



LIFE GROUPS

Small Group Ministries at TDM

God's Design For Your Life Series

Facilitator Guide

www.ourtdm.org

Designed for Relationship

This study explores five insights we can learn from David's life on God's Design
for Your Lives

1 Samuel 18:1, 3, 4 (NIV)

In building deep relationships we must leave our weapons, protection strategies, our masks, and quit faking "everything is okay."

We practice _____, _____ and
_____ to build deep
relationships.

The second step is letting people _____ our
lives.

1 Samuel 23:15–18 (NIV)

When giving counsel to a friend we need to help them _____
_____ and
_____ for their lives.

Small Group Guidelines

Discuss these guidelines after watching the video session. It's a good idea for every group to establish and commit to a set of values and expectations in order to build a community where you can be open and honest with each other. These guidelines will help you avoid unspoken and unmet expectations and agendas. Whether you're a new group or an experienced group, reviewing these values will help your group start and stay healthy. Add anything that you feel needs to be added for your group.

Our small group's purpose is to grow healthy lives by building a healthy small group community

A Healthy Small Group . . .

- Building relationships with others in the group
- Supporting each other's spiritual growth
- Serving each other in the group
- Inviting others to join the group
- Connecting with God through worshipping together

We agree to:

Clear Purpose

To grow healthy, spiritual lives by balancing the 5 Biblical purposes in our group.

Group Attendance

To give priority to the group meeting time. I will do my very best to attend every week and will call if I am going to be absent or late.

Safe Environment

To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved so we will be careful with being judgmental, giving quick answers, and offering our simple fixes to complex situations

Be Confidential

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group (unless someone states they are going to hurt someone else or themselves)

Conflict Resolution

To avoid gossip and to immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15-17, which begins with going directly to the person with whom we have an issue

Spiritual Health

To challenge and encourage one another to live a healthy and balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God.

Limit Our Freedom

To limit our freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol, drugs or tobacco during Small Group meetings or events to avoid causing a weaker believer to stumble and not showing up under the influence. (1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Romans 14:19-21)

Welcome Newcomers

To invite our friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers

Building Relationships

To get to know one another outside of the group time and pray for each other regularly

Shared Responsibility

To work with each other and develop group ownership as each one of us helps with group responsibilities (rotate homes, study facilitators, snacks, drinks, collect prayer requests, etc)

Building Unity

To work on building unity by focusing on what unites us, Jesus Christ and Scripture. To not participate in controversies that could cause division in our group. Avoid opinions in things that separate people based on opinions such as politics and conspiracies.

Maintain Group Integrity

We will use the material provided by TDM for all lessons. We understand that there are a lot of great materials out there. At the same time there are some erroneous teachings that could be very harmful to my group and could cause confusion among group members. Because of this we agree that we will not bring in other teachings, messages found on YouTube or social media or any other material that have not been pre-screened for accuracy by TDM's main leadership.

- **Starting time** _____ **Ending Time** _____

How will we handle child care?

.....

.....

.....

Group Time

Icebreaker

After you've discussed the guidelines for your group, have each person share for one minute about who was his or her childhood best friend and what made them friends?

Building relationships

Now it's time to share a bit more about your life story.

Share your life story in 5 minutes with your group. Focus on your whole life picture, not just a testimony. Talk about growing up, going to school, careers, meeting a significant other, your family, your hobbies, how you got connected to your church, and when you gave your life to Jesus. If your group is larger than eight people you should break into two or more groups of four to six people to make sure everybody has time to share.

If your group has been meeting for a while, share something your group doesn't know about you. It could be an embarrassing moment, a weird job, or memorable trip, or a dream that you have for your life.

Subgrouping

Each week we're going to break into smaller, three to five person groups for some deeper sharing. Try to divide along gender lines if you're a mixed gender group. This is a great way to make sure every person has time to share and provides an opportunity for more openness.

In your subgroup share one or two areas that God is working on in your life. Have the person most comfortable with sharing go first.

Don't try to offer a quick fix or snap judgment as people share. Let people be real about what's going on in their lives. If there's something that needs prayer, don't wait until the end of the meeting, pray right then and there for them.

Prayer requests

In your subgroup share any prayer requests you have. Don't worry whether the requests are big or little. God cares about all areas of our lives. Nothing is too big for him, and nothing is too small for him. Write your requests on the inside back cover of the study guide to keep track of what God does in the lives of your group members. Then go around your circle of people and pray for the person to your right. If you've never prayed out loud in front of people just use a simple one-sentence prayer like the one below.

“Father, Please provide a great job for Megan so her family doesn't lose their home. Amen.”

