



LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

KICKOFF | SESSION 1

KICKOFF | SESSION 1

OVERVIEW

Before this session, remember: You only get one chance to start.

IS THIS GROUP GOING TO BE IMPORTANT OR MARGINAL?

WILL THERE BE A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO GROW?

- When you cast a vision for what being “fully alive” looks like and share your desire for these men to grow, the group will be energized!
- The opportunity will be there, but personal growth is not easy.
- Growth will result by embracing the challenges that you and the group will confront and work through during this time together.
- Let the group know that there will be points of frustration—as challenge is difficult—but that frustration is part of the pruning process as we get rid of the things in our lives that hurt our relationships with God and others.

IS THIS EXPERIENCE GOING TO BE GENUINE?

- This will be answered on launch night and at the second meeting by how much you tell of your faith story and how you share it.
- Your transparency, vulnerability, and humility will be what inspires and draws your group members into the experience.

WILL I DEVELOP ANY TRUE FRIENDSHIPS?

- Given the high level of commitment, there will likely be a kindred spirit in the room from the very beginning.
- It's highly possible several members of the group will become friends who will remain connected far beyond the life of the group.

GET PREPARED | PRAY | BE YOURSELF

BE FULLY PRESENT | ENJOY IT | LOVE YOUR GROUP



KICKOFF | SESSION 1

AGENDA

The goal of this session is to set expectations. There will be a collective vision cast for all groups launching, and then there will be individual group time in separate rooms for the remainder of the evening.

ALL GROUPS TOGETHER

- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:05 Welcome, Prayer
- 7:07 Vision cast for the groups (from stage)
- 7:30 Adjourn to groups in breakout rooms (by nametage number)

IN BREAKOUT ROOMS

1. NAMES

10 MINUTES

- Ask everyone to remove their nametags and play this name game:
- Start with your name, and associate the first letter of your name with an animal, like Rocky the Raccoon. The guy to your left has to look at you, repeat “Rocky the Raccoon,” then say his name and an animal whose name starts with the same letter. The third person has to give the name and animal of the first two members, and so on. A key component of this activity is having each person look at the person while he says his name and the animal. By the time it gets to the last person, each member should know and be able to remember everyone else’s names. You could even ask if there are any volunteers who want to try to say everyone’s name and animal correctly.

2. MENTOR INTRODUCTIONS

15 MINUTES

- Co-Mentors introduce themselves for no more than five minutes each. Have someone set a timer. Share these things:
 - Why you are leading this group.
 - Why it is important to you.
 - What following Jesus means to you.
- Finally, put this in your own words: I want to pour everything from my cup into your cup, no matter how little or much that is.



KICKOFF | SESSION 1

AGENDA CONT.

3. APPRENTICE INTRODUCTIONS 20 MINUTES

- Apprentices introduce themselves for two minutes each. (Set timer.) Have them answer these questions:
- What's your name and who's in your family?
- What do you do for a living?
- What is one thing you love about your church?

5. GROUP COMMITMENT 10 MINUTES

- Co-Mentor 1: Review the points from the Group Commitment: “Okay, everybody, last chance. Are we in?”
- Pass around the Group Commitment for everyone to sign.
- Co-Mentor 2: Collect individual signed copies they brought with them.

4. LEADER DEVELOPMENT VISION 10 MINUTES

- Co-Mentor 1: Review the “Email #2” you sent them and share your hopes for them. (5 minutes)
- Co-Mentor 2: Explain Developing your Personal Ministry Vision: “One of the things we’ll do down the road . . .” Talking points are on homework assignment for meeting 8.
- Emphasize that they’re being prepared for ministry leadership and that they are welcome to start leading/serving before that time if they’re ready/available.

6. SETTING THE CALENDAR 30 MINUTES

- Co-Mentor 1: Start by acknowledging this is going to be hard. It’s going to take some sacrifice and some collaboration.
- “We’ll approach the calendar in three parts . . .”
 1. Our first session together
 2. Our overnight retreat (or 12-hour day as alternative)
 3. When our normal meeting time will be
- There is a blank chart in the ‘Print for Group’ portion of the website.



KICKOFF | SESSION 1

SETTING THE CALENDAR

FIRST SESSION TOGETHER

- This one's going to be hardest because it needs to happen within four weeks.
- It will be at (fill in the location).
- This first session is pivotal because (Co-Mentor) and I will be telling our faith stories, no holds barred.
- Everyone must be there – “My Co-Mentor and I are going to propose (day and time).”
- Keep negotiating until you come to an agreement.
- Tell the group that if something comes up from this point forward, it will be the responsibility of the person attempting to change the meeting to find an alternative time that works for everybody in the group.
- Tell them that this is a painful experience and should be a last resort.

