



**BEING A
small
GROUP
@ Faith**

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INTRODUCTION

SMALL GROUPS DON'T JUST MEET ... THEY MATTER.

You were created for community; community with God and with others. Small groups play an integral role in the culture of Faith Baptist Church. As a church, we exist to lead people to faith and maturity in Jesus Christ. Small groups support that mission as we help one another take our next steps with Jesus. While we know that not everyone will choose to be in a small group, our goal is that 3 out of 4 people who call Faith home would be in a small group. **We truly are #BetterTogether.**

ONE WHAT ARE WE ALL ABOUT?

Thanks for taking the step to join a small group at Faith! These communities are essential parts of our local church family. As a church, Faith exists to lead people to faith and maturity in Jesus Christ.

Small Groups at Faith support that mission by helping one another take our next steps with Jesus.

VIDEO NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Acts 2:42-47 together as a group.

1. What were the characteristics that made this community of Christ-followers so extraordinary?
2. How did this early church learn about God's truths and what were some of their applications and outcomes

TWO WHY SMALL GROUPS?

Acts 2 points us towards small groups. As we are known and know others, we can fulfill the “one another” commands of scripture and help one another take our next steps with Jesus. For example, “love one another” (John 13:34,35), “bear one another’s burdens” Galatians 6:2), and “show hospitality to one another without complaining.” (1 Peter 4:9) There are some common next steps we all need to take and in fact, there will always be a next step in following Jesus as we strive to keep growing and applying God’s Word to our lives.

VIDEO NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you’ve been part of a small group in the past, share how it was a help to you beyond the group meetings.

2. When you think about where you are now in your life and faith, what might be the “next step” for you in your spiritual journey?

3. How can your group “help one another” in taking those “next steps in following Jesus” you just talked about?

THREE WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Recognizing the value of small groups to Faith's culture and mission, it's our desire to see **at least 75% of people who call our church home to be part of a healthy small group!**

VIDEO NOTES



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can you as an individual, and your group together, help fulfill the vision of seeing **at least 75% of people who call Faith Baptist Church their home become part of a healthy small group?**

2. How can you help your group stay healthy?

FOUR YOUR SMALL GROUP COVENANT

Why a covenant? Commitments are made in many areas of our lives. Commitments give clarity regarding agreed upon expectations. Your small group covenant works the same way.

With the covenant, your group will have clarity on what group life looks like, dodging assumptions which can lead to confusion. The covenant includes items common to all our groups and provides space for adding items unique to your group. Clarity really does help!

Your group leader will now lead a discussion relating to your small group covenant. A copy of our "Group Covenant" can be found in the Appendix section at the end of this booklet.

Remember that healthy small groups don't just meet ... they matter! Have a great time with your small group as you help one another take your next steps with Jesus Christ!

WHAT'S NEXT? CHOOSING A SMALL GROUP STUDY WITH YOUR GROUP

One of the struggles that many small group leaders face is the choosing of small group studies. To help with that process we have created a CORE Curriculum chart (found in the Appendix) which will help leaders assess where their group members are at on their spiritual journey and direct them towards helpful studies that will move their group forward.

Working through that CORE Curriculum chart takes time and planning. So as an added resource, we've created a 3-part small group study called *Confident* for all new small groups to use after they have completed the "Being a Small Group at Faith" video study.

In *Confident*, group members will gain understanding about, and learn to live out, the reality that they can be confident in the Bible, in our salvation, and in God who hears and answers prayer.

As you work through *Confident*, look ahead to your next study, using the CORE Curriculum chart as a tool and seeking insight from your small group coach.

Confident begins on the next page!



CONFIDENT

WEEK 1 THE BIBLE

We can be confident that the Bible is trustworthy.

Welcome people as they arrive and make sure there is conversation as people gather for the meeting.

Ask one of the icebreaker or heart-warmer questions found in the Appendix.

Start the meeting by taking a moment to pray, asking God to help each person to understand the Bible and to take their next step with Jesus.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The role of the small group leader is to be a *discussion facilitator*, not to be a teacher. Give time for people to answer the questions.

1. Some people would say that the Bible is not trustworthy or authoritative because it's the product of men and not of God, or because they believe there are mistakes or contradictions found in it, or because it's only one of many religious books in the world. Do you believe the Bible can be trusted and is authoritative? Explain why or why not.

