



SMALL GROUPS

- To make my spiritual Journey with a community of trusted friends
- Small groups intentionally connect people, regularly gathering them together to help one another grow in loving God and doing his will.

SCRIPTURES: Psalm 133:1, Ecclesiastes 4:12, Hebrews 10:25

WHY:

- Regularly gathering with others to study Scripture, pray, and support one another
- Connect with others through support groups, discernment groups, covenant groups, Bible Study Groups, outreach groups, mission groups, book clubs, discipleship groups, prayer groups
- Intentionally opening myself to others and listening to their insights about my life and journey
- Developing a hospitable community in which strangers can become known
- Blessing others in my small group through my gifts

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- If you have never been part of a small group experience, ask the Lord if now is the time to join one. Consider what kind of small group you would like to be involved in: an outreach group, A Bible study group, a book club, a covenant group or a support group. Ask God to help you start to find a group you can journey with.
- Three people are enough to begin a triad, or small group. So if you are not a group lover, ask two other people to join you in a triad, meet to discuss your expectations, content and structure you wish to have.
- Many books are available to aid the small group process. Spend some time at a bookstore looking into the variety of tools that could help you in the content or process of forming a small group.

REMEMBER THE STAGES OF SMALL GROUP DEVELOPMENT:

Forming- Storming- Norming- Transforming



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PRAYING SCRIPTURE

- To allow God to shape my prayer life through the words of Scripture
- It opens the heart to praying particular prayers, psalms, teachings, and hopes found in the Bible

HOW:

- Meditating on Scriptures, interacting with God around the revelations its stories bring.
- Listening to the Lord and lingering at the spaces for reflection that biblical stories allow
- Listening for the questions Jesus puts to the disciples as if they were questions, he is putting to you.
- Placing your name in the places of “you” pronouns.
- Adopting a prayer of David, Daniel, Paul, Mary, Jabez or Jesus

WHY:

- Letting Jesus lead you into Prayer through Scripture
- Growing in your love for God and His Word
- Receiving guidance in prayer
- Slowing down scripture reading to a pace that serves listening
- Personalizing Scripture by substituting your name where it is appropriate to do so.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- Use the Lord’s Prayer as a framework for your prayer

“Our Father who at in heaven, hallowed be your name.” Spend some time thanking God for his fatherly love and attention. Ponder who he is and adore his majesty, holiness, sovereignty, goodness and beauty.

“Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Turn your intercession to God’s purposes in the world. Where are you trying to bring in your kingdom rather than putting your efforts toward God’s Kingdom agenda? Confess where God’s priorities have been replaced with your own. Consider what God’s kingdom agenda might be in your relationships and in the world. Pray for these things. What might partnering with God around his will look like?



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SPIRITUAL EXERCISES (CONTINUED):

“Give us this day our daily bread” Pray for your needs and whose lives are closely linked with your own. Pray for those who are in danger, suffering, and in places of decision making or costly love.

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Confess your grudges, bitterness, and over sensitivities; dwell at the foot of the cross. Thank God for what it is like to be forgiven.

“And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil.” As you look ahead into your day, notice the tasks and transactions ahead of you. Where might you get off track? Become aware of the ways you may be tempted to spin the truth, manage your image, live out of your false self, lose your patience or envy another. Pray for the Spirit to work in you to change you. Ask for protection and courage for the day.

“For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.” End your time of intercession with prayers of trust in God’s goodness and his redemptive plan.

- Become quiet and breathe in God’s love. Breathe out your self-recrimination. Turn to Psalm 139. Slowly read the psalm aloud, pausing after each verse. Substitute your own name for the pronouns me and I. Do not hurry. There is no need to get through the entire psalm as once.
- When you are convicted of your own sinfulness, turn to Psalm 51 or Psalm 32. Offer yourself to God in repentance. Read the psalm a verse at a time. Stop after each verse and talk to God about what you have read.
- When you are filled with concern for the church, place yourself in the presence of God and pray one of Paul’s prayers for the church: Ephesians 1:15-21 or Philippians 1:3-6, 9. Or turn to Jesus’ prayer for the church in John 17. Slowly read the passage. Listen for the prayer God places in your heart for the church. Take the prayer with you.
- If you find it hard to pray for someone you love (over even hate), ask God to give you a prayer or him or her from his Word. Don’t stay from that prayer until you are prompted by the Holy Spirit to do so.

