

## What do we want Home Group Leaders to be and to do?

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Home Group Leaders facilitate regular meetings for the purpose of discipleship. They do this so that the activities listed in Acts 2:42 are continually taking place between members who are themselves devoted to regularly meeting and being disciplined.

**Requirements:** Christ-like character is of paramount importance over apparent giftedness or skillfulness.

Home Group Leaders must be mature believers holding to sound doctrine and demonstrating a life faithful to Christ. They should desire to have the church invest in their spiritual growth and equipping. They must actively desire to serve God by discipling others and leading in gospel living. They must be hospitable, generous, faithful, patient, earnest, humble, and known for integrity. They must be spiritually, mentally, and emotionally stable and have the mental, emotional, and time capacity to disciple other believers.

Home Group Leaders do **NOT** necessarily need to be gifted bible teachers, professional therapists, or experienced evangelists. Home Group Leaders are provided training, coaching, and equipping to grow in Christ and to aid them in discipling others in Christ and leading them in exercising their spiritual gifts for God's glory and their flourishing. Home Group Leaders are also **NOT** necessarily expected to teach every lesson, lead every prayer, to host every gathering, or plan every outing. Shouldering all tasks leads to burn out for leaders and the stunting of growth for members. Instead, Home Group Leaders should seek ways to discover and develop their members' spiritual gifts and talents for the flourishing of their Group. Finally, Leaders are the primary contact point between their Home Group Members and Home Group Coaches and Ministers. Thus they disseminate announcements and communications from staff and elders to their members while also communicating on behalf of their members to staff and elders.

Home Group Leaders oversee the health of their group by assessing and administrating their members spiritual gifts for internal sanctification and external mission. Home Group Leaders are charged with assessing, advising, and advocating for their members.

Home Group Leaders are asked to oversee three key areas of discipleship for their group:

- **Assess:** Where is each member in their walk with Christ? Is every member fully known or is there someone who is a black box? Endeavor to assess your members strengths and weaknesses using "Enjoy God, Love People, Make Disciples" (Theology, Care, Mission).
- **Advise:** Give wise gospel counsel alongside your other group members. Listen in a way where people feel safe to speak and speak in a way where people are willing to listen.
- **Advocate:** Persistently bring visibility to the care needs of your members to the staff and coaches that cannot be covered at the Home Group level. This can be care of many types: serious sin, financial needs, mental health care, relationship reconciliation, etc.

Finally, Home Group Leaders commit to the following practical duties:

- Commit to regular church attendance and giving.
- Communicate the announcements from the weekly HGL emails at each gathering.
- Attend quarterly Leader Trainings.
- Alert coaches, staff and/or elders as needs, concerns, or emergencies arise.

# Practical Do's for Home Group Leaders

## **Seek to be Sanctified and Grow Spiritually**

1. Take time for union with Christ through personal prayer and study of the Word apart from the Group gatherings.

## **Establish a Caring Atmosphere**

1. Communicate openness to dialogue with your facial expressions, body language, and tone.
2. Share authentically what you are learning. Your authenticity will set the tone for the group.
3. Contact any member that misses a meeting to let them know they were missed and to encourage them.

## **Facilitate Home Group Discussion and Prayer**

1. Start and end Home Group at the agreed upon times. This means starting even before most people might have arrived in order to set the expectation that we respect each other and our gift of time.
2. Use your time well. For example, allow 5 minutes for warm-up, 30 minutes for discussion, and 25 minutes for prayer.
3. Give Home Group members time to think when you ask a question. Some silence is okay. Fight the urge to answer questions yourself if the group is quiet. When members do share, affirm them verbally and nonverbally during and after they speak.
4. Sometimes direct questions to specific people instead of opening up the question to the entire group. This encourages the shy to share and the outspoken to not dominate.
5. Allow for discussion, especially regarding questions for which you "know the right answer." Active participation in the discovery of truth is much more powerful than being handed a pat answer.
6. Model prayers toward sanctification. Model authenticity and openness by sharing areas where sin needs to die or where you want to grow in righteousness or holiness. Building trust in this area will take time and patience.
7. Ask group members to use their gifts to help form friendships and serve each other. Does anyone enjoy admin? Give them the task of communicating the prayer requests. Hosting or event planning? They could organize a girls night or a guys night out. Prayer? Ask them to close the group time in prayer. The Home Group Leader does not need to carry every facet of group life. This will be burdensome to you and stunt the sanctification and spiritual formation of your members.

## **Build Relationships**

1. Welcome newcomers and direct specific people to be intentionally welcoming to them as well.
2. Prayer regularly for your group members and the prayer requests shared with you.
3. Pay attention to the needs and hurts expressed and follow up with people who have specific needs. Please don't be shy about reaching out to your Coach or to a staff member regarding difficult or confusing situations outside of your comfort level!
4. Find ways for members to stay in touch outside of the weekly meeting: group texts, individual calls, GroupMe, Facebook, emails, notecards, etc.
5. Have someone plan regular gatherings outside of the Home Group time during each season. Once a month or once every two months as your group is able. Enough for the group to gel, but not so much that it is a burdensome chore. It's okay if not everyone attends such outings.
6. Communicate with your Coach about the health of your group, your own personal spiritual growth and struggles, and any concerns or questions you might have.