2. The Bible is a compilation of 66 different books written by 40 different human authors over a period of 1500 years. What is the source of the Bible and how did the authors know what to write? (Jeremiah 30:1-12; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

3. The first 39 books of the Bible point forward to Jesus Christ and are referred to as the Old Testament. The remaining 27 books reveal more about Jesus and are called the New Testament. Are the Old and New Testaments on par with each other? Are they both equally trustworthy and authoritative? (2 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Peter 3:14-16)

4. Sometimes people will talk about the Bible as a "rule book for life." Although the Bible gives some very good advice on how to live, it is so much more than simply a list of do's and don'ts. Why did God give us the Bible? What is its purpose and why should this get us excited? (Luke 24:25-27, 44; John 1:45; 5:39)

5. What are some of the benefits and blessings of prioritizing time reading and listening to God's Word? (Psalm 1:1-3) What happens if someone does not make the Bible the foundation of their life? (Matthew 7:24-27)

6. What “danger” should someone be aware of when reading and listening to God’s Word? (James 1:22-25)

7. The Bible was completed almost 2000 years ago. How can we know for certain that it hasn’t been tampered with or changed? (Proverbs 30:5-6; 1 Peter 1:24)

8. How should we approach and handle the Bible? (Psalm 119:18; Jeremiah 15:16; 2 Timothy 2:15)

9. Why can we trust the Bible to be trustworthy and authoritative in everything it says? (2 Peter 1:20-21)

CONCLUSION

Was there something helpful in this study for establishing your confidence in the Bible as the trustworthy and authoritative Word of God? How might this change the way you think and live?

Transition into a time of prayer:

- Take time to thank God for His Word and ask Him for His help to understand it more and apply it to your life.
- Share any personal concerns and encouragements with one another, along with ministry efforts being carried on by the church.
- Take time to pray as a group for these items. When you sense everyone has had an opportunity to pray that would like to, close in prayer.

Agree on a plan for when and where your next two meetings will be and arrange who will bring a snack each week.

WEEK 2 SALVATION

We can be confident that we are saved.

Welcome people as they arrive and make sure there is conversation as people gather for the meeting.

Ask one of the icebreaker or heart-warmer questions found in the Appendix.

Start the meeting by taking a moment to pray, asking God to help each person to grow in their understanding of what salvation is and to experience the assurance of their salvation.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The role of the small group leader is to be a *discussion facilitator*, not to be a teacher. Give time for people to answer the questions.

1. Some people believe that a person cannot know they are saved or know for certain they will go to Heaven when they die. How would you reply if someone was to ask you, "If you were to die tonight, do you know 100% for sure that you would go to Heaven?"

2. What is *salvation*? We get a clue from the angel's announcement to Joseph about the coming of Jesus. (Matthew 1:21)

3. What is *sin* (1 John 3:4), who has sinned (Romans 3:23), and how serious is our sin? (Romans 6:23a)

4. Can anyone work their way to Heaven by keeping God's law and being a good person? Why or why not? (Galatians 3:10-11; a summary of God's law is found in Exodus 20:1-17 and Matthew 5:21-48)

5. What is the eternal consequence for us because of sin? (Revelation 20:14-15)

6. Why can God not allow us in Heaven being sinful? (Habakkuk 1:13a)

7. Why does God take sin so seriously and punish it so severely? (Job 10:14)

8. God has provided a way for His justice to be satisfied and our sin to be punished. What is the character trait God has that made this possible? (1 John 4:8)

9. What did God's love cause Him to do in order to deliver us from the consequences of our sin? (John 3:16)

10. How did Jesus Christ provide a way for us to go to Heaven? (Romans 5:6-8)

11. What kind of deliberate response needs to be made for a person to have eternal life? (John 1:12)

12. What is *genuine saving faith*? (Acts 20:21)

13. Trusting Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour changes one's life. What might some of these changes look like in a person's life and how do they provide *assurance of salvation*? (1 John 3:19-24; 5:13)

CONCLUSION

Is there something God wants you to do as a result of what you've learned in this study? Could it be that you need to make a decision to receive Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour? Is there a promise from the Bible you can claim to help you have assurance of your salvation? Is there someone God might want you to do this study with who doesn't know Christ as their personal Saviour?

Transition into a time of prayer:

- Take time to thank God for sending Jesus Christ and ask Him for His help to share this wonderful news with others.
- Share any personal concerns and encouragements with one another, along with ministry efforts being carried on by the church.
- Take time to pray as a group for these items. When you sense everyone has had an opportunity to pray that would like to, close in prayer.

Remind the group about when and where the next meeting will be and who is scheduled to bring a snack.

WEEK 3 PRAYER

We can be confident that God hears and answers prayer.

Welcome people as they arrive and make sure there is conversation as people gather for the meeting.

Ask one of the icebreaker or heart-warmer questions found in the Appendix.

Start the meeting by taking a moment to pray, asking God to help each person to grow in their understanding of what prayer is and to develop a growing relationship with Him through prayer.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The role of the small group leader is to be a *discussion facilitator*, not the teacher. Give time for people to answer the questions.

1. Prayer is like breathing: if a person stops breathing, they will die. We are dependent upon the air we breathe to live. In prayer, we express our dependency upon God to live and grow spiritually.