Wrapping Up

Having people you can count on is the first step towards living God's design for your life. Life certainly is not always easy, but just like David had Jonathan to encourage him when life was tough, we need people who will walk with us.

Divide responsibilities for the next four weeks of this study. Have group members bring snacks or a meal, host the group meeting at their home, reserve space for the group at your workplace, coffee shop or restaurant or facilitate the group time. The more people involved, the more the group becomes everyone's group, not just the facilitator's.

Designed to Grow Spiritually

David was, “a man after _____.”

David’s passion for _____ and continual
_____ marked
him as “a man after God’s Heart.”

Psalm 119:72–79 (NIV)

The goal of reading the Bible is to _____
_____ in each passage.

Psalm 142:1–7a (NIV)

Our prayers need to be _____ with God, not a religious exercise.

Then our prayers should transition to _____
_____, _____, and _____.

_____ connect, encourage one another, and keep each other accountable to God's purpose for their lives like Jonathan helped David.

Group Time

Icebreaker

What is your favorite Bible story? Why do you connect with that story?

Spiritual Health Assessment

The *Spiritual Health Assessment* is a great tool to help you measure how you are doing with five different areas of our spiritual lives: relationships, spiritual growth habits, serving, worship, and evangelism.

. You can find the paper version at the end of this packet. Simply answer the questions and then add up the scores for each area of spiritual health and identify where you are strong and weak. Don't compare your score to others! Some people give themselves higher scores while others reserve the highest scores only for Jesus. The assessment helps you identify your relative strengths and weaknesses.

Finally choose a next step in one or two of the areas. The first two weeks of this study are about relationships and growing spiritually so you may want to pick a next step in those areas.

Come back together as a group once you've completed your Health Assessment and picked one or two next steps.

Subgrouping

Break into smaller groups if your group is larger than eight. Breaking up along gender lines is always best if your group is a mixed gender group. Then discuss the following questions:

Which area did you score highest in the assessment?

In what way could you help serve in your group in that area? Be creative or pick one way to serve your group from the list below.

Fellowship

- Host or organize a group get together on a weekend.

Discipleship

- Facilitate one of the group meetings or one of the sections (Prayer, questions) for this study.

Ministry

- Help organize the group to serve a group member or someone else in need.

Evangelism

- Help organize a party for the end of this study to invite people who don't know Jesus to join your group

Worship

- Select a worship song to begin each group meeting. Play it on an instrument or watch it on YouTube®.

Which area of the Health Assessment did you score lowest? What is your next step in that area?

Spiritual partners

Now divide your group by gender into smaller groups of two or three. The other person or people in your group of two or three will be your Spiritual Partners for this study. Write their names below along with the next step each person has shared. You'll be checking in next week to encourage each other and see how you're doing with the next step.

Spiritual Partner(s)	Next Step

With your spiritual partners, share any prayer requests and write them down.

Take time to pray for each other. If you're nervous about praying out loud, use a simple one line prayer like,

“Father, please give Joe wisdom about whether or not to take the new job he was offered.”

Wrapping Up

If you truly want to grow spiritually in this small group, simply watching a DVD and talking about what you think about it won't grow you enough. Growth happens as the Holy Spirit works in and with you as you make a commitment in an area and stick to it. Spiritual partners are the most effective way to ensure you stick to your commitments. Even after this study ends, it is a good idea to plan time during the group meetings to connect with your spiritual partners to encourage each other.

The Spiritual Health Assessment is a powerful tool to help you spot areas of strength from which you can serve others and areas of weakness that you can work on. Healthy small groups take the assessment every four to six months to review how they're doing and establish new goals.

Next week

Next week we'll see how God used David's personality and experiences to prepare him to defeat his giants.

Designed to Serve Others

1 Samuel 17:25–27 (NIV)

God has given each of us a _____
according to his design for our life.

It's important to realize that our personality is God-given and that he wants us to live the way he created us.

1 Samuel 17:32–37 (NIV)

Our _____ prepare us for the impossibilities that we will face.

Your _____ equips you to _____ to others going through similar experiences.

1 Samuel 17: 37c, 40–50 (NIV)

Relying on _____ is the best way to get killed when facing our giants. We must depend on _.

Group Time

Icebreaker

Four different personality scales are listed below. Spend a minute sharing where you fit on each of the scales.

1234..... 5

Introverted

Extroverted

Energized from alone time

Energized from being with people

1234..... 5

Organized

Spontaneous

Prefer life to be orderly and routine

Prefer life to be varied and messy

1234..... 5

Thinker

Feeler

Base decision on "facts" not "feelings"

Base decisions on others feelings

1234..... 5

Big Picture

Details

Like dreaming about what could be

Enjoy figuring out specifics of the now

Discussion questions

- What do you like about your personality?
- What would you like to change about your personality?
- Is what you'd like to change something you think God would like you to change?

