



## I Choose: Deciding Our Values for Life

Life Group Leader Guide

### What values guide your life...

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For each of us, we have a series of values that guide our lives and help us decide what's most important. Family, work, church, and our own personal development headline a list of things that are important to each of us, but too often get squeezed out for less meaningful values.

Where do our values come from and who decides what is most important in our lives?

Together, we will study how our values are shaped, what ought to get our best effort, and what God has to say about juggling all that competes for our attention. During this seven-session series, we will look at the following Scriptures and themes:

- Session One: "Defining Values"
- Session Two: "Valuing Your Eternal Soul"
- Session Three: "Valuing Your Best Self"
- Session Four: "Valuing Family"
- Session Five: "Valuing Work"
- Session Six: "Valuing the Church"
- Session Seven: "Valuing Christ"

In this packet, you will find sample discussion questions for our study and several helpful tools & handouts that you can use in leading your group meetings.

In addition to these materials, watch for our regular leadership emails and other helpful resources as you lead your group. Feel free to contact your group coach or our team with any questions or concerns that come up during this series.

## Discussion Questions

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At each group meeting you will have the opportunity to discuss a series topic and explore the passages we are studying in worship each week. Our sessions are aligning with the sermon series beginning the weekend of October 27 & 28 and will give your group a chance to dig a little deeper into our weekly theme.

Each session's discussion includes three groups of questions:

- 1. *Get to know me:*** Questions written to help your group open up to one another and begin sharing life experiences related to the topic.  
If your group is meeting for the first time, consider using all (or most) of the questions included here.  
If your group knows one another fairly well, you might consider skipping the first question or two in this section and starting your group discussion with question three, etc.
- 2. *Into the Bible:*** Questions designed to draw you into the text from the most recent week's sermon. These questions include Scripture passages to study as a group. This might be the first time some of your group members have really explored the Bible. Don't miss an opportunity to let them really read the Word of God. These questions are written with the most direct questions first and the more complex questions last. Feel free to select the questions that best fit your group and will get them discussing the ideas that will be most valuable to them.
- 3. *Application:*** No lesson is complete without the opportunity to apply the learning to our lives. The questions and discussion prompts in this section are just that. Complete as many as your group has time for and/or focus on the questions that stimulate the greatest interest in your group.

## Session One: “Defining Values” - 1 Timothy 4:7-10

<sup>7</sup>Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; <sup>8</sup>for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. <sup>9</sup>The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. <sup>10</sup>For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

### **Get to know me**

- If your group is meeting for the first time, be sure to introduce yourselves to one another and welcome any newcomers. As you begin this series, discuss who you might like to invite to join you in the coming weeks. Complete the group roster in the appendix of this packet and use the “Circles of Life” handout to brainstorm who would benefit from joining your group.
- As we begin our look at what is important in our lives, kick off this week’s discussion by sharing about a time when you felt tension between two things that you valued. Have you ever had to choose between multiple priorities that were all really important? How did you resolve that tension?
- Can you think of a value that has gotten more important to you over time? How has that value been shaped?

### **Into the Bible**

- What stood out to you most from this week’s sermon?
- This week’s text says, “train yourself for godliness.” Based on this week’s study, how do you understand the quality of godliness?
- In your own words, what does someone do who is trying to “train themselves toward godly living” look/act like?
- Why does building a strong value system require such hard work?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In each session of this study we will have an additional scripture designed to give your group another option for discussion. Feel free to look at these suggested verses as time permits and consider similarities or differences that you find. This week, consider Mark 10:30. How do Christ’s words emphasize the lasting impact of godly values?

### **Application**

- Think of an area in your life where your values could use more clarity?
- What is a value that should increase in importance in your life?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: In each session of this study we will have an application designed to help your group focus on a personal discipline. This week, consider how disciplined Bible reading could help shape your values. If you haven’t already, consider starting a reading plan using the YouVersion Bible App. The Bible App has hundreds of very good reading plans and it would be great for your group to choose one together.