REGULAR SESSIONS

- Schedule remaining regular monthly sessions.
- Meetings are once a month between launch and commencement, so try to keep monthly meetings 3–5 weeks apart.
- Once you've nailed down all the dates, go back over them one more time to be sure that everyone, including you, has the correct dates noted.
- Email everyone the dates the next day.

FIRST RETREAT OR STORY DAY

- Next, let's set a time when we can get away together and each tell our stories.
- We'd like to do an overnight, if we can work out the dates and a location.
- If that won't work, let's pick a Saturday (or, if we really have to, a Sunday) for our retreat.
– “My Co-Mentor and I propose (date) for this retreat.”
- Shoot for a Friday–Saturday retreat. This is the best possible scenario.
- If an overnight is not doable, schedule a 12-hour “Story Day.”
- Last resort is a “Story Sunday,” when members meet at your house after church to share.



KICKOFF | SESSION 1

AGENDA CONT.

7. PREPARING FOR NEXT MONTH

10 MINUTES

- **Monthly Book** – (Co-Mentor 1 explains)

Each month there'll be a book to read and a one-page 'net-out' to write. You're expected to bring printed copies to the session. . . one for every Mentor and apprentice in your group. The first book is a little different . . . it's a novel called Bo's Cafe. Your 'net-out' will be the principles and truths you distilled from the story. Here's the 'short and sweet' on what a "Net-Out" is. (Distribute "Net-Out" Example and hand out the books).

- **Monthly focus with scripture memory** – (Co-Mentor 2 explains)

We believe that 'fully alive' leaders MUST be grounded in God's Word. Each month, you'll have a verse to memorize with a selection of scripture for context to mediate on. We will also have a prayer to pray throughout the month connected to the topic. Each session will begin with a check on the scripture memory and a brief "sharing" from one person about the monthly focus. After the mentors lead the first few, group apprentices will.

- **Monthly assignment** – (Co-Mentor 1 explains)

Each month, you'll have a 'relational assignment' to do. We (your Mentors) will explain what you're to do. You'll do it for 30 days, then come back and report to the group what happened. (Hand out Homework Assignment and go over)

- **One-on-Ones** – (Co-Mentor 2 explains)

Each month, starting this month, you'll connect informally with one other guy in the group. Breakfast, coffee, lunch, whatever...there'll be a question to discuss, but it'll mostly be about getting to know each other better outside the LDG group.

8. PRAY AND DISMISS

5 MINUTES

- **Pray:** Close in prayer and ask the guys to pray regularly for your co-Mentors and every guy in your group.
- **Dismiss:** Give each guy a hug as you head out!

ROOTED | KNOWN | ENGAGED





LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

COMMUNITY | SESSION 2

COMMUNITY | SESSION 2

"None of us ever get fixed. But we can mature in community."
– BO'S CAFÉ

Bo's Cafe by John Lynch, Bill Thrall, and Bruce McNicol may help your group members see this truth about community. Connecting with other God followers in an open, transparent way allows God access to our hearts.

If we're not careful as leaders, we might end up solely focused on how we can help others live "God-centric" lives. But we can't forget that it's also about helping them connect with each other. If we lead well, our groups will truly connect and a community will develop among them. They'll love each other, challenge each other, hang out together, and help each other in ways a mentor cannot.

DIFFERENCES IN THIS SESSION

This is not a typical session because each mentor will be sharing his faith story with the group. Each story will take about 30 minutes (20 minute timer for story and 10 minute timer for questions), so explain to the group that the high/low sharing time and book summarizing discussion of Bo's Café will be abbreviated for this session, in order for the mentors to have time to share their stories. Wrap up the Big 5 below in 2 hours for this month instead of 3 hours, in order to devote the last hour to the mentors sharing their stories.

This session will be centered on a conversation about men living and growing in community. This is not a teaching format, but it needs to be a structured conversation. That is, be careful not to let the conversation "run."

Please see the * on the agenda, regarding the retreat.



COMMUNITY | SESSION 2

AGENDA

1. MONTHLY FOCUS

10 MINUTES

- Share a personal reflection of what you learned regarding the Scripture, prayer, and verse.
- Check in on verse memorization
- Close in prayer

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENT

25 MINUTES

- Discuss “5 feet for 5 minutes” or “Bless and do not curse” assignment.

5. BOOK NET-OUT

35 MINUTES

- Bo’s Café

7. SECOND MENTOR SHARES

30 MINUTES

- 20 minute story, 10 minutes for questions

2. RELATIONAL TIME

35 MINUTES

- Monthly Question: “What was your high and low from the month?”