2. What does God delight in? (Proverbs 15:8)

3. God gives us great encouragement to pray by offering us promises of what He will do when we pray. What does God promise us, according to Jeremiah 33:3?

4. What is prayer a remedy for, according to Philippians 4:6-7?

5. Looking at the following passages from the Bible, what are some of God's conditions for answered prayer?

2 Chronicles 7:14

Psalm 37:4

Matthew 21:22

John 15:7

1 John 3:21-23

1 John 5:14-15

6. Why should we pray *in Jesus' name* as John 14:13 instructs us? What do you think it means to pray in His name?

7. When we don't know what or how to pray, who is there to help us? (Romans 8:26-27)

8. Prayer is a spiritual discipline and, like our muscles, we need to exercise it to become a healthy and growing Christian. What does prayer require? (1 Peter 4:7)

9. Besides praying on our own, what is another way we are to pray? (Matthew 18:19-20)

10. Jesus gave us a model of how to pray in Matthew 6:9-15. Read that passage together and review the points on the next page.

PRAISE: Begin by expressing your love to God (v9).

PURPOSE: Commit yourself to God’s purpose and will (v10).

PROVISION: Ask God to provide for your needs (v11).

PARDON: Ask God to forgive your sins (v12a).

PEOPLE: Pray for other people (v12b).

PROTECTION: Ask for spiritual protection (v13).

11. What can we learn from Jesus’ example of prayer in Mark 1:35?

12. Besides praying at set times, what else is important when we think about prayer? (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

CONCLUSION

Try to set aside a specific time each day for personal prayer this coming week. Claim the promises God gives to hear and answer our prayers as we humbly come before Him.

Transition into a time of prayer:

- Take some time to share prayer requests with one another.
- Use the Lord’s Prayer (found in Matthew 6:9-15) as a guide for your group prayer time.
- Allow each person time to pray at each point (see question 10) before moving on to the next one.

Discuss your next steps as a small group:

1. Take some time to review the *Group Covenant* (found in Appendix) and decide if you would like to continue as a small group. If you’re continuing as a group, make decisions about where and when you’ll meet and other decisions related to the covenant.
2. Agree on what you would like to study next by using the “*Choosing the Right Bible Study for your Small Group*” document found in the Appendix.

APPENDIX

In this Appendix you'll find some helpful tools as you start up and grow your small group at Faith! We're cheering you on as you help one another take your next steps with Jesus!

CHOOSING A BIBLE STUDY

Choosing a Bible study for your small group isn't always easy! Here's a tool to help you with that process! Use the following **CORE Curriculum chart** to ask yourself where you and your small group members are at in your spiritual journey and decide what the next step is that Jesus wants you to take. After reviewing the chart below, reach out to the pastor of small groups for Bible study ideas for your next step with Jesus.

	HEAD	HANDS	HEART
	<p>What a person KNOWS:</p> <p>Gaining knowledge and understand of God and His Word. (Romans 12:1-2).</p>	<p>What a person DOES:</p> <p>Receiving practical training and experiences that enables a Christian to obey God's Word and put into practice what they are learning. (Hebrews 5:14).</p>	<p>What a person IS:</p> <p>Having personal examples in one's life of people who are applying God's Word to their lives and are maturing in Christ. (1 Corinthians 4:16).</p>
YEAR 1	<p>Hermeneutics: Knowing how to interpret the Bible. (2 Timothy 2:15).</p>	<p>Evangelism and Apologetics: Sharing the Gospel with others.</p>	<p>Discipleship and Mentorship: Being a disciple of Jesus Christ who is making disciples of Jesus Christ.</p>
YEAR 2	<p>Doctrine: Knowing what the Bible teaches and what one believes. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)</p>	<p>Spiritual Formation: Practicing the spiritual disciplines that leads to greater maturity and godliness.</p>	<p>Conflict Management: Being a peacemaker who enjoys and facilitates healthy relationships.</p>
YEAR 3	<p>Genesis: Knowing our world through a biblical world view.</p>	<p>Spiritual Gifts: Finding and serving in a meaningful place of ministry.</p>	<p>Finances: Being a wise and godly steward of the money God has entrusted to you.</p>
YEAR 4	<p>Romans: Knowing the Gospel clearly.</p>	<p>Missions: Serving on a short-term mission's trip.</p>	<p>Marriage and Parenting: Being a godly marriage partner and parent who reflects Jesus.</p>

1. Would you like your study to be Beginner Medium In-Depth?
2. Would you like your study to have homework? Yes No Doesn't matter
3. When considering the CORE Curriculum chart on the previous page, what key area of the Christian life does your group need to prioritize next? Head Hands Heart
4. Would you like to study a book of the Bible? Yes No

- If yes, first choice _____, second choice _____, third choice _____.
- Suggested study guide publishers to use: Fisherman, Life Guide, Life Change, John MacArthur, Navigators, Precept, Ligonier.
- Sermon-based study discussion questions that track with the Sunday messages at Faith are also emailed to group leaders each week.