## Session Two: “Valuing Your Eternal Soul” - Mark 8:34-38

<sup>34</sup> And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.<sup>35</sup> For whoever would save his life<sup>[a]</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.<sup>36</sup> For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?<sup>37</sup> For what can a man give in return for his soul?<sup>38</sup> For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

### Get to know me

- If anyone is new to your group this week, be sure to give them a chance to introduce themselves and meet the other group members.
- As we open this week’s discussion, what are some ways that our values can become short sighted?
- In our culture, we often see people looking for immediate gratification. Can you think of ways that you fall into that trap? What are some of the consequences for valuing the “here and now” too highly?

### Into the Bible

- What stood out to you most from this week’s sermon?
- In what ways do we work to gain “the whole world”? How does this verse speak to our value of material things?
- When we are challenged to consider our values, what compromises does Christ suggest people are making because they value the world too highly?
- What does our feeling of shame teach us about the things that we value most?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In addition to this verse, Luke 12:20 talks about how foolish overvaluing the present is. How can you relate to the man Jesus is talking about in those verses?

### Application

- How can you shift your value of worldly things toward something more lasting?
- In what ways have you felt the consequences of valuing worldly things? How could those consequences motivate you to strive for things that are eternal?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Sacrificing is a way to redirect your values off of worldly things and become more dependent on Christ. Is there something that you will go without for a period of time as a way of refocusing your values?

## Session Three: “Valuing Your Best Self” - Colossians 3:12-17

<sup>12</sup> Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,<sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.<sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.<sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you

were called in one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Get to know me**

- When are you at your best? Is there a time of day or type of activity that seems to bring out the best in you?
- When you think of your best qualities, what are you most proud of? Are there ways that you have displayed your best qualities that were especially impactful?
- What gets in the way of consistently becoming your best self and growing in your strengths

### **Into the Bible**

- What stood out to you most from this week's sermon?
- Read Colossians 3:12-17 together as a group. What specific qualities did Paul want the Colossians to exemplify?
- How do those qualities translate into today's culture?
- In what ways do our values display our commitment to living out the words/teaching of Christ in our lives?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In addition to Colossians 3, consider looking at John 15 as a group this week. How does our connection to Christ help us to become our best self?

### **Application**

- In what area of your life do you want to get better? Is there a quality found in this week's verses that you would like to develop?
- What can your group do to help one another grow and make personal development a priority?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: In this week's teaching we emphasized personal development. As a group, commit to doing something to grow. Challenge a member of your group to read a book together that might interest you, develop your gifts through serving someone in need, or consider participating in an upcoming class like Leadership School. (For more information on November 17<sup>th</sup> Leadership School, visit <http://christchurchohio.org/leadership-school> or call the church office).

## **Session Four: "Valuing Family" - Ephesians 5:22-33**

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he

might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.<sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.<sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,<sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body.<sup>31</sup> "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."<sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.<sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

#### **Get to know me**

- When you think of your family growing up, how would you describe what that environment was like? Were you close to one another or more independent, was your family flexible or a little more rigid?
- How would you describe your family today? Is it similar or different from the family you grew up in?
- What are some things you do to balance the value of your family amongst other priorities that compete for your attention?

#### **Into the Bible**

- What stood out to you most from this week's sermon?
- In Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul describes similarities between family life and Christ's relationship with the church. In what ways does that metaphor help you understand your family relationships and in what ways is that a difficult connection to make?
- What characteristics of Paul's description for family life are especially countercultural today?
- How could the marriage qualities Paul describes be an example to other family relationship (i.e. kids, grandkids, extended family members, etc.)?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In addition to this passage, consider looking at 2 Corinthians 11 as a group this week. How does Paul's description of the church there continue the marriage metaphor and help shape the value we should have for our families?

#### **Application**

- What is one thing you can change to help make family a higher value?
- Is there any competing value that you need to consider modifying in order to emphasize the value of family?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Praying for our families can be a powerful experience. Spend some time in prayer this week asking God to show you how you might make a deeper investment in your family.

### **Session Five: "Valuing Work" - Titus 2:11-14**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly

*lives in the present age,<sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,<sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

#### **Get to know me**

- Remind everyone in your group what you do for work. What is the best thing about your job/what are some of the more difficult aspects of your workplace?
- What did you want to be when you grew up? In what ways is your work similar/different from what you envisioned doing when you were younger?
- If money were no object, would you keep working? In what ways would you change your work life if you had the freedom to do anything you wanted?

