

CHAPTERS — LEADER QUICK-START GUIDE

Everything You Need to Lead a Table—Without Overthinking It

READ THIS FIRST

You **do not** need to:

- Be a teacher
- Know the Bible well
- Have led a group before
- Have a perfect home

You **do** need to:

- Show up
- Create a welcoming space
- Ask the provided questions
- Keep the tone healthy

If you can do that, your table will succeed.

WHAT CHAPTERS IS (ONE-MINUTE OVERVIEW)

Chapters is a **6-week, all-church table experience** where people gather to:

- Build real relationships
- Talk about life seasons
- Feel connected and supported

This is **not a Bible study or class**.

It's a **guided conversation**.

Your role is to **host the environment**, not teach content.

YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER (SIMPLIFIED)

You are:

- A **host**
- A **facilitator**
- A **tone-setter**

You are not:

- A counselor
- A fixer
- A preacher
- A referee for debates

Your focus is to ensure:

- Everyone has room to participate
- No one dominates the conversation
- The atmosphere stays respectful and safe

BEFORE WEEK 1 (10-MINUTE SETUP)

Confirm:

- Day, time, and location
- Seating in a circle or living-room style (no rows)

Decide:

- Whether kids are welcome
- Snacks or no snacks

Prepare:

- Chairs ready
- A calm, welcoming environment
- A clear start and end time

Send a simple welcome text to your group.

There's no need to overprepare.

THE WEEKLY FLOW (USE THIS EVERY TIME)

Total time: about 75 minutes

1. Arrival & settling in — 10 min
2. Opening check-in — 10 min
3. Table talk discussion — 40 min
4. Wrap-up & prayer — 15 min

Starting and ending on time builds trust.

OPENING SCRIPT (READ THIS)

You can read this word-for-word:

“Thanks for being here. This is a relaxed space—no pressure to talk, no pressure to be deep. Share what you’re comfortable with, and let’s make room for everyone.”

Scripts help everyone relax. Feel free to use them.

GROUND RULES (STATE THESE EARLY)

- No interrupting
- No fixing or advice-giving
- No preaching
- What’s shared here stays here

You can restate these anytime if needed.

HOW TO USE THE WEEKLY QUESTIONS

Each week:

- Use the **provided table questions**
- Ask one question at a time
- Encourage brief, honest responses

If conversation slows, try:

- “Can anyone relate to that?”
- “Does anyone see this differently?”
- “What stood out to you?”

Silence is okay. You don't need to rush to fill it.

HANDLING COMMON SITUATIONS

If someone talks too much

You can say kindly:

“Let's pause there so others can share.”

That's leadership, not rudeness.

If someone is very quiet

You can say gently:

“No pressure—would you like to add anything?”

Participation is always optional.

If the conversation turns negative

You can redirect with:

“That’s important. Let’s hear another perspective.”

Your role is to protect the tone of the group.

If someone overshares emotionally

You might respond:

“Thank you for trusting us with that. Let’s connect after.”

You’re not expected to counsel anyone.

KIDS & REAL LIFE

- Noise is okay
- Mess is okay
- Imperfect homes are normal

Hospitality matters more than presentation.

PRAYER (KEEP IT SIMPLE)

Choose what feels most natural:

- You pray
- Silent prayer
- Voluntary one-sentence prayers

Participation is always optional.

ATTENDANCE (IMPORTANT)

After each gathering:

- Submit attendance using the provided link

That's it.

This helps the church care for people—it's not micromanagement.

WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

Please reach out to leadership if:

- Someone mentions self-harm
- Serious conflict arises
- You feel overwhelmed
- You're unsure how to handle a situation

You're supported. Asking for help is wise.

FINAL REMINDER

If people feel:

- Welcomed
- Heard
- Respected

You did your job well.

You're creating space for connection and growth—and that matters more than doing this perfectly.
