

## Small Groups: What Guys Want



I have been involved with ministry to and through men for over twenty years, much of it through small groups. This article focuses on what I see as some unique aspects of men in small groups.

First of all, let me say that most of the benefits of being in a small group apply to **all** guys out there, not just some. Men need relationships, and, more specifically, spiritual relationships. Yes! I said relationships!! The Lone Ranger mentality I have heard about and seen personally does not work well. In fact, it adversely affects the Lone Ranger as well as those around him. Men need a place to belong, to know someone cares about them, and to be held accountable for their actions and attitudes. They need help in applying God's Word to their daily lives and to pray with other men.

At *New Life Church*, we are in year three of a new approach to ministry to men. Here are some things we have learned along the way about helping men see how important it is for them to meet together:

1. Men are more willing to join a small group if they have had other, more casual contact with guys through sports, larger gatherings, etc. first. Use men to invite other men into those groups. (See also the book [No Man Left Behind](#) by David Delk and Brett Clemmer.)
2. Men need more time than women to "warm up" to group life. (Anyone surprised by that?) DVD series like the [Men's Fraternity curriculum](#) (Robert Lewis) that combines a 45/50 minute talk with 30/45 minutes of table discussion afterwards helps men start to see the advantages of other men's voices in their life. Another benefit of using a DVD is getting more men to step into the role of table discussion leader. It is easy and helps men take the next step into leadership.
3. Guys "stay in the game" and grow in relationships better if they meet weekly for six to ten weeks with breaks in between. Though this isn't unique to men in small groups, it is extremely important. Meetings don't need to be longer than 1 ½ hours.
4. Men want to know that they have received something useable for their lives, so be sure you apply what you are studying. (Or just use a curriculum like *Men's Fraternity*—oh, did I mention that before?) Relationships are key, but with no substance, a man could build relationships just by watching a game with the guys.



### In this issue:

- Real Men Need Small Groups
- Recruiting Small Group Leaders
- Coffee Break Story
- Becoming an Apprentice of Jesus
- Partner with Global Coffee Break

**Your feedback is appreciated!**  
Feel free to make a suggestion using the link below.



### Join the conversation on the Network!



*The Network is a CRC initiative to help you get the answers, tools and ideas you need.*

- Talk about [Small Groups](#)
- Talk about [Coffee Break](#)

#### FREE RESOURCES:

- [How to Recruit](#)
- [Who do you Recruit](#)
- [Sign Up for Small Talk](#)
- [Send a Father's Day Card](#)

For more information about recruiting please contact us at [smallgroups@crcna.org](mailto:smallgroups@crcna.org).

#### OTHER RESOURCES:

[The Good and Beautiful God](#), by James Bryan Smith: We all have ideas that we tell ourselves about God and how he works in

5. In a small group discussion, men often try to skip over the sharing part of their lives and go directly to gaining information. If you're a facilitator, don't let them! (Read the book [Brothers](#) by Geoff Gorsuch specifically about stealing second base.)

These learnings are extremely important in inviting and keeping men in these vital relationships in their lives. These relationships will call men to their most important relationship of all, their relationship with God. According to Robert Lewis, a real man is marked by the following:

1. He rejects passivity (no more standing around)
2. He accepts responsibility (of God's will, God's work, God's woman and family)
3. He leads courageously (that is, is a life giver, but only as he asks for God's help)
4. He expects the greater reward that is God's reward.

The local church and the world need real men of God who can take up their role in this world. Men's small groups help.

- Todd Wessels  
Pastor of Connections - New Life Church

## Recruiting Small Group Leaders



It is that time again. What time you ask? The time to recruit leaders for small groups that begin in the fall. How do you do it? It is easy. Simply put in an announcement in the church bulletin, that reads something like this:

**Needed:** Small Group Leaders who can:

- ask brilliant, penetrating questions which will challenge people to re-examine their lives down to their core
- discern and meet the deepest, unspoken needs of group members
- maintain confidentiality while skillfully praying for specific needs
- answer any questions with a memorized Bible verse
- to commit to a minimum of five years

If that method works, you must be really good. But for the other 99.8 percent of us, recruiting that way is an invitation to a bulletin announcement a month later which reads something like this, "Small groups have again been cancelled this year due to a lack of leaders."

In fact, should some individuals volunteer through the announcement, you run the risk of having those not gifted in leading small groups actually be the ones to apply.

our lives. Some are true but many are false. James Bryan Smith believes those thoughts determine not only who we are, but how we live.

[Infuse: Jonah](#) Now available! God calls an unlikely prophet, Jonah to preach to an unlikely, enemy people. Jonah doesn't want anything to do with them, but God has other plans. [Download the free leader's notes for this study](#) (.pdf, 10 pp., .19 MB)

[Discover Life](#) work great for **men's groups!** The studies explore what God's Word says about today's key issues and encourage small group members to follow Christ.

