

# House Church Leader's Handbook



# Table of Contents

## **Section 1: House Church: The Hope for a City, p. 3**

- The House Church Leader, p. 5**
- The Spirit Led House Church, p. 9**
- A Leader's Relationship with God, p.12**
- Building a Solid Routine, p. 15**
- House Church Leadership Roles, p. 17**
- The Cost of Leadership, p. 19**
- A House Church Leader's Sunday, p. 23**

## **Section 2: Building Family in the House Church, p. 26**

- Winning Hearts, p. 29**
- Promoting Friendship, p. 32**
- The Power of Encouragement, p. 35**
- Humility in Leadership, p. 39**
- Pro-Active or Re-Active? p. 41**

## **Section 3: Discipleship in the House Church, p. 43**

- A Sample House Church Meeting, p.47**
- An Effective Discipleship Time, p. 50**
- Accountability, p. 51**
- Expectations, p. 55**
- Spiritual Breakthroughs, p. 57**
- The Greater and Less Principle, p. 59**

## **Section 4: The Evangelistic House Church, p. 61**

- Goals, p. 64**
- Winning Souls as a House Church, p. 66**
- Developing an Evangelistic Plan, p. 69**
- Urgent to Study the Bible with People, p. 71**



# Introduction

## House Church: The Hope for a City

### **Genesis 12:1-3, 17:4**

From the very beginning, God has chosen to work salvation through families. God's vision for Abraham was that he would be one father with children from many nations. This is physically impossible. Yet, through Jesus, we find ourselves in a family of disciples from diverse backgrounds.

What the Law of Moses and the kings of Israel could not accomplish, a band of unschooled, ordinary men brought in the course of one generation. Abraham's seed through Jesus Christ truly became a great nation and a blessing to ALL the peoples of the earth.

### **Acts 16:1-40**

This heartless jailer, a gentile, becomes the first man converted in Europe. But not only is he converted, his entire family is

converted with him. A house church has begun in Philippi and there is now hope for the city. Lydia's house is a launching point for other households to convert. As you read the book of acts you see the Holy Spirit's impact from house to house. Even when Jesus sent out his disciples and the 72, they were to go into a town and search for a worthy house. *Where there is a house church there is hope.* The first, and possibly most difficult task in becoming a house church leader is re-imagining the way you view your house.

**How do you think of your home?** (messy, refuge, humble, too small/big, family)

A house church leader sees their home as the hope for their city/neighborhood/area. First and foremost it is not only your home (apartment, dorm room, coffee house)- it is God's home for the family of disciples in your area. That means that your home is everyone's (mess, refuge, etc...). Of course, private family time is essential, it is not beneficial to think in either/or terms.

Like Lydia's home, your home is the central base for the promotion of the gospel from household to household in your area.

**How will this view of home change you and your family's life?**

**What are some ways that your home could be the hope for your area?**

**How could you use your household to promote the gospel among the family of disciples and the lost?**



# Section 1

## The House Church Leader

### **The roles:**

Older Brother and Sister, discipleship (learning) coordinator, shining light to the lost

How can one household be the hope for an entire city or area?

It all comes down to the mindset of the house church leader.

The house church leader has different hats to wear:

**1) Older brother and sister:** this must be the first priority. The house church must be founded and grounded in familial love for one another.

**John 13:34-35**

**Matthew 12:46-50**

**How can you be an older brother/sister for the disciples in your house church?**

**2) The discipleship coordinator:** the house church leader lovingly directs brothers and sisters into discipleship so they can grow and bear fruit.

**Titus 2:1-8**

**2 Timothy 2:2**

**How can you coordinate discipleship for your house church?**

**3) Shining light for the lost:** the house church is a starting point for the lost to find the kingdom of God

**Acts 18:24-28**

**How can you lead your entire house church to be a shining light for the lost?**

**Overview:**

The first priority of the house church leader is to promote a family atmosphere in the house church. Older brother or older sister was chosen as a metaphor for the house church leader to lean on. The term big brother has negative connotations and father is inappropriate and unscriptural (Matthew 23:9-11).

In most cases the house church leader won't even be the oldest in the group. Yet, he is to take care of the brothers and sisters in his house church like a good older brother.

He will pray for all the disciples and their needs. He will help when brothers and sisters have inevitable conflicts. He will organize meetings for the house church **family** so their relationships with one another can grow and be an invaluable part of their lives. He will set an example for the believers. He will be engaged in others lives; interested and listening, truly knowing his house church members like family. He will serve and sacrifice and encourage the other members to serve and sacrifice as well.

The family atmosphere that the house church leader provides is an ideal place for **discipleship** to manifest. The house church leader is always looking and listening for opportunities to help his brothers and sister grow, mature and bear fruit in Christ. He should not do all the discipling but should coordinate the discipleship. He should know who is learning what from whom, and who needs to learn and grow in what areas, even seeking help from other nearby house church leaders.

As brothers and sisters learn and grow in a loving environment they will have many opportunities to **share their faith**. The house church leader knows how to help hose brothers and sisters introduce their friends to following Jesus. He coordinates events that will bring people who would never go to church into homes in the group. He helps set up, facilitate and advise bible studies that will help the lost to truly know how to follow Jesus and come to a decision. He coordinates whatever is needed to care for new disciples.

**Acts 2:42-47**

Overall, the house church is an environment of celebration, of awe, of serious prayer for the weak and the lost and of hope for all who may be touched by it. Being a house church leader is hard work. But it is truly a blessing that is worth working for.

***Questions for thought:***

**Which of the three roles is currently your strength?**

**Which role will be the hardest to embrace?**

**Write out a description of the state of your House Church in each of the three areas:**

# The Spirit Led Family Group

## DESPERATION AND DEPENDANCE

**Acts 4:23-25, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Psalm 102:17**

It is obvious that the early church was constantly in prayer. This unleashed the power of God's spirit to work mightily in their ministries. They prayed constantly because of the desperation they felt. They did not know what to do, and they always felt the possibility of death breathing down their necks. We must understand our desperate need for God's direction and understand how powerless we are without God's help. We must also understand that when we are dependent on God, no one or nothing can stop us. God cannot wait to perform miracles in our ministry, but He can only bless us as we are desperately dependant on Him. *Our house churches are simply a conduit for the Holy Spirit to work through.* The more dependent we are on God, the more fully the Holy Spirit can use our house churches. We should put these convictions in our people and incorporate powerful prayer in all we do. We must creatively keep our people inspired to pray at all times.

## FAITH-FILLED PRAYERS

**John 14:12-13, John 6:28-29, Psalm 73:1-28**

Faith is a critical ingredient to effective prayer. Do I really believe what I am praying? Listening to a leader pray who really believes his prayers, inspires his people to believe their prayers. One of the greatest gifts a leader can give his people is faith. Hebrews 11:6 and James 1:6-8 tells us that doubting prayer

yields nothing. As leaders, our greatest battle is our faith. Being absolutely certain of what we hope for. This faith moves the heart of God. God can change our hearts to give us faith as we pray to him to repent of the sin of faithlessness. Above all, a leader points his people to God for everything. A leader with faithful prayers cannot be stopped. He will experience miracle on top of miracle. We must fight and work for our faith in prayers. There is some point in our prayers when we go from speaking words to completely connecting with God on a heart level. At that point our faith soars. Psalm 73 describes this point beautifully. Before verse 17 the Psalmist is struggling, at verse 17 he says that he has entered the sanctuary of God. After verse 17 his faith is completely different. We must work hard to break through the faith barrier, so that our prayers are full of faith and move God's heart.

## **CREATING A PRAYER CULTURE**

### **2 Kings 20:5, Matt 18:19-20, Acts 1:14**

God answers Prayers. We should pray specifically for what we want and never stop praying (Luke 18:1-5). The Bible teaches that certain more difficult situations can only be changed through prayer (Mark 9:29). Have your house church write out prayers that everyone will pray about together. Write out the needs of each disciple. Write out the names of all the people you are trying to help become Christians and bring to the house church. This will aid in creating a culture of prayer. Create a prayer journal where all these prayers can be logged, prayed for in the house church, and highlight the answered prayers so that the group's faith can be encouraged. Spend a good amount of time at the beginning of each meeting praying. You can pray

through your journal, pray through a chapter in the Bible, pray through your goals for the year, pray through what you want to accomplish that week, pray through all the great qualities of God, and pray through everything you are grateful for. The list is never ending. Also, our discipling times must be prayer partner times. Each of our key relationships must be saturated in Prayer. As we study the Bible with people, we should spend a good portion of time praying with them. Often immediately after a non-Christian spent time praying with a Christian, the Non – Christian had a significant breakthrough.

