).

The idea behind discipling another person is much more than simply leading that person to Christ. It's the process of helping that other believer mature to the point of becoming active and effective in reaping the harvest of souls in his pool of humanity, and then learning the ministry skills necessary to mature and train his converts to become effective in reaching the harvest of souls and turning those converts into effective workers, who in turn can train their converts and so on.

Jesus' ministry was not initially aimed at reaching the world. His earthly ministry was twelve men whom he called and then trained. Examine these passages (Luke 6:13; John 17:4; 6-9; 12-18). Jesus ministry touched thousands, but he trained (discipled) only twelve.

II. The Goal Of Biblical Discipleship:

The ultimate goal of Biblical discipleship is to be conformed to Christ

Galatians 4:19 _____

Romans 8:29 _____

2 Corinthians 3:18 _____

Those who had been discipled portrayed Jesus in their life in observable ways

Colossians 1:26-28 _____

2 Corinthians 4:7-11 _____

Acts 4:13 _____

A true disciple's goal in life is to also transform other people into Christ's image, and thus "Disciple them to Christ"

Matthew 27:57 _____

Galatians 4:19 _____



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2 Corinthians 3:2-3; 18 _____
1 John 2:6 _____
Colossians 1:28 _____
cf. 1 Corinthians 11:1 _____
Galatians 2:20 _____
Luke 6:40 _____

Lesson # 11 How To Shepherd Those In Your Group

How would you describe a shepherd? May-be you'd say that a shepherd is someone who is in charge of a flock of sheep. May-be you would say that a shepherd is someone who cares for a flock of sheep. May-be you would say that a shepherd feeds and waters and protects a flock.

All of these ideas comprise different aspects of being a shepherd. If you are placed in the ministry as a small group leader, you are, in essence, shepherding that flock of sheep. In this leadership skill builder, we want to help you expand your vision of your ministry as a shepherd or pastor of a flock of sheep and better equip you to take care of your flock. (NOTE: some of this outline on shepherding came from Lynn Anderson's lesson on "They Smell Like Sheep")

I. What does the Bible say about shepherds?

- What are some aspects you observe about God as a shepherd from the following verses?
 1. Psalm 23
 2. Isaiah 40:11
- What do you observe about prophets, priests and kings as shepherds?
 1. Psalm 78:70-10
 2. Ezekiel 34
- What do you observe about Jesus as a shepherd?
 1. John 10:1-5
 2. 1 Peter 2:25
- What do you observe about the apostles being shepherds?
 1. John 21:15-19
- What do you observe about elders being shepherds?
 1. Acts 20:28
 2. 1 Peter 5:1-4
- What do you observe about all Christians being shepherds?



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A. Matthew 20:25-28

II. What do shepherds do for flocks

- Acts 20:28
 - Guard the Flock
 - Watch the Flock
 - Feed the Flock

- Ephesians 4:10-12
 - Equip the Flock for Ministry
- 1 Timothy 3:5
 - Care for the Flock
 - Direct the Affairs of the Flock
 - Preach the Word
 - Teach the Flock
- Titus 1:9-10
 - Encourage the Flock
 - Refute Falsehood
 -
- James 5:14
 - Pray for the Flock
 - Anoint the Sick
- 1 Peter 5:1-5
 - Serve the Flock
 - Lead the Flock
 - Be an Example to the Flock
- Hebrews 13:7
 - Lose Sleep over the Flock

III. You as a shepherd

- A. After studying the above passages, how should you see yourself as a shepherd of your flock (Group)?
- B. Are there people in your group who need special attention or care spiritually or physically or emotionally? What can you do as a shepherd to care for them?
- C. What do you see as your weakest area as a shepherd? Your strongest?
- D. How can you apply this lesson to yourself this week?



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Lesson # 12 How To Mentor People In Your Group



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Lesson # 13 How To Develop Effective Discussions



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Lesson #14: Principles For Persuasion and Motivation

Introduction

Leadership is an art. Leadership is defined as "**Influence**". As a leader, you influence others to do or to accomplish something. There are healthy and unhealthy ways to lead. The purpose of this lesson is to contrast the two ways of influencing someone so that you will develop healthy leadership skills.

I. Unhealthy Persuasion

- A. Poor leadership skills often cause people to use authority, manipulation, guilt or pain control, and coercion when attempting to lead others. All of these are unhealthy leadership qualities.
- B. Unhealthy leadership methods are "*extrinsic*" (imposed from the outside). If you have not won the heart of the follower, the *only* way to persuade him to follow is through unhealthy methods.
 - »Make the person feel guilty
 - »Get angry and stomp your feet or pout
 - »Use manipulative coercion, pleading, or pressure
- C. The following statements show why unhealthy leadership methods do not work in the long run.
 - »"*Convince a man against his will, he's of the same opinion still*"
 - »"*You can't push a rope*"
 - »"*You cannot push anyone up the ladder unless he is willing to climb himself*" (Andrew Carnegie)

II. Healthy Persuasion

- A. Persuasion in itself is not wrong. Paul persuaded people because he did not want them to stand before God unprepared (2 Corinthians 5:11).
- B. Healthy leadership and persuasion is not easy and does NOT come naturally! Regardless of who the leader is, or how good the leader is remember this: Leadership is a learned skill!
- C. Statistics demonstrate that in sales or management, success is 15% product knowledge, and 85% people knowledge. We are in the people business, so as leaders we must become graduate students in the fine art of getting along with and leading others.
- D. Leaders are not:
 - »**BOSSSES**. There are many bosses, but they are not necessarily leaders.



