

FaithTalk Groups

Lesson 6: Evangelism Through Small Groups

Small groups have proven to be one of the most effective ways to share the gospel of Jesus with non-Christians. In this lesson we will review. This lesson addresses some basic principles and practices for helping your FaithTalk group participate in Jesus' work to evangelize new people and make new disciples.

"Every small group or church needs to have some form of evangelism going on in order to maintain health." — Steve Sjogren

1. Spontaneous Evangelism

- Small group evangelism should spontaneously flow out of the life group members share with God and with each other, in Christ.
- In other words, love for people, that flows out of love for God, along with living in the life of the Father, Son and Spirit, leads to evangelism.

Question: How can your FT group intentionally evangelize in its context?

2. Focus group vision

- Clarify the vision of your group (with the primary objectives of discipleship, evangelism and multiplication). Communicate this vision clearly and frequently.

3. Help people wrestle with the call to evangelism. Study relevant scriptural passages. Pray for wisdom, insight and guidance.

4. Spend time during each meeting focusing outward – the needs of friends, family acquaintances and community.

5. Make your group visitor-friendly

- Meet Consistently
- Stay Small
- Avoid the "family-reunion" mentality (it's not all about your familiar family group. It's about new people – others!).
- Make newcomers feel welcome.
- Follow up on newcomers.

6. Cultivate: Make contact with the “lost”.

- Servant Evangelism: make serving others, outside your group and church, a priority.
- Focus on your family, neighborhood, community and city/town.

Go after the “right people:

- ▶ *Be intentional.*
- ▶ *Start with friends, relatives and acquaintances who are unchurched or non-Christians; your neighborhood or work place.*
- ▶ *Look for people who are interested and responsive; people with spiritual questions and who seem open to discussing and exploring Christian answers and principles.*

Build relationships

- ▶ *Find out what activities they participate in – community events, sports, school events, etc.*
- ▶ *Watch for “Stress Events” that open doors for ministry: deaths, divorce, illness, job change, relocation.*
- ▶ *Look for ways to serve and serve.*
- ▶ *Invite them to your home.*
- ▶ *Plan informal, non-threatening activities with a couple other Christians.*
- ▶ *Let them see and participate in Christian community.*

7. Plant seeds of the gospel

- Invite people to a special event with your church.
- Invite them to your FaithTalk group or weekly celebration.
- Start an Exploratory Bible Study.
- Discuss *The Shack* or *The Dancing God*.

Let them see and experience Christian community

- ▶ *Be authentic.*
- ▶ *Let them experience God’s grace within the group community.*
- ▶ *Experience community service together.*
- ▶ *Encourage them to invite others*

8. Reap: Be prepared to “reap a harvest”

- Look for opportunities to ask something like this:
 - *“What did you think about what you heard the pastor say the other night?”*
 - *“What did you think about the discussion we had last night?”*
- Encourage the seeker in meaningful conversation that flows out of his answer.
- Be prepared to use the Scriptures to show how one becomes a follower of Jesus.

At the appropriate time:

- ▶ *Introduce the Scriptures.*
- ▶ *Teach them to pray.*
- ▶ *Teach them to worship.*
- ▶ *Help them “cross the line” into a relationship with Jesus.*
- ▶ *Baptize them.*

9. Multiply: Continue to reach new people and make new disciples

- At every opportunity encourage new people to invite/include their friends.
- Always look for potential apprentices, hosts and leaders of new groups.
- Always prepare to start new groups.

10. Additional reminders – always find ways to

- Keep group members connected to the larger congregation.
- Keep the group connected to your pastor.
- Keep the group connected to GCI.
- Keep group members connected to their community – their cultural context.
(Seek to prevent groups from becoming ingrown – focused only on the group and/or larger congregation)

Personal Activities

1. Take some time to list those people in your life who do not know Jesus below. Do you pray for these people? Will you think of ways to strengthen your :

Your Friendship Prayer List

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ |

2. Make a list of “fun things” that an unbeliever would participate in with a FaithTalk group.
3. Watch the video lesson provided at this link:
<http://missionohio.e-quip.net/presentations/show/2261> (Evangelistic Small Groups by Rick Howerton)

Questions

1. What is your greatest personal roadblock to being effectively used to reach people for Christ?
2. What do you need to allow God to change in your life so that He can use you more effectively in reaching people?
3. How will you help your group member participate in relational, service-oriented evangelism?

Resources

- Contact a member of the GCI-USA Ministry Development Team for ideas, resources and help you may need for evangelizing through your FT group.
- *How to Lead a Great Cell Group Meeting* by Joel Comiskey, Chapter 8.
- *101 Ways to Reach Your Community* by Steve Sjogren.