## **SPECIAL TIMES OF PRAYER AND FASTING**

### **Acts 13:1-3, Nehemiah 9:1**

There are times when the house church needs to set aside special times of prayer and fasting. Starting off the year is a good time to do this. If the house church is in need of a revival, a day of prayer and fasting can unify the group as you call on God together. Many house church leaders fast on the day of their family group to beg God to strengthen the disciples and send visitors to the group. Special times of Prayer are great memory builders for the group. It also communicates that first and foremost we are a group that is devoted to God.

In order for our house churches to please the Lord and to multiply, we must teach them that the most powerful tool that they have is prayer.

**How will you create a praying house church?**

# **A Leader's Relationship with God**

As a house church leader all we do will flow from our relationship with God. If our relationship with God is strong everything else will fall into place. If it is not, everything will be a struggle.

## **A Leader's Faith**

### **Phil 1:12-22**

Paul is in prison, yet because of his faith, he sees God's hand in it. When we have faith we see God's hand in the worst of situations. This faith will be contagious for our people. Even when confronted with people deliberately out to do him harm he chooses to see how God will use it. In verse 19 he says "I Know" that God will deliver me. In verse 20 he says that he, "Eagerly expects and hopes" that he won't be ashamed. In 21 he reasons that no matter what happens, life or death, it will be good. In 22 he is absolutely sure that if he lives he will be abundantly fruitful. What happens to people who are led by someone who has this type of faith? Here are four ways to develop this type of faith:

1. Through Obedient action; John 7:17
2. Through reading the word; Romans 10:17
3. Asking God for faith Mark 9:24
4. Deciding to believe; John 6:29

## **Your Spiritual Routine**

### **Psalms 5:3, Psalm 119:97**

We must develop a spiritual routine that will meet our needs, and the needs of our people. The time each day you spend with

God is the most important time of your day. This time will restore your soul, direct your thoughts and work, connect you with God's will and fill you with ideas from God. We must develop a personal desperation for our times with God. We can't determine the amount of time we spend with God by how we can fit it into our schedule. We must start by saying what do I need to be the man of God and leader for God that He wants me to be. Commit to God a spiritual routine that will meet these needs.

### **Praying for your People**

**Philippians 1:3-6, Romans 16:3-16, 2 Corinthians 11:28-29**

It is obvious from Romans and Philippians that Paul prays constantly for the disciples. As leaders we must pray daily for our people. God will then be involved in our leading them. If we love people, we will feel the pressure to help them and meet their needs. We can't handle this pressure alone. God wants to work with us and take that pressure on his shoulders. This happens through prayer. As we pray for our people we develop a deeper love for them, we see them through God's eyes, we will think of them and their needs more and more and we will be more active in meeting those needs.

### **Think Time**

**1 Samuel 3:8-9**

We should spend some time each day in our times with God simply thinking about our lives and responsibilities and what God wants us to do. Each morning I spend about 10-15 minutes simply thinking/praying what God wants me to do each day in

my various responsibilities as a disciple, husband, father, and leader.

### **Extended Time to Read and Pray**

**Daniel 10:2-3, Luke 6:12**

With regularity it is important to get extended personal time with God. As we really devote ourselves, God will open up doors previously closed. We will be able to drink deeply of God's word and our faith will soar. We will become more and more in tune with God, and not be swayed by the pressures around us.

**Will you commit to pray for the people you lead every day?**

**How would developing a routine help you be a better leader?**

# Building a Solid Routine

The routines that we develop will determine the outcome of our lives. This is true for us personally, for our families as well as our house churches.

## **Proverbs 15:19**

When we develop Spiritual routines in our house church everything runs smoothly. When we don't problems are everywhere and balls are constantly dropped.

## **Proverbs 14:23**

Developing these routines can be hard work. The work of everyone being on the same page takes planning, and persuasion, but it is worth it in the end.

Routines provide security and productivity. If you tell me what you do every day, I will tell you what you value, what you will become and what you will accomplish. The structure of routines provides security in a house church. They can know and depend on the schedule you have put together.

## **Sample routine for house church:**

Weekly Group Quiet Times – Acts 1:14

Discipling Times

Daily Communication – Acts 2:46, Hebrews 3:12-13

Think Through

Outreach – Acts 5:42- Acts 17:2, Acts 14:1

Every week we .....Every Month we.....

Special evening to leave open for dinner with the lost

Socially – Each month we.....

### **Personal Routines:**

Your own Quiet Time

10 minutes in QT thinking and planning for your house church

Regular discipling time with assistant leader

Weekly time with spouse/ co-leader to plan and think.

Schedule

Needs

Plans to move forward

Feelings

Planning to make whatever we do exciting and fun is important. If we don't do this then our routines can become unproductive and boring. **With just a little planning** we can make everything we do something that everyone will look forward to.

### **Questions for thought:**

**What does your current routine say about what you value and what you will accomplish?**

**Use the sample routines to write out your weekly/monthly routines for yourself and your house church:**

# House Church Leadership Roles

## House Church Leader

**Jeremiah 23:3-4, Isaiah 32:8, Joshua 1:3-6**

The house church leader is the focal point of the whole church. Every other leader is set up to support the house church leader. He is so important because in a sense he is leading his own church. He is the one motivating, shepherding, and coordinating evangelism. The house church leader is responsible for discipling and raising up the next house church leader. The house church leader is responsible for leading his house church to be first and foremost a spiritual group of people. The leader is responsible for finding each of his member's unique God-given gifts and coordinating and motivating each member to use these gifts to benefit the whole group. The leader is responsible for planning and executing the actual house church meetings. The leader is responsible to make a calendar and planning for the activities and events of the house church. The leader is responsible for making sure that the members of the house church are motivated to bring visitors, and then to make sure that the visitors study the Bible and become disciples. He is responsible for the members of the house church being a part of this process. The leader is also responsible for making sure that discipling is taking place and meeting the needs of the disciples.

1. Shepherding his group
2. Coordinating evangelistic activity
3. Discipling and raising up the assistant to lead the next house church

4. Spiritually leading the group
5. Planning the calendar for the future plans.
6. Finding and utilizing each of the members unique gifts
7. Making sure that the Family Group has visitors and that those visitors are being brought through the conversion process with the help of the members
8. Planning and executing the actual Family Group time.
9. Making sure that the discipling is taking place and meeting the needs of the disciples.

## **House Church Assistant's Role**

**Ezekiel 22:30, 1 Samuel 14:6-7, 1 Corinthians 4:16-17**

The assistant has primarily two roles. One is to support the house church leader in any way that he can, and the other is to prepare to lead his own group. The assistant must always be learning as well as training others, always preparing to lead his own group. In supporting the house church leader he must always keep his eyes, heart, and ears open. He must be an extra set of leadership eyes to give the group leader a different perspective, and therefore needed advice. The assistant will also disciple people in the group. These people will most probably be the beginnings of his new house church in the future.

1. Support the house church leader
2. Prepare to lead his own group
3. Disciple members of the house church

## **Disciples Role**

**Isaiah 60:22, Romans 12:6-7**

Each disciple is critical to the success of the house church. Each disciple should be supportive of the leader and the leadership he provides. The disciples should use their unique talents to benefit

the group as a whole. Every disciple should come to the house church itself ready to serve, encourage, and give to the other disciples and the visitors. Each disciple is responsible for bringing visitors to the house church. Every disciple is responsible for being aggressive about receiving the discipling they need.

1. Being supportive of the direction of the leadership
2. Use their unique talents to benefit the whole
3. Come to the house church ready to encourage and give
4. Each disciple bring visitors
5. Getting the discipling they need

**Questions for thought:**

**What is your role in your house church?**

**Who is fulfilling the roles in your group?**

**Is everyone doing their part? What needs to change?**

# The Cost of Leadership

## Self Sacrifice

**Mark 10:44-45, 1 John 3:16**

As house church leaders we are always putting others before ourselves. We will sacrifice time and energy. We are willing to be wronged and stepped on and be the first to apologize. However in the process we will grow and the people around us will grow. Souls will be saved by our willingness to lay ourselves down. Glory is brought to God by a leader who is willing to give himself up. Satan wants us to save and protect ourselves. He wants us to draw lines and in the end he wants us to be selfish. We must use the cross as our standard as we die so that others may live.

## Loneliness

**2 Timothy 1:15**

“Most of the world’s greatest souls have been lonely”. To live always thinking and doing one step ahead; To call people higher when their flesh likes where they are; To take stands that puts friendships on the line; To be willing to leave an appointment without being resolved and to let God work; all of these things are necessary for strong spiritual leadership however can be lonely. We must be willing to drink that cup. If we are willing to stand alone for God then those with godly hearts will soon crowd around us.

## Fatigue

**Philippians 2:17, John 4:6, 2 Corinthians 4:16, Isaiah 43:22, Matthew 11:28-30**

Working hard for God will make us tired physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. This does not mean that something is wrong; this is part of God’s plan. When we are fatigued we will

either look for rest as the world gives rest or we will look for rest in God. The world's rest is temporary escape that can make us long for the escape and resent God's work. God's reset rejuvenates our hearts, makes us more dependent on God and ready for the next battle.