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»**POSITIONS:** Simply because you hold a "position" does not mean that you are a leader, especially in the kingdom (Matthew 20:20-28)

»**MANAGERS:** Leaders need to be good managers, but good managers are not necessarily good leaders. Note the following:

1. Leadership is a quality; management is a science and an art
2. Leadership provides vision; management supplies realistic perspectives.
3. Leadership deals with concepts; management relates to functions
4. Leadership exercises faith; management has to do with fact
5. Leadership seeks for effectiveness; management strives for efficiency
6. Leadership is an influence for good among potential resources; management is the coordination of available resources organized for maximum accomplishment.
7. Leadership provides direction; management is concerned about control
8. Leadership thrives on finding opportunity; management succeeds on accomplishment.

E. Someone said the following of effective leadership:

"The Prime function of a leader is to keep hope alive"
(John Gardner)

"Leadership is a serving relationship that has the effect of facilitating human development" (William Ward)

"If you set the right example, you won't need to worry about the rules"

"What does it mean to be promoted into a leadership position? Frankly, it means we now have the responsibility to serve people in a special way"

F. Six principles to help you understand people and give them what they need from you as a leader.

1. Everybody needs to feel like somebody special
2. No two people are alike
3. Understanding begins with seeing things from the other person's point of view
4. Don't jump to conclusions
5. Treat others the way you want them to treat you. *"The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated"* (William James)
6. Don't take advantage of people



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III. Conclusion

Leadership is the skill, talent, ability, and attitude with which you can motivate people from the inside to do something or go somewhere, because *they* now want to.



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Lesson #15: Basic Qualifications For Spiritual Leadership

Introduction

With any endeavor in life, there are qualifications. Not everybody can be a leader. James gives us some insight into the reasons for that in James 3:1: Those who influence others will be held more responsible by God. In this lesson we will examine some qualifications for spiritual leadership. Some of the qualifications are for elders and deacons, but the principles can apply to those in other leading ministries.

SCRIPTURE

QUALIFICATION

*Reputation with God

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| A. 1 Timothy 3:2; Acts 6:3-7 | Lives under control of the Holy Spirit. |
| B. Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:9 | Knows and holds firm to the truth of the Bible. |

*Reputation with others

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| A. 1 Timothy 3:2; Acts 6:3 | Has a good reputation, not prejudiced. |
| B. Titus 1:6 | Has personal integrity. |
| C. Titus 1:7 | Is not self-centered. |
| D. Titus 1:7 | Is not hot-tempered |
| E. Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:8 | Is honest and good in business and has no questionable dealings with money. |
| F. Titus 1:8; 1 Timothy 3:2 | Is hospitable ' "self restraint" |
| G. Titus 1:8 | Is just, fair, and upright |
| H. Titus 1:8; 1 Timothy 3:8 | Is sincere, holy, and moral in every circumstance. |
| I. Titus 1:8; 1 Timothy 3:2 | Is self controlled. One who lives in "Moderation" |
| J. 1 Timothy 3:2, 9 | Knows God's word and is able to teach it. |
| K. 1 Timothy 3:7 | Has an honorable reputation with believers and non believers. |

* Family

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| A. Spouse | |
| 1. Titus 1:6; 1 Timothy 3:2 | Is not a womanizer |



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2. 1 Timothy 3:11

Has a spouse who is temperate and trustworthy, and who does not gossip.

SCRIPTURE

QUALIFICATION

B. Children

1. Titus 1:6; 1 Timothy 3:4-5 If children are under the care of their parents, the children are obedient and under control.

2. 1 Timothy 3:12

Is a good manager of his household.

*Ability

A. Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:9

Has the ability to know and teach God's word.

B. 1 Timothy 3:6

Is not a new believer, not a recent convert.

C. 1 Peter 5:2

Is able and willing.

D. 1 Peter 5:3

Is humble, and recognizes that God owns the church.

E. 1 Peter 5:3

Is able to be an example to other Christians.

F. 1 Peter 5:4

Is able and willing to be submissive.

Not all of us can meet the qualifications of being elders and deacons. Not even Paul the apostle met the qualifications for being an elder or deacon. However, he was a great leader. These insights into leadership qualifications can give us a bench mark by which we can measure our lives as leaders. Let's strive with the help of God and His Spirit who indwells us to become the best leaders we can for His glory!



