



Sermon Based Small Group Leader Notes

For the week of September 18, 2011

Opening Reminders

- The first 3 gatherings of your group are “on ramp” weeks (people should feel free to try different groups until they find the right fit).
- Hand out and review the Group Covenant with your group this week.
A Group Covenant sample can be found online under this week’s SBSG resources and at the Small Groups table in the Foyer. Feel free to create your own version to suit your group’s needs and personality.
- Share email information so that the group can be contacted easily with prayer needs, group gatherings, service opportunities, etc.
- Plant the seed now for roles within the group, e.g., snack organizer, service coordinator, prayer coordinator (see note under **Prayer**). This will make group involvement much more meaningful for everyone.
- Keep your eyes open for the person/people in your group who could lead a group in the future. Leadership and group proliferation are goals of this ministry!

Topic:

SERMON SERIES: What’s So Great About the Gospel? (Week 1 of 3)

“God’s Great Promise” Philippians 1:3-6 (Pastor Harrington)

Goals for this Gathering

1. To launch the new 10-week cycle of small group gatherings
2. To allow potential participants a no-pressure opportunity to visit your group
3. To discuss group expectations & commitment by reviewing the Group Covenant
4. To discuss the homework
5. To pray together

Prayer

- Take prayer requests and praises
- Pray for all Small Groups meeting at Northwest and in homes
- Pray for the spiritual growth of your group

Leader Guide

Reminder to Leader:

Encourage participants to take a few minutes each week to read the homework guide, jotting down responses to the questions.

- One-word answers are fine; just enough to jog participants' memories during discussion time.
- Be ready to share your own stories for each of these sections... this can go a long way in getting your group to open up.

Getting Started

- This section should help people share their story in a non-threatening way before getting into the Bible study. Encourage honest, non-Sunday School answers.
- The final question in this section points the focus to this week's sermon.

Into-the-Bible

- This section provides participants with additional New Testament scripture that both confirms the truth found in Paul's letter to the Philippians and reinforces those truths in our minds with another example from the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. God's Word is consistent.
- *Question 4* allows participants to draw connections between this week's sermon text and God's involvement in Peter's life. Some in the group might move beyond Peter's life, connecting these same truths to how God relates to us.
- Spend time on *Question 5*. This Old Testament passage was chosen because it reminds us to never give up, to trust that God is our strength and sustainer, and that there is hope for renewal when we wear out.

Digging Deeper

- The questions in this section prompt life application.
- Allow your group to answer these more personal questions, as they feel comfortable. Newer groups or established groups with several new members might find less responding initially.
- *Question 6* touches on the theme of this current sermon series: "What's so great about the Gospel?" If participants voice a lack of ability/giftedness for evangelism, bring the focus back to their perception of what makes the Christian message resonate with them. Seekers may express other opinions; allow them room for their opinions without the group trying to convince them.
- *Question 7* reminds participants of the baseball image from the beginning of this week's small group gathering, allowing people time to explore and discuss the truth behind the comparison.

Prayer

Encourage someone in the group to serve as the Prayer Coordinator. This person takes note of prayer requests/praises with the understanding that he or she will communicate these to the group during the week. Note: share email information at the beginning of the session.