Small Group Leadership

Purpose of Small Groups

- Gives every woman an opportunity to share more frequently, openly and intimately than they can in a larger group setting.
- Gives women the opportunity to discuss how study applies practically to their lives.
- Gives women the opportunity to pray together.
- Cultivates meaningful friendships and fellowship with other women.
- Encourages accountability.

Role of a Small Group Leader

- To rely on the Holy Spirit for His power, wisdom and discernment.
- To encourage women to share their insights & discoveries as it relates to the study.
- To guide discussion in a meaningful manner: asking appropriate questions, keeping the discussion on track, and helping women to see personal application.
- To love and care for the women in her group (eg. Calling during week).
- To pray with her group of women.
- To be a godly role model in everything.

Qualities of Small Group Leaders

A Heart for God

The most important, foundational quality we can have is a hunger and thirst for God! We can cultivate a vibrant, growing friendship with God by daily abiding in Christ and obeying His Word. A small group leader is, first and foremost, God-centered.

Psalm 42:1,2 "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom an His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Practical Application:

- Spend time daily with the Lord, in His Word and prayer.
- Take a personal retreat with the Lord, spending extended time in prayer, worship and His Word.
- Go on prayer walks.
- Listen to the Holy Spirit during the day and keep in step with Him!
- Worship the Lord!

A Godly Role Model

Women need *godly* role models they can imitate, particularly in the areas of marriage and parenting. As small group leaders, God calls us to be reliable, godly role models whom other women can imitate! We're not perfect, but we should be able to say, as Paul did in I Cor. 11:1, *"Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ."*

I Cor. 4:16 "Therefore I urge you to imitate me (Paul)."

I Tim. 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity."

Practical Application:

- Ask yourself, *"Are my thoughts & attitudes pleasing to the Lord?"*
- Build others up in your conversations, speaking well of others.
- Honor your husband in the way you treat him and speak of him.
- Be gentle & patient in the way you speak & treat your children, privately & publicly.

An Under-Shepherd's Heart:

An under-shepherd is one who serves our Chief Shepherd by loving and caring for others. God wants us to develop an under-shepherd's heart where we regularly initiate love and care for others and pray with them. A small group leader is others-centered.

I Peter 5:2,3 "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving a overseers—not because you must but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."

I Thess. 3:12 "May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you."

Practical Application:

- Greet women at church and get to know them!
- Pray with women before/after church.
- Call the women in your group weekly.
- Pray for and with the women in your small group.
- During fellowship time, ask women if they'd like prayer.
- Look for ways to encourage and build up the women in your group.

A Servant's Heart:

A servant is someone who expresses their love for their Master (Christ) by serving others in practical ways. Servant and undershepherd attitudes go hand in hand. God desires that we grow as His servants, actively looking for ways we can express our love through service. Small group leaders serve by facilitating discussions, calling their members, etc.

Phil. 2:3-7 "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who…made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant…"

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Practical Application:

- Serve in some area at church.
- Arrive early to help with set up. Stay a little later to help with clean up. ☺
- Listen well to others during group! Avoid the temptation to talk too much.
- If you see a need, step in and help (food on floor, a mom who might need help with her child, woman in need of encouragement, etc.)

Skills to Develop

"Small group leaders are not born. They are developed."

1. *Continue to cultivate a vibrant relationship with the Lord!*
   - **Spend time with the Lord daily** through His Word and prayer. Listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and obey Him.

2. *Prepare for Meeting.*
   - **Read, meditate, journal** the coming week's passage by Monday. I encourage you as a leader to study the passage inductively (observe-interpret-apply). In doing so, the Holy Spirit teach you many wonderful truths!
   - **Pray** for your women during the week.
   - **Call** women before study**.**
   - **Arrive for Prayer 15 minutes prior to study**.

3. *Be a Good Listener!*
   - It's tempting to want to share all your insights, especially since you have studied and prepared so well! Encourage the ladies to share and **love them by listening**!

4. *Lead Discussion Well.*
   - **Use your time well**. Don't let one or two people dominate the discussion.
   - **Encourage quiet** ones by asking, *"Cindy, would you like to share…?"*
   - Be sensitive to what the **Holy Spirit** is doing in your group.
   - If your discussion goes "off track", you can steer it back by saying something like, *"Thank you for sharing. Because our time is limited, let's move on to…"* **Or,** *"We're getting off the subject. I'd be happy to talk/pray w/ you after the group…"*

5. *End on Time.*
   - It's important to end on time. Women appreciate this!

6. *Shepherd and Serve, even outside of small groups.*
   - **Pray** for the women in your group.
   - **Call your women by Monday at the latest**. Ask if they need prayer.
   - **Reach out** to women at church and at fellowship. It's tempting to gravitate towards comfortable friends, but an undershepherd is always reaching out!
   - Be a **godly example** in attitude, speech, modesty. Women learn from our modeling. Sometimes, if we're having a hard day, it's easy to let that spill over in the form of complaining. Prayer and thankfulness will help us!