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Lesson #16: Insights Into leadership

Character

Introduction

Leaders influence others. A biblical leader does not lead from a position of authority. One man said that a Spiritual leader does not lead from behind, or from in front, but rather from along side. There are some attractive characteristics that give the leader credibility in the eyes of those he is leading. The following are some of those characteristics.

I. Reliability

A. 2 Timothy 2:2

B. Reliable means: dependable, trustworthy, able to be trusted or counted upon.

C. Three insights from this passage:

1. Leaders are teachable.
2. Leaders are trustworthy.
3. Leaders teach and influence other people.

II. Soldier

A. 2 Timothy 2:3-4

B. Insights from this passage:

1. Leaders are able to endure hardship. *"Smooth sailing does not a mariner make"*.
2. Leaders focus on the task at hand, not on civilian affairs. *"The double-minded man is unstable in all that he does" (James 1:8)*.
3. Leaders desire to please the commanding officer. *The best leaders are also the best followers.*

III. Athlete

A. 2 Timothy 2:5

B. Leaders compete according to the rules.

1. Independent personalities or rebellious individuals never make good leaders.
2. Good leaders can take orders easily, and enter into the competition with the team.



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IV. Farmer

A. 2 Timothy 2:6

1. Leaders are hard workers.
2. Leaders receive their reward from the work itself. *"My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (John 4:34).*

V. Wise Master Builder

A. 1 Corinthians 3:6-15

B. Insights into this passage:

1. Careful and diligent as a builder for God.
2. Recognizes the source of the success - God.
3. Has the desire to build something of quality that will last.

VI. Determination to win

A. 1 Corinthians 9:24

B. Insights into this passage:

1. Runs with winning and success as a deliberate aim. *People are attracted to winners.*
2. Leaders expect results, work for results, and are engaged in healthy competition.

VII. Self Control

A. 1 Corinthians 9:25

B. Insights into this passage:

1. Leaders harness their energy and focus it on one primary goal.
2. Leaders exercise self control in "all things".

C. No one will follow a person who is out of control. *He is not fit to lead others who cannot first lead himself.*

VIII. Task and Goal Oriented

A. 1 Corinthians 9:26-27

B. Insights into this passage:

1. Leaders have a definite goal in mind and know where they are going.
2. Leaders don't "shadow box".



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3. Leaders ensure that they themselves do not become disqualified in the game.

Conclusion

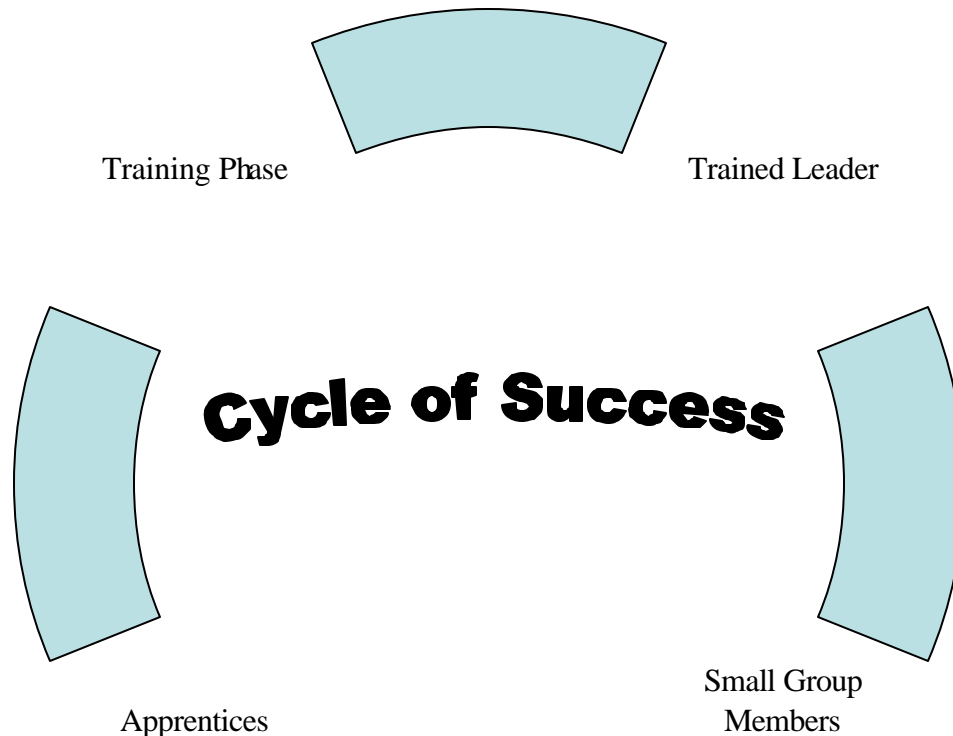
Leaders are reliable, single minded, and endure hardship as soldiers in the Lord's army, compete as Olympic athletes according to the rules, and are hard workers like farmers. Leaders are Wise Master Builders, who build their ministries carefully and with the highest quality. Leaders are determined to win, are self controlled, and are task and goal oriented.