## Save the Date

**November 4-5, 2010**  
*Discipleship/Small Group*

**Featuring:** [James Bryan Smith](#)

**Partners:** Reformed Church, Christian Reformed Home Missions, Calvin College and The Journey

**Event will be located at Calvin Seminary and simulcast to eight other locations around the US and Canada**

**Cost :**

**Calvin Seminary Location:**

\$65.00 per person, early bird price of \$55.00.

**Simulcast location:**

\$35.00 per person, early bird price of \$30.00

**Watch for more details about simulcast events in your area!**

What does work? One idea that seems to be most effective is to have a group of two or three people who work together on recruitment. This allows for a variety of personality types to be identified as those with good qualities for small group leadership. These types include:

- one who demonstrates a desire to follow Jesus
- one who doesn't need to be the center of attention or project an image of knowing it all
- one who listens well and thinks about follow up questions
- one who is willing to ask for help from others

Once potential leaders have been identified, take them out for coffee or a meal. Present the opportunity and identify the qualities you see in them that might make them effective small group leaders.

It is also essential that you present a vision for the purpose small groups serve in your church. Experience seems to indicate that the more important the role of small groups is in your church, the more seriously people will consider becoming part of the leadership. If it is a match they will know it. Invite them to take time to pray about the opportunity to serve. Do not manipulate with guilt or false praise; twisted arms can produce leaders who can twist groups into strange shapes. Above all, commit this process to prayer. Ask God for discernment and courage. Then trust that He will provide the leaders who are willing and gifted.

- Pastor Tom Draayer  
Ministry Developer – Central US

## Coffee Break Story



Forty years ago, Coffee Break began in a Chicago suburb for the purpose of introducing women to the Bible. Many women and their children have come to know Jesus through learning to read the Bible in Coffee Break.

Today, the Coffee Break method is introducing men and women to Jesus in China, Korea, Canada and the United States. New plans are being made to share Coffee Break methods with people in Brazil, Mozambique, South Africa and beyond. It is no longer our mother's Coffee Break.

This might seem like a silly question, but what is Coffee Break? Coffee Break is a method where the Bible is the primary evangelism tool in a small group setting. The Discover Your Bible method is a form of inductive Bible study. It begins with a simple set of questions that people can prepare in advance. The questions help people of all levels of Bible knowledge or experience to process what the words say and mean. In the group, the members discuss their responses to the questions and reactions to the text. The leader, with the training and the leading of the Holy Spirit, asks additional questions to help members probe further into the passage. They discuss what it says and means, but also what it means personally for each participant. The key components of the Discover Your Bible method are direct study of the Bible, simple questions about the passages and a spiritually sensitive leader who points people towards Jesus.

What are the results of this method of study? People learn to read the Bible for themselves, and people all over the world are accepting Jesus as their Lord because they learn who he is through their study of the scriptures. In addition, through the Discover Your Bible method, people are disciplined, and leaders grow in their Bible knowledge and the ability to disciple others.

The wave of interest in the Discover Your Bible method is growing. In May 2010, Coffee Break will be introduced in Indonesia, and in May a woman from Dubai will receive Coffee Break training with others in Zillah, Washington. This new leader plans to bring Coffee Break to her home in Dubai. In June, Coffee Break methods will be presented at the [World Alliance of Reformed Churches](#) meeting at Calvin College, in Grand Rapids.

From a suburb of Chicago, God has used Coffee Break, first in North America, but now in many parts of the world. It has become a global mission strategy! When you think of Coffee Break, think of it through the eyes of Korean, Chinese and other friends from around the world. Be challenged by them to consider how you might use the Discover Your Bible method in your community. Request training for your leaders by contacting Irene at: [smallgroups@crcna.org](mailto:smallgroups@crcna.org) or call 1-888-644-0814

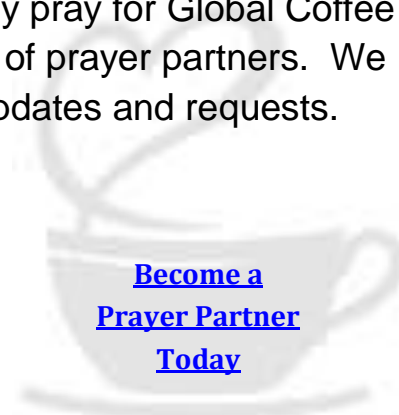
- Sam Huizenga  
Ministry Developer Coach

## Join others in praying for Global Coffee Break!

We dream of **1000 prayer partners** who will regularly pray for Global Coffee Break. When you sign up, we will add you to the list of prayer partners. We will keep you informed by emailing monthly prayer updates and requests.

Thank you for your support,

Sam Huizenga  
CRC Home Missions



[Become a  
Prayer Partner  
Today](#)

Or visit: [www.crhm.org/smallgroups](http://www.crhm.org/smallgroups)