

The Value of Small Groups

1. The small-group program is not an appendage; it is not a program we tacked onto an existing structure. The small group is part of our lifestyle. –Andy Stanley
2. When the New Testament was written, the typical church was so small that it was, in essence, a small group. –Larry Osbourne
3. John Wesley wasn't persuaded that someone had made a decision for Christ until that person became involved in a small group. -Joel Comiskey
4. Effective small group leaders don't just "lead a group." They raise up leaders to reach the world. – Dave Earley
5. It is very difficult for a cell group meeting to continue over the long term, if group members are not willing to become transparent. –M. Scott Boren
6. Great small groups celebrate success, suffer with one another, and expect God to do more than they can do themselves. – Rick Howerton
7. The first thing you must learn to avoid burnout as a small group leader is that God is the real leader and center of every Christian small group. –Michael C. Mack
8. Your desire to change your small group can't be greater than your desire to change within. –Andrew Mason
9. Cell ministry is not "another program"; it's the very heart of the church. –Joel Comiskey
10. After 25 years of leading small groups and coaching small group leaders, I have come to one clear conviction: prayer is the most important activity of the small group leader. – Dave Earley
11. In many ways, group life drives what we do (and do not do) as an organization. –Andy Stanley
12. A spiritual family, or cell group, provides a safe place for people to be open and transparent at the first hint of temptation: this is "preventative maintenance," not "damage control." –Larry Stockstill
13. The goal is to facilitate ministry in the group, not to have the leader "do" the ministry. –M. Scott Boren
14. The 'best small group leader ever' formed a small team that would eventually change the world. –Michael C. Mack
15. Every small group or church needs to have some form of evangelism going on in order to maintain health. –Steve Sjorgren
16. ...I believe one of the best preparations for marriage is participating in a small group. If a person has learned to be intimate and honest with a few friends before they get married, they will have less reason to fear intimacy after they are married. –Andy Stanley
17. Every time I have practiced the habit of inviting someone every week, the group has grown. Every time I have not consistently invited new people to come, the group has not grown. – Dave Earley

18. When group members empty themselves, humility has room to move in. –M. Scott Boren
19. The most vital thing you do as a (group) leader is to develop new leaders. –Michael C. Mack
20. The main purpose for every cell group must be to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell. Otherwise, the cell becomes a social club without any power. – Larry Kreider
21. When Jesus started His ministry, the very first thing He did was form a small group. –Rick Warren
22. ...it is the very essence of the true church of Jesus Christ that is worked out in small groups. – Christian A. Schwarz
23. Through the years, I have noticed the long-range effectiveness of leaders revolves around simple habits that those leaders practice outside of the group meeting. – Dave Earley
24. Small-group ministry constantly faces a dilemma; maintaining the intimacy of a small group while fulfilling Christ's command to evangelize. –Joel Comiskey
25. We have found that some unchurched people are more open to connecting in a home before they are willing to visit a church. -Andy Stanley
26. Remember: Don't focus on cell attendance as much as on leadership development. When leaders are properly trained and motivated, they will bring in the attendance! . –Larry Stockstill
27. Give permission for group members to reveal their struggles. –M. Scott Boren
28. When a small group leader loses passion for their group the small group loses their passion for group life. – Rick Howerton
29. The best ministry generally doesn't occur during a group's meetings so much as between the meetings. –Carl George
30. Almost all of the New Testament churches met in a home. –Larry Osbourne
31. When Christ is not central to a small group, it's not a Christian small group. –Michael C. Mack
32. Cell churches worldwide are adopting a more revolutionary mode of reasoning...every lay person can successfully lead a cell group. –Joel Comiskey
33. Highly effective small group leaders view prayer as a non-negotiable aid in their ministry to others. – Dave Earley
34. Small groups help even the most experienced marketplace leaders understand that leadership is really about influence and serving, not their position or title. –Dave & Jon Ferguson
35. ...since the size of the group is relatively small, this ensures that no one slips through the cracks. If a person doesn't show up, it is noticed. –Andy Stanley
36. A successful small group meeting will lead people to open up their lives and get 'beneath the surface.' – Andrew Mason