Lesson #17 How To Reproduce Apprentices

Introduction

The success of your ministry largely depends on your ability to reproduce and develop leadership. If you expect your ministry to grow to meet more needs, then it is vital that you be able to recruit, train, and motivate more leaders. Paul's instruction to Timothy is vital for you to learn, "*The things you have heard me teach in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to reliable men who will be qualified to teach others also*" (2 Timothy 2:2). Here are some general guidelines to help you in reproducing new leaders or apprentices:

I. Cycle of Success





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1. Your small group is one of the best places to look for apprentices.
2. These apprentices are trained to start new LIFE Groups, out of which will come more potential apprentices
3. The question of growing is **not** one of *larger* groups, but *more* groups.
4. The method of growing is always need driven. In other words, growth occurs because *new leaders* are continually needed, recruited, and trained.
5. We recruit and train leaders who **create** new groups. The groups don't come first, the leaders do.

II. Finding leaders in your small group

- A. Make it your goal to see the small group as the training ground for new apprentices.
- B. Watch for people who actively participate in the study, the application, and the serving of people. Look for people who have *a heart for people*.
- C. A benefit of maintaining groups of 8-12 people in size is that you can become more acquainted with each person and more familiar with their gifts and talents. This allows you to identify new apprentices more quickly.

III. Qualities to look for in apprentices

- A. Look for F.A.T. people:
 - »Faithful to the group
 - »Available for ministry assignments
 - »Teachable or wanting to learn
- B. Look for those who have an influence on others. Leadership is predominantly defined as influence.
- C. Credibility: Ask the question, "*Is this the kind of person I want to release my ministry to? Is this the kind of person who can take my place and carry on what I've started?*"
- D. Watch for those who are loyal to current leadership. The best leaders are first the best followers. You can't train an independent, rebellious, or self-willed person.



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- E. Look for people with a heart and vision for the ministry. Look for the *gleam* in their eye.

IV. Recruiting apprentices

- A. The best type of recruiting is one-on-one. In fact, the best apprentices must be recruited personally.
- B. Following a small group meeting, is a good time to discuss interest in becoming an apprentice.
- C. Ask questions such as, "*Would you like to try leading the lesson next week?*" **or** "*If I'm not available, would you care to take my place?*" etc.
- D. Try to encourage individuals by emphasizing some aspect of their personal growth, showing realistic confidence and belief in them.
- E. Recognize people's spiritual gifts and allow individuals opportunity to demonstrate gifts such as exhortation, leading, counsel, etc.

V. Training & releasing

- A. Entrust certain aspects of your ministry to the apprentice. Set up weekly or ongoing training and monitoring. Continue to affirm the apprentice and guide his or her development as you learn more about leading.



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Lesson #18: Principles of Coaching: Introduction

Throughout the Bible you will see that, as a leader, one of your primary roles is to raise up other leaders, to train them, and then release them to do the work of ministry (Exodus 18; John 17; Ephesians 4; 2 Timothy 2). This is the task of coaching or *discipling*. Jesus said of this principle, "*A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher*" (Luke 6:40).

The role of a coach is by definition: *A tutor or instructor; one who trains.*" This role is not specific to ministry. Therefore, the principles in this lesson will be helpful in your parenting, your workplace, your home, and, of course, your ministry.

I. Principles of coaching

Coaching is the process of reproducing oneself, so we begin with some basic principles:

A. You must have a high regard for people. Ask yourself:

» "*What do I generally think of people?*"

» "*Do I believe people desire to make a difference in their world?*"

B. You must have a deep commitment to people. If you say, "*I really care about you.*" but they only hear from you at Christmas, or when you need something, they conclude that you are not committed - at least not to them. Ask yourself these questions:

» "*Who do I spend my time with?*"

» "*Do these people make me feel good?*" "*Are these the people I'm coaching?*"

C. You must develop a consistency with people. People make a lot of decisions based on *your* behavior as to how long or deep their level of commitment will be. Ask yourself:

» "*How faithful are you in their life?*"

» "*Do you consistently perform to a level of excellence in coaching them?*"



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D. You must set a high standard for people. People tend to perform to the level of expectation to which they are called. Ask yourself:

- » *"Am I painting a picture into which people can grow?"*
- » *"Am I maintaining a standard of excellence myself?"*

E. You must have an ability to influence people you're coaching. Position alone yields no long-term or life-changing influence in those you're coaching. Excellence in principles "A" through "D" place you in a position of influence where you can then proceed with the following process. Ask yourself:

- » *"Am I willing to go the extra mile to develop "influence" in people's lives?"*
- » *"Am I relying on my position alone to touch people's lives or am I developing a life worth emulating?"*
- » *You impress people from a distance, you impact them up close*

II. Process of coaching

One of the major principles of leadership is: *"People do what people see."* The burden of proof of coaching always begins with the coach. People will not rise above your level of excellence. *"If a blind man leads a blind man, they both will fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:14).* Once you grasp this concept, you need to align your life to the level you desire to reproduce in the lives of those you're coaching. You will also notice the importance of relationship in this process. Remember: spiritual leaders do not lead from behind, or from in front, but along side. God also knows the concept of *along side* leadership. In John 14:15-18 Jesus said that he would not leave his disciples alone, but would send them the *Counselor or Helper*. In the Greek the word is *Paraklete* which means *"one who comes up along side"*. Jesus became a man to come *along side* us. He did not lead us from a distance, but by relationship. You, too, must coach people from *along side*. You don't lead from position, but from relationships, and those relationships, especially with your apprentices, must be developed. You train and coach people as they catch your personality, your vision, your mind and your heart.