#### **Into the Bible**

- What stood out to you most from this week's sermon?
- In Titus 2:11-14 we see that God wants us to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives. How does your work serve as a place to live out these values?
- In what ways are people tempted to compromise to ungodliness and worldly passions in the marketplace? Why?
- How do our jobs express our appreciation for the work of Christ in our lives?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In addition to Titus, Psalm 130:7-8 references our response to God's redemption. In what ways does the Lord's steadfast love, drive us in our work?

#### **Application**

- What are some specific ways that you can be tempted to cut corners in your line of work? What can you do to be sure you aren't tempted to do less than your best?
- The sentences in Titus 2 that lead up to our selected verses describe a model of good work. What can you do to display those qualities in our work this week?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Sometimes God can use our workplaces as a mission field. This week, take time to pray for your coworkers. Who are you most influential toward? Is there something you can do to help them take steps closer to Christ?

### **Session Six: "Valuing the Church" - Ephesians 4:1-7**

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.<sup>7</sup> But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

### **Get to know me**

- As we near our last session of this series, be sure to confirm plans for the launch of your group's next study; consider where and when are you going to meet, who you might like to invite to join you for your next study, and what, if any, changes you are planning to make in your group meeting format? As well, consider what you might do to celebrate Christmas together; have a party, attend one of our Christmas Concerts together, etc.
- Did you grow up in a churchgoing family? Share with the group what importance the church has had in your life and how that has changed over time.
- There are many competing values that crowd out church involvement. Why can it be so difficult to prioritize the church in our daily lives?
- Usually churches are beautifully healthy places, but sometimes church can be a source of friction or interpersonal conflict. Why do you think churches aren't better at building unity and healthy relationships?

### **Into the Bible**

- What stood out to you most from this week's sermon?
- In Ephesians 4:1-7, we see Paul's understanding of the church. What key characteristics seem to be most important to him?
- In what ways does a local church foster qualities like, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit?
- In what ways do church members need to show grace to one another?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: In addition to this verse, consider Ephesians 5:25 as a group this week. What doesn't Christ's commitment tell us about our own opportunity to give ourselves fully to the church?

### **Application**

- What are you doing to live out the qualities described this week?
- What specific area would you like to grow in as part of the church? How can your group members help you develop that quality?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Set aside some time this week and look for a way to meet a need that you observe. Whether it is participating in a Christmas outreach project or preparing a meal for someone in need, what can you tangibly do to represent Christ to someone in your church family?

## **Session Eight: "Valuing Christ" - Ephesians 2:4-10**

*<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,<sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*



### ***Get to know me***

- As we complete this series, revisit your plans for the launch of your group's next study. As well, confirm any plans you may have made to celebrate Christmas together.
- If you could only eat one food for the next month, what would you choose to eat? As much as you like that one thing, how long do you think it would take until you caved in and snuck other things to eat?
- Prioritizing our competing values can be much the same way; all the values you try to juggle, what would you say is most important? What would it be like to only prioritize that single value?

### ***Into the Bible***

- What stood out to you most from this week's sermon?
- In Ephesians 2:4-10, we see qualities that make God worth our highest value. Which of these qualities do you find most compelling?
- Here Paul describes the good work of our lives as a response to God's initial grace. How does the grace of God compel you to live your life differently?
- How do you understand Ephesians 2:10? What role do you have in the good work that you do? What part does God play?
- ALTERNATE SCRIPTURE: Additionally, consider looking at Colossians 1:9-14. How does this response to God's grace compel you to prioritize Christ?

### ***Application***

- In what ways can you make Christ a higher value in your life?
- What might you need to eliminate from your life in order to make more room to prioritize Christ in your life?
- DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: As we grow in our value of Christ, His works can be a powerful motivator to realign our values. Spend time this week meditating on Ephesians 2:4-10 and review the list of reasons why Christ is worthy of our highest priority.

# Group Agreement

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**Our Group's Purpose:**

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community.

**We do this through:**

**Group Attendance**

To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent. (Completing the Group Calendar will minimize this issue.)

**Safe Environment**

To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments or simple fixes.)