## **Criticism**

### **2 Corinthians 8:21, 1 Corinthians 4:3-4**

As we lead things will go wrong in the lives of the people we lead. There is a tendency to blame the leader for whatever problems we face. As we lead our faults also become amplified. As time goes by a leader must become more and more humble or he will become more and more bitter. Leadership is one of the greatest tools God has to humble us.

## **Rejection**

### **1 Peter 2:7 , Galatians 6:9**

“He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” People have a tendency to reject anything new and different, a new conviction, new direction. As leaders we are always introducing new convictions and directions. We must be willing to be rejected gracefully without retaliating or retreating. As we persevere people will be led. We must also be willing to lose people in order to maintain the purity of the church. This is a gut wrenching process but will inspire those who long for holiness.

## **Pressure and Perplexity**

### **2 Corinth 4:8-11**

We feel the pressure of people depending on us and yet we are not all together sure of what we are doing. We constantly faced with situations where we have no idea what direction to take but we know that we have to take some direction. The 2 P's

Draw us close to God and each other. The man that is the lone ranger leader will be crushed under this pressure, but the spiritually plugged in leader will grow and flourish.

**Questions for thought:**

**What challenges have you faced as a leader?**

**What has God taught you through those challenges?**

**From the challenges listed here, what is your greatest fear?  
What does that say about your character?**

# A House Church Leader's Sunday

Sunday is a critical day in the life of a House Church Leader. It is a day when he will see the people in his house church at church. It is a day that he will fellowship with the visitors from his house church. It is also a day that he can set up his house church to have a victorious week.

## **Preparation for the day**

### **Joshua 3:5, Exodus 19:10**

Having a great Quiet Time and preparing to worship God is critical. In the Old Testament they would consecrate themselves before a spiritual event. In your Quiet Time Sunday Morning it is also a great idea to pray for all the Christians and visitors related to your group. As you pray the Holy Spirit will put different things on your heart to do at service. Write out a list of the things you want to accomplish while at service i.e. giving cards, a special encouragement etc. It is also important in your quiet time to prepare to spiritually be ready to give.

## **Be Early**

### **Luke 12:35**

The time for a leader to serve on Sunday is about 10-15 minutes before church begins. It is very important that you are 10- 15 minutes early so that you can get settled and ready to love and give to those who come.

## **In the Car**

### **1 Kings 8:44**

It says that the Jews prayed when they went to war and when they went to temple, and God heard their prayer and upheld their cause. When we go the church we are going to war against

Satan so that God can work miracles at the service and in the fellowship. We need to pray on the way to church with your family. This will put everyone in the right frame of mind and heart and keep Satan far away from causing trouble.

### **At the Service**

#### **Proverbs 27:23**

It is important to be a spiritual quarterback for your group at the service. Look for weaker Christians sitting by themselves, visitors needing to be talked to, studies needing to be set up, trying to get one disciple to set up a quiet time with another etc. All of these things need the touch of a loving leader.

### **After service**

#### **Eph 5:15-16**

Sunday lunches can be some of the most impacting spiritual times. People have just heard a lesson from God's word and are now ready to make decisions. If we wait too long the opportunity will be lost. A great tradition is for everyone to have lunch with their visitors and pull in others from the house church. This will unify the group and afford an opportunity to help your visitors to become Christians.

### **Sunday Night**

#### **Eph 4:12**

This is a critical time for the leader to assess the needs of his group and set up the week for victory. First, it is a great idea to have a talk with your co-leader to talk through the week. In the married groups this would be your spouse. Then making calls **Sunday night** to set up the week can make the difference between the week being wasted or many great things happening. Making sure discipling times are set up, studies are

taking place, family devotionals are happening, sick people's needs are met, etc... can all be set up with a **chain reaction of calls** on Sunday night.

**Questions for thought:**

**What will you do differently on Sundays to more effectively lead your house church?**



## **Section 2**

### **Building Family in the House Church**

#### **Introduction**

**What do you think it means to be an older brother or sister for a group of disciples?**

#### **Example of love**

**John 13:34-35, John 15:13-15**

Jesus showed his disciples intimate friendship, acceptance and love. He modeled love for them and expected them to do the same. True love and care is the benchmark of any disciple so we cannot think that a house church could be founded on anything else.

**How can you love and model loving friendship for your house church?**

**How can you help the members of the house church to truly love one another?**

**What expectations do you have for yourself and your group to be loving?**

**Conflict resolver**

**Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 1:10-17**

In any close family, conflicts are inevitable. It may actually be a sign that you are growing closer as a group (not that you want conflict). The house church leader and the members should all have real expectations that conflict will occur so they are not totally shocked when it does. The scriptures tell us clearly how to deal with conflict and a good house church leader can lead people from conflict to resolution and the group will be better off because of it.

**How do you help disciples when conflict occurs?**

**When should the conflict be dealt with?**

**How important is listening when resolving conflict?**

**What do you do if the conflict is too much for you to handle?**

**Unity promoter, defender of the weak**

**James 2:1-9, Ephesians 4:1-6, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

Since the kingdom is made up of people from many nations, a house church should be full of all kinds of people. This is a great blessing but it has pitfalls. In our sin we are tempted to be selfish, show favoritism and pull back our hearts from people who are different from us.

**What are the different kinds of people you may have in a house church?**

**What are some ways that you can promote unity as a house church leader?**

**How can you defend and uphold the weak?**

**How would you challenge selfishness or favoritism in someone's heart?**

These are just some of the responsibilities of an older brother or sister leading a house church. **What are some other actions and attitudes that will help you succeed in promoting and exemplifying love for your house church?**

# Winning Hearts

People are emotional beings. What we feel is our reality. We must understand this as leaders. No matter how much truth we are saying to people, if we have not made an emotional connection they WILL NOT FOLLOW. We must win people's hearts before we can take them to victory.

## **Expressiveness**

### **John 14:3 (John 17:24)**

Jesus expressed his love to his men often. We can see from the John 17 passage that he wasn't just doing this as some ploy, but it was what he really felt. We never out grow the need to win each other over. As soon as you take a relationship for granted, you begin to lose it.

## **Giving your heart away**

### **2 Corinth 6:11-13, 1 Peter 4:8**

It is the leader's responsibility to win over the hearts of the people. As a disciple however we should try to win over the hearts of the people who lead us as well as the people we lead. We can never sit back and wait for someone to win over our heart. We must target the most difficult people and win them over with love. Paul made a decision to give the Corinthians his heart. We must make a decision to give our hearts to our people. It was a sign of Paul's maturity to give his heart to people who had not yet given their heart to him.

## **Personal Touch**

### **Luke 8:40-56**

As leaders in God's Kingdom we must never lose touch with all of our people. Jesus was always among the people. The sick, the demon possessed, the blind, the poor, Jesus was with them all.

Many times we don't want to be with the people because the needs are great and we may get overwhelmed. Perhaps we can feel that if we stay with people who are loyal and predictable they won't rock our boat. Sometimes we simply don't want to extend ourselves. Whatever the reason we must fight to be around our people as much as possible and to touch them and love them. Jesus' personal touch often took the form of serving people and meeting their felt needs. When someone meets your needs, you become bonded with them.

Napoleon made it a practice to know every one of his officers by name and to remember where they lived and which battles they had fought with him.

Robert E Lee was known to visit the men in their campsites the night before any major battle. Often he met the next days challenge without having slept.

*Norman Schwarzkopf, on Christmas day went from camp to camp to shake hands with his soldiers. In that one day he greeted ~ 4000 soldiers.*

### **Emotionally Relatable**

#### **Hebrews 5:1-2, John 11:33-36**

When we speak publicly or one on one we must first strive to connect emotionally with people before we can take them anywhere spiritually. We must:

Let people know that we have felt the way they have felt before, even if it is sinful. We must let people know that despite their sin we know in their hearts they want to do right. Through the eyes of grace we must let people know how God feels about them. We must allow ourselves to get emotionally involved and feel

what they are feeling at the moment. We must fight the feeling to fix them right away and first let them know we are with them emotionally.

### **Move their hearts**

**Acts 20:19-21, 26, 37**

Paul did not just serve them and relate to them. Paul also was able to get them to repent, grow and change because of the love that he had displayed. Without expecting our people to repent, grow and do great things for God, our emotional bonding will simply be sentimentality.

### **Questions for thought:**

**Are a ‘heartsy’ person? How would understanding emotions help your ministry?**

# Promoting Friendship

When everyone in the group feels as though their closest friends are in the family group, Satan will have a very difficult time pulling anyone away and people from the world will be drawn to this type of atmosphere.

