



SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES:

SAFE GROUP: everyone can be real, open, and honest with their struggles and victories.

CONFIDENTIALITY: What is said in the group stays in the group.

LISTEN: really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

PAUSE: Give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

NO "CROSS TALK": Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

NO FIXING: We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement; speak truth, and point to Jesus.

NO RESCUING: When people are sharing something deeply personal resist the temptation to rescue them by giving advice. This will often cause them to stop sharing.

SHARING: Be sensitive about the amount of time you share.

BE SELF-AWARE: Be self-aware of how you are personally effecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

USE "I" STATEMENTS: It's easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Try to use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "us", "we", etc.

CONFLICT: When conflict or sin issues arise, we want to make sure that we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues.

Small Group Evening Schedule:

10min - Hangout time

10min - Welcome, Opening Prayer, Group Guidelines, Announcements

10min - Follow-up discussion about Sunday's Sermon

- What is one thing you learned? What challenged you?

40min - **Storying through scripture:**

We learned this week about the power of a strategic plan when it comes to our holy ambition. Pastor Tim showed us what it looks like to make a plan to move from a "current reality" to an "ideal future." This can be for any area of our life. Today, you will again look at Nehemiah's response to what he sees in Jerusalem.

5min - Instructions for "storying" of scripture: "Storying" is taking a passage of scripture or a story in scripture and retelling it in your own words. The story is meant to be in the flavor of the individual and should be easy to tell. The rest of the group will pay attention and make sure that the individual does a good job covering the entirety of the story.

Then the group leader or someone in the group "rebuilds" or recaps the story with the rest of the group making sure to fill in gaps and add perspective. Rebuild the story and have everyone participate using questions like "What happened first?", "Then what happened?" until you get through the story together.

SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 2:11-20

HEAD, HEART, & HAND QUESTIONS:

Who are the main characters in this passage/story? List all of them.

What did each of them do in this passage? What were their actions and attitudes? _____

How did Nehemiah act or respond to the people and situation?

What action or idea in this passage made the most impact on you?

READ James 2:14-18

Explain what James is saying about the connection between our faith and our actions: _____

HOMEWORK: What area do you need to create a "current reality" and "ideal future" chart for?

10min - Share prayer requests & pray.

(one person write requests and email/text to the rest of the group)