

## 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.

## The Prophets: 4. Learning the language of the Spirit

### Key Text:

1 Corinthians 14 vs 1-5  
John 10 vs 27

### WAY IN

Paul encourages us to desire the gift of prophecy because God speaks today. Jesus talks about us listening to his voice and following him as a result. But how do we recognize that voice? How do we learn the language of the Spirit?

### Discussion Guides for Small Groups



Answering this question is like trying to answer the question “How do I know I am in love?” Infuriatingly the answer is “You will know”.

### **DISCUSS**

*How do you know that you love someone, or that they love you?*

*How do you recognise the voice of Jesus?*

### **God’s Word**

The Bible is our go to source for the revelation of God to us. He will never say anything to us that contradicts his will revealed in Scripture. God is consistent in character; He may challenge our interpretation and application though.

### **Take your hands off the scales**

Be aware that your own preferences or desires do not dominate what you hear, but also do not assume that when God speaks it will always be the opposite of your character or what you are thinking.

### **Peace in your heart**

**Colossians 3 vs 15** “rule” means “act as umpire”. Do you feel peace in your heart when God speaks, even when he is challenging you? If you are uneasy in your inmost being, then that maybe God’s

indication that something is not quite right in what you are hearing.

### **Don’t overlook the obvious**

The next time you find yourself “distracted” when you try to pray, worship, hear a talk, go for a walk to clear your mind etc. stop and check what you have been distracted by, because that very thing might be just the way that God has been able to get your attention.

### **Hit the pause button**

Rather than just blurt out the words of a prophecy as soon as you think God has spoken it is wise to hit the pause button and reflect. Ask “How does this fit in the flow of what has happened so far?” God is a God of order and will seldom wrench you in a direction where his Spirit has not already been leading. The time you have to pause will vary between whether you are in the middle of a service or part of your daily life. God may also speak to you now for your to share later.

### **Make yourself available**

When God called Samuel in the Old Testament Eli and Samuel did not recognise God’s voice at first, but they had put themselves in a place where God could speak, and they could listen by trying to live a life as close to that intended by God as possible. The picture is one of spending time with God.

### **Prayer**

We can make prayer difficult but at its simplest it is a conversation. The more we talk and listen the more we get to know God, share thoughts, ideas and learn to hear his voice. **Luke 18 vs 1** – always pray and never give up, **1 Thess 5 vs 7** – Pray continually. **James 4 vs 2** – Ask God (in prayer)

### **Priorities**

There is probably never enough time in our life to do everything we would like to do but we always make time in life for the things that are most important to us. Maybe, if we want to learn the language of the Spirit, we need to put Prayer higher up our list of priorities, because it takes time to get to know someone.

### **WAY OUT**

*How helpful are these guidelines for you?*

*Share any experiences where they have rung true for you.*

*How busy is your life?*

*What priorities do you set for the how you spend your time?*

*How would you feel about sharing a prophetic word as part of a service/to an individual/with the Elders etc.*

*What experiences have you had of being on the receiving end of a prophetic word?*

Remember when God speaks it is your mind he will speak into.

### **CONTEXT**

The guidelines in this document are not supported by Bible verses, they are practical hints and tips from personal experience of learning the language of the Spirit.