

Small Group Announcement - “Right now, some people in your life are far away from God. What if you took the risk to pull together an informal, non-threatening gathering at a coffee shop where seeking friends could raise their questions about Christianity?”

Join us on March 8th as Garry Poole, from Willow Creek Community Church, one of America largest churches, equips us to reach our city with the love of Jesus Christ in a revolutionary way.”

Garry has been Willow Creek’s key evangelism leader since 1992, and is widely recognized as the nation’s leading innovator in reaching spiritual seekers through informal discussion forums. Passionate about impacting people for Christ, Garry and his team have trained thousands of facilitators to effectively assemble gatherings for spiritual seekers to explore biblical truths in their own settings. His award-winning book, *Seeker Small Groups*, provides a detailed blueprint for engaging spiritual seekers in life-changing conversations. Garry is also the author of *The Complete Book of Questions*, primary author of the *Tough Questions* series, and co-author of *Experiencing the Passion of Jesus*.

For more information contact Keith Twigg at keith.twigg@therocksandiego.org

For all other Rock events, please go <http://www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/>.

MINISTRY PRAYER REQUESTS

As “small groupies,” you are the heart and soul of this ministry--who better than you to lift up the Small Group Ministry in prayer? So, it’s up to you, you can spend time in your small group praying for these things (weekly or occasionally), or you can pray during the week on your own time. And if you’d like to be added to our Pastor’s Prayer Team, just let us know. Mark Collins, the Small Group Pastor, would love your prayers! We send out a monthly email of his personal and ministry prayer requests. Just contact Andy Rodgers at andy.rodgers@therocksandiego.org. May God work through your prayers mightily!

Reaching the Lost: Is your group looking for a great outreach opportunity? Ken Davis from Lifeline Ministries would love to help your group get out of the four walls of your home. You can contact Ken at 619-861-2550

Current Small Group Leaders/Small Groups: Pray that all of our Small Group leaders and group members develop personal accountability and become a part of the Rock ARMY.

Potential Small Group Leaders: Pray that are current leaders continue to give their ministry away and develop future leaders to reach their full potential in Jesus.

Small Group Staff: Pray that God gives us the favor and wisdom to rebuild the Small Group team ask Him to order our steps in every decision we make.

The Rock Body: Pray that the people of the Rock may a commitment to join the Rock ARMY.

MEMORY VERSE

Memory verse: Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – TRANSFORMATION ACCOUNTABILITY

What is Accountability and Why do we need it?

Let's begin our study today by discussing a "no duh" fact. If you have a teenager you're familiar with this kind of fact; it's the kind of brilliant and profound statement to which your child responds, "No duh, Dad." So here goes: Most Christians are aware of their need to grow. That seems simple enough right? But herein lies the problem, when push comes to shove this growth stuff is a little harder than it looks. Last week we discussed the true nature of spirituality and what it truly looks like. Over the next four weeks we'll look at some pathways to get you there. The bible depicts Solomon as one of the wisest men who ever lived, listen what he said about the nature of true friendship and accountability:

Two are better than one,
Because they have a good return for their work;
If one falls down, his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

This passage outlines the advantages of walking in a partnership with another. Solomon says a friendless person is one to be pitied. One thing's for sure the Bible says that the person who tries to embark on this journey alone will be missing out. In fact, the truth is that all of us need a spiritual running partner to help us see the difference between what we say we believe and how we actually live.

These kinds of close, accountable relationships are built on the foundation of trust. Developing trust is a slow process and it takes time to develop and grow. As people meet together to share, they begin to establish a rapport with one another. Here are three important ingredients to develop and deepen trust in a relationship:

- Active listening, James 1:19 says, "My dear brothers take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."
- A non-judgmental attitude is another essential element. Remember we can be accepting of an individual while being discerning of the situation. Matthew 7:1-2 says, "Do not judge others or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the same measure you use. It will be measured to you."
- Caring for each other is also essential. 1 John 4:21 says, "And he has given us this command, Whoever loves God must also love his brother."

Therefore, the more you read the bible the more you'll come to realize that we're better together, so much so that God wants you to get to know Him through the strengths and weaknesses of other people. Only then can we say that we are imitators of Christ.

Getting Started

1. The Bible speaks about a “friend closer to you than a brother,” if you were looking for a friend like that what are some attributes and character qualities you’d look for?
2. Can you describe a time when you needed love and support from a friend but found yourself alone? What happened?

Digging Deeper

I don’t know about you, but the older I get the harder it is to make true friends. Friends who are willing to open their lives to me and in turn share allowing me to share my inner life with them. Maybe that’s because it easier to go about my everyday life doing my job and collecting things rather than building real relationships with people. Yet there’s one thing I’ve learned: True biblical community is about finding people to help me grow and being the kind of person that helps others to grow.

3. Read Proverbs 6:16-19. What would happen in our lives if we surrounded ourselves with people who exhibit these kinds of behaviors? Are you susceptible to any of these?
 - a. Can you think of times in your life when being with the wrong company hurt you? What happened?
 - b. Can you think of times when the right company benefited you? What happened?
4. Throughout the pages of Scripture, God’s Word speaks about the character qualities and commitments necessary to bring to an effective accountability relationship. Read 1 Timothy 1:5; Proverbs 27:17, 6; Jeremiah 17:9 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What is the role of vulnerability and teachability in the heart of someone who wants to enter an accountability relationship?
5. Read James 5:16; Ephesians 4:15; 1Samuel 20:4; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. How do traits like honesty, accessibility, trustworthiness, empathy, and compassion fit into an “iron sharpening iron” relationship?
 - a. Which of these traits do you possess in good measure? Which of these will be hardest for you to live out?
 - b. When you think of words such as: vulnerability, teachability, honesty, accessibility, trustworthiness, empathy, good listening skills, and non-judgmental attitude, what person(s) in your group come to mind?
 - c. What role does affirmation play in true biblical friendship?
6. Read Proverbs 27:6 and Galatians 6:1-2. What does it mean to lovingly confront a brother or sister in Christ? How do you respond when you’re confronted? How does the method of confrontation affect the result?
 - Some tips on biblical confrontation: keep a humble attitude; be a support through the change; work from strengths to weaknesses and pray before revealing the truth.

Bringing it Home

So where do you go from here? If you believe that God is calling you to seek out an accountability relationship in your life here are some next steps to help you find an accountability friend:

- Right now, begin by praying for God to reveal the person.
- Consider the possibilities: small group members, close friends, a Christian man or woman you respect (remember men with men, women with women). Maybe God has brought a person in your life that has had or is facing similar circumstances that you're facing.
- Invite this person to lunch, and talk about the possibilities while getting to know one another more deeply.
- Be patient, developing an accountability partner takes time and intentional effort.
- Start by praying for each other, and see where the Lord leads!
- If possible establish a set time where you can meet together.

Consider the following Rock ARMY 12 questions for your discussion times:

1. Have you been humbly obedient to the voice of God this week?
2. Describe what God is teaching you in your small group?
3. Are there inappropriate secrets in your life you would like to discuss?
4. Whose salvation are you actively pursuing and how?
5. Describe obstacles you face in leading this person to Christ.
6. Did you do anything this week that would discredit your witness to Christ?
7. How are you using your spiritual gifts to serve others?
8. Is the focus of your serving consistent with God's design for your life?
9. In what ways is your serving motivated out of your current study of God's Word?
10. Do you acknowledge that God has trusted you with all of your resources?
11. Are you honoring God with "Yo money?" Tithe? Offerings? Sacrificial giving?
12. Have you been truthful in this conversation and relationship?