## **Decision**

### **1 Samuel 20:42**

Jonathan and David had sworn friendship. They had made a decision and targeted each other to be close friends. We need to decide to give our hearts to the people we are in discipling relationships with. We need to decide to be close friends. This is powerful because it is not based on random relationship chemistry, but a will directed agape love. This is also powerful because people feel like a priority.

## **Thick and Thin**

### **Proverbs 18:24**

We must commit to be there for each other when they are lovable and when they are not. When they are needy and when they are giving. This type of love will produce great gratitude for each other.

## **Kindness**

### **Proverbs 22:11**

Being kind in all of our interactions provides an inviting atmosphere where people want to be with you and want to be open. When we have an edge or we are rushed people are pushed away.

## **Spiritual**

### **Psalm 119:63**

The foundation of our friendship must be our relationship to God. This foundation will allow God to use the friendship to help us grow closer to Him and to conquer our sin.

## **Giving**

### **Proverbs 19:6**

It is not so much the gift as the feeling that someone is always thinking about me. This type of constant thoughtfulness shows a deep love. This type of love is not out of sight out of mind but out of sight in mind.

## **Speak the Truth**

### **Proverbs 27:6**

We must love one another enough to say the hard things with love. When people only say positive things the relationship lacks a real genuineness. We must be willing for the relationship to be uncomfortable at times out of our love.

## **Openness**

### **John 15:15**

A real openness about what we are feeling is critical for a great friendship. We must be open about the good, the bad, and the ugly. However once we are open we must also be willing to be helped with our emotions and feelings. When someone is vulnerable with us we must treat that as a treasure and value the confidentiality and be tender as we deal with our friend's feelings.

## **Available**

### **Proverbs 17:17**

We must be ready to help our friends when they need our help and not just when it is convenient for us. Rarely will needs come at a convenient time.

As we hear this lesson we need to focus on how we are friends to others, not how people are not friends to us. *People that focus on how they can be great friends will always have friends; people who focus on how people need to be friends to them will always feel lacking.*

**Questions for thought:**

**Take an inventory of your friendships. Are you a good friend?**

**How will improving your friendships improve your leadership?**

# The Power of Encouragement

## **Training our Hearts and Minds**

### **Proverbs 31:10-31, Romans 12:21, Philippians 4:8**

Our people respect our opinion so much that if we think they are selfish, lazy, and uncommitted, soon they will feel the same way about themselves, however if we feel they are loving, sensitive, hard working and sold out for God, so will they! This man had to sit down and think through everything good about his wife and make a list. While he is doing this it is obvious that no negative thought was running through his mind. I am sure that this woman had a sinful nature as well, but that is not the way that this husband had trained his heart and mind. We can't be thinking about all the good in a person, and then start entertaining all the bad. Sit down and write out all the good about your disciples. Let this list guide and guard your thoughts about the people you lead. It is amazing once you do this how differently you will perceive the people in your group. You will see them in a whole different light.

## **Think and Choose our Words**

### **Ephesians 4:29-31, Proverbs 12:18, Proverbs 13:3**

This passage tells us that all of our words should be well thought through before they leave our mouths. Every word we speak has some effect. Will the words we speak, in the end, have the desired result. We must work from the end of the conversation to the front. We must first establish how we want people to leave us and then determine what to say and how to say it. When we are frustrated with our people, we can vent our frustration on them with the justification that it is true. However, when they leave, are we sending them away ready to conquer the world for Christ or are we sending them away discouraged. Our words must be

carefully chosen to build up our people, and help them see beyond themselves to what God sees, and we must always fill our people's hearts with hope. We can have very challenging conversations and still leave people with an incredible amount of hope and vision.

## **Appealing to their Spiritual Nature**

### **Matt 8:5ff, Judges 6:11-12**

In every one of us there are two natures; our sinful nature and our spiritual nature. A great leader will always appeal to his people's spiritual nature. An immature leader will just rebuke the sinful nature. I am sure that the non-Christian Roman Centurion had plenty of sin, but what Jesus chose to focus on was his faith. Gideon was hiding from his enemies in fear, and selfishly just trying to salvage just enough grain for his family, and yet when God comes to him, God chooses to focus on what qualities are in him that God will use in the future and calls him a mighty warrior. God could have rebuked him for being a selfish coward and He would have been absolutely accurate, but what good would that have done. If your child is being lazy, and you say to him, "I can't believe how lazy you are", he will walk away feeling sinful and hopeless. If you appeal to his better nature and say, "Son, *I know you want to be great for God*, so the way to do it is to repent of this laziness and develop a strong work ethic, and I can help you because I have been there myself." This assures the person that you know down deep, the real person, has great motives and wants to do what is right, and you're giving him the vision and help he needs.

## **What Encourages**

### **Acts 20:1-2**

It is obvious that as Paul traveled, he thought through how he could encourage the saints in every city. We have to spend some time thinking about how to encourage our people. Satan spends

all of his time figuring out how to discourage them, and we must counter attack his efforts and win. Whatever encourages you will typically encourage your people as well. Most people are encouraged by:

- Good news
- How great God is
- People telling them good things about themselves
- People telling them that they have made positive changes
- People telling them good things about their wife and kids
- The promises of God
- Gifts
- Verbal Affection
- Victories
- People having vision for them
- Someone really listening to what they feel, and trying to help them
- Someone out of the blue visiting them
- Being around someone that is happy and laughing
- Helping them overcome a sin
- Sharing how they have made a difference
- Being around people that are an upward call to their love and faith
- Empathizing with what they are going through
- Praying with them
- A random phone call to see how they are doing
- Meeting a specific need
- When they have failed someone still believing in them

These are just a few. I am sure that you could come up with many more. If we think through these things and this is how we have trained ourselves to lead, we will have a happy, Godly, fruitful ministry.

## **Deeper Issues**

### **Exodus 6:8-9**

If a person refuses to be encouraged then you have not gotten to all of what is going on in a person's heart. Maybe there is sin that has not been confessed so when they are encouraged they feel that if we really knew what was going on we wouldn't be so positive about them. Maybe Satan has set up short circuits that kick in every time they start to feel encouragement. These must be explored and thoroughly talked through so that they can be freed to feel all the encouragement.

### **Questions for thought:**

**How will you unlock the power of encouragement for your group?**

# Humility in Leadership

Humility is critical when leading a small group. The leader's humility will determine the openness and humility of the members. Humility will give the house church a real sense of unity and freedom to be themselves which will enable everyone to grow.

## Vulnerability

### **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

As a leader your vulnerability will help others be vulnerable. Sharing your weaknesses and struggles will give your people hope with their own weaknesses. Also, in the house church meeting, your comments will set the pace. If your comments are personal as you share from your life and struggles so will everyone else's.

## Others better than yourself

### **Phil 2:3, Proverbs 27:2**

As leaders we should always be lifting God and others up. Finding the good in others and letting everyone know about it. If we feel the need to let people know the good we are doing people will resent your leadership. God will reward what you do in secret. Pray through each member to identify in what ways they are better than you, and let them know.

## All for God's glory

### **Jeremiah 45:5, Psalm 115:1, 1 Corinthians 12:26**

There is no room for competition in God's Kingdom. We all want to honor God and bring him Glory. If one group is doing great then we all praise God for them. If one group is hurting we all hurt for them. Trying to be at the top of the heap is not a godly desire. We should all strive to be great and do great things for God and not for our own sense of success. Self glory has

destroyed many churches and many relationships. In heaven only God's glory will matter.

### **Invite healthy criticism**

#### **Proverbs 12:1, Proverbs 12:15**

As leaders we must invite healthy criticism. If someone corrects us or challenges us, we must be grateful and realize that God is protecting us. We must even ask the people in our group what we could be doing differently. Many times people will be emotionally charged when they talk to us. Humbly overlooking their tone, and recognizing what they are saying is valid will go a long way. It is not good enough simply to act humble; we must take what people are saying and make legitimate changes. This freedom to speak their minds will create an exciting atmosphere and exchange of ideas, as well as many opportunities for your own growth.

### **We still must lead powerfully**

#### **2 Timothy 2:24-25**

Humility does not mean that you let your people lead you. You must still set the course and make sure that the Christians get strengthened and that you're house church multiplies. It does mean that as you do these things you will go about them with a humble gentle spirit.

### **Blessings of humility**

#### **Proverbs 11:2, Psalm 25:9, 1 Peter 5:5-6**

In these passages God says that humility will bring you many blessings. God will give you grace and wisdom. These passages teach that as you are humble God will guide and lead you. They also teach that at the proper time God will lift you up. WOW!! Let's give God an opportunity to work powerfully through us by leading with humility.

# Pro- Active or Re-Active?

## **Reactionary Leadership**

### **1 Samuel 13:5-14**

Saul had no plan. He was in the war but was simply reacting to what his enemy was doing. This caused his men to have no confidence in his leadership and they were on their way to complete destruction. You are either a pro- active leader or a reactionary leader.