**Respect Differences**

To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

**Confidentiality**

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

**Encouragement for Growth**

To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our lives by serving others with our God-given gifts.

**Welcoming Newcomers**

To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

**Shared Ownership**

To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

**Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes**

To encourage different people to host the group in their homes and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting. (See the Group Calendar.)

- Refreshments/meal times \_\_\_\_\_
- Child care \_\_\_\_\_
- When we will meet (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_
- Where we will meet (place) \_\_\_\_\_
- We will begin at (time) \_\_\_\_\_ and end at \_\_\_\_\_
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together. Our primary worship service time will be \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of this agreement \_\_\_\_\_

# Group Calendar

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Planning and calendaring can help ensure the greatest participation at every meeting. At the end of each meeting, review this calendar. Be sure to include a regular rotation of host homes and leaders, and don't forget birthdays, socials, church events, holidays, and mission/ministry projects.

DATE	LESSON	LOCATION	DESSERT/ MEAL	FACILITATOR

# Group Roster

Use this chart to record contact information for the members of your group.

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL	MINISTRY	OTHER
<i>Brett Eastman</i>	<i>29801 Santa Margarita Pkwy. Ste. 100</i>	<i>949-609-8709</i>	<i>brett@ iretogether.com</i>	<i>Childrens</i>	<i>5 Kids</i>

# CIRCLES OF LIFE

DISCOVER WHO YOU CAN CONNECT IN COMMUNITY

The diagram consists of five overlapping circles arranged in a pentagonal pattern. Each circle contains a title and a brief description, followed by four horizontal lines for writing.

- Family**  
(immediate or extended)
- Familiar**  
(neighbors, kids' sports teams, school, and so forth)
- Friends**
- Fun**  
(gym, hobbies, hangouts)
- Firm**  
(work)

Follow this simple four-step process:

1. **P**ayerfully list 1-2 people in each circle.
2. **P**repare the group for them. Share a few names with your group and update your progress.
3. **P**lace a call to them.
4. **P**ick them up and bring them to your next meeting.

*"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19*

## Leading for the First Time

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Sweaty palms are a healthy sign. The Bible says God is gracious to the humble. Remember who is in control; the time to worry is when you're not worried.

Those who are soft in heart (and sweaty palmed) are those whom God is sure to speak through.

Seek support. Ask your leader, coleader, or close friend to pray for you and prepare with you before the session. Walking through the study will help you anticipate potentially difficult questions and discussion topics.

Bring your uniqueness to the study. Lean into who you are and how God wants you to uniquely lead the study.

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Go through the session several times before your group meets. Set aside time to discuss the material with your coach and bring up any questions or ideas that you are unclear about. Consider writing in a journal or fasting for a day to prepare yourself for what God wants to do.

Don't wait until the last minute to prepare.

Ask for feedback so you can grow. Perhaps in an email or on cards handed out at the study, have everyone write down three things you did well and one thing you could improve on. Don't get defensive, but show an openness to learn and grow.

Prayerfully consider launching a new group. This doesn't need to happen overnight, but God's heart is for this to happen over time. Not all Christians are called to be leaders or teachers, but we are all called to be "shepherds" of a few someday.

Share with your group what God is doing in your heart. God is searching for those whose hearts are fully His. Share your trials and victories. We promise that people will relate.

Prayerfully consider whom you would like to pass the baton to next week. It's only fair. God is ready for the next member of your group to go on the faith journey you just traveled. Make it fun, and expect God to do the rest.

# Leadership Training

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Congratulations! You've responded to the call to lead a group.

There are few other tasks in the family of God that surpass the contribution you will be making. As you prepare to lead, whether it is one session or the entire series, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind. We encourage you to read these and review them with each new discussion leader before he or she leads.

