



CCN SMALL GROUPS TRAINING SERIES
LEADERSHIP SEMINAR SEPTEMBER 27, 2005

Groups That Grow:

Experiencing Jesus in Your Small Group

Featuring:

Dr. Bill Donahue

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Willow Creek Association*

&

Author, Leading Life-Changing Small Groups

Submit questions to CCN's presenters via:

Phone: 408-530-0787

Fax: 650-745-0660

Email: questions@ccnonline.net

Visit CCN on the web at: www.ccn.tv

I. A Meeting to Remember: Moments with the 12 (John 13-17)

Preparation: A place and a purpose – An upper room and a journey to the cross

- Jesus Invited His Group to the Table

The table is a place of healing

At the table, Jesus meets us as *Sacred Friend*

- Jesus Picked up a Towel

The towel is the instrument of humility

Jesus meets them as *Relentless Lover*

- Jesus Challenged Them with the Truth

The truth is our guide to holiness

Jesus meets them as *Truthful Revealer*

II. Inviting Your Group into the Company of Jesus

Preparation:

Place – Free of distraction; a table for food

Purpose – To meet with Jesus

Prayer – Recognizing the presence and power of God to change lives

*Jesus, living Word, we know you are powerfully present among us.
Open our eyes to see you and our hearts to follow your guidance.
We are listening, and we are willing to learn from you. Teach us
and transform us. Amen.*

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III. Guiding the Group into an Encounter with Jesus

(Suggested process)

1. Gathering and Listening: A reading that will set the tone for the time, and a question to provoke thinking and open hearts

2. Encountering Jesus: The story of Christ in the gospels

3. Joining the Conversation: Inviting people to enter the story of Jesus and respond with questions, reflections and prayers

4. Connecting Our Stories: The place where our lives connect with one another in the group as we encounter the ways and teachings of Jesus

5. Finding Our Way: A forward look at our relationships, decisions, and actions in light of this encounter with Jesus

6. Praying Together: Seeking wisdom and hope in the presence of God as he meets us in Christ by the power of His Spirit

IV. Designing a Gathering that Helps a Group Experience Christ

- 1. Preparation** – the atmosphere you create and the tone you set are important
- 2. Authenticity** – you cannot manufacture an encounter with Jesus, you can only invite Him to meet you
- 3. Food** – keep it simple
- 4. Lighting** – pay attention to the mood you want to set
- 5. Time** – allow enough time for reflection and prayer
- 6. Media** – if you use it, check it first and time it
- 7. The Lord's Supper** – if you observe this as a group, make sure you have permission and gain instruction in how to administer this properly
- 8. Materials** – Choose readings and a process that will guide you along and provide enough choices for the leader

V. Doing Life in the Company of Jesus

Meeting Christ as ...

Sacred Friend

Relentless Lover

Truthful Revealer

Provocative Teacher

Extreme Forgiver

Compassionate Healer

Authentic Leader

Supreme Conqueror

Resources:

Leading Life-Changing Small Groups

By Dr. Bill Donahue
www.willowcreek.com

Walking the Small Group Tightrope

By Dr. Bill Donahue
www.willowcreek.com

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