5. Would you like to study a topic from the Bible? Yes No

If yes, circle and number your top three choices from the list below.

apologetics	Christian growth / sanctification	the Church	a current issue
discipleship	evangelism	hermeneutics	leadership
marriage	something specific for men or women	parenting	prayer
healthy relationships	revival	a theological area	other:

6. Would you like to use video teaching as part of your study? Yes No

7. Would you like to read a book with study guide questions? Yes No

8. How long would you like the study series to run?

- <=6 weeks 7-12 weeks 13-18 weeks 19-24 weeks

9. What price range are you willing to pay individually for study material?

- \$0, I'd prefer to have no cost \$5 - \$10 \$11 - \$15 \$16 - \$20

10. What area in your life are you struggling with right now that you would like some answers about?

11. The next study for our small group will be: _____

OUR SMALL GROUP COVENANT

As a group we want everyone to benefit from our group and so it is helpful that we all have clarity and agreement in terms of the following matters:

We recognize that _____ will serve as our small group leader and we will all help, using our unique gifts, to make our small group happen and to ensure its health.

Our apprentice leader will be _____.

We recognize that ultimately our small group is about “helping one another take our next steps with Jesus” and in view of that:

- We will prioritize attending our small group meetings.
- We will practice the *one another commands* among our small group members.
- We will have meetings that include social interaction, Bible study discussion, sharing items of joy and concern, prayer, and discussing how we might serve one another and those beyond our small group.
- We will allow group members to hold us accountable to commitments we make towards our next steps with Jesus. At the same time, we realize that giving unsolicited advice is not necessary.
- We will nurture a welcoming environment which is open to newcomers as we seek to encourage everyone at Faith to join a small group. This is done in pursuit of our goal of 75% of our church family being part of a healthy small group.
- We desire to birth a new group when our group reaches 12-16 people.
- We will create a safe environment in which anything that is said in meetings is never repeated outside the meeting without permission.
- We will help each other feel comfortable in listening, talking, sharing, and praying based on our different personalities and where we are in our spiritual journeys, without either dominating or hibernating in the group.
- We will actively look for opportunities beyond our regular group meetings to build our group relationships, bless those beyond our group, and take our next steps with Jesus.
- We will guard the unity of our small group and the church by practicing Matthew 18:15-17.

Some agreed upon details relating to our specific small group:

- We will meet on (circle): SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT
- Our meetings will take place at (give location): _____
- Our meetings will start at _____ and end by _____.
- How frequently will we meet? (circle) Weekly Bi-Weekly
- Our start date for this current season of small groups will be: _____
- Our end date for this current season of small groups will be: _____
- If we cannot attend a group meeting, the group member we will contact is: _____
- If childcare is needed during our meetings, then it will happen as follows: _____
- Other items relating to our group that we agree on are:

ICEBREAKER AND HEART-WARMER QUESTIONS

Developing healthy relationships in community.

Icebreaker and heart-warmer questions are helpful tools in nurturing healthy relationships in a small group. They open people up to each other in wonderful ways. They help a group bond and become a community. Here are a few suggestions for you to try out at your group meetings!

Questions about the past:

1. Share one of the nicest birthday presents you ever received.
2. Share one of the happiest days of your life.
3. What is the best advice you have ever received?
4. What can you identify as a turning point in your life?
5. Share a time when your feelings were hurt.
6. Share a time when you believe you were clearly led by God.

Questions about the present:

1. How do you "tune into" God?
2. How would you describe yourself to someone who does not know you?
3. Describe a typical day in your life.
4. If you had to move and could only take three things with you, what would you take?
5. Give three words to describe how you feel right now.

Questions about the future:

1. Describe your ideal house and how you would furnish it.
2. What would you do if someone gave you one million dollars?
3. What is something you think God might want you to do?
4. What spiritual goals are you currently reaching for? Why?
5. If you could do anything you wanted by this time next year, what would it be? How could you accomplish this goal?
6. What epitaph do you want on your tombstone?

Extra questions on your spiritual life:

1. What human being is one of the most influential in your life? How?
2. How would you define *saving faith*?
3. How has attending a church been helpful to you and / or your family?
4. Was there ever a time in your life when you made a conscious commitment to put your faith in Jesus Christ?
5. If you have put your faith in Jesus, how has your faith in Him affected your life?

The 4 Quaker questions:

1. Where were you living between the ages of 5-12 and what were the winters like then?
2. How was your home heated during that time?
3. What was the centre of warmth in your life when you were a child?
4. When did God become more than just a name to you ... and how did it happen?

**helping one another
take our next steps
with Jesus.**



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