Consider this five step process:

- » I do it; I'm a model
- » I do it - you watch; I'm a mentor
- » You do it - I watch; I'm a monitor
- » You do it - multiplication has begun
- » You do it - someone else watches; multiplication cycle one complete.

The essence of coaching is people development. The more people you develop, the greater the effect of your ministry.

III. Suggested Reading



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The following materials are highly recommended to help you learn the detailed process of coaching others.

» "*The Lost Art Of Disciple Making*" by Leroy Eims

» "*Discipling: The Multiplying Ministry*" by Milton Jones

Lesson #19: Principles of Influence

Introduction

John Maxwell, in his book, *Developing the Leader Within You*, suggests that there are five distinct levels through which a person goes as he becomes an effective leader. Think, for instance, of someone in your personal life who has made a dramatic *influence* in your life. Did he or she have that influence simply because they held a position? Probably not. He or she influenced you because of some intangible quality that you admired. They *led* you, because leadership equals influence. You lead a person to the degree that you are able to influence him to *want* to follow you. Leadership is not accomplished by strata, position or pressure. Leadership is *relational*. It is the ability to inspire others to move in a direction that you desire them to go. In this lesson we will examine the five levels of leadership so that you will be able to let God develop you into an effective leader.

I. Position Level - Rights

Some people will follow you if you hold a "position", either as a teacher, group leader, or title. This, however, is the lowest level of influence and leadership. In the position level of leadership, control by position or "rights" of the position is the means by which people are led. At this level, you have little ability to inspire people to do great things. People following someone in a "position" usually do only the bare minimum to satisfy the position, and never excel internally.

Regardless of if your position is a boss, ministry leader, husband, or CEO, there are three things necessary to move through the position level to the next higher level of leadership:

1. Must know the job description thoroughly
2. Must do the job with consistent excellence
3. Strive to do *more* than what is expected

II. Permission Level - Relationship

At this level, people will follow you because they like you and like to be with you. They have developed a certain amount of admiration for you because you have



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successfully progressed through the three required steps already mentioned. At this level, you add a sense of value to a person's life which results in their encouragement. There are three things required to move to the next level of leadership:

1. Possess a genuine love for people, not love for the position
2. Make those around you more successful than they were before
3. Win/win, or don't become involved. Companions, not competitors.

III. Production Level - Results

At this level of leadership **you** accept the responsibility for the results and for the growth. Here are the three things required of you at this level:

1. Accept responsibility for growth, this inspires confidence in your followers.
2. Develop and follow a "Statement of Purpose". Must know why you exist, what you are trying to accomplish, and stay on target in an excellent way.
3. Understand the value of timing; change is a part of timing.

IV. Personnel Development Level - Reproduction

At this level, others want to be like you, and want to help pull the cart *with* you. This is where you multiply your efforts because you multiply yourself. You can only multiply yourself if people respect you, trust you, and want to be like you. There are three observations at this level

1. You are reproducing yourself in other people who are following you
2. Present problems are now growth related, and people problems
3. You can only pour your leadership efforts into 20% of your followers. Choose wisely.

V. Personhood Level - Respect

You can only get to this level of influence *if* you have successfully progressed through the previous four levels consistently. You don't demand respect from followers, you earn it. Here are some characteristics of this level of leadership

1. Followers are sacrificial and loyal
2. Your greatest joy comes from watching others grow
3. Problems are minimal; others are fighting your battles for you and defending you.

VI. Observations

1. The greater the level of leadership the longer it takes



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2. The greater the level of leadership, the fewer people you take with you
3. Be sure that those you are taking into the greater levels are leaders, and not followers
4. The "law of change" applies to leadership. When you fail, you won't bankrupt your leadership *if* you've deposited enough value into others lives
5. Leaders know where they're going, how to get there, and how to take others along.