4. TAKE A BREAK

10 MINUTES

6. FIRST MENTOR SHARES

30 MINUTES

- 20 minute story, 10 minutes for questions

8. NEXT MONTH AND PRAY

5 MINUTES

- Pass out and explain next month’s assignments, homework, any retreat details that can’t be emailed, and pray.

*For the retreat, it is recommended to communicate in advance that there won’t be any alcohol at the retreat. Without hearing everyone’s story, it is difficult to know if it would be best.

9. OPT-OUT OPPORTUNITY

5 MINUTES

Many men won’t have a full understanding of what they were committing to when you kicked off. Let them know that despite signing the Group Commitment, they now have a better and clearer understanding of the commitments and expectations. And if this is not the right season for them to engage in the group, they are free to step out of the group prior to the retreat. Let them know they can let you know now or later, but to pray about it and talk to their wives if this is something they should not be a part of during this season. Follow up and process any reasons and reservations as they arise to help the men process the decision.





LEADER
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RETREAT | SESSION 3

RETREAT | SESSION 3

OVERVIEW

The retreat is the most critical experience for the group to connect relationally and encounter authentic community.

Remember your first day at a new school? Remember your first day at your first job? You didn't really know anyone, but you wanted to be known. The same is true when a new group forms. You'll be going through a lot of stuff together over an extended period of time. Remember how it seemed to take forever before you knew everyone at work? And remember how much more comfortable you felt once you did?

That's what this first retreat is all about. In a focused time away together, you and your group will do in a weekend what it usually takes weeks or months to do—really get to know each other.

You'll do some of what normally happens each session, including reviewing a book, reciting Scripture verses, and a homework assignment. But by far the biggest part of the retreat will be spent sharing “faith stories.” Once someone shares his story, you and others in the group will ask questions that should challenge the person to share even more about himself. The goal of this time is to help each member become more comfortable being transparent.

Having already told your story, you are in a great position to be able to listen intently. Here are some tips to help you do that:

- Be in prayer for the person before they share, and ask God to help you to focus on the story you're about to hear.
- Take notes during each story.
- Be mindful of key questions:
 - Where is this person coming from? What is his spiritual background?
 - Where is this person right now spiritually?
 - Where God might be leading him?

By the time your group members cook together, clean together, do some fun activities, pray, and share life stories openly, the hope is they'll be ready to help each other take full advantage of the group experience over the next several months. Perhaps, more importantly, they'll begin building a friendship or two that may last the rest of their lives.

Be strategic in terms of who shares when. Pre-select who you are going to ask to go first and second. Pick someone who seems ready to share vulnerably. This person can set the tone for how the rest of the stories are told.

Finally, not only should you take notes, you should ask everyone to do the same. Taking notes demonstrates that the group cares for each person. Also, remind the group that it will be helpful to look them over before their one-on-ones.



RETREAT | SESSION 3

PLANNING THE RETREAT

PREPARATION

- Delegate responsibilities and touch base with the group members for the logistics, details, costs, etc.
- Clearly communicate with everyone about those details and about preparing their stories.
- Fill out the overview for StrengthsFinder and bring copies for all group members.
- Bring paper and masking tape for the challenge. (See Below)

FOUR GOALS

1. Have an abbreviated meeting with normal meeting components.
2. Have fun.
3. Hear everyone's stories and ask questions.
4. Break up the stories with the StrengthsFinder® Assessment Discussion and Challenge.

STRENGTHSFINDER® ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION AND APPLICATION CHALLENGE

- Bring 60 sheets of paper and two rolls of tape.
- Divide the groups into two teams, each with 30 sheets of paper and a roll of tape.
- Explain the rules:
 1. The goal is to build the tallest object possible.
 2. Teams will have eight minutes to brainstorm and eight minutes to build.
 3. The mentors observe and keep time.
 4. It must be a freestanding structure using only what is given. Using walls, furniture, or any other outside material to support it is not allowed.
- Call time and determine a winner.
- Review the assessment results for each person. After each person shares their results, ask if, after three months and in lieu of the paper tower challenge, the others group members see these strengths in the person.
- Share the summary and process how each person can use these to align their gifts with their roles and/or opportunities.



RETREAT | SESSION 3

AGENDA (OVERNIGHT)

Reminder: Carpooling to the retreat will allow additional connection time.

FRIDAY NIGHT

Have a typical session. This is intended to be a condensed version to take less time.

1. MONTHLY FOCUS 10 MINUTES

- Share a personal reflection of what you learned or thought regarding the Scripture, prayer, and verse.

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENT 25 MINUTES

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 20 MINUTES

- What are you currently passionate about?

