

# FOCUS GROUPS

**FOCUS GROUPS** are small group meetings that encourage and provide for personal interaction and involvement within a pleasant and respectful environment. These groups meet to explore and understand the realities of this world in the light of God's love and truth. The goal of the group is to promote spiritual growth, develop meaningful supportive relationships and share the love of God in practical ways.

## "SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS"

This week, we will look briefly at "Small Group Dynamics" and the "Power of our Testimony". As we begin our study, it is important to identify some of our goals and objectives. We are all busy with various demands and requirements, and yet we have decided to set aside this time to meet together. List some of the reasons you feel this weekly FOCUS study time is important.

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What do you personally hope to achieve/learn/receive from this study time? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read **Psalm 1:1-3**. Note and discuss how these verses compare with your answers from above.

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Within each group is a mix of personalities, gifts, talents, needs, desires... Every week issues will change but certain aspects must always be present, such as:

1. **Trust** is vital. You will only share your *true* struggles and joys with those you trust, likewise others will share with you only if you can be trusted. Identify some ways that trust is gained/given.

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Identify some ways that **trust** is undermined.

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2. **Humility** is essential. We will share with one another because we desire support, encouragement, or direction from someone we can relate to. Be patient, compassionate, and considerate of one another. "Be swift to hear, slow to speak". **Read Titus 3:1-9**. What points stand out to you concerning trust and humility?

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3. **Prayer** is a priority and privilege. Pray for one another, pray with one another. Commit time to pray for those who are in your group. Recognize that God will teach you to pray as He also taught the disciples. (**Luke 11:1**)

In the book of Acts, we have Paul's "testimony" recorded three times (**9:1-9, 22:1-16, 26:12**). The purpose for this is not to draw attention to Paul, but rather to declare what God has done in and through Paul. It is the work of God in the lives of individuals that declares His love. Religion appeals to the masses. God rejects religion (man's efforts) and reveals His love through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Early Church was filled with 'transformed' people; individuals who had responded to God's love and experienced the power of the Gospel. People were changed, not 'religiously charged'. This life changing work of Jesus Christ is what empowers people to stand in the days of trial and adversity. Our lives are a living testimony of the presence and power of God. When we speak to others about being "born again," we are not promoting an *idea*, we are proclaiming His *power* in us... *personally!* It is important to be able to speak of what God has done for you concerning salvation.

If you are ready, share *your* testimony tonight. If you are not ready at this time, prepare by writing out your testimony this week. Do this by praying and asking God to remind you and reveal to you the work He has done. Have Him reveal any false motives (such as pride) that may be present. Admit them and give them to Him. As you write, rejoice, remember what He has rescued you from and be ready to step out in faith and share what God has done in your life. Be ready to share your testimony next week.

(**P.S.** Some testimonies are dramatic and exciting, others seem to be quiet and almost boring. It is not *how* He saved you that it is most important, it is *that* He saved you! Never underestimate the great work God has done!)