Lesson #20: Basic Skills In Biblical Counseling

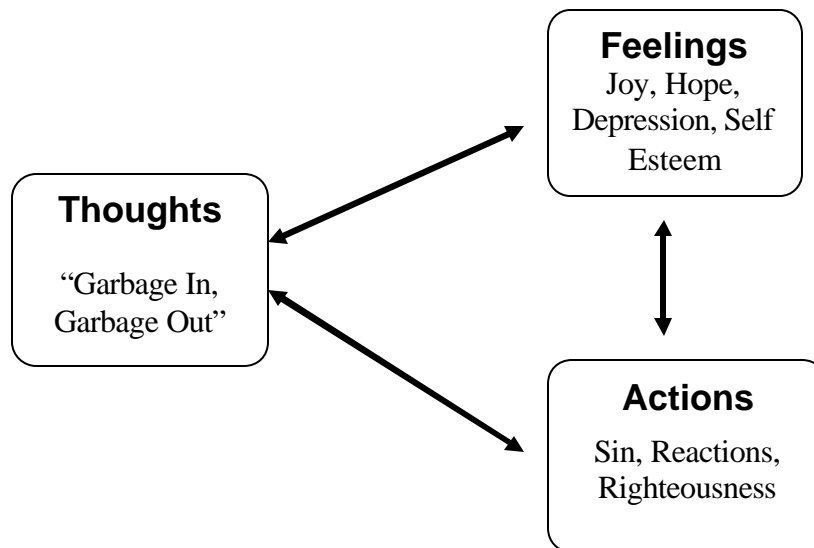
Introduction

Counseling is a necessary part of teaching and maturing people. We cannot teach others without giving them specific advice and counsel.

There are dangers involved in counseling however. We need to learn what *is* and what *is not* appropriate when giving counsel. This section on counseling will address the Bible's parameters on counseling and offering advice. In a later lesson we will pursue and address some legal ramifications of counseling.

I. Understanding How The Mind, Emotions, and Actions Work

- A. Our minds, and the information (true or false) that is fed into the mind, produces feelings, and resulting actions.





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- B. Thoughts fed into and accepted by the mind produce feelings or actions. The emotions and actions are interrelated. If a person feels bad, he will act bad. If a person acts bad, he will feel bad. Both actions and emotions originate from thoughts in the mind.
1. Genesis 3:2-5 - Satan fed false information to Eve, and she accepted it as true
 2. Genesis 3:6 Eve acted on the information and sinned
 3. Genesis 3:7-13 Shame, Guilt, Fear, and Blame were the result.
- C. Our ministry as teachers is to correct wrong thinking with truth, so that people's emotions and actions can be brought back into line with the will of God.
1. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5
 2. Romans 12:1-2
 3. 2 Timothy 2:24-26
 4. Philippians 4:8-9
- D. The word of God is the basis of our instruction, advice, counsel, and correction
1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training). All of these areas, especially rebuking and correcting, involve advice and counsel.
 2. John 8:32
- E. Proverbs gives many passages that deal with counseling one another
1. Pr 14:12; 9:8; 10:10, 17
 2. Pr 11:14; 12:1; 12:15,
 3. Pr. 13:1,13, 16; 15:12, 22, 31-33
 4. Pr. 17:10; 18:2; 19:20, 25
 5. Pr. 20:18; 26:12, 16
 6. Faithful friends correct and advise (Pr 27:5-6)
 7. We need each other's advise and counsel in order to grow (Pr 27:17)
 8. Correction and rebuke build relationships (Pr. 28:23; 29:1)
 9. For additional references see Pr. 1:22-23; 5:11-13; 13:10; 15:10; 20:5; 21:2,5; 24:5-6

II. How To Give Advice, Counsel and Correction

- A. Use the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16 - 4:2; Hebrews 4:12-13; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- B. Use your personal wisdom and experience (Titus 2:3-4)
- C. Our Motivation for giving counsel, correction and advice
1. To warn against destruction (Philippians 2:4; 1 Timothy 1:19; James 5:19-20; Galatians 6:1-2)
 2. To keep the church pure (1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 1 Timothy 5:20)
 3. To defeat Satan (James 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:25-26)
 4. To protect yourself (Ezekiel 33:8-9)
- D. The manner in which to counsel, advise, and correct
1. With gentleness (2 Timothy 2:24-25; 4:2; Galatians 6:1-2; Pr. 17:10)



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2. In wisdom (Proverbs 15:1-2; 25:11-12)
3. Sometimes sternly (Proverbs 15:10; 1 Timothy 5:20)
4. Use caution yourself (Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 7:3-5)

III. Conclusion

- A. As teachers of the word, we must give counsel, advice, and correction. The goal of our instruction is to help people correct their thinking, so that their actions and emotions can be what God wants them to be.
- B. We must use wisdom and gentleness when giving counsel.

Lesson #21: The "A,B C;s" Of Counseling

I. Achieve Contact

- A. Use "active" listening.
 1. Fully understanding the meaning of what a person is saying
 2. Effectively communicating back to the person that you understand what they're saying
- B. Build Rapport
 1. Try to build common ground to get the person to trust you.
 2. Before a person can open up their life to you, they must trust you. You develop that trust by building rapport.
- C. Communicate warmth and understanding. You must be genuinely caring about what's going on in that person's life if you are to minister effectively to him or her.