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SUBMISSION

- To have Jesus as the Master of my life in absolutely every way
- Is Aligning my will and freedom with God's will and freedom.
- God's will for us includes freely submitting to each other out of love and reverence for Christ

SCRIPTURES: Ephesians 5:21, Philippians 2:6-8, John 3:30, Hebrews 13:17, Romans 12:1

HOW:

- Seeking God's will (no matter where it leads) and doing it
- Allowing others to mentor, disciple, teach, correct and guide you
- Being a good follower
- Laying aside the need to be in charge

WHY:

- Surrendering and losing your life to find it
- Esteeming and honoring others more than yourself
- Developing approachability, gentleness, humility

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- Who do you submit to in the normal events of your life-boss, teacher, parents, colleagues, friends, spouse? What does healthy submission look like in each of these relationships? Pray for grace in these relationships.
- Consider a character flaw you would like to have transformed in your life. What spiritual discipline might help you cooperate with God in his transforming work? Willingly practice this discipline for a stipulated period of time. Submit your process to a trusted friend. What is this like for you?
- Are there areas of your life that are not fully submitted to God? Take time to ask Why? Pray and ask God to help you to allow Jesus to be the Master of every area of your life



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COMMUNION

Communion celebrates God's redemptive plan through the sacrificial death of Jesus. It meets our desire to be nourished by Christ, tasting the sweet depths of redemption.

SCRIPTURES: Mark 14:22-24, I Corinthians 11:26, Acts 2:46-47, I Corinthians 10:17 NLT

HOW:

- Keep company with Jesus no matter what happens
- Have nourishment for the journey
- Develop a deep love for Jesus
- Grow in awareness of your spiritual poverty
- More fully appreciate Jesus' sacrificial love to rescue you
- Appreciate the diversity of other believer who partake of the Lord's Supper with you
- Have a passion for unity of the church worldwide

WHY:

- Jesus invites us to the table. Jesus pulls out a chair and makes a space for us through his extravagant grace. Can we make time and space for this encounter in our lives and see and love the others who join us at this open table?

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- Communion invites us into a deeper unity with Jesus and his body. Take a moment to appreciate the significant cost of the Communion meal. Christ's blood and body were sacrificed for us! What do you hope to receive at the Lord's Table?
- Read John 13:1-7. Imagine you are there at the table with Jesus. What are your feelings and thoughts? How does it feel to have Jesus wash your feet? How does it feel to drink the cup knowing your own betrayals? Confess your sins and imagine attending Communion with what is in your heart to say to God.
- Ask someone who celebrates Communion differently from you, "What does the Lord's Supper mean and do for you?"
- The Communion meal reminds us that we belong and are not alone. Sharing a meal is a powerful experience in building community. Is there someone you are just getting to know or who you could welcome in? Consider gathering a few individuals and sharing a meal, either going out together or inviting them over.



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WITNESS

Means modeling and telling of the difference Jesus has made in one's life.

To reveal the life-changing love of Jesus to others

SCRIPTURES: Acts 1:8 NLT, Matthew 28:19-20 NLT

HOW:

- Living in the presence of Christ in a way the world finds compelling and desirable
- Serving others at points of need and in times of pain
- Inviting others to investigate the claims of Christ and the community of faith
- Sharing the good news of Jesus at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way
- Addressing the fears and sins that harm my witness

WHY:

- Leaving others with the fragrance of Christ wherever I go
- Expressing God's heart for the world
- Seeing people around me come to know Jesus

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- God changes the course of Israel's life when he rescued his people from slavery in Egypt. Their redemption story is found in the book of Exodus. Read the story of Israel's rescue.

You also have a "redemption story" about how God has found and rescued you. Write an account of your redemption story. How might God use this story to set others free? Share the story of your journey to freedom in Christ with a friend.

-Make a list of the people you are praying will respond to God. Beside each name list one intentional way you can be the face of God to them in the next month.

-Write an account of how God has been at work in your life in the past six months. Ask the Holy Spirit to make you sensitive and open to an opportunity to share your experience with a seeking friend.



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Simplicity cultivates the great art of letting go.
Simplicity aims at loosening inordinate attachment to owning and having.
Simplicity brings freedom and with-it generosity.

SCRIPTURES: Matthew 6:19-21 NLT, Mark 10:21 NLT, Philippians 4:11-12 The Message

HOW:

- Assessing the things and activities that keep life convoluted, complicated and confusing: working to simplify these things
- Setting priorities that flow from loving God above all else
- Downsizing possessions
- Enjoying simple pleasures that require no expense
- Removing distractions and preoccupation with things.

WHY:

- Living an uncluttered life
- Creating more space in your life for loving and serving God
- Experiencing freedom from envy and entitlement
- Being able to let go
- Staking your identity in God's love, not accumulation and possessions

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

- Uncomplicate your life by choosing a few areas in which you wish to practice "letting go." Clean out the garage, basement, closet or attic. What is this like for you?
- If someone admires something of yours, give it away. Find out just how attached you are to your things. What is this like for you?
- Where have you complicated your life with God? Consider what brings you into the presence of Christ. Spend time there.



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