

ADA BIBLE SMALL GROUPS

LAUNCHING WELL

ADA BIBLE CHURCH

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Introduction

Welcome to the Ada Bible Church small groups study called **Launching Well**. We designed this study specifically for our small groups at Ada Bible, and it will help your small group get off to the best start.

Over your next six times together, this study will guide you through some very important small group experiences to set a strong foundation for your group. In your small group, you will:

1. Share Life.

A huge part of this study is getting to know the people in your group and sharing life. During weeks 3-4, each person will share his or her story in a fun, profound and guided way.

2. Pursue God.

As you discuss the weekend sermon, you will have life-giving conversations to help root the incredible truths of God's Word deeper in your daily life.

3. Invest In Others.

Your small group will challenge each other as you engage with the world around you. Learn how investing in others is a natural progression in the walk of faith.

We know small groups can change lives. Whether this is your first small group or you've done small groups for years, we're excited you've joined us for **Launching Well**.

Praying for you and your small group,
The Small Groups Team

SESSION 1:
SHARE LIFE



SESSION 1: SHARE LIFE

CIRCLE BACK

At Group Launch, we asked you to :

- Be There
- Be Engaged
- Be Yourself

Why are these three so important to your group going forward?

SHARE LIFE

God created us for relationship. We can grow and do as God intends when we have a healthy relationship with God and those around us. Small groups help us love God and love others better.

Jesus said,

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35

We are not meant to do life alone. As Jesus' disciples, we are to love each other by sharing life and building healthy relationships. Here are three critical ways we can **Share Life** in a small group environment.

SESSION 1: SHARE LIFE

Safe Environment

Trust is a big deal. We all desire to have a place where we can safely share life's joys and struggles. Take a few minutes to review the group covenant on page 23.

What will make small group a safe place for you? What can the group do to make this a safe place?

Our Stories

We all have a desire to be both known and accepted. Our stories are what make us who we are—and we should hear, value and respect each person's story. In sessions 3–4, we will share our stories in a fun and easy way. We hope this continues because strong groups never stop sharing parts of their story with each other.

Share a piece of your story by describing a favorite summer childhood memory in two or three sentences.

Care

Sharing life means caring for others. We want small group to be a place where we pray for, encourage, challenge and serve one another. As we step into each other's lives, we should begin to think about tangible ways we can care for each other.

Prayer is a good first step in beginning to care for each other. What's one thing your small group can be praying for you in your journey with God?

SESSION 1: SHARE LIFE

Once you have all shared, have someone pray this prayer of blessing:

God, you are here with us, and have heard our prayer requests. We give each of these requests to you. May you bless each member of this group as we take our next step in our journey with you.

SERMON DISCUSSION

In your remaining time, return to the weekend service by discussing the questions from the Sermon Discussion Guide weekly email.

SESSION 2:
PURSUE GOD



SESSION 2: PURSUE GOD

CIRCLE BACK

What is one thing that stood out to you from the **Share Life** conversation last time?

PURSUE GOD

Small groups can play a big part in helping us love God better. Engaging in life-giving conversations around God's Word helps us practice our faith and grow.

God tells his people,

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 29:13-14 a

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being nonexistent and 10 being awesome, how would you rate your pursuit of God? Why?

Here are three critical ways we can **Pursue God** in a small group environment.

Biblical Truth

Healthy small groups center their discussions on biblical truth. We believe the Bible is God's Word. By learning more about what it says, we learn more about God and ourselves. At Ada Bible Church, we produce a weekly resource called the Sermon Discussion Guide. This guide helps small groups discuss the content of the weekend so they can apply it directly to their lives.

Typically, people remember about 20% of what they hear and 70% of what they discuss. Do you find these numbers true for you? How do you learn best?

SESSION 2: PURSUE GOD

What are the benefits of returning to the teaching from the weekend services in small group?

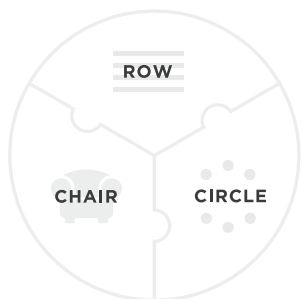
Formative Conversations

A small group is more than a Bible study and not just a social club. It is a place for conversations that not only inform but transform our lives. We don't just want to know something about the Bible—we need to let God's truths shape us. Our conversations can be formative when the truth we discuss leads us to a next step in following God.

What excites you about having formative conversations?
What intimidates you or what concerns do you have about a conversation like this?

Spiritual Practices

At Ada Bible, we have identified three environments of spiritual growth: The Row, The Circle and The Chair. What does each symbol represent? How do they connect to each other?



Healthy small groups model and encourage engagement in all three environments including The Chair. This group is a great place to discuss practices that are helpful to you in your Chair time, such as :

- Scripture memory
- Journaling
- Prayer
- Bible reading
- Times of solitude

What are some meaningful practices you've found to connect with God? What are some you would like to begin?

SESSIONS 3 & 4:
STORIES



SESSIONS 3 & 4: STORIES

CIRCLE BACK

What is one thing that stood out to you from the **Pursue God** conversation last time?

OUR STORIES

Healthy small groups hear, value and respect each other's stories. It is a major part of sharing life. Our stories make us who we are today—and help us know and understand each other.

Jesus says to one person he healed,

“Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” Mark 5:19

The next two times you gather, you will be sharing your stories with each other. Plan to have half your group share each week.