Reactionary leaders simply put out fires and act on the situations and phone calls put before them. They simply go to the family group each week hoping something good happens without working a plan on how to make sure it happens.

## **Pro Active Leadership**

### **1 Samuel 14:6-15, Isaiah 32:8**

Jonathan came up with a plan. He inspired those around him with his plan. He acted on his plan. God honored Jonathon's leadership by working for and with him. We must be leaders that assess the needs of our group, determine where we want to go, get the people behind us, and act with determination.

## **The constant needs**

### **Nehemiah 2:11-16**

Times with God

Relationships – unity, discipling

Weak situations

Marriages and families

Physical needs

Etc..

What are the needs of your group? How many of them must be met immediately and how many can wait? What are the plans you can come up with to meet those needs? What are the

obstacles to meeting those needs? How will you deal with them when they arise? Many house church leaders get stopped because they simply don't know what to do. Some house church leaders get stopped because they have tried to implement plans to meet needs in the past and they have failed. We must believe that God is with us and wants us to meet the needs of our people. We must be eager to get help whenever we get stuck. Others have faced the same problems we have faced and broken through.

### **Evangelistic Plan**

#### **Acts 19:8-10**

Paul always had a plan to win the lost. Here Paul is effectively leading a family group to win many souls. His first plan didn't work so he had to come up with another. What is your evangelistic plan? How is it working? What do you need to do now to make it great? What do you see is blocking your plan? How will you overcome those obstacles? What do you need personally to make it all happen? How will you get your needs met so you can be what you need to be for your group?

### **Calendar for the house church**

#### **2 Corinthians 2:17**

Monthly calendars are very effective tools for pro-active leaders. Activities, birthdays, group prayer times, etc can all be put on a calendar. You can take the church's calendar and incorporate it on your house church's so that your people only need one calendar.



## Section 3

### Discipleship in the House Church

#### Introduction:

##### The Need

##### Colossians 1:28-29

It is important for each of us to understand that God never intended Christianity to be a solo activity. The demands of a Christian's life can be overwhelming, and we need each other's encouragement. Sometimes we simply need someone to help us spiritually process all of the things that can happen to us. Often we are blind to our own sin and the consequences of them and need others to help us see them and repent. We also need someone to confess our sins to so that our hearts stay soft. We all need someone to push us beyond our comfort zone and to help us conceive and realize our spiritual dreams. Sometimes we just

need a shoulder to cry on or a listening ear. These needs are where discipling comes to life.

## **Two way street**

### **Gal 2:11-13**

Even though Peter had walked with Jesus and been a disciple years longer than Paul, Paul still felt the freedom to help Peter when he saw Peter sinning. It is important in any Christian relationship that we are always able to help each other grow. We must of course speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15), however if we are to have **true friendship** there must be mutual edification and mutual admonition.

## **A decision to love**

### **1 John 3:16**

The foundation of every Christian relationship is love. Love is a will directed decision. We can and must decide to love those who are in our lives. We must give the people in our lives our hearts. We must decide to be out for their best interest always. We must decide to always look for the good in them. This decision is very powerful and will keep our relationships from being dictated by how we perceive we are being treated by the other person.

## **Winning hearts**

### **2 Corinth 6:11-13**

It is a leader's responsibility to try to win over the hearts of his people. As a disciple it is also our responsibility to try to win over the hearts of the people that lead us. In doing this it is important not to be a people pleaser, but to continue to speak the truth in love.

## **The focus is God**

### **1 Samuel 23:16**

In our relationships we must always understand that the goal is to point each other to God. If we simply get together and talk and give our opinions on how to help each other, we will do a great disservice to the church long term. We must open God's word and help each other from the scriptures. Each time we get together there should be a time of prayer and the Bible study. In this way we will make sure that we are helping each other grow in our dependence on God, and that our wisdom and power comes from Him.

### **Weekly Times – Daily Contact**

#### **Hebrews 3:12-13, Acts 2:46**

The Bible frequently talks about daily Christian relationships. Our Christian discipling relationships should be daily in our communication to be able to constantly encourage each other. However, it is very important to actually get together and meet eyeball to eyeball on a weekly basis. So much is gained and communicated when we actually meet together. This may mean being creative with the schedule and making sacrifices, but it is worth it to be able to grow and help others grow in the Lord. [Sprinkler v. Good Intentions- which lawn is greener?]

### **Call each other higher**

#### **Hebrews 10:24**

In our discipling we must not just strive to maintain our current level of spirituality and effectiveness but set our hearts on helping each other reach the next level. We must expect growth in each other's lives. One of the great blessings of Christian relationships is that we are able to call each other higher and God uses this powerfully to accomplish things and become what we never dreamed possible. We should dream for/alongside those we disciple and help them reach their goals with God's word.

## **Delegate**

### **Exodus 18**

A house church leader is not going to disciple everyone in the house church but is responsible for being sure that they are all in solid discipling relationships. One person can't do it all and by delegating others learn how to disciple and lead. It is important to give clear direction and have clear expectations.

### **Questions for thought:**

**How is discipleship currently set up in your group?**

# A Sample House Church Meeting

Preparation is critical in making sure that the actual House Church meeting is successful. Part of each discipling time with the house church assistant should be thinking through and praying about the next house church. This is also critical in training the assistant to think like a leader. The house church leader makes sure that the visitors and potential visitors are contacted and set to come. Some leaders fast the day of the family group to spiritually prepare to lead God's people. Time is needed to make the lesson awesome. There are four elements to each house church: Welcome, Worship, Word, and Work.

## **Welcome**

### **Romans 12:9-13, 1 Corinthians 14:26**

A warm, welcoming atmosphere is important to set the mood for hearts to immediately feel open and ready to learn. Training the Christians to prepare before they come to be ready to love, give, and serve helps everyone look forward to being together. There are many introduction questions, and exercises that can help people be excited about the house church. You can use this ice breaker either before the Worship section or before the Word section. Sharing ideas with other house church leaders is an easy way to continually have fresh ideas.

## **Worship**

### **Colossians 3:16, Psalm 146:1-2, Acts 16:25**

Praying at the beginning of the house church will help everyone put the worries of the day behind them and focus on the power and presence of God. This will soften everyone's heart to prepare them to hear God's word. This is also a great time to be creative. Perhaps you could use a guitar or a meditative CD of a spiritual song. In the time of prayer each house church should have a

prayer journal in which the disciples and even visitors could put their request. A member of the house church can maintain the journal, highlighting the answered prayers and removing the ones that are no longer applicable. However, there are many ways to keep the prayer time creative and meaningful. Again, sharing with other house church leaders ideas during this time is very helpful. This time allotted for this time should be about 10 minutes.

## **Word**

### **Psalm 119:107, Isaiah 66:2, 2Kings 22:11**

Helping people come to deep conviction through the word of God is truly one of the great joys of leading a house church.

Thoroughly being prepared for this time is so important. This is *not a time to teach a lesson, but a time to direct people to related verses and asking thoughtful, open-ended questions that enable people to come to their own convictions.* After a series of questions it is important to wrap up the discussion in a way to drive home a certain point. There may be 3 times during the entire lesson that you wrap up and drive home a point. The discussion should meet the needs of the visitors and Christians. It is a great idea to pick out a few of the Christians to give you feedback after each house church. This time should be about 30 minutes.

## **Work**

### **1 Corinthians 15:58, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3**

As a leader of the group you are responsible for utilizing all of the disciple's gifts to insure that all of their work harmonizes and produces results for God's Kingdom. At the end of each house church meeting it is important to focus the house church in a particular area of God's work. You may have a house church on the power of a testimony and have everyone share their testimony with a non-Christian that week. You may have a house church on

being a great servant and have them serve a family outside the family group that week. You may have a house church on prayer and direct everyone to spend all of their discipling times in prayer that week. At the beginning of the work section you can have good news sharing about the previous week's challenge. This will unify the group and keep the disciples focused on working for the Lord. The good news and that week's challenge should take about 10 minutes.

### **Afterwards**

#### **Ephesians 5:16**

Immediately after the house church is a great time to have good talks with both visitors and Christians. After the house church the leader acts as a spiritual quarterback. As you see the Christians and visitors fellowshiping you can tap shoulders to make sure that everyone's needs are met. This is a great time to follow up on comments that were made during the house church. It is also a great time to set up personal bible studies with your visitors because their hearts have been tenderized by the worship and the word.

# An Effective Discipling Time

## **Preparation 2 Timothy 1:3-6**

Pray and think through needs and what should be the focus. Look at the books of Titus and Timothy and how thoroughly Paul prepared and thought through these men's needs.