Subgrouping

Just like God used David's experience fighting lions and bears, he can use our scary and painful experiences to help us serve others.

Break into subgroups of three to five people (by gender if possible). In your subgroups, share for a few minutes about one of your personal painful experiences that God could use to help others.

Spiritual partner check in

Now partner up with your spiritual partner(s). Look back on your next step from the last lesson. Talk about how you did this past week. Is there any way you can help each other do better this week?

Choose a next step from this week's discussion. How are you going to use your personality or experiences to help serve others around you?

Share prayer requests and updates from a previous week's requests. Celebrate the answered prayers together. Then spend time praying for each other.

Wrapping Up

God has given us a personality and experiences that equip us to serve others inside and outside of our small group. Always be on the lookout for ways to serve each other in the group. Look for ways your group can serve together either in your community or at your church.

Next week

Next week we will examine David's highest priority, connecting with God through worship. We will take communion together so have someone in your group bring grape juice and crackers or bread to the group meeting.

Designed to Connect with God

David's connection with God enabled him to live out God's design for his life.

Psalm 27:4 (NIV)

When we _____ we connect with God.

Psalm 19:1 (NIV)

Psalm 145:8, 9, 13b–20 (NIV)

As you read God's Word, look for scriptures that _____
_____.

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. 2

Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

Remembering _____ in our
lives helps us connect with God.

Communion

_____ is an act of remembering what Jesus did for us on the cross.

“Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 1 Corinthians 11:23b–25 (NIV)

If we are to take the Lord’s Supper, we must be _____
_____.

We must _____ before we take communion.

Group Time

Icebreaker

In one minute, describe your favorite way and place to connect with God.

Communion

Pour a small amount of grape juice into enough cups for each person in your group to have one. Then break up crackers or bread so each person can have a small piece. Play the communion video provided with this session and take communion together as the pastor leads it.

Subgrouping

Spiritual partner check in

Break into your spiritual partner groups of two or three. Look back at your next step from last week. Talk about how you did since our last meeting. Is there any way you can help each other do better this week?

Choose a next step from this week's discussion. How will you spend time connecting with God?

Share prayer requests and updates from last week's requests. Celebrate the answered prayers together. Then spend time praying for each other.

Wrapping Up

We all need to live in connection with God so we can live out God's design for our life. Worship can be a part of every small group meeting. We can listen to or sing a song together, meditate on scripture, take communion, or spend an extended time praying together to intentionally connect with God. All of these activities invite him into the challenges we are facing and enable us to see that he is bigger than the giants we are facing.

Next week

Next week we're going to discuss how David shared stories of what God had done in his life.

Designed to Share Your Story

2 Samuel 22:17–20 NIV

Psalm 145:4–5a, 6, 11–12 NIV

Sharing the stories of what God has done helps strengthen our relationship with him, encourages others who know him and help people who don't know Jesus come to know him.

We need to share the _____
 _____ in our lives.

Sharing your story

Start with life before you knew Jesus.

Then share how and why you asked Jesus to be your savior.

End with telling the difference Jesus has made in your life, what means the most to you personally.

There should always be room for _____
 _____.

I can invite _____
to the group.

When someone joins your small group, _____
_____ of what God has done in your lives.

The future of this group

You've seen and experienced a taste of what God can do in your life through being in a small group. Having a group of people with whom you are doing life together is one of the most powerful keys to overcome life's challenges. With this study almost over, spend some time discussing the future of your group. Experiencing the power of community like David and the people who shared their stories on the video takes time and commitment. The same will be true for your small group.

Group Time

Icebreaker

When did you come to know Jesus? If you are not sure that you really know Jesus yet, take a minute or so to share your hopes for your time in this group/study.

Facilitator set a timer for 5 minutes so that group members can get a feel of what 5 minutes feels like. At the end of the 5 minutes, move on to the next person. Have group members practice sharing their testimonies with a timer throughout the week. Help them keep the most thrilling parts of their stories, and shave off everything else so they are able to share a 5 minute testimony of how they came to know Christ.

Share the five-minute version of your story of what God has done in your life. Use the outline provided in the video session if you're unsure about what to say. You may want to take notes on other group members' stories as they share what God has done in their lives.

Small Group Party!

Next week, during your group time or during the weekend, host a small group party! Whether you go out to eat or have a potluck dinner or hors d'oeuvre, enjoy food and invite others who could join your group. It's always good to focus on people who aren't religious and don't attend church. You might want to spend time sharing stories of what God has done in your lives through the study and your group; or you can wait until the next time they visit your group. Either way, make a connection with each other's friends and see what God does.