1. Remember that you are not alone. God knows everything about you, and He knew that you would be asked to lead your group. Remember that it is common for all good leaders to feel that they are not ready to lead. Moses, Solomon, Jeremiah and Timothy—they all were reluctant to lead. God promises, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). Whether you are leading for one evening, for several weeks, or for a lifetime, you will be blessed as you serve.
2. Don't try to do it alone. Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy leadership team. If you can enlist a co-leader to help you lead the group, you will find your experience to be much richer. This is your chance to involve as many people as you can in building a healthy group. All you have to do is call and ask people to help, you'll be surprised at the response.
3. Just be yourself. If you won't be you, who will? God wants you to use your unique gifts and temperament. Don't try to do things exactly like another leader; do them in a way that fits you! Just admit it when you don't have an answer, and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it, and you'll sleep better at night!
4. Prepare for your meeting ahead of time. Review the session and the leader's notes, and write down your responses to each question. Pay special attention to questions that ask group members to do something other than engage in discussion. These exercises will help your group live what the Bible teaches, not just talk about it. Be sure you understand how a question is designed, and bring any necessary supplies (such as paper and pens) to your meeting. If the exercise employs one of the items in the appendix, be sure to look over that item so you'll know how it works.
5. Pray for your group members by name. Before you begin your session, go around the room in your mind and pray for each member by name. You may want to review the prayer list at least once a week. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of every person uniquely. Expect God to lead you to whomever he wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead!
6. When you ask a question, be patient. Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question, and if silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple "thanks" or "good job." Then ask, "How about somebody else?" or "Would someone who hasn't shared like to add anything?" Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who

aren't ready to say, pray or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time.

7. Provide transitions between questions. When guiding the discussion, always read aloud the transitional paragraphs and the questions. Ask the group if anyone would like to read the paragraph or Bible passage. Don't call on anyone, but ask for a volunteer, and then be patient until someone begins. Be sure to thank the person who reads aloud.

8. Break up into smaller groups each week. If your group has more than ten people, we strongly encourage you to have the group gather in discussion circles of three or four people. With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they're learning and ultimately get more out of it. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member. It can also help people feel more loved in your group. When you gather again at the end of the section, you can have one person summarize the highlights from each circle. Small circles are also helpful during prayer time. People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more time to actually pray. When you gather back with the whole group, you can have one person from each circle briefly update everyone on the prayer requests. People are more willing to pray in small circles if they know that the whole group will hear all the prayer requests.

9. Rotate facilitators weekly. At the end of each meeting, ask the group who should lead the following week. Let the group help select your weekly facilitator. You may be perfectly capable of leading each time, but you will help others grow in their faith and gifts if you give them opportunities to lead. You can use the Small Group Calendar to fill in the names of all meeting leaders at once if you prefer.

10. One final challenge (for new or first time leaders): Before your first opportunity to lead, look up each of the five passages listed below. Read each one as a devotional exercise to help equip yourself with a shepherd's heart. Trust us on this one. If you do this, you will be more than ready for your first meeting.

- Matthew 9:36
- 1 Peter 5:2-4
- Psalm 23
- Ezekiel 34:11-16
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12



## How to lead in Prayer

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One of the most powerful aspects of small groups is the opportunity to offer prayer requests, to pray together, and then to see how God follows through on those prayers. It's amazing to see how God works over three months or six months or a year. Prayers gets answered, situations change, hearts change—your group sees God work in mighty ways.

Just as powerful as the group dynamic of prayer is the impact that a praying leader can have on his or her group. A praying leader ministers to the group not only by showing how much he or she cares about their needs but also by modeling a life of prayer.

As with most things, becoming a small group centered on prayer doesn't just happen. Here are seven tips on how you can minister to your small group through prayer:

- Dedicate the last half hour of each bible study to “personal prayer needs” time.
- Write each member's prayer requests down on 3x5 cards or the prayer sheets provided. Bring the cards/sheets to every study so you can check back on their requests.
- After the requests are given, pray immediately with your group.
- Set up a prayer-partner system where each member has another member praying for him or her, and vice versa.
- As a leader, continue to pray for each specific prayer request of each of your members (use your cards as reminders) daily.
- Call mid-week (or mid-session) to see how things are going.
- Call or email whenever the Holy Spirit prompts you. God may use you to help answer a member's prayer. If you feel the Holy Spirit giving you wisdom that could help a member in a quandary, let that person know.

# Prayer and Praise Reports

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Prayer is essential to group life, use this chart as a place to record prayer requests that are shared in your group each week.

<b>PRAYER REQUEST</b>	<b>PRAISE REPORT</b>