

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments, as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Ephesians – “The depth of God’s grace lived out in love.”

Opening Questions

- Share some ways where you have seen God’s hand working during these last two weeks?
- Are there any needs of anyone that can be fulfilled by this small group?

Ephesians 4:11

- Christ gave gifts to every believer through the outpouring of the Spirit. He also gave gifts to the corporate body of believers in the same outpouring, to “equip the saints for the works of ministry.” In light of what Paul previously wrote (Eph. 1:1 & 2:20), how did the Apostles’ and Prophets’ ministries equip believers?
- What does Eph. 2:20 tell us about the duration of the office of an apostle & prophet?
- What are some similarities of apostles and evangelists? What are the differences?
 - **Leaders Cheat: Apostles** where men **chosen, commissioned, and sent out** by Jesus on a mission to start new churches where there weren’t any churches.
- What are some similarities of prophets and pastor-teachers? What are the differences?
 - **Leaders Cheat: A new testament prophet** refers to one who is empowered by the Holy Spirit with the gift of prophecy for the purpose of **edification, comfort and encouragement**, as well as for the purpose of understanding and communicating the mysteries of God’s revelation to the church.
- **Read and discuss** 2 Timothy 4:5 & Acts 21:8

- What are some differences between Timothy’s ministry & Philip’s ministry? Read the following verses to help answer this question.
 - Acts 8:26-40
 - 2 Tim. 2:2
- **Read and discuss** Titus 1:5-9. What is the only qualification of an elder that isn’t a character issue? Read 1 Tim. 3:2 to help answer this question.
- What are the differences between the 3 titles: Elder, Overseer and Pastor? Read the following passages to help answer this question.
 - Titus 1:5-7
 - 1 Peter 5:1-2
- Discuss what you think each title emphasizes? (Elder, Overseer, and Pastor)
- Why is it appropriate that COBC calls their “elder board” a “pastoral team”?
- What could be the danger in separating these 3 titles into 3 different offices?
- **Read and discuss** the following verses. What do these verses tell us about church governance? Pay attention to the words that are and aren’t plural.
 - James 5:14
 - Acts 14:23
 - Philippians 1:1
 - 1 Peter 5:1-2
- According to Titus 1:5 how important is it to have a plurality of elders?
- Practically, why is it smart to have a plurality of elders?
- **Read and discuss** the following verses from the pastoral epistles. What do they tell us about the importance of teaching sound doctrine?
 - 1 Timothy 4:13
 - 2 Timothy 2:15
 - 2 Timothy 4:2
 - Titus 1:16
 - Titus 2:15
 - Titus 1:9

- **Read and discuss** the following verses. What do they tell us about the importance of teaching God's word and sanctification?
 - Eph. 5:25-26
 - 2 Tim. 3:16
 - ***Leaders Cheat:*** Sanctification is the process of us becoming more and more like Christ.

- What does 1 Timothy 5:17-18 tell us about the importance of preaching and teaching within a church?

- **Read and discuss** the follow quote by Alexander Strauch.
 - No matter how poor a local congregation is, it must exercise faith before the Lord in giving to those who labor in the Word. Today we desperately need to capture Paul's passion and vision for the centrality of preaching and teaching the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit. If we do, we will gladly render double honor to elders who labor in the Word. If we don't, we are doomed to wander far off course into forbidden waters, just as the church at Ephesus did. – Alexander Strauch

Note from Nathan: it is always awkward for a pastor to talk about giving within the context of a church. I just want to thank the body at Country Oaks for always taking such good care of their pastors. For all of you that faithfully give, - Thank you!!