## **The Whole Man**

### **1 Timothy 5:23, 2 Timothy 1:7-8, 2 Timothy 2:1**

*Topics to consider:* Times with God, outreach, **one** area of character to transform, marriage, dating, parenting, extended families, work, sin, finances, their relationships, their felt needs, health etc. all are a part of what makes up a man. If one area is hurting, it can affect all of the others. If we don't address their felt needs, it will severely hinder our ability to truly help them in all of the other areas.

## **Prayer**

### **James 5:13-16**

Every discipling time should be bathed in prayer. This passage talks about praying if you're in trouble, sick or in sin. This passage talks about praying for and with each other. Prayer puts God in the middle of our relationships and makes sure that our eyes are on God and our direction comes from Him.

## **Scripture**

### **Colossians 3:16**

This passage teaches us that as the Bible dwells in us richly, if this is true, it will be natural that our counseling will be full of Scripture. Scripture puts power and authority in our counseling. It takes our counseling from humanistic advice to "thus sayeth the Lord".

## **Openness and vulnerability**

### **2 Timothy 4:9-17**

For any relationship to be real there must be openness and vulnerability. On one hand we must provide a safe place for each other to be open and real, and on the other hand we must love one another enough to help each other repent. It is not good enough for only one

party to be open about their struggles. In the above passage we see Paul's vulnerability and need for Timothy.

### **Encouragement**

#### **2 Timothy 1:4-5**

We need to always be looking for ways to build up and encourage each other during our times together. An atmosphere of encouragement is also an atmosphere of growth.

### **Social Time**

#### **Mark 6:31**

There are some times that we simply need to do something enjoyable together. These times can be the most bonding and memorable.

### **Expect Change**

#### **2 Tim 4:1-2**

In our relationships we must expect each other to change and grow. One of the most powerful aspects of our studying with people is that we expect them to change and therefore they do. We must be that for each other in the church.

### **House Church Leader and Assistant discipling time**

#### **Mark 3:13-15**

During the discipling time with your asst you should be training them to take on their own group. One way to do this is to go over the Small group training lessons with them. Another is to go over the work to be done in the family group as well as making future plans.

### **Questions for thought:**

**How will this lesson change your discipling times?**

# Accountability

It would be great if everyone was motivated by the love of Christ 100% of the time and stayed motivated no matter what happened in their lives. It would be awesome if no matter how busy or distracted we were with life's situations and distractions we were able to keep our priorities straight and always make the best decisions. It would be wonderful if we were to set goals according to our convictions, and no matter how discouraging life became we did not waiver from them until our goals were accomplished. It would be fantastic if we made a decision to repent of our ingrained habitual sins and we simply never were tempted to waiver from that decision. However, as anyone who has tried to live the Christian life knows, these scenarios are not realities. No matter how strong we are, without help from others we will get discouraged, distracted, and worn down and weak. We must love each other enough to hold each other accountable to God's standards and the decisions we make along the way to obey His word.

## **Their Own Conviction**

### **Luke 19:5-10**

Zacchaeus had dinner with Jesus. Through that conversation Zacchaeus was so motivated that he decided to completely repent of his greed by giving ½ of his possessions to the poor and pay back everyone he cheated 4 times the amount that he cheated them. We don't know what they talked about, but we get a glimpse of how Jesus ministered to people. Jesus knew that it would be useless to hold someone accountable to be righteous unless they came to their own deep convictions. However once someone had deep convictions, we are able to use their own convictions as a foundation to build upon. Then we are able to come up with a plan and a way to help them stay on course. As

leaders we must learn how to help people come to deep convictions about their sin and their work in the Lord.

### **Questions, Questions, Questions**

**Matt 16:13, 15, Matt 21:24, Luke 10:25-26, 36-37**

Asking the right questions can help people process spiritual truths. They can help people realize what they are feeling. They can help people come to deep convictions. The right question can probe into someone's soul to expose their sin. When we tell people what to do we sort circuit the conviction process. Reading a passage and then asking questions is the best way to help people come to convictions about the word of God. Questions keep their heart, mind and soul engaged and on the examining block. However, we must be careful, we can ask a question but really just be telling people what to do. For example, "Don't you think it would be best to quit that job so you could be more involved with the church?" A better set of questions would be, "What do you value most in life?" "In the long haul what do you want to accomplish in your life?" "What decisions do you think you should make today to be able to accomplish those goals?" "How do you think Satan will work to keep you from reaching those goals?" What do you think you can do to keep Satan from winning that battle?" People's convictions will be so much deeper and long lasting if we get them to think and process, and delve into the recesses of their soul, than if we simply tell them what is right and wrong.

### **Decision**

**Joshua 24:15**

Helping people decide what action they need to take and when is important in order for there to be a lasting change. Simply counseling people without a decision to change will be frustrating to all involved. However, decisions have incredible power as a foundation or a starting point for things to be different. A simple

question such as, “What do you plan to do about the things we discussed?” will help them think through a plan of attack. Most of the time, the follow up question of, “When do you feel you need to do this?” is also important. Given their answers, there may need to be more discussion about their specific plan of action, however, you giving them the plan of action should be avoided at all cost. This will only be your conviction projected onto them and will produce short lived results at best. If they come up with the plan and the time table they will own their Repentance and change is much more likely to take place.

### **Follow Through**

#### **2 Corinthians 1:17, 2 Kings 23:1-7**

After they have developed convictions of their own, and come up with a plan of attack of their own, now they are ready to be held accountable. Praying for them about the issue and asking them how it is going is critical. If they have been successful, be very encouraging, if they have made progress but haven't totally done all, be encouraging and discuss further action using the above methods. If they have failed completely, reaffirm your love for them and faith in them. Figure out exactly what did or didn't happen and why. Find out how they feel about it. Use the Bible to develop deeper convictions, pray specifically about the situation, and have them come up with another plan. Then revisit the issue in a time manner. This takes faith, love and patience, but it will produce lasting change in the disciples we are trying to mature.

**How will you use accountability to lead your house church?**

# Expectations

If we are to accomplish great things in our house church there must be expectations that we have for the members of the group. Clear expectations that everyone agrees to and are followed up on are powerful.

## Clear Expectations

### **Numbers 13:17-20, 2 Timothy 4:1-5**

Moses and Paul made it clear exactly what they expected of the spies and Timothy. What do you expect of the people in your house church in terms of their personal relationship to God, Their Family Times, Discipling times, Evangelism?

## Commit

### **1 Samuel 23:1-5, Nehemiah 2:17-18, 1 Samuel 14:7**

Sometimes as leaders we don't expect anything for fear people will think we are lording our leadership over them. In order for this not to happen it is important to get your people to enthusiastically agree. This is where you have to explain why you think your expectations are right and godly and then to persuade them to take on the expectation as their own. It is important to really get a healthy discussion going about the expectations. This can take place in a group or individually. If you feel that your expectation may meet with opposition you may first want to talk it through with a few people in the group individually first. David at first did not get his men to commit, but as he continued to pray and talk to his men they got behind him. We must be willing to change our expectations as we have these conversations.

## Follow Up

### **Num 14:26-29, Mark 6:30, Luke 10:17-20**

Without follow up there is really no expectation. A teacher who gives assignments but never collects them really doesn't expect the students to do the assignments. We must see how our people are doing with the expectations that they have committed to. This does not have to be a heavy time at all. It can be a simple question. "Hey Joe, how did your family devotional go last week." "Julie I have been praying for your

neighbor Linda that you wanted to invite to house church, how did it go.” This is important in order for people to make spiritual progress in their lives. Imagine at your job if there was no follow up on any of your task. How are you doing on your follow up?

## **Resistance**

### **Numbers 13:31-33**

Don't be surprised if people resist when you expect them to follow through on what they have committed to. We must patiently keep the expectations while we help people work through their issues. We cannot back off simply because people resist. This is a test of our resolve.

## **Guilt, Pressure and Failure**

### **Psalms 34:18, 2 Corinthians 1:8-9**

It is natural for us not to want to feel guilt, or to fail or to feel pressure. However avoiding these would be a serious mistake. Many want to avoid expectations because they foresee that after expectations will come these BIG three. Guilt, failure and pressure are huge in our spiritual growth. We must not avoid these as much as help people process these correctly.

## **Additional Discipling**

### **Numbers 14:30-33, Luke 10:17-20**

After we follow up there is usually additional instruction that needs to be given. Moses had the task of trying to help the spies be more faithful in how they processed their task. Jesus wanted to make sure that the apostles processed their success correctly by reminding them that their joy should be in their going to heaven and not in their temporary success.

## **Grace and Mercy**

### **Jude 22, Matthew 5:7**

In all of our expectations few will perform perfectly. It is important that we show much grace in failure. We should share our own failures. We must help people to get back on the horse and try again. Perseverance will be a great lesson learned if we handle expectations correctly.