4. MONTHLY BOOK 30 MINUTES

- Wild at Heart Questions

5-10 MINUTE BREAK BEFORE STORIES

5. INTRO TO SHARING FAITH STORIES 15 MINUTES

Sample script: Last month, as I shared my story, I tried to emphasize the points in my life that influenced my faith. I can't wait to hear your stories. A couple of reminders before we get started:

- Our group will rise or fall on each person's transparency.
- What is said in this group stays in this group.
- Your target for time is no more than 20 minutes for your story and 10 minutes for questions. We will set a timer for everybody to help keep you on track. If the time starts to get way from you, I'll reel you back in.
- Last thing: take notes during each person's story.
- Does anyone want to go first?

6. SHARING STORIES 1 - 1.5 HOURS

- Faith Story #1 (30-50 minutes)
- Faith Story #2 (30-50 minutes)

HANGOUT, GAMES, ETC., TO END THE NIGHT



RETREAT | SESSION 3

TIPS FOR LEADING THE STORY SHARING TIME

- A best practice is to pre-select someone to share first who you feel can model vulnerability. Remember, many times the first person sets the tone for the rest of the group.
- Let the first volunteer tell his story.
- If he starts to approach 20 minutes, try to gently make eye contact and signal that time is getting short.
- If necessary, interrupt with a question, such as: Hey John, I really appreciate you being so transparent. Since we're running over a little, answer this: If there was one word or phrase that would summarize your story, what word would it be?
- After each person finishes, ask the group if they have any questions they'd like to ask. If you feel like a clarifying question needs to be asked about his personal faith journey, do so. For instance:
 - Tell me a little more about your personal faith. How does your faith come into play in your day-to-day life?
 - When do you feel like your faith became your own, instead of just believing what someone else (perhaps your parents) told you?
 - Is there one word you can think of that describes your relationship with God right now?
- Use this time as an opportunity to gauge where each group member is spiritually, and take notes about what you observe. If you feel the need to talk more about their faith journey than this setting or time allows, follow up during your one-on-ones.



RETREAT | SESSION 3

AGENDA (OVERNIGHT)

Reminder: Carpooling to the retreat will allow additional connection time.

SATURDAY

1. BREAKFAST

1 HOUR

- Suggestion: start at 7:30am and mentors cook for all the members

3. SHARING STORIES

1 HOUR

- Faith Story #3 (30 minutes)
- Faith Story #4 (30 minutes)

5. SHARING STORIES

30 MINUTES

- Faith Story #5 (30 minutes)

7. SHARING STORIES

30 MINUTES

- Faith Story #6 (30 minutes)

9. SHARING STORIES

1 HOUR

- Faith Story #7 (30 minutes)
- Faith Story #8 (30 minutes)

2. HALF HOUR OF FOCUSED TIME

30 MINUTES

- Encourage the group to have some personal time with God.
- Use the time to leverage the Monthly Focus.

4. BREAK

1 HOUR

6. LUNCH AND BREAK

1.5-2 HOURS

- Perhaps have a physical activity afterwards, such as basketball, volleyball, or a walk.

8. STRENGTHFINDER ASSESSMENT AND CHALLENGE

30 MINUTES

10. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

15 MINUTES

- Pass out the homework handout for the selected session and pair growth partners.

PRAY, PACK UP, AND LEAVE.





LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

HOW GOD SEES ME | SESSION 4

HOW GOD SEES ME | SESSION 4

OVERVIEW

For this session there are two fundamental things to reinforce:

GOD LOVES US SO MUCH THAT HE CHOSE TO ADOPT US.

- Really coming to terms with this helps us live without immense pressure to perform for others—many times pretending to be someone we're not.
- While our relationships with other people are important, our identity does not need to be completely wrapped up in how our earthly father, our family, our boss, or friends view us.
- Letting this truth sink in also helps us relate to God in a different way. For example, when this truth is internalized, there is freedom to pray genuine, personal prayers without the risk of believing the lie that we are unloved, looked down on, or alone.

GOD FORGIVES US.

- He truly forgives us.
- Being forgiven changes us.
- Forgiveness creates a fresh start and a new perspective on life. Multiple forces will try repeatedly to convince us that we are the same person we've always been, but we're not. We are truly new creations in Christ.
- When we mess up in life, we don't have a conscience that convicts us. We now have the Holy Spirit. He not only convicts us after we sin, but he convicts before we mess up—when the sin is just a thought. The Holy Spirit will also inspire us to change our thinking, decisions, values, and relationships.

Based on how easy or difficult it is to complete the homework assignment and talk about how they felt about engaging with someone they feel fully known by, you'll gain some insight into their self-concept. Take notes on what each person says in the group so you can help them see themselves clearly when you're with them one-on-one.

