

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES: LEADER NOTES

Leaders: you will distribute a copy of these small group guidelines to your group. There is no need to read it to them word for word, but please use the bullet point notes to highlight several important points.

ATTITUDE

We encourage you to come expecting that you will meet with Jesus just like the woman at the well did in John 4. Also, to seek to enjoy community with each other.

ATTENDANCE & PROMPTNESS

Your commitment to **regular attendance and being on time for your small group** will make it possible for you to reap the most benefit from the Bible study and small group time. This helps your small group remain consistent and run smoothly. Please let your Small Group Leaders know ahead of time, if possible, of any expected absences. Please make **attendance and being on time a priority** so that you and your fellow group members can be blessed by all that God has for you through the study.

- Be on time. This time with Jesus in fellowship with your small group should be prioritized.
- We all have appointments, but hopefully you can schedule appointments around our study time since you know about it in advance. When you miss a week, you miss valuable group sharing with your sisters in Christ.
- If you have to come in late, please just take your seat quietly and join in the conversation when you are ready. The group will generally not stop.

PARTICIPATION

You can expect the most spiritual growth when you complete your Bible study lessons each week, participate in the small group discussions, and attend consistently. We do understand that on occasion the week gets busy, or you have unexpected reasons why you cannot finish your homework. We encourage you to come to small group anyway. We recognize that each member has their own comfort level where group participation is concerned. You can always choose to pass when invited to answer a question. Remember, you get out of it what you put into it!

- The more you put into the study, the more you'll get out of it.

- Gentle reminder that we want everyone to feel comfortable participating. So extraverts, let's try to not overtalk, and introverts please be brave and speak up - all input is valuable!

CONFIDENTIALITY

We expect a commitment from each group member to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the other members, especially in the sharing of prayer requests, or personal information of any kind. We want to build our small groups on a foundation of trust and make them a safe place to share what is on our hearts.

- What is said in small group stays in small group please.
- Trust in our small groups is paramount. Everyone needs to agree that what is said here stays here. That includes husbands and best friends. Remember, it's a small church and a small town, and you never know who knows whom.

RESPECT

Please respect other people's opinions without judgement, advice or criticism. Your Small Group Leader will always strive to direct our understanding to what the Bible says is true.

OPENNESS

We encourage honest and appropriate sharing, being careful not to disclose information that would hurt someone else. A good question to ask yourself is; *if the person involved in what you are thinking of sharing was in the room, would they be comfortable with it?*

- This includes "advice." Please be wary of giving advice regarding specific situations in group unless asked directly. Most of the time we don't have nearly enough information to give wise counsel and we risk hurting rather than helping.

PRIVACY

Emails and phone numbers are to be kept private within the small group and are not to be used for anything but small group communication. They are not to be used for business advertising or promotions. They are not to be shared with anyone outside of your small group please.

CARE

We encourage group members to **love one another** through prayer and acts of service. Take the time to get to know each other. Let's walk the journey together as sisters in Christ.

OUTSIDE MATERIALS

Women's Ministry Bible Studies operate from the foundation of BACC's accepted theology. While we recognize that not everyone may agree on all theological questions, for our purposes we are teaching BACC's position and will affirm those positions when needed. We ask that you please refrain from bringing in or recommending any outside materials, shows, radio programs or books during group time. Leaders will strive to keep the focus on the study and on God's Word during the group discussion time.

- We don't expect everyone to agree on doctrinal issues. However, for this Bible study we ask that you are understanding that Women's Ministry Bible Studies teach from BACC's policy positions.
- **Let's not fight over secondary doctrines.** Secondary doctrines are areas of biblical interpretation that are not essential to salvation. We agree that Jesus' death on the cross paid the penalty for our sin and salvation is available to those who place their faith in Jesus as their Lord and savior. When conflict arises in secondary doctrine, we will refer back to BACC's position and move on in the discussion.

COMMUNICATION

When information needs to be passed along to the group (i.e. snow cancellation, etc), the main means of achieving that is through email, text, or Facebook messaging. If you do not want to be included on group emails or texts, please let your leaders know **immediately** that you wish to opt out. However, it will then be your responsibility to make sure you get information from your leaders.

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25