# Spiritual Breakthroughs

Each of the people in your group is at different points spiritually. However, each one is facing some type of block that is keeping them from growing in a significant area. As leaders we need to help people breakthrough these spiritual blockades so that they can grow. Once someone has a significant breakthrough, their excitement and gratitude increases and they want to help others experience what they have experienced.

## **Identify**

### **Acts 8:18-23**

Peter was able to help Simon identify what was holding him back. Peter saw that Simon was bitter and that was leading to all kinds of other problems. If we don't identify our sin specifically, we will just feel unmotivated and negative but never really know why. Often we need other people's help to identify our sin because Satan can blind and confuse us.

## **All on Same Page**

### **2 Chronicles 33:10-15. Mark 9:23, 24**

Manasseh was one of the two most evil Kings of the Jews. God could not produce a spiritual breakthrough until Manasseh really wanted it. Once Manasseh wanted it, the breakthrough came quickly. We must first help people really want to be helped. Once they have the desire then all the direction and help will have an impact.

## **4 Tools :**

**Help of Others, Get Spiritually Busy, Enter the Sanctuary, Decisions – Galatians 6:1-2, 1 Kings 19:14-19, Psalm 73:17, Job 31:1**

The word used in verse 2, translated “burden” is an overwhelming weight too heavy for any one person to carry. The word used in verse 5 is “load” means a cargo that is manageable. This verse teaches that we will all need help at times with our sin. However it also teaches that each of us is responsible to do what we need to do to be righteous. We must understand that people in our groups won’t change unless they have help. This help comes in many forms, but we must be ready to initiate and quarterback this help until they have a breakthrough.

God gave Elijah very specific direction. When people are stuck they need to know exactly what to do. When someone is stuck their thinking can become confused and they can’t land on a specific direction. What others can see clearly is so far from clear to them. Clear direction will help people pull out of the pit.

### **Consistent Help**

#### **Luke 11:24-26, 1 Kings 19:3-13**

Truly helping people change is a commitment. If someone makes progress but there is no immediate follow up Satan will immediately come in and steal the progress and dishearten the disciple. Consistent help builds on the previous day’s progress and if there are setbacks they will be short lived and fixed quickly.

**Can you identify any spiritual breakthroughs in your house church?**

**What will you do when there is a breakthrough?**

# The Greater and Less Principle

As leaders in God's kingdom we must always be trying to replace ourselves. We need to do this in order to multiply. If we remain the center of people's focus, in terms of human leadership, then when we are no longer with them the people will be directionless. However as we develop those around us to become greater and greater and we become less and less more and more people will carry the responsibility of leadership and inspiration. We will be amazed at the talents and abilities that will surface.

## Catching the Dream

**Acts 8:1-5, Heb 13:7**

Touched by God- It is not just a matter of training the disciples to do what we do, it is a matter of them catching the dream, being filled with the Spirit and having their own set of deep convictions that will end up calling us higher in many ways. We see in the passage in Acts that the common disciple was no longer just motivated by the apostles; they now had their own set of convictions and motivations. The fire had been passed, not just a set of teachings. The place we need to start is to get them connected to God. This will give them the confidence and the direction they need. If their motivation is straight from God, who they will end up becoming and what they will end up accomplishing will be way beyond any goal we could put before them.

## Let Them do It

**Luke 9:46, Luke 10:1-2**

Jesus without hesitation let the 12 apostles each lead a small group of 6 right after they were openly arguing with each other about who was the greatest. We must find our people's gifts and let them use those gifts even when they are struggling with many things. Using God's gifts for the glory and advancement of His

kingdom makes it easier to change the areas in their character that are sinful. We must remember that God used us when we were not the perfect example of discipleship. If we wait till everyone is just where they need to be very few would ever do anything. Find the gifts and use them for God's Glory.

## **Least and Servant**

### **Mark 9:35**

To be truly great according to Jesus we must be the servant of all. We will not be the one in front but instead, the wind beneath the wings of the one in front. We will prepare, encourage, critique and train. We will only win the world if we are constantly training and replacing ourselves. "They must become greater, I must become less", will be the theme of a leader who truly understands God's grand plan. When the one we are training does more and more of the public presentations and private appointments people will begin to look to them for help. This will boost their confidence and free you to do more and more training. This in turn will multiply the group rapidly.

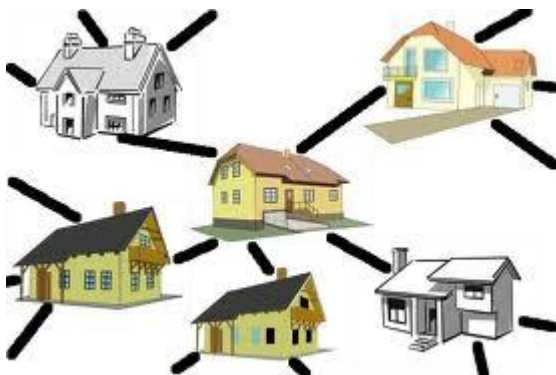
## **Self Effacing**

### **John 14:12-13**

Jesus states that anyone who believes in him would do greater things than He. Jesus was not threatened, but gloried in the success of those that followed Him. His design was for them to accomplish more than He. We cannot be concerned with who gets the glory. Isaiah 60:19 says that God is our glory. When we are concerned about our glory we short circuit the ability of God to use us in the most powerful of ways and that is to help those we lead to be great.

## **Question for thought:**

**How can you do less and see your group be more successful?**



## Section 4

### The Evangelistic House Church

#### **Introduction: Multiplying Your Group**

#### **Multiplying is at the Core of Christianity**

#### **Mark 4:20, John 14:12-13, Matthew 13:31-33**

Jesus' heart and vision was for the kingdom of God to multiply from one man to thousands. Jesus says that when God's word falls on a good heart it will multiply 30, 60 even a hundred times what was sown. This vision is also at the core of every family

group. Even though we may love our house church and the fellowship, the goal is to multiply into two and so on so that the world can be won. We see this principle when we read from Luke 9 to Luke 10. In Luke 9 Jesus sends out the 12, and then in Luke 10 Jesus sends out the 72. Each disciple multiplied by 6. This is very exciting when we consider what one house church can become. This takes faith for us to be able to believe that our group can become hundreds of groups, but God has promised that we will do greater things than He has done if we believe.

### **Faith is Critical**

#### **Isaiah 60:21-22, Isaiah 43:18-19, Romans 4:16-17**

This prophecy about the kingdom in Isaiah says that in the kingdom, where we will all be righteous through Jesus' blood, the least will become a thousand and the smallest a mighty nation. The prophecy also adds that it is the Lord who will do it. When we look at some house churches we can't imagine how God can use the group to multiply. We see people that have weak characters, or have many spiritual issues that have rendered them powerless. We must see them as God does. There is a reason that God said the least will become a thousand. God wants us to see people as they will be and not as they are. This faith in the leadership will translate to the people. The spiritual issues still must be dealt with, however, when there is the faith in the people's ability to change, it makes changing so much easier. Isaiah 43 also tells us that God will make a way in the desert and the wasteland. God makes a way where there is no way. This faith is necessary and contagious.

### **Dream, Think, and Plan to Multiply**

#### **1 Chronicles 28:11-12, 19**

David passed on his dream for the temple to his son. We must pass on our dreams to all of those we touch. David had also thoroughly thought through how to build the different parts of the

temple and he had plans drawn up. In order for our dream to multiply to become a reality, we must thoroughly think through how we are going to get it done. We must think about who will be the next leaders and start training them. We must think through where, geographically, it makes sense to put a new group. We must look ahead 5-10 years and think through where will we be and how can we get there. It is obvious from this passage that God had put the dream on David's heart, and God also gave David the understanding of how to accomplish all of the details of the plan. God will give us the wisdom and insight of how to multiply if we go to Him.

**Put together a 5 year plan for your House Church:**

# Goals

When you think of what you would like the kingdom to do and accomplish in the next 5 years, what comes to mind. My mind is filled with visions and dreams of all kinds of different needs being met, neighborhoods being won, new ministries beginning, and new churches being planted. The only way that great things are accomplished is that they have to be in someone's mind first. This vision becomes a goal when a decision is made and a date is set. Without goals we will flounder in our work for the Lord. Goals inspire us, focus and direct our work, and reset our priorities.

## Setting Goals

### **Proverbs 16:3**

In this verse it is obvious that God expects us to make spiritual plans. Spiritual plans are goals. What are the goals that you have for yourself and your house church. These verses also talk about the importance of praying to God about what your goals should be and praying to God to accomplish your goals. We should not make goals rashly, but consider what it is you are trying to accomplish in the big picture, and consider the strengths of your people. A simple well conceived goal is a powerful tool in God's hands. Do not have too many goals or your energies will be fragmented.

