

Overview

River Small Group Leader Vision

Leading God's People Towards God's Purposes

River Small Group Leader Lifestyle

Be a leader who Communicates, Demonstrates, and Celebrates Biblical Beliefs, Values, and Behavior.

River Small Group Leader Responsibilities

Mentoring, Meetings, Mission, Member Care

Mentoring: Lead in the development of emerging leaders through life on life investment.

Attention: Look for what God is doing in the lives of group members

Privilege & Responsibility

- ⇒ Time Will Tell
- ⇒ Faithful in little before much
- ⇒ Walk with Jesus/Walk with others

Heart Attitudes

- ⇒ Participate In the ministry of River
- ⇒ Demonstrate an open and honest Life
- ⇒ Maintain clear relationships
- ⇒ Put the success of others ahead of your own
- ⇒ Follow leadership within Biblical limits
- ⇒ Support River Financially
- ⇒ Give and receive scriptural correction

Investment: Invest strategically in Leader Assistant(s)

Reproducible

- ⇒ Simple
- ⇒ Sustainable
- ⇒ Transferrable

Practical

- ⇒ Beliefs
- ⇒ Values
- ⇒ Behavior

Meetings: Lead group meetings that help develop leaders and full-time followers of Christ.

Coffee:

- ⇒ Encourage and model healthy and honest life sharing and fun during group meetings.

Content:

- ⇒ Spend significant and focused time in the Bible during group meetings.

Mission: Lead in Evangelism and Discipleship

Keep the Great Commission central in your small group. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Member care: Lead in loving one another

Keep the Great Commandment central in your small group. (Matthew 22:37-40)

River Small Group Leader Vision



Leading God's People Towards God's Purposes

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

1 Corinthians 4:2

Our vision for leadership at River can be summed up in a single word, "faithfulness." But faithfulness in a leader's life will result in God's people being lead towards God's purposes for their lives. Whether the group becomes larger or members become more like Christ are not factors completely within the control of the group leader. However the leader can decide to be found faithful and nothing external to the leader can stop this from happening. Faithfulness, therefore, is the measure of success for the leader.

Leading God's people towards God's purposes can sound like a grandiose and daunting task. On the one hand it is a grand vision and it is a daunting task. On the other hand, when viewed through the lens of faithfulness, it is simply "Knowing and loving God, and making God's love to others." It is being God's man or woman in the sphere of influence where he has placed you.

Faithfulness is "doing" based on "being." First, the leader must pay attention to their own relationship with Christ, then learn to lead others from that secure place. As the leader finds their identity in Christ they are positioned to do the things that are necessary to help others move forward in their own relationship with Christ.

What does it look like to be faithful as a leader? What are God's purposes for his people? These things will be addressed in the remainder of this document. You will sometimes hear what is in this document referred to as our "Philosophy of Ministry." A Philosophy of ministry is a phrase that indicates what we believe (what is true?), what we value (what is important?), what we should do (how then shall we act?).

River Small Group Leader Lifestyle



Communicate, Celebrate, Demonstrate



Biblical Beliefs, Values, and Behavior.

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

John 14:21

Communicate Biblical Beliefs: What the Christ-centered leader believes and teaches must align accurately with what Scripture says. Leading God's people towards God's purposes requires that the leader understand adequately and accurately what God has said in his Word. The leader must not lead based on opinion, emotion, or passing trends but rather on the principles and patterns outlined in Scripture.

Celebrate Biblical Values: What we believe to be true must shape what we hold to be most valuable. For instance if we believe that God's word is true when it says God treasures people then we too must learn what it means to treasure people in our hearts and lives. If in our hearts we value money and possessions more than people then there is a disconnect in our states beliefs and our actual values. We celebrate biblical values by "making much" of people who serve others rather than people who have talent or certain types of personalities. We celebrate Biblical values by investing in emerging leaders based on their faithfulness not merely their giftedness. Ultimately we demonstrate what is most valuable to us by what we most consistently do.

Demonstrate Biblical Behaviors: What we really believe and value will show up in our behavior. If we truly believe and treasure what God has said then we will live a life that is increasingly in line with the life of Christ. As Christ-centered leaders it is important that what we teach is Biblical but it is vital that we live Biblical lives. Ultimately modeling Christ-like character is what will be most impactful in the lives of the people we lead.

River Small Group Leader Responsibilities



"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."
Hebrews 13:7

The four main responsibilities of the small group leader at River are: **Mentoring, Member Care, Missions, and Meetings**. This may seem complex but it really isn't and no special gifting or expertise is necessary to be successful in these things. Let's look at those four key responsibilities one at a time beginning with Mentoring.

MENTORING

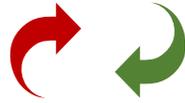
Lead in the development of emerging leaders through life on life investment

Attention

Mentoring is at the center of all the leader does because ultimately we are praying and working toward the multiplication of other leaders through our ministry. Although we cannot directly control whether or not others become leaders through our ministry we can control our own efforts to be found faithful as mentors. Mentoring is not about being an expert it is really just about "walking with Jesus and walking with others." A mentor is someone who has influence in the life of another person. Again the first and most important part of mentoring others is to "be" what you want to "see" in others. This means you must pay careful attention to your own walk with Jesus. Then you will have something to give others as you walk with them.

As a mentor you must learn to pay attention to what God is doing in the lives of the people He has called you to lead. Where are they in their faith and life and what needs to happen for them to move forward? Who is an emerging leader and how can you help them develop in their leadership capacity? Mentoring is about walking with Jesus, walking with others...it is paying attention to God and to them. What is God up to in this person's life and how does he want me to participate?

