

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Developing Leaders for Small Groups

Episode 98

Practical Tips for Effective, Multiplying Groups

In this episode, Tony Morgan interviews Chris Surratt. Chris is an author, a ministry consultant at The Unstuck Group, and the Discipleship & Small Groups Specialist at Lifeway Christian Resources. This is a conversation with practical tips for how you can equip group leaders to build effective, multiplying small groups.

Home-Based Groups Work

- The Unstuck Group's data is showing one of the key differences between healthy growing and declining churches is that healthier churches have home-based groups and it's one of the primary ministries of the church.
- There's something about building community in somebody's home that's a little bit easier than a classroom.
- *"Most people are looking for community; they're looking to get connected with somebody else. And small groups do that really well. Serving teams do that to some degree, but it usually that ends when the service ends."* -- Chris Surratt

Multiplying Is Key to Healthy Groups

- Group leaders shouldn't only be focused on the people already in their living rooms; they need to understand the goal is to expand and multiply disciples.
- Multiplication is the element most commonly left out of a churches' small group strategies.
- We tend to use negative language unintentionally when we talk about multiplying groups. We'll say split or divide—but that's not really what we're doing.
- *"The reason for multiplication goes back to creating disciples. If you look at II Timothy 2:2, Paul lays out four generations of disciples in that one verse. If we're going to create generations of disciples, the best way that we're going to do that is by creating new small groups."* -- Chris Surratt
- The best way to create new groups is to raise up leaders. If you're raising up a leader in your group, you are discipling them. From there you can either send them out to start a new group or let them take the existing group. And then the original leader, as the disciple maker, steps out to start another new group.

Consistency & Cohesion

- Consistency is one of the main group killers. Groups that don't meet consistently, or that cancel a lot, or that are constantly switching the meeting times or locations rarely make it. After a while, people will just give up.
- When you're coaching your leaders, remind them that joining a small group is not easy. Most people don't have a lot of time. Asking somebody to give up another two hours of the week and go to a small group is a big ask.
- It's important that when groups launch, you set the right expectations up front.
- *"When my group launches, every semester we have a group covenant we lay out that explains, 'This is when we're going to meet, and we're going to have childcare or not have childcare. You guys are going to be responsible for bringing food or not bringing food. If you're going to miss or be inconsistent, this may not be this semester to jump in.' All of these are laid out in a document."*
-- Chris Surratt

Next Steps

- Check out *Leading Small Groups* by Chris Surratt.
- Develop training for your small group leaders based around each section of the book.

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