

## THE POINT OF SMALL GROUP RELATIONSHIPS

Motto for small group relationships:

The task of the small group leader is to provide \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor John Piper defines spiritual leadership as: “Knowing where God wants people to be and taking initiative to use God’s methods to get them there in reliance on God’s power.<sup>1</sup>”

A picture of where God wants them to be: ***Colossians 1:28-29—Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.***

## THE POWER OF CHRIST AT WORK IN US

A Spiritual Leader Recognizes His Dependency on Christ

A Spiritual Leader Invites Christ to Work in His Heart

***Proverbs 4:23—Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*** (See handout: How to Battle)

## HOW TO LEAD SPIRITUALLY

***Colossians 1:28-29—Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.***

## A Ministry Mindset

A call to spiritual leadership is a call to \_\_\_\_\_

***John 10:11-15—I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.***

1 Piper, John. *Spiritual Leadership*. <http://desiringgod.org/resource-library/articles/the-marks-of-a-spiritual-leader>.

The hired hand vs. the shepherd:

You are working with people “for whom Christ died”: **Acts 20:28—Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.**

## Paul—An Example of Mentoring and Spiritual Leadership

REAP =

R \_\_\_\_\_, E \_\_\_\_\_, A \_\_\_\_\_, P \_\_\_\_\_

### Relationship

*Philippians 1:8—For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 4:1—Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.*

### Example

*Philippians 3:17—Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.*

*1 Corinthians 11:1—Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. (NIV: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.)*

*Philippians 4:9—What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

The kinds of qualities the Bible commends for leaders: (Add to this list as you discover other qualities in your Bible reading.)

- Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness—1 Tim 6:11b
- Let “no corrupting talk to come out of your mouths but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear”—Eph 4:29
- Giving thanks always and for everything to God—Eph 5:20
- Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others—Phil 2:3-4
- The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil—correcting his opponents with gentleness—2 Tim 2:24

There is a tendency today to be drawn more to \_\_\_\_\_ than to \_\_\_\_\_.

We are called not to be \_\_\_\_\_ examples; but \_\_\_\_\_ examples.

Keep God at the Center of All of Life

**Romans 11:36—For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.**

Respond Biblically to Situations

**Philippians 1:27—Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.**

### Application

**James 1:22-25—But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup>For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.**

In order to connect the Bible to life we have to:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

In making life application of the scriptures you want to affect the child's \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Listen for “e\_\_\_\_\_g\_\_\_\_\_”<sup>2</sup>

- Listen for \_\_\_\_\_ words:
- Listen for \_\_\_\_\_ words:
- Listen for \_\_\_\_\_:
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<sup>2</sup> Tripp, Paul. *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Pub., 2002), 127ff.

**“God transforms people’s lives as people bring His Word to others.”<sup>3</sup>**

Use not only specific verses to encourage others, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Bible.

- The Gospel (See Ephesians 2:8-9, 12-16; Romans 5:1-11.)
- The Sovereignty of God (See Isaiah 46:9b-11; Psalm 115:3; Ephesians 1:11; Psalm 103:19; Psalm 33:11; Lamentations 3:37-41; Job 42:2; Proverbs 19:21; Proverbs 21:1.)
- The Grace of God (See Romans 3:23-24; Galatians 3:2-3; 2 Peter 1:3-4.; 2 Corinthians 12:9.)
- The Glory of God (See Isaiah 43:6-7; 1 Corinthians 10:31.)

## **Prayer**

***Philippians 1:3-5—I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, [<sup>5</sup>because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.]***

## **A CALL TO SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IS A CALL TO PRAYER**

Two reasons:

*The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men...Men of prayer.”—E. M. Bounds*

*Prayer does not equip us for greater works—prayer is the greater work.—Oswald Chambers*

A promise as we labor in God’s name and for His glory:

***Galatians 6:9—And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.***

***2 Corinthians 9:6—The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.***

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3 Tripp, Paul. *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Pub., 2002), 19.

## Small Group Leader Reminders

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Use these reminders to fuel your prayers.