II. Boiling Down The Problem

- A. List what kinds of problems exist (no more than 3-5).
 1. After listening for 10 - 15 minutes, try to simplify the issues by listing them in one sentence or word. (Marriage, financial, spiritual, health...)
- B. Determine as best you can who is causing the problem
 1. Lack of communication in the relationship?
 2. Disobedience of a child?
 3. Not spending time in the word?
 4. Where is the problem coming from. Identify it briefly.
- C. Identify who is affected by the problem.
 1. Husband, wife, children, friends?
- D. Choose ONE of the problems to deal with first.
 1. Help them to identify one solution for one problem at one time.
 2. This gives them help in moving forward to discovering the solutions for themselves.

III. Cope With The Problem



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- A. Divide a sheet vertically and list all the "wants" that pertain to the chosen problem on the left side.
- B. Choose the one "Want" that is most important to them, and circle it.
- C. On the right hand side of the sheet, list all the "Willings" that will be done to bring about the desired "Want" "What are YOU willing to do to bring about this want?"
 1. Example: the want better, more meaningful communication with spouse.
 2. Willing: I will be willing to read a book on communication, and begin learning how to be a better listener and less critical.
- D. Circle two or three of the "Willings" and develop a plan to put them into action as soon as possible.

IV. Conclusion

- A. What this approach does is take the feeling of despair and boil it down to some concrete action and put it into the hands of the person who can solve their problem.
- B. When you leave the conversation, you can leave that conversation and hand the person the sheet, leaving him a game plan for action and implementation.
- C. You've eliminated your own opinions and helped the person develop his own solutions.
- D. Before getting together with the person again, ask him if he's done what was talked about last time. This saves you from chasing rabbits, and puts healthy accountability into the relationship. This frees you from ownership of the problem and gives responsibility for solving the problem back to the person.
- E. Your goal in counseling is to empower a person to solve his own problems.



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Lesson #22: Biblical Steps To Conflict Resolution

Introduction

- A. Jesus died on the cross so that we can find wholeness, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. (John 8:32; 10:10)
- B. A "peacemaker" is defined as "one who inserts righteousness into an unrighteous situation resulting in peace" (Matthew 5:9). When Jesus cleared the temple, he was being a peacemaker. Sometimes, making peace may involve conflict. Don't run from it!

I. 1st Step : Define The Core Issue

- A. Allow God to control you so that He can help you define the core issue. "The meek, He will guide in judgment and the meek He will teach His ways" (Psalm 25:9).
- B. After you have identified the core issue, you can then begin finding a creative solution.

II. 2nd Step: Ask, "Where Am I Wrong In My Thinking?"

- A. Acts 15:36-39 sharp disagreement ... parted company.
- B. Reason and emotion need to be balanced.
- C. Avoid the blame game ... take personal responsibility. What can YOU do to help resolve whatever conflict may be present in your life?

III. 3rd. Step: Ask, "What are the possible Solutions?"

- A. Option 1: The situation could stay the same as it is.
- B. Option 2: I win - you lose.
- C. Option 3: I yield - you yield.
- D. Option 4: Compromise - but neither is satisfied.
- E. Option 5: Resolve the problem that is causing the conflict.

IV. 4th Step: Detail The Solution



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- A. Decide which solution is agreeable to all concerned
- B. Detail the solution (Acts 15:19-20)
- C. Self control in detailing the solution comes from the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:13-16; Galatians 5:23)

V. 5th Step: People Win With God's Help

- A. God can help us do what we otherwise could not do.
- B. Do what you agreed to do.

VI. Conflict Can Involve Three Levels:

- A. Level one: Felt needs. (Things we "feel" we need)
- B. Level two: Intellectual needs. (Perception, doctrine, tradition, understanding)
- C. Level three: Physical needs. (Financial, physical, etc.)
- D. Defining the level or levels which are in conflict is helpful for conflict resolution.

VII. Review:

- A. Consider the five options for conflict resolution:
 - 1. Withdraw
 - 2. I win
 - 3. I yield
 - 4. I compromise
 - 5. We resolve the problem
- B. Use the five Biblical steps to resolve the conflict:
 - 1. Define the core issue
 - 2. Where am I wrong in my thinking?
 - 3. What are the possible solutions?
 - 4. Detail the solution.
 - 5. With God's help, do what you agree to do.



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Lesson #23: Dealing With Bereavement

Introduction

1. Grief is a natural part of the human experience. “Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Romans 8:23).
2. Jesus was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (Isaiah 53:3))
3. He lost a close friend, Lazarus & grieved (John 11:25-26).

The following article was submitted by Dr. Ruth Evans, a Psychologist, counselor and wife of Dr. Clyde Evans, elder and educator from Muscatine Iowa

UNDERSTANDING BEREAVEMENT

by Dr. Ruth Evans.

Mourning is a powerful stressor which can be a significant factor in the development of emotional, behavioral, addictive, and psychomotor disorders. It is important for supporting family and friends to be aware of the more striking symptoms of normal grief, and to provide reassurance that the feelings are natural and should not be avoided. It is also important to recognize when grief becomes dysfunctional.