Attention: Privilege/Responsibility Balance



As you look to see who might be an emerging leader and as you help the people develop as spiritual leaders there is a key theme that needs to be the foundation for ministry and it is the balance of "privilege and responsibility." Privilege is simply an opportunity given to someone. In marriage it is the opportunity for physical intimacy. In ministry it is the opportunity for influence and leadership. Responsibility is the rightful pre-requisite for privilege. If you want the privilege of physical intimacy you must take the responsibility of marriage commitment and faithfulness. If you want ministry influence you must take responsibility to serve others as spiritual leaders are called to do. When privilege and responsibility are not in balance then the result is loss of freedom and beauty relationships.

There are three indicators that in a person's life there is an adequate balance of privilege and responsibility. The first one we call "Time Will Tell" or "TWT."

Time Will Tell (TWT)



"Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?"

Proverbs 20:6

It is not possible to determine if someone is faithful in a short period of time. People who have not learned to balance privilege and responsibility or who have not learned Biblical character can "sprint" for shorter periods of time but they cannot maintain a pace for a long time. So if we are quick to appoint people to leadership then we are likely to be disappointed. Many people are able to look mature for a short time but are not in fact mature Christians ready for leadership. "Who" we actually are on the inside can take time to be revealed but in time, it will be.

Faithful in Little Before Faithful in Much



"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."

Luke 16:10

The second indicator of a person having an understanding of the privilege/responsibility balance is what we call "Little before much." Jesus said that the person who is faithful in little will be faithful with much and the person who is unfaithful will be unfaithful in much. As a leader watching for what God is doing in the lives of others this is something to pay close attention to. People with Christ-like character are willing to do things that seem "menial" they are not waiting for something "great" before act with faithfulness. As are

watching to see if someone is ready for leadership and as you are helping emerging leaders grow giving them the opportunity to be faithful in small tasks is invaluable.

Walk with Jesus/Walk with Others



"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

John 15:4

Since the ministry belongs to Jesus and we are simply his stewards then it stands to reason that in order to accomplish anything of lasting value we must walk closely with Jesus. In ourselves we have nothing to offer others. What we bring to others we get from Jesus. This is not complex but it is essential.

Attention: Heart Attitudes



In addition to paying attention to signs of Privilege/Responsibility balance in the lives of those you lead it is also important to encourage them towards what we call our "Heart Attitudes." These biblical values and behaviors are vitally important for individual growth and for overall health in our church community. You can read about these in more depth by clicking this link.

MENTORING

Lead in the development of emerging leaders through life on life investment

Investment

Investment: Reproduceable



"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."

2 Timothy 2:2

Effective mentoring requires paying attention to what God is doing in the life of your group members as well as ongoing, intentional investment in their lives. In order for this investment to be reproduceable it must be simple, sustainable, and transferrable. **Simple** doesn't mean "easy" it means "non-complex." In order to be effective in their lives and ministries they need to know what the basic of what walking with Jesus and others looks like. This is actually pretty simple. Love God, Love people. But it is difficult to

consistently live this way. In addition your ministry model should be **sustainable**. This means that it doesn't require certain skills, life situations, gifting, or hard to maintain approaches to ministry. **Transferrable** means that these ministry lessons can be passed on to anyone who is willing to learn and try.

Investment: Practical



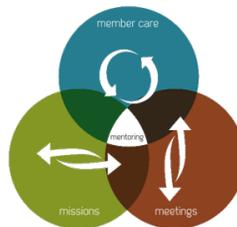
Biblical Beliefs, Values, and Behavior.

"The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

1 Timothy 1:5

Just as the leader's lifestyle is based on beliefs, values and behavior these same characteristics are the aim of the leader's investment in others. The outcome of investment in others should be practical not merely theoretical. This means that the result of your investment in others should show up in love for God and love for others. What we believe about God must shape what we deem most valuable which directs our life choices.

Small Group Leader Responsibilities



Meetings

Lead meetings that develop leaders and full-time followers of Christ

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Hebrews 10:25

Leading regular meetings is the second responsibility of the group leader. These meetings are important aspects of the developing emerging leaders and full-time followers of Christ. The meetings are not ALL of group life but they are a very important and necessary component of group life. There are two components to effective small group meetings we use two words to describe these components: coffee and content.

Coffee



You don't have actually provide coffee in your group meetings or even personally like coffee yourself. This is just a symbolic way of saying that effective small group meetings must have time for casual (but intentional) time to get to know one another. In other words the meetings should not be all "business." You should encourage and model healthy and honest life sharing and fun during group meetings.

Content



Small group meetings should include time to share life together but ultimately the point of life together is to know and love God more and more. So small group meetings should spend significant and focused time in the Bible. God's word must be the main "content" of group life.

Small Group Leader Responsibilities



Mission

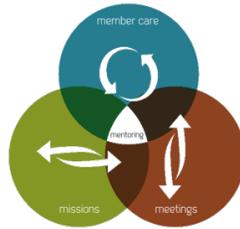
Lead in Evangelism and Discipleship

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19, 20

In addition to leading effective small group meetings the leader must set the pace in ensuring the group remains focused on its primary mission. This mission of the church as a whole is to make full-time followers of Jesus. Small groups are a very important part of accomplishing goal this mission. This can be a part of group meetings but it extends way beyond the regular meetings into the day to day lives of the individual group members.

Small Group Leader Responsibilities



Member Care

Lead in loving one another

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:37-40

Member care finishes out the four responsibilities of the small group leader. It means keeping love for one another central in group life. This shows up in many practical, actionable ways...many of which occur outside of the small group meeting.