

## Leading a Small Group Discussion

### 1. Prepare

Work through the materials and think yourself into your group meeting.

### 2. Pray

Pray before your group meeting.

### 3. Don't talk too much

Your job is to get people thinking and talking and keep the discussion moving from member to member rather than talking to the members.

### 4. Be A Good Listener

So simple yet so hard to do. Don't just listen to what people are saying – actively listen. The best leaders listen with their eyes and ears.

### 4. Don't Answer Your Own Questions

The whole purpose of asking the question is to create an environment where group members feel safe to share. It's not about getting the right answer. When people are silent with some of these questions, embrace the silence: this might be where the introverts are thinking and the Holy Spirit is speaking!

### 5. Encourage Responses

If no one really speaks you could say something like, "Paul, you look like you were going to say something..."

### 6. Ask Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions help group members to say more than a simple yes or no. Use 'what?' or 'how?' questions to get people to open up.

### 7. Try To Involve Everyone

Your group might be too big if everyone isn't able to speak their thoughts. Groups of over eight members will have difficulty doing this. In those cases, it might be best to divide the group into smaller groups for some of the time.

### 8. Keep the Main Thing, the Main Thing!

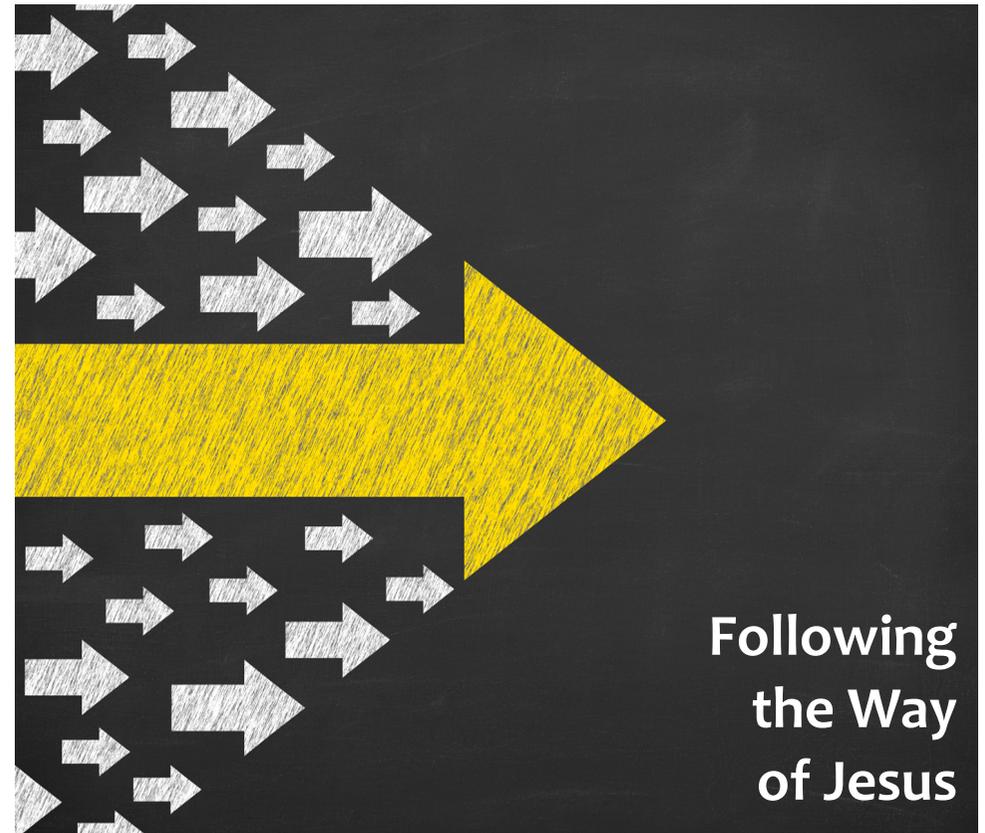
Remember, the focus is not on getting through the material and you may not cover all the questions. If the discussion is fruitful then allow group members the time they need to discuss, process, and grow with the information.

### 9. Manage the Time

Keep an eye on the clock. Don't let things get bogged down in interesting but irrelevant discussion. Bring things back on track and take the initiative to move things on when it feels right.

### 10. Leave time for application.

Make sure people have time to think about the difference that this discussion will have in their daily 'frontline' lives.



Discussion Guides for Small Groups

## 7. Following the Way of Jesus: The Way of Humility

## WAY IN

Ask the group to think of people they know (or have known), who they would describe as 'humble'. What is it about them that makes them humble?

as 'putting yourself down'. How would you answer people who had these concerns?

humble! Why would humble people be more successful as leaders in the workplace?

## WAY OUT

Read James 4:6.

Pray for any who, in choosing to be humble, have suffered at the hands of others.

## Read Matthew 18:1-4

### Key Text: Matthew 18:4

So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

## DISCUSS

1. Why do you think a child is an appropriate example of Christian humility? (NB - see commentary notes too).
2. Read Philippians 2:1-11. What can we learn about Christian humility from these verses?
3. People sometimes think of humility as weakness, or

4. The 19th Century Pastor Andrew Murray wrote this: "Humility is the displacement of self by the enthronement of God. Where God is all, self is nothing." Humility, by Andrew Murray.
  - How are 'self' and 'God' in competition for our affections? Galatians 5:16,17
  - Practically, how do we 'enthron God'? What does it mean to live out Galatians 5:24?
5. In 2001 a book was published called 'From Good to Great'. It was a serious study of some of America's most successful big businesses. It looked into how they had moved from being good companies to being great companies. One key finding was that in all of the companies the leaders shared two characteristics: they were absolutely determined to do the best for their companies and secondly, they were

## Commentary Notes: Matthew 18:1-4

But why the object lesson of a little child? In contrast with little children's high rank in contemporary western society, little children ranked low in ancient society. So references to childlike trustfulness or innocence are misplaced when applied to the present passage; and Jesus isn't referring to little children as such. "Like little children" and "like this little child" present them as objects of comparison, so that "one such little child" is a figure of speech for a disciple of Jesus. He means that entry into the kingdom requires humbling yourself to his lordship (compare 23:12). Bowing down before him is like lowering yourself to the stature of a statusless little child. Having brought up and taken care of the issue of entrance, Jesus then addresses the disciples' question of greatness. "Therefore" indicates that since entry requires self-humbling for entry into the kingdom, greatness within the kingdom requires continued self-humbling.

Gundry, Robert H.. Commentary on Matthew (Commentary on the New Testament Book #1) . Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

18:2-4. The most powerless members of ancient society were little children; in most of ancient society, age increased one's social status and authority. In Jewish culture, children were loved, not despised; but the point is that they had no status apart from that love, and no power or privileges apart from what they received as total dependents on their parents. The posture of children as dependents may recall 6:9. "Converted" may allude to the Jewish idea of turning, returning or repenting, often found in the biblical prophets.

Keener, Craig S.. The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (pp. 89-90). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.