Healthy grief is a complex, forward moving process of coming to terms with a painful loss. The initial response to the news of a close death is to distance the self from the pain of loss. A state of partial emotional anesthesia, even though punctuated by sensations of active distress, permits functioning to meet immediate obligations. There is a strong tendency to avoid the waves of discomfort by avoiding mentioning the deceased or receiving sympathy. The price of total denial is sanity, and is too high for most of us to pay for long.

Avoidance gradually gives way to unrealistic feelings and behaviors. Yearnings and wishes appear to halt the process of separation, and auditory and visual hallucinations are frequent during this period. Searching efforts frequently occur, and anger may be directed at persons regarded as partly responsible for the death. Sometimes the bereaved may



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magically substitute another person in his life for the deceased. Self-blame frequently involves an element of self-punishing sacrifice. All efforts of the "undo it" stage are destined to failure.

A necessary third phase, sometimes 2 or 3 months following the death, is to examine the ways in which the loved one is missed, and to "hit bottom". Questions such as, "Can I continue without you? How? Do I want To?" are raised. Suicidal ideation is prevalent, and although not necessarily a sign of dysfunction, should be taken seriously. As the bereaved begins to focus on responsibilities he/she still has in life, helplessness begins to recede, and some notion of how to refashion a life begins to emerge.

Finally, after maybe 4 months of mourning, rebuilding begins, and solutions, though perhaps only partially satisfactory, are tried. Disappointments often plunge the bereaved back into patterns of earlier adjustment phases, but the thrust of the process is forward. It becomes possible, at last, to gain pleasure from cherished memories.

Grief can be very rapid when it involves a peripheral relationship, but when someone close is involved, may well last a year or two, or more. Minimal professional assistance can be anticipated on the basis of positive personal, relational, and environmental factors. A healthy adult, with good intellectual capacity, who is able to deal assertively with his needs, is the most optimistic personal profile. It follows that children, adolescents and the aged are at increased risk to experience more intense, or dysfunctional grief. The less dependent the bereaved is upon the deceased, the less intense the grief is likely to be. Other positive factors are that the death event was perceived to be appropriate, predictable, or non-preventable. For example, the sudden death of a child violates expectations and healthy adjustment by the grieving parents may be the most difficult challenge one ever faces. A positive social environment includes significant others who will patiently listen to the expressions of grief and provide assistance to spare the bereaved from overwhelming demands. The availability of other people with whom new ties can be formed also increases the probability of establishing satisfactory replacement relationships. A counselor might be useful in shortening the period of unresolved grief and minimizing or preventing the pathological outcome of bereavement. Clinical consultation becomes important when there is an inability to express sadness or rage, the bereaved becomes stuck in the first or second stages of coping, or when suicidal danger is present.

In summary, a lack of understanding of the bereavement process tends to cause embarrassment and avoidance, and Americans generally see grieving as a shorter process than it really is. Healthy grief takes time, but enables the mourner to come to a new beginning, enriched, strengthened and encouraged. When picking his/her next step through the valley, he/she realizes that yes, rocks are everywhere, but so is the path!



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Lesson #24: Caring Enough To Confront: Dealing with sin.

Introduction

- A. Sin is a reality in the lives of human beings. That's the reason Christ came to die for us. He came to set us free from the bondage of sin in our lives (Romans 8:1-2). Sin is also a reality that we all struggle with in our lives as Christians.
- B. In this lesson, we will discuss how to counsel a Christian who may be trapped in an habitual sin. There are two types of sinful behaviors a person that you will encounter, and need to confront.
 - 1. Wilful, rebellious, and unrepentant sin that a Christian stubbornly refuses to repent of, and:
 - 2. Sin in which a Christian finds himself trapped and can't get free on his own. This may be a strong temptation of some kind, or it may be a habitual sin that has taken up deep seated resident in a person's life that may be referred to as a "sin addiction."

I. Understanding the nature of sin.

- A. Willful, rebellious & unrepentant sin (see Hebrews 10:26-31 for a description).



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S.T.R.O.N.G. L.I.F.E. Groups

Leadership Lifter for L.I.F.E. Group Leaders

Stan Freitas, L.I.F.E. Group Coach

October 6, 2002

S

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:4-5

Walk through God daily in prayer. Pray for each of the members in your group.
Teach your
group to pray. We must be dependant on the Lord, 1 Cor. 3:7

T

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:1-2

Don’t “just have a Bible study,” have a ministry!

R

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which bought with his own blood.”
Acts 20:28

Attendance to staff weekly for evaluation

Special Needs to staff and elders for shepherding.



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O_____

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” 2 Timothy 2:2

Reproduce and Multiply!

N_____

“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.” 1 Peter 2:1-2

G_____

“Go and make disciples...” Matthew 28:19

S.T.R.O.N.G. Life Groups are...

Seeking the Lord's Blessing

Taking Care of Their People

Reporting Regularly to the Leadership Team

Ongoing Leadership Development Cells

New Christians are maturing in Christ

Going after more people for Christ.