**Colossians 1:28-29**—*Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*

The Power of Christ Within Us

- “I am dependent on Christ”
- “Christ, I invite you to work in my heart”

Guard Your Heart

**Proverbs 4:23**—*Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

A Ministry Mindset

- “Make me a servant”
- “Make me a shepherd of those for whom You died”

**Galatians 6:9**—*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

### Relationship

**Philippians 1:8**—*For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.*

**Philippians 4:1**—*Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.*

### Example

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**1 Corinthians 11:1**—*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. (NIV—Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ)*

Keep God at the Center of All of Life: **Romans 11:36**—*For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

Respond Biblically to Situations: **Philippians 1:27**—*Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ...*

### Prayer

**Philippians 1:3-5**—*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy ... <sup>5</sup>because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**—*Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

## How to Battle Spiritually

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**2 Corinthians 9:6**—*The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

### Be in the Word daily

- Find a time and place to meet with God

“I think there will be no successful spiritual leadership without extended seasons of prayer and meditation on the Scriptures. Spiritual leaders ought to rise early in order to meet God before they meet anybody else.”<sup>4</sup>

If you want to be a great leader of people you have to get away from people to be with God.

- Have a plan—any plan; a plan keeps us on track; helps us to be diligent; keeps us from wandering aimlessly and holds us accountable
- Bible memory—(See Dr. Andrew Davis: [An Approach to the Extended Memorization of Scripture](#))
- Meditate on the Word—don't just feed the words through your mind, but ponder the text, ask questions, wrestle with understanding

**Joshua 1:8**—*This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

**Psalms 119:97**—*Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.*

**Psalms 119:99**—*I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.*

“There are eyes in pencils and pens...”<sup>5</sup> (Having to write something down about what you are reading, forces you to slow down and to think.)

- Pray the Word of God

### Fill your mind and heart with that which would nurture your soul

- Read books about the Bible and the Christian life—books of depth
- Seek Christian fellowship
- Listen to the preached Word
- Attend a Bible study

### Guard your heart

Stop in situations and look at your heart and address the attitudes and feelings...and sin within.

### Make confession a part of your daily routine

Keep short accounts with the Lord. Everyday our hearts lead us astray; we have attitudes which must be checked; desires that need to be reined in; actions that do not honor God.

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4 Piper, John. “Spiritual Leadership.” *Desiring God*. <http://desiringgod.org/resource-library/articles/the-marks-of-a-spiritualleader>

5 Piper, John. *When I Don't Desire God*. (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2004), 123.

Example: Team member who kind of rubs you the wrong way—stop yourself realizing that you have a choice to either nurture those feelings or to ask God to watch over your heart, give you a love and appreciation for that person, and help you to find ways of encouraging that person.

Find yourself getting frustrated, stop, examine your heart—what is the root of your frustration? Confess any exposed sin; pray for God’s help

## Wean yourself from the world

What you expose yourself to will either nurture your soul or damage your soul

***Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.***

We need to make the best choices of how to spend our time—what influences we will allow in our lives and which appetites we will feed.

## Scripture Memory

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These suggestions are based on a Bible memory method developed by Dr. Andrew Davis in his booklet *An Approach to the Extended Memorization of Scripture*.

Dr. Andrew Davis is the Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church, Durham, NC. [www.fbcdurham.org](http://www.fbcdurham.org)

The full article is available at <http://www.fbcdurham.org/writings/Scrimem.htm>

**Sunday:** Read this week’s memory passage with surrounding verses so you can see it in context. Ask the Lord to help you commit this passage to memory, apply it to your life, and use it to bless others.

**Monday:** Read this week’s passage (with the reference) aloud ten times. Cover the passage and try to say it aloud (with its reference) ten more times, peeking if necessary. Say each memorized passages from previous weeks one time (aloud with references).

**Tuesday:** Cover this week’s passage and try to say the verse aloud (with its reference) ten more times, peeking if necessary. Say each memorized passage from previous weeks one time (aloud with references).

**Wednesday-Saturday:** Say this week’s passage and each memorized passage from previous weeks one time (aloud with references).

Other Suggestions:

- Repeat memorized passages once daily for at least 50 days; after that once every week or two.
- Pray daily asking the Lord to help his word remain in you, using it to feed your soul and minister to others.
- Take advantage of passing “idle” moments during the day to call this week’s passage to mind.