## Buy In

### **1 Samuel 14:6-7, Nehemiah 2:17-18**

The leader may be all excited about his goals for the house church, but if the people aren't just as fired up, the goals won't be accomplished. One important role of a house church leader is to learn how to communicate your vision in such a way is to persuade people to follow. It is just as important to listen to your people. They may have a better plan or even improve on the one

you have laid before them. Don't begin until they have made a decision that they are with you heart and soul. The time that it takes to do this will pay off in the end.

### **Set a Course of Action in Keeping with Your Goals Isaiah 32:8**

Isaiah tells us that our goals must be followed by deeds. If we set goals but don't act on them, they are simply fantasies. Notice the armor Bearer followed Jonathan. Your people will follow your lead. You must be the first to act and call them confidently to follow. Our action proves our faith and ignites God's power. Nothing builds trust like finishing what you start.

### **What if we don't make our goals?**

#### **Proverbs 24:16**

In Christ we have the freedom to try to achieve great things and fail. Failure is one of the greatest tools God has in his arsenal to make us great. Without failure we would be overwhelmingly prideful. Without failure we would learn very little. Without failure we would be very un-relatable to a failing world. Almost every success was preceded by more than one failure. It is the process of setting the goal, striving with all of our energy and seeing what God gives us that will in the end accomplish great things if we do not give up. When we fail we must evaluate what went wrong, learn and recommit ourselves.

# Winning Souls as a House Church

## **Developing an Oikos**

**Luke 5:29-32, Luke 19:5-7**

Oikos is a Greek word meaning your sphere of influence through your relationships. As disciples we must have people that are not disciples that we have made friends with that we are trying to move towards becoming disciples. The more people that we are friends with the greater chance we have to help them become disciples. We can meet these people from cold contact evangelism or from meeting the neighbors on your block. The point is that each of us has a group of people that we are working with. A new homes ministry was developed by some disciples in which all of the people who bought a home in a certain area were visited by the disciples. This was great because someone just moving into an area knows very few people and has very few friends. Also when people move they have many needs and no church home yet. Each of us must develop a way in which we can develop our own Oikos.

## **Getting involved**

**1 Thessalonians 2:8, John 1:38-39**

We must find a way to share our lives with the people in our Oikos. This is where the other members of our House Church come in. Having a family devotional with another disciple family and a family that is a part of your Oikos is a powerful way to show them your love, the power of Christian relationships, great parenting and the power of the Bible. Sports, hospitality, and running errands together are just a few of the ways we can open our lives to the people that are a part of our Oikos. As they see our lives and our love they will begin to be more and more open

about what is really going on in their lives. Think about what really drew you to God and His kingdom.

### **Meeting needs**

#### **John 8:7-11, 1 Peter 4:8**

Jesus met people's physical needs. He used this as a way to eventually save their souls. This woman's need was to be saved from the men ready to kill her. Jesus saved her and then preached to her. In John 9 he does the same with a blind man. Jesus fed people and cured people, but these acts were not ends in of themselves. Jesus ultimately wanted to save their souls. People have perceived needs and real needs. Every person's real need is to be saved from their sins and be reunited with God. However few people feel this need very acutely. Once people see that we are willing to help them meet their perceived need they are more open to us helping them with their real need. Troubled marriages, out of control teenagers, grief over a family death, needing help with a home project, needing a babysitter, moving furniture, the list is endless. As a house church we can help each other meet the needs of people in our Oikos and open their hearts to the gospel.

### **Sharing your faith**

#### **Mark 5:19-20, 1 Corinthians 3:6-9**

Often Jesus would tell people to share what God had done for them. Thinking through why we love God so much, why we love His Kingdom so much, and what God has done for us will help us develop our testimony. Our personal testimony is one of the most powerful tools we have in converting our friends. As people from our Oikos open up to us, we can open up to them about how God has changed our lives so completely and why He means so much to us. It is important to let people know right away about your involvement in God's Kingdom for two reasons. First, this will help you figure out if a person is completely not open so that we are able to invest our time into the most open people. Second, it is important in every way to be transparent about our motives and

hearts. Helping people from your Oikos become disciples is a group activity. If we try to win souls alone, we will be very frustrated and fruitless. Bringing people to the house church will help all the disciples get involved with them. Getting as many people involved on as many levels as possible will help your visitor become a disciple.

### **Your Routine**

#### **Acts 17:2, Acts 5:42**

We see that the apostles had certain routines that made them effective. Whatever we do routinely will tell us who we will become and what we will accomplish. Each disciple needs an evangelistic routine. Maybe you share at the gym daily. Maybe every Saturday you meet new neighbors. Each disciple should think through their lives and come up with an evangelistic routine that works well for them. Share this routine with your house church leader so he can help you stay on track.

**What is your plan for winning souls as a house church:**

# Developing an Evangelistic Plan

## **Inspiration**

### **Judges 7:9-14**

Inspiring people to want to do the work, and to have faith that they will be successful is half the battle. God used an inspirational story, or dream to give Gideon confidence. Giving your people the vision of what will happen after they do the work is inspirational. Telling the people stories of others that have done what they are doing and been successful is inspirational. A story of someone that shares their same weakness that has overcome is inspirational. Getting your people to pray with faith is inspirational. Rallying your people around a promise of God is inspirational. Without inspiration your people's motivation will dry up quickly. However with inspiration you won't be able to stop them. As leaders we must provide a constant source of inspiration and encouragement to our people.

## **Specific Direction**

### **Matthew 10:1-8**

It is important to let your people know exactly what you expect of them. If the expectations are too high you will discourage them if they are too low you won't get the job done, and your people won't be inspired. These expectations should come after a discussion of their specific situation, and it is best if they set their own. Then after you have nailed down exactly what they will be doing, pray about it together.

## **Leading the way**

### **Judges 7:17-21, Judges 5:2**

The leaders must lead, not just coach. You must be the most determined. When you fail you must rebound quickly. There

must be stories of your exploits and your weaknesses and how you overcame. This inspires the people to keep going.

## **Accountability**

### **Mark 6:30, 1 Samuel 15:13-19**

Finding out how people are doing with the task they have been assigned, and redirecting them is critical. Without accountability you have no idea if your plan is working or not. However accountability must always be done in a spirit of love, gentleness, encouragement and concern for the lost and for your people. Accountability motivated by love will produce happy productive disciples.

## **Evaluation**

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-15**

After a set time you must evaluate is my plan producing what I expected. If it is you may want to change it to be more effective. If it is not you must ask why not, and make the necessary changes. Nothing is more discouraging to your people than a leader who keeps doing the same thing over and over again if it is not working. Nothing is more encouraging than for your people to see you humbly admit your mistakes, fix your mistakes, and then become successful because of it.

## **HELP!!!!**

### **Luke10:1**

Often when we are just getting our feet wet in our evangelistic efforts we need the encouragement of another disciple. Going out together to share is so encouraging and fun. Once we have been emboldened by sharing with a brother or sister will we be ready to go it alone.

# **Urgent to Study the Bible with People**

## **People are Open**

### **John 4:34-35**

When we listen to Christian's conversion stories we realize that people are really open. Many people that became Christians took a while before they ever came to church. Many were praying for God to act in their lives. Many had a rough exterior only to have a soft and tender heart. We must believe that many, many people will respond if we pursue them. This verse tells us to open our eyes. People that could become Christians are in our address books, they are people that have come to your bible talk and church, they are all around us. God is pleading with us to open our eyes to see what he is doing behind the scenes.

## **A Sense of Urgency**

### **Luke 19:5-9, Ephesians 5:16**

Jesus had a sense of urgency knowing that there were many lost people and knowing that once someone's heart is open, it will not stay open long. Satan wants to close every open heart, and if we don't act quickly he will do it. God will provide the open door, and when he does we must jump at the opportunity.

## **Ask**

### **Matthew 7:7-8**

Often the only thing standing between someone studying the bible with us and not is that we don't ask. One great way to ask is to get some one on one time with a person, such as a lunch or a coffee and share your life and ask them what they feel is their greatest spiritual need. Whatever they say the answer can always be, "Why don't we get together and study the Bible about it."

## **Expect**

**Acts 18:10, Acts 14:1, Acts 14:21**

The Bible makes a point to tell us in each of these cases that a large number of people became disciples. We must expect many to respond to our message. We must not be satisfied with just a few. There are many people all around us waiting for us to ask them to study the bible and we must come through for them.

## **Persevere**

**Galatians 6:9**

We must keep pursuing people that have expressed openness and not give up. We are in a fight for souls and we must overpower Satan with God's power and our perseverance.

## **Let's Do It**

**Colossians 4:17**

Write out a list of people that you or the people in your group could ask to study the bible with, and make sure that they get ask within the next three days. Then as people begin to say yes, share the good news with everyone.

## **Questions for thought:**

**Write a list of people who could be studying right now and ask them right away!**