37. When cell leaders are facilitating well, they often speak only 30% of the time. –M. Scott Boren
38. ...small group leaders inevitably step up and assume roles of spiritual leadership that they would have otherwise deferred to the pastoral staff. –Larry Osbourne
39. Your role as a small group leader is not to lead the entire small group of eight or ten or twelve. Your role is primarily to shepherd and disciple two or three people in your inner circle- and then to share ownership and leadership with them. –Michael C. Mack
40. Effective cell leaders excel in mobilizing the group to work together toward cell multiplication. –Joel Comiskey
41. Too many small groups worry too much about doctrine and too little about building Christian community. – Rick Howerton
42. Regularly contacting group members will increase the number of times they attend in a year. – Dave Earley
43. When believers catch the vision for cells, an internal explosion occurs! Something I call, “the anointing to multiply” takes over, and they become incredibly innovative and involved. . –Larry Stockstill
44. The readiness of a new leader is the true indicator that a cell is ready and able to successfully reproduce. –M. Scott Boren
45. God created the world in such a way that healthy things grow and reproduce themselves. –Michael C. Mack
46. We ask every small group leader in our existing groups to appoint an apprentice leader who will head up their group at least once a quarter. –Larry Osbourne
47. Cells are open, evangelism-focused small groups that are entwined into the life of the church. –Joel Comiskey
48. We encourage (group) leaders to identify an apprentice within the first six months of the group. –Andy Stanley
49. You don’t want to have small groups of 20 or 30 or 40 people. That’s not a small group, that’s a church. –Rick Warren
50. Closed groups are restricted and dead-end, and they do not fulfill the Great Commission. – Dale Galloway
51. A home environment is certainly more warm and inviting than a sterile classroom. –Andy Stanley
52. ...a small group takes our good intentions and puts them on a calendar. –Larry Osbourne
53. If a (group) discussion does not lead to the implementation of truth, then it has failed. –M. Scott Boren
54. The ultimate goal of each cell is to multiply itself as the group grows through evangelism and then conversions. –Joel Comiskey
55. Biblical discussions make disciples. Unresolvable doctrinal debates create a climate of confusion and dysfunction. – Rick Howerton

56. Knowing that everyone is a potential leader changes everything. Your goal as a cell leader is to challenge and believe in those God has sent you so they will take their rightful place as cell leaders. . –Larry Stockstill
57. The 58 ‘one anothers’ of the Bible- love one another, care for one another, help one another, encourage one another, serve one another, share with one another (etc.)- can only be done in a small group setting. –Rick Warren
58. The Apostle Peter came to Jesus’ small group through another person’s invitation. –Andrew Mason
59. I have led groups for over 20 years. The thing I look back on is not the groups I have led but the leaders I have developed, especially those who are effectively mentoring others. – Dave Earley
60. Believers within a cell find their dreams for evangelism being fulfilled when they join rank in prayer and fasting for the lost. . –Larry Stockstill
61. Successful small-group leaders take advantage of the variety of gifts within the cell. –Joel Comiskey
62. A great group is focused on God’s mission rather than the group members’ agendas. –Michael C. Mack
63. The highly effective small group leader understands that unless he is intentionally making progress in his personal, spiritual life he will soon begin to decline. – Dave Earley
64. Cells build “family” into a church, making the members “sons and daughters” in the house, and not just “servants” in the house. . –Larry Stockstill
65. Small group leader, the most important small group member is the one who is in your presence. – Rick Howerton
66. Not every group multiplies, but there is the danger of stagnation when one doesn’t. –Joel Comiskey
67. You’ll be told by lots of well-meaning people that your small group is supposed to do a lot of other things to attract members and keep existing members happy. But this is your main goal: Follow Jesus. –Michael C. Mack
68. A group needs to be small enough that everyone has a chance to contribute, but large enough that no one feels forced to speak up or share more than they want to. –Larry Osbourne
69. The cell meeting is not the place for the solo preacher or teacher. It is the body of Christ working together, building up each other. –M. Scott Boren
70. Every time leaders ask open-ended questions, they are inviting participation. –Andy Stanley
71. ...the simplest and best tool I’ve ever seen for connecting people to one another and engaging them with the Bible for the long haul is a sermon-based small group. –Larry Osbourne
72. Group leader, don’t rely solely on church small-group announcements. All these do is legitimize your personal invite. –Andrew Mason

73. Encourage group members to progress through the church's equipping materials.

–M. Scott Boren

74. We ask every group to take on at least one service project a year (the ideal is two)...

–Larry Osbourne

75. When leading a small group the most important meeting may be the meeting after the meeting. – Rick Howerton

76. I believe God can and will use healthy small group communities to change the world, one life at a time. –Michael C. Mack

77. In a biological cell, cell multiplication begins when the chromosomes start "pairing up" rather than floating alone inside the cell. . –Larry Stockstill

78. As a cell group leader you are an under-pastor. –M. Scott Boren

79. ...their impact will never equal the revolutionary results that occur when small groups reach the level of a core ministry, or better yet the hub around which a ministry (or church) revolves. –Larry Osbourne

80. We have found in Cell life that group members will typically be as transparent and open as the leader is willing to be. –Joel Comiskey