

## 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.



## 1. Jesus, Founder of a movement (Mark 1:14-20)

## WAY IN

What would cause you to give up **everything** and start a new life? Discuss

**Read: Mark 1:14-20**

## DISCUSS

**The Kingdom. Read verse 14-15**

1. Jesus' announces the nearness of the kingdom of God and the need to respond v14.
    - Consider if you have a sense of urgency for people to respond to this good news? If not what could be some of the reasons? If we do how is this worked out? Or how could it be worked out?
- Call to follow. Read verse 20**
2. Mark tells us that Jesus called his first disciples Peter, Andrew, James. They all responded by following Jesus. v 17
    - What were the implications for them?
    - Read Mark 10: 17-31. As you read ask the question:

how would've I responded to Jesus? What the things that a value most?

- Jesus' call meant that Peter, Andrew, James and John would leave there everyday life v 20
- Read Mark 5: 1-20 and spot the difference in terms of calling.
- What are the implications for us? Share about your Frontline? How would you feel if to follow meant a change of vocation or location?

**Revelation of Jesus. Read v 18**

- Spend time consider what it was that caused these first followers to immediately follow, leaving all. This was without any cajoling or arm bending or detailed job description.
- Remember that these people were oppressed by the Romans
- Jesus offer them a new life and a new purpose. Share your faith story, how much of you coming to faith was reasoned argument and how much was an encounter with Jesus?

**Jesus founded a community as his body in the world. Peter, James, John and Andrew.**

Read Acts 2: 42 - 47

- What does this reading tell you about their out reach? Who is the agent of evangelism and what might we need to do/be to grow such a community?

- Read Acts 3: 1- 10
- How does this account of faith sharing differ from the previous?

## WAY OUT

What has each person heard in this session that they want to act on, or think about further.

Pray for one another.

### Commentary Notes: Matthew 1: 14 - 20

The moment had arrived. If you were to walk down the street of any town or village with any Christian background and were to call out 'Repent and believe the gospel', people would think they knew what you meant: 'Give up your sins and become a Christian.' Of course, Jesus wanted people to stop sinning, but 'repentance' for him meant two rather different things as well. First, it meant turning away from the social and political agendas which were driving Israel into a crazy, ruinous war. We can imagine someone saying that today in a country where ideologies are driving half the population into violent behaviour. Second, it meant calling Israel to turn back to a true loyalty to YHWH, their God. And, as anyone with a smattering of knowledge of the Bible would recognize, this was what had to happen before God would redeem Israel at last. The call to repent is part of the announcement that this is the time for the great moment of freedom, of God's rescue. That's why it goes with the call to believe. Jesus' contemporaries trusted all sorts of things: their ancestry, their land, their Temple, their laws. Even their God – provided that this God did what they expected him to. **Jesus was now calling them to trust the good news that their God was doing something new.** To get in on the act, they had to cut loose from other ties and trust him and his message. That wasn't easy then and isn't easy now. **But it's what Peter, Andrew, James and John did, and it's what all Christians are called to do today, tomorrow, and on into God's future.**

Wright, Tom. Mark for Everyone (New Testament for Everyone) (pp. 8-9). SPCK. Kindle Edition