Each story should only take about 5-10 minutes so try not to get too sidetracked. We hope these weeks serve as a great way to get to know each other.

We are going to be using the 2x2 Method to tell our stories. The 2x2 Method invites you to answer two questions with two answers each conversationally.

SESSIONS 3 & 4: STORIES

THE 2X2 METHOD

Tell your story by spending just 2-3 minutes describing each of the following:

- **Two important people** who have made an impact in your spiritual life—past or present.
- **Two significant events/places** that have shaped your life.

Tips for telling your story:

- Sketch it out ahead of time. There is space below. Come prepared and stick with your plan.
- Stay on track. Try to keep moving. Avoid rabbit trails or side stories that pop into your head.
- Only share what you are comfortable with but prayerfully consider being a little more vulnerable than you naturally would be. Trust your group.

Tips for listening:

- Don't interrupt. Listen well.
- Keep each story confidential.
- Don't "story-steal." Don't interject your own stories into others.
- Ask questions, but wait until they are done sharing to ask.
- Affirm the person when they are done. Share what you love about their story or what you learned about them.
- When someone finishes their story, pray a prayer of blessing over them. It might be something like this:

God, thank you for _____. It is amazing to see how you have worked in their life. Thank you for bringing them to our group. May you bless them and draw them closer to you.

SESSIONS 3 & 4: STORIES

Sketching Out Your Story

People who have made an impact in your spiritual life—past or present.

1. _____

2. _____

Events/Places that have profoundly shaped your life.

1. _____

2. _____

SESSION 5:
**INVEST IN
OTHERS**



SESSION 5: INVEST IN OTHERS

CIRCLE BACK

How did it feel to share your story? What was your favorite part of listening to stories?

INVEST IN OTHERS

When healthy groups **Share Life** and **Pursue God**, often a natural outcome is to begin looking outside the group. When groups invest in others, they begin to engage the world around them.

Consider how the newest believers were challenged to **Invest in Others**:

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24–25

What could happen to a small group if they only **Share Life** and **Pursue God** and never look outside their circle?

SESSION 5: INVEST IN OTHERS

Here are three critical ways we can **Invest in Others** in a small group environment.

Service

Healthy small groups prioritize service. They serve both individually and together. When we understand that Jesus loved us and gave himself for us, it should cause us to want to serve others. Serving is a big part of being a disciple of Jesus because it shows we value the things Jesus valued.

Spend some time dreaming about how to serve the broken world around you together. Who needs some help from our group? What is one way our group can serve together this month?

Often groups have a serving champion. Who wants to take the lead on making it happen?

Relational Investments

At Ada Bible, we often say, "Everyone can't look out for everyone, but everyone can look out for someone."

Who are you looking out for?

How can our group invest relationally in the people we are looking out for so that we point them to Jesus?

SESSION 5: INVEST IN OTHERS

Group Growth

This group is a part of something bigger. As the group continues, routinely ask, “Who needs what we have?” Asking this question helps remind us that we may need to be willing to add members to our group.

Why is it important to see our group as a part of something bigger?

Spend some time discussing the possibility of adding someone to this group. Is there someone who needs what we have?

LOOKING AHEAD

Next time is the final week of the study. Let's celebrate! Take time today to schedule a fun get together. Maybe it's appetizers, desserts or a potluck meal. Perhaps the group meets at a favorite restaurant. Whatever the plans, be sure to celebrate what God has done so far through this group.

SERMON DISCUSSION

In your remaining time, return to the weekend service by discussing the questions from the Sermon Discussion Guide weekly email.

SESSION 6:
CELEBRATE



SESSION 6: CELEBRATE

CELEBRATE

Healthy small groups take time to enjoy life and celebrate what God has done. As you complete this initial group study, we want you to take some time to celebrate.

At the earliest Christian gatherings,

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
Acts 2:42

Sometime during your celebration, take a few minutes to:

- Talk about the highlights of your time as a group together.
- Review the expectations of a healthy group discussed at Group Launch. See page 23.
- Commit to the group going forward. Is there anything you want to change or add?
- Decide what’s next.

SMALL GROUP COVENANT

Small Group Covenant

There is a huge advantage to agreeing to a covenant with your group. It helps everyone understand the expectations we have for each other. A covenant helps eliminate disappointments and lack of understanding, as well as creates clarity. It really helps the whole group get on the same page.

Here are some basic points of a group covenant:

- 1. Be There:** Make it a priority to be there. Make the commitment, stay consistent, protect your calendar.
- 2. Be Ready:** Be ready for each small group meeting by doing any work needed ahead of time (if necessary).
- 3. Be Engaged:** Groups work best when everyone participates in the discussion by not only sharing, but also being a good listener.
- 4. Be Yourself:** Everyone has a story that is worth telling and hearing. Opening our lives to those we trust allows God to use our stories to provide encouragement, guidance and wisdom as we navigate through difficulties.
- 5. Be Kind:** There will be times we have different opinions. We will treat each other with respect even when we do not agree. We care for each other when we think before we speak, do not dominate the conversation and consider if what we say will hurt someone else.
- 6. Protect Confidences:** Groups are only safe if things can be shared in confidence. If we share something outside of the group, we breach the trust of the group. When we break confidentiality, it often leads to hurt feelings and ruined relationships.
- 7. Pray Often:** We show care when we pray with and for others. God draws near to us when we pray and draws our hearts toward others through prayer.

A young man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue polo shirt, is sitting on a brown leather couch. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a bright, out-of-focus interior space with large windows showing greenery outside.

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

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