## Telling Christ-Centered Stories<sup>6</sup>

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- *Tell your story in a way that breaks down the misconception that you are essentially different from the person you are helping.*
- *Always tell a completed story.* Your story needs to include (1) a difficult situation, (2) your struggle in the midst of it, and (3) how God helped you.
- *As you tell your story, be honest in describing your struggles and failures.* Your story must highlight God's grace in your weakness, not your heroic faith.
- *Be discerning and purposeful as you tell your story.* Limit the amount of "gory" detail. Your focus is not the situation, but the God who met you in the middle of it.
- *Always tell your story in way that makes God the key actor in the drama.*
- *Tell your story with humility, admitting your continuing need for grace.* Sometimes we have a way of telling our story that has a "good student learning the ultimate lesson" character to it. It communicates spiritual "arrival" rather than continuing need. We must tell our story out of a fresh recognition of our helplessness apart from the resources we find only in Christ. It may even be appropriate to ask for prayer from the person you are serving.
- *Always make it clear that you are not what this person needs – God is.*
- *The goal if your story should always be worship.* Giving hope is about helping a person see the Lord. Giving hope is more than convincing people that things will get better, or helping them decide what to do. Giving hope introduces them to a Person. It helps people who are dealing with the unthinkable to view life from the perspective of God's glory and grace and their identity as his children.

***God's grace is always grace leading to change.***

As we offer people a humble, patient, gentle, forbearing, and forgiving love, we must never communicate that it is okay for them to stay as they are. As long as a vestige of indwelling sin remains, change is God's call.

## Making Application of Scripture to the Lives of Students

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This is an excerpt from the *Open My Eyes Student Journal*.<sup>7</sup>

In making application of scripture to the lives of students, consider the following possible applications:

- |                         |                                  |                                     |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Command to obey       | • Truth to believe               | • Error to avoid                    |
| • Promise to hold on to | • Teaching to put into practice  | • Perspective to ponder             |
| • Example to follow     | • Sin to repent of and turn from | • Priority to establish             |
| • Example to avoid      | • Character quality to imitate   | • Tactic to employ                  |
| • Warning to heed       | • Prayer topic                   | • Verse to memorize                 |
| • Advice to follow      | • Something to be thankful for   | • Something to teach or tell others |
| • Attitude to change    | • Temptation to resist           |                                     |

6 Tripp, Paul. *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Pub., 2002), 155-159.

7 Michael, Sally. *Open My Eyes: A Study for Youth on Studying the Bible*. (Minneapolis: Children Desiring God, 2006).



## Prayers for the Bible Teacher and Small Group Leader

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*This collection of Scripture and text is taken from the biography of George Whitefield, written by Arnold Dallimore, (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 16.)*

And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.—1 Corinthians 2:1-5

***For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!—1 Corinthians 9:16***

***For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.—2 Corinthians 4:5***

***Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.—Colossians 1:28***

***To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...—Ephesians 3:8***

***Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.—2 Timothy 4:2***

***To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel...—Ephesians 6:18b-19***

***Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.—2 Timothy 2:15***

***For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance...—1 Thessalonians 1:5***

***One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts... Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, And I will declare Your greatness... They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.—Psalm 145:5, 6, 11-12***

Oh God, please help me to believe what I teach! Grip me with it and humble me with it, and help me exalt in it until I am lost in wonder, love, and praise. For Jesus' sake!—Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones

Oh God, please help me give these young people a sense of You and Your presence when I teach. Help me to give them a glimpse of Your glory and majesty, the love of Christ my Saviour, and the magnificence of the Gospel, for Jesus' sake!—Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones

Oh God, please cut all the ribbons that tie me to the frowns and smiles of men and drive a steel beam down my backbone and free me, for Jesus' sake!—Pastor Albert N. Martin

“...that we shall see the great Head of the Church once more bring into being His special instruments of revival, that He will again raise up unto Himself certain people whom He may use in his glorious employ. And what manner of people will they be? People mighty in the Scriptures, their lives dominated by a sense of the greatness, the majesty and holiness of God, and their minds and hearts aglow with the great truths of the doctrines of grace. They will be people who have learned what it is to die to self, to human aims and personal ambitions; people who are willing to be ‘fools for Christ's sake,’ who will bear reproach and falsehood, who will labor and suffer, and whose supreme desire will be, not to gain earth's accolades, but to win the Master's approbation when they appear before his awesome judgment seat. They will be people who will teach with broken hearts and tear-filled eyes, and upon whose ministries God will grant an extraordinary effusion of the Holy Spirit, and who will witness ‘signs and wonders following’ in the transformation of multitudes of human lives.”