One way to reinforce these two things this week is to consider some different ways to approach being a mentor. Being an effective mentor is analogous to being these three things in another person's life:

- A tape recorder: Here's what I hear you saying about yourself.
- A mirror: Is that how God sees you?
- A translator: Maybe you could replace those lies with the truth of how God really sees you.



HOW GOD SEES ME | SESSION 4

AGENDA

1. MONTHLY FOCUS 10 MINUTES

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

- From now on, assign a different person each meeting to lead this part of the group time.
- The person leading this each week will be responsible for checking in with a few others regarding memorization.

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS 35 MINUTES

- Sexual Integrity Assignment
- Fully Known Assignment

5. BOOK NET-OUT 55 MINUTES

- *The Cure*

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 1 HOUR

- In what area of life do you need to place more trust in God?

4. BREAK 5 MINUTES

6. NEXT MONTH 10 MINUTES

- Book: *Sacred Marriage or What Radical Husbands Do*
- Delegate tasks for the dinner with wives.
- Assignment: Married Men—Love Note OR Single Men—Becoming the One
- Assessment: 5 Love Languages
- Monthly focus: Marriage – Ephesians 5:25

PRAY AND DISMISS





LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

HOW I SEE GOD | SESSION 5

HOW I SEE GOD | SESSION 5

OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

That question can be (and has been) answered in many helpful ways. But one of the primary views of God a Christian has is that he views God as a heavenly Father.

- The idea of God as Father is one of the main themes of Scripture.
- An indicator of how well a person understands Christianity is revealed by how much he identifies with being God's child and having God as his Father.

"For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament "new," and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God.

"Father" is the Christian name for God."

– J.I. PACKER, *KNOWING GOD* (PP. 181–182)

Many conversations on theology take us to places of disagreement, conflict, and confusion. Theology should not be debated in this group. Instead, focus this month's discussion on seeing God as Father—not on issues of church practices or opinion-based theology.

"In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity."

– SAINT AUGUSTINE

TIPS FOR GOOD CONVERSATION:

- Cut off the conversation before the discussion steers toward theology and doctrine.
- This group is about life-on-life application of the essential truths of Christianity and facing everyday challenges and common issues.
- This can be difficult to facilitate, but important.

As far as theology, keep the conversation focused here:

- We have a heavenly Father who's always available, always listening, always there for us.
- He invites us to know him, and he's made that possible by giving us Christ Jesus.
- He's given us the Bible, which reveals many truths about him.
- He's given us the Holy Spirit and the ability to interact with him through prayer.
- The bottom line: Seeing God as heavenly Father is the single, essential element of theology you need to stress in this module.



HOW I SEE GOD | SESSION 5

AGENDA

1. MONTHLY FOCUS: LOVE 10 MINUTES

- Ephesians 2:4-5

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS 35 MINUTES

- Exploring Scripture

5. BOOK NET-OUT 50 MINUTES

- *The Good and Beautiful God*

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 1 HOUR

- What is one thing you've done or experienced in the past 60 days that you are proud of?

4. BREAK 10 MINUTES

6. NEXT MONTH 10 MINUTES

- Book: *Louder than Words*
- Assignment: Identify your #1 character flaw and develop a plan to address it.
- Monthly focus: Character (Romans 12:2)

PRAY AND DISMISS





LEADER
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MARRIAGE | SESSION 6

MARRIAGE | SESSION 6

OVERVIEW

“What marriage has done for me is hold up a mirror to my sin. It forces me to face myself honestly and consider my character flaws, selfishness, and anti-Christian attitudes, encouraging me to be sanctified and cleansed and to grow in godliness.”

– GARY THOMAS (SACRED MARRIAGE)

SOME THOUGHTS ON MARRIAGE

- A married man can have no greater priority than making his marriage successful.
- Many times, well-meaning people say, “God comes first.”
- But it’s easy to find stories where well-meaning men got so involved in their ministries and with “putting God first ” that they neglected their marriages and, sadly, lost their families.
- When we see how Scripture correlates the husband’s love for his wife with the love Christ has for the Church, we get a sense for how important marriage is to God.
- Every married person has had marriage problems.
- Even some of you (leaders) have divorces in your past. There will be people in your group who have been divorced as well.
- Regardless of your past, what we want to emphasize is that the ideal is one man, one woman, for life.
- Even if you suffered through a divorce or caused one, you can still state what the ideal is without diluting it. God’s grace and forgiveness always accompanies his truth. If you’re divorced, God forgives all parties involved and gives grace.

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

- It’s possible someone’s marriage is in crisis right now. If not, someone likely will be soon.
- That person needs to hear that marriage is for life, and that a lot of energy needs to be spent making his marriage work.
- No energy needs to be spent on considering other options.



