

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.



6. Jesus: Son of God - Son of Man

(Mark 9:2-13)

WAY IN

When you are in a time of worship, what image of Jesus is in your mind?

Key Text: Mark 9:7

Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: 'This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!'

Read Mark 9:2-13

DISCUSS

1. What is the significance of Jesus being with Moses and Elijah? What do they represent to the Jewish disciples, Peter, James and John? *(Note for leader: Moses and Elijah represented the whole Old Testament, the Law and the Prophets. In other words they represent all of the wisdom that Peter, James and John had about how to live, how to work, and how to worship).*
2. The statement in verse 7, "Listen to him", probably alludes to the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15. In

the light of your discussion so far, what does it mean for us to 'Listen to Jesus'? How do we do it? What do we listen *for*?

- I. What other 'voices' speak into our lives? How do we relate those to the voice of Jesus?
3. The disciples are clearly disturbed by Jesus' reference to death and suffering (9,10,12). Why had their vision of Jesus' glory added to their confusion?
 - I. Are there ways today that we find it hard to hold the 'glory' and the 'suffering' of Jesus in tension?
4. Peter had already had a confrontation with Jesus over Jesus' prediction of his death (see 8:31-33). Jesus seems concerned to make sure his followers know that it is not just him that will make a sacrifice, but all of those who want to follow him (8:34-38).
 - I. How would you explain Jesus' words in v34-38, to a friend who was asking you what it means to be a Christian?

WAY OUT

is there anyone who needs to hear from Jesus at the moment? Or anyone who has heard from him, but is finding it hard to carry out what Jesus is asking of them?

Pray for one another.

Commentary Notes: Mark 9:2-13

In Mark, the transfiguration is a dramatic indication of the resplendent glory which belongs to Jesus as God's unique Son. As a revelation of the concealed splendour of the Son of Man, the event points forward to the advent promised in Ch. 8:38, when Jesus' status as the eschatological Judge will be manifested to the world. The episode provides a personal and preliminary revelation that he whom the disciples follow on a way marked by suffering and humiliation is the Son of Man whose total ministry has cosmic implications. Ch. 9:2-8 serves as a prelude to Chs. 14:1-16:8 and corresponds in function to Isa. 52:13-15 in relationship to Ch. 53:1-12: it offers assurance that despite apparent abandonment by God, Jesus is the Lord's Servant who prospers in the task he has been sent to accomplish. The revelation of Jesus' mysterious, transcendent dignity serves to confirm Peter's acknowledgment that Jesus is the Messiah (Ch. 8:29), and Jesus' own prophecy of his impending passion and vindication (Ch. 8:31). The event is oriented toward the disciples (Ch. 9:2 "before them," 4 "appeared to them," 7 "This is my beloved Son: listen to him") to strengthen them in their commitment and to prepare them for the sufferings which they must share.

Lane, William L.. The Gospel of Mark (pp. 315-316). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.. Kindle Edition.