MARRIAGE | SESSION 6

OVERVIEW

AN ANALOGY | CARS

- If the car you have now was the only car you could ever have, would you waste time looking at other cars? Wouldn't looking at fancy cars on the Internet just create unhealthy anxiety?
- And how would you treat it? You would take very good care of that car if you knew it had to carry you all the way through your life.
- That's what marriage is—a lifelong commitment, no matter what.
- Make divorce a non-option. Don't allow the word to slip into your marriage vocabulary. Otherwise, you may be tempted to think, "If she doesn't change, then I'm getting a divorce," or, "If she does that one more time, I'm out of here," or, "I just don't know how much more I can stand."
- If you're in it for life, you can stand anything. And if you're committed for life, your motivation should not be to tolerate it, but to make it better.
- Another solid principle: almost all marriage problems stem from unmet expectations.
- A husband expects his wife to do a certain thing or be a certain way. She doesn't live up to his expectations, and he becomes anxious and unhappy. She doesn't measure up, even if she's just being herself.
- And vice versa, she will have expectations of him—how he should act, what he should or shouldn't do, and she is disappointed when he doesn't measure up. Now she's unhappy and frustrated.
- In the midst of unmet expectations, if someone from work or church or the neighborhood—who seems to be perfect—enters the picture, the temptation can seem unbearable.
- A helpful thing to remember when we encounter that—and we all will—is this: don't give in; don't give up.

Without God's involvement, people almost never change. The key is to stop putting expectations on your spouse. If you can help your group members love their wives unconditionally, you'll have done them an incredible service.



MARRIAGE | SESSION 6

AGENDA - NORMAL MEETING

1. MONTHLY FOCUS: WOMEN 10 MINUTES

- Ephesians 5:25
- Assign a different person each meeting to lead this part of the group time.
- The person leading this each week will be responsible for checking in with a few others regarding memorization.

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS 35 MINUTES

- Love Note or Becoming the One
- 5 Love Languages Assessment

5. BOOK NET-OUT 50 MINUTES

- *Sacred Marriage* or *What Radical Husbands Do*

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 1 HOUR

- How would someone close to you or your spouse describe your current relationship with her?

4. BREAK 10 MINUTES

6. NEXT MONTH 10 MINUTES

- Book: *Good and Beautiful God*
- Delegate tasks for the dinner with wives.
- Assignment: Dig into Scripture Challenge
- Monthly focus: Love (Ephesians 2:4–5)

PRAY AND DISMISS



MARRIAGE | SESSION 6

AGENDA - COUPLES | DINNER INCLUDED

WOMEN

80 MINUTES

- Share a little bit about your family.
- What do you admire most about your husband?
- What do you hope your husband gets out of the LDG group?

MEN

1. MONTHLY FOCUS: WOMEN

10 MINUTES

Ephesians 5:25

- Assign a different person each meeting to lead this part of the group time.
- The person leading this each week will be responsible for checking in with a few others regarding memorization.

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

20 MINUTES

- Love Note or Becoming the One
- 5 Love Languages Assessment

5. DISCUSS NEXT MONTH

5 MINUTES

- Book: *Good and Beautiful God*
- Delegate tasks for the dinner with wives.
- Assignment: Dig into Scripture Challenge - Monthly focus: Love (Ephesians 2:4-5)

2. MONTHLY QUESTION

1 HOUR

- How would someone close to you or your spouse describe your current relationship with her?

4. BOOK NET-OUT

40 MINUTES

- *Sacred Marriage* or *What Radical Husbands Do*

6. PRAYER

5 MINUTES

- For each other and for each man's marriage

ENDING THE NIGHT | COUPLES DISCUSSION

- Serve dessert and coffee, if you choose.
- Mentors and their wives share their Love languages and how they've worked through their differences to make their marriages work.
- Answer any questions from apprentices or wives, then pray and dismiss.





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GROUPS

CHARACTER | SESSION 7

CHARACTER | SESSION 7

OVERVIEW

This session will be a good test of how open your group has become. When your group members identify their biggest character flaws, you'll know if they are trying to protect an image or truly opening up and exposing themselves to group. Those who make a genuine effort to share even the worst side of themselves need your encouragement.

First, ask questions and drill down to make sure they've truly revealed the issue in its entirety. For example, you may have someone confess he has visited a "porn site or two." But, when challenged, he admits a pornography addiction or even an extra-marital affair. The challenge for the mentor is to skillfully and tactfully lean into a person who seems to be less than fully transparent. Redemption and healing cannot truly begin until sin is brought into the light.

Pray, ask, listen, challenge, and dig as much as you feel you can in this setting. Spiritual growth could likely be on the other side of being challenged.

One thing to look for: Loneliness is a theme that may show up in this discussion. And there are good reasons: they give their work so much energy, then they have to be husbands and dads, and there are expectations from church, from their parents, and in their community. Before long, it's easy to become isolated, as they have been playing roles but rarely having genuine relationships with other men.

This practice of airing out the ugly parts of ourselves will be new. And while we should approach our group members with love, this is a time you can be a little bit more direct.

Let's face it: we all have some dirty laundry, even if it's our thought life but never acted on. Encourage your group members to open up and confront those parts of their character that God hasn't been given access to yet. You can't change them, but pushing them to be honest with themselves, with each other, and with God may start the process of repentance and growth.



CHARACTER | SESSION 7

AGENDA

1. MONTHLY FOCUS: CHARACTER 10 MINUTES

- Romans 12:2

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS 35 MINUTES

- Character flaw and plan to address it

5. BOOK NET-OUT 50 MINUTES

- *Louder Than Words*

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 1 HOUR

- In what ways are you trying to be better than you really are?

4. BREAK 10 MINUTES

6. NEXT MONTH 10 MINUTES

- Book: *Fields of Gold*
- Assignment:
 1. Assignments and goals regarding time, work and money.
 2. Prepare personal ministry plans and take a step
- Monthly focus: Priorities (Matthew 6:33)

PRAY AND DISMISS





LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

PRIORITIES | SESSION 8

PRIORITIES | SESSION 8

OVERVIEW

... He started out so young and strong, only to surrender.
– JACKSON BROWNE, *THE PRETENDER*

A priority isn't proven to be a priority until there's a conflict. One of the ways we have been illustrating this in our group is by our group's requirements: that members attend every session, be on time, and do their reading, homework, and Scripture memory.

Over the course of this group, things come up: work conflicts, out of town meetings, social opportunities, great free tickets to sporting events and concerts, kids activities—all good things, but in conflict with the group meeting schedule. And conflict, many times, causes us to examine our priorities.

In other words, our priorities guide our decision-making. And decisions have consequences. We must help our group members see the long-term consequences of their priorities. We're most effective in this by sharing what we did (or wish we had done) to set priorities in our own lives.

Ultimately, the foundation for setting and honoring priorities should be our faith. For instance, if every day we decide to trade spending time with God with getting extra work done at the office, sleeping more than we should, or watching screens, it will impact the connection we feel with God. Where we end up in our walk with God is the result of a series of decisions we make and priorities we set and defend.

To fully leverage the idea of priorities, begin by being clear on what our priorities are. What is it in our lives that takes priority over other things? It's very difficult not to take advantage of what we think are rare chances to do fun things. But when those things consistently hijack our priorities, it should give us pause. Setting priorities is of little value if we are not living by them.

Be transparent about your successes and especially about your failures in this session. Avoid the temptation to just share your successes. Be real about how you've set and lived out God-honoring priorities—and how you haven't.



PRIORITIES | SESSION 8

AGENDA

1. MONTHLY FOCUS: PRIORITIES 10 MINUTES

- Matthew 6:33

3. MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS 35 MINUTES

- Assignments and goals regarding time, work, and money.

5. BOOK NET-OUT 50 MINUTES

- *Fields of Gold*

2. MONTHLY QUESTION 1 HOUR

- What area of your life is not aligned with the direction you want to be heading?

4. BREAK 10 MINUTES

6. NEXT MONTH 10 MINUTES

- Book: *Finishing Strong*
- Assignments: Prepare your eulogy statement
- Monthly focus: Pay it forward (2 Timothy 2:2)

PRAY AND DISMISS





LEADER
DEVELOPMENT
GROUPS

COMMENCEMENT | SESSION 9

COMMENCEMENT | SESSION 9

OVERVIEW

This is your last formal time with your group. Don't be surprised if you find yourself wondering, "Was this a waste of time? Did this group get anything out of this? Should I even bother doing this retreat, much less ever consider leading another LDG group?"

Without hesitation, I can answer, "No, Yes, and Yes." No, it was not a waste of time. Relationships are messy. Not everyone "gets it" when you're handing it out. I've had men come back years later and say, "You probably don't remember, but something you said in our group changed my life." He then goes on to recount a situation where I had answered a simple question that, in time, meant everything to him.

We have seen men who we thought slept through the whole experience come back years later "on fire" for Jesus and credit LDG for starting them on their spiritual journey. Remember, you have an enemy who does not want you to follow through or ever mentor again. Satan knows the power of Jesus' model for making disciples, and he wants to thwart God and His children in every possible way.

So, as you plan your graduation retreat, think about this: If this were the last time you would ever see each of these guys, what would you tell them? How would you challenge them individually? Collectively?

Remember the Group Commitment they signed at the beginning? That's a great place to start, reminding them of their pledge to "pay it forward" by investing in others. Be sure they leave your retreat with a firm plan and "next steps" in fulfilling that commitment.

There's usually a conversation around, "Hey, why can't we keep meeting . . . keep this thing going?" We know the disciples did keep meeting. They were constantly together. But it was different. It was relational. They "did life together" as they did what Jesus asked them to do. It wasn't sitting at the feet of their Mentor. It was just being together, talking, sharing, laughing, and crying. The mentoring season was over for them. But their relationships were just beginning.

Point the men to the Lord and how the time came when he sent the disciples out. He "graduated" them, telling them to go forth and preach the good news. The "watch, listen, and learn" was replaced with "go, make disciples, and baptize."

You can also remind the men that even though you are having commencement you are still available to them. Make sure they know that if they want more time with you, they will need to take the initiative and you will be there for them. However, you will be most likely doing another group and pursuing those guys, so continuing an individual relationship would be initiated by them at this point.

TIPS FOR GOOD CONVERSATION:

- You will discuss *Finishing Strong* by Steve Farrar.
- Delegate responsibilities for the session: location, food, binder, etc.
- Each member will share his summary of the whole experience.
- You will do the Letter from God exercise.
- Everyone will share his eulogy.
- Everyone will share his personal ministry plans.



COMMENCEMENT | SESSION 9

AGENDA

MOST GROUPS WILL SPEND A FULL DAY OR AN OVERNIGHT TRIP FOR THE FINAL SESSION. BELOW ARE THE MAJOR COMPONENTS.

TYPICAL MONTHLY ITEMS

90 MINUTES

- Monthly Focus: Pay it Forward (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Monthly Question
 - God, in what ways can I serve you in this season of my life?
- Monthly Assignments
 - Eulogy
- Net-out: Finishing Strong
- Prayer
- Dismiss
- Break

PERSONAL MINISTRY PLANS

1 HOUR

- Have everyone share his personal ministry plans.
- Affirm them; ask further follow-up questions for clarification.
- This should be a clear plan on how they plan to engage in a leadership role within the church: men's group leader, married groups leader, InsideOut small group leader, Transit small group leader, etc.

NET OUT FOR THE ENTIRE GROUP EXPERIENCE

45 MINUTES

- Have the group discuss their conclusions from the experience and their "takeaways" from the entire curriculum and relational time together.

LETTER FROM GOD

90 MINUTES

- In 'Other Resources' section on website.
- Review Letter from God handout before giving to the group.



COMMENCEMENT | SESSION 9

AGENDA

COMMUNION

30 MINUTES

- Prepare and do communion as a group at the end.
- Feel free to add worship, prayer time, etc. This is a good way to either start or end your day together.
- If you are part of a commencement with other groups from your church, you can participate in communion together if you have a time when all the groups come back together.

SURRENDER CONTRACT

15 MINUTES

- Near the end of the experience, please hand out the Surrender Contract. In 'Other Resources' section on website.
- Hand copies to everyone and challenge them to prayerfully consider signing it . . . to only sign it when they are truly ready.
- Don't ask for feedback...and don't ask if they did or didn't sign it.
- Tell them it is between them and God.
- Also tell them if and when they sign it, they might share it with their "fully known guy" and/or their wives. Suggest they talk it through with their "fully known guy" to keep it in front of them until they were ready.
- If multiple groups are meeting together for commencement, you can do this collectively from the stage before or after communion.

CONCLUSION

45 MINUTES

- Pray with the group.
- Get a group picture.



FACILITATING THE LETTER FROM GOD

EXERCISE

Ask the group to leave their phones and prepare to spend an hour in silence. You will want them to spread out and only bring a journal, a Bible, a pen, and the handout.

Emphasize the importance of being completely alone with God and eliminating distractions.

Setting them up well:

- Once you dismiss them, everyone will be silent until everyone is back. This will be about one hour, and you will have a signal for a five-minute, wrap-up warning.
- Pray before you send them off. Ask God to remind them of who he is. Confess and thank him for his forgiveness. Encourage the group to do the same on their own and to try to clear their minds and hearts before they begin.

Ask the group to read Romans 6 in preparation. Pass out the Letter from God handout and review it with them.

Let the group know that no one will be required to read their letter. This exercise is to help each person spend time thinking through their relationship with God, so it can be completely private. We say this on the front end of the exercise, because we do not want group members feeling like they need to filter anything in his letter in lieu of having to share it. After the exercise, people are encouraged to share if they choose.