To help you identify people you can invite to the party spend five minutes identifying activities that you're currently involved in. Then write down a few names of people you connect with during those activities

Activities You Enjoy

(hobbies, sports, work, kids, clubs, etc.)

People to Invite

(friends, family, coworkers, etc.)

Now select one or two people on your list and invite them to your party next week. Share who you will invite with your group.

Spiritual Partner Check In

Break into your spiritual partner groups of two or three.

Look back on your next step from last week. Talk about how you did this past week. Is there a way you can help each other do better this week?

Choose a next step from this week's discussion. Who are you going to invite to your group party next week?

Share prayer requests and updates from previous prayer requests. Celebrate the answered prayers together. Then spend time praying for each other.

Wrapping Up

Inviting someone to one of your small group events could be critical in helping them come to know Jesus. Always be thinking of who you can invite to join you for your next group event.

When a new person joins your group, devote a meeting to sharing your stories. It helps build connections and can help them discover God's love, maybe for the first time.

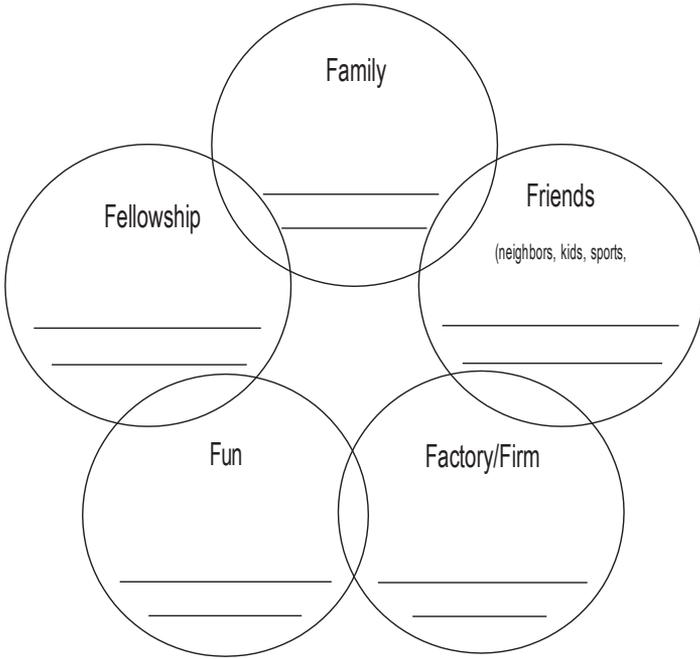
Next Week

Next week plan to invite other people to your group party who could benefit from being a part of your group. Remember to think about people who aren't religious and don't attend church. Even if they are unable to come to your group party, share the story of the difference Jesus has made in your life with those people.

Finding New Group Members

Use the circles below to help identify people you can invite to your small group.

1. Simply list one or two people in each circle
2. Prayerfully select one or two of the people from your list and tell your group about them.
3. Invite that person to your group meeting or group party. Over fifty percent of people invited to a small group say, "Yes."



Spiritual Health Assessment

The Spiritual Health Assessment is designed to help you evaluate how you are doing in each of God’s five purposes for your life, the five areas that this study focuses on, and create a plan to improve your weaknesses and serve in your strengths. The assessment is also available as the *Transform Me* app at www.SpiritualHealthApp.com if you prefer to do it on your mobile device.

Instructions

1. Rate yourself on each of the statements from 0 to 5, with zero meaning the statement doesn’t match you and five meaning it is a strong match.
2. After you have rated each statement, add the results by transferring your ratings from each of the statements to the scoring table on this page. Then add up the numbers in each column to find your score for each purpose.
3. Then use the Spiritual Health Plan on page 83 to create a plan to help you grow spiritually.

Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don’t drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups . . . Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it. 2 Corinthians 13:5 (MSG)

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The Spiritual Health Assessment and Spiritual Health Planner measures your health at a particular point in time. It is not a tool to see how you measure up against other people; nor is it a tool to see how close you are to perfection. We all know we'll never be perfect this side of heaven. Rather, this is a tool that will help you evaluate your spiritual health, and give you direction for developing a plan to bring God's five purposes for your life into balance.

	Doesn't Match	Partial Match	Strong Match
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Worship: Designed to Connect with God

How I live my life shows that God is my highest priority	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am dependent on God for every aspect of my life.....	0	1	2	3	4	5
There is nothing in my life that I have not surrendered to (kept back from) God ...	0	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly meditate on God's Word and invite Him into my everyday activities	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have a deep desire to spend time in God's presence	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am the same person in public that I am in private	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have an overwhelming sense of God's awesomeness even when						
I do not feel His presence	0	1	2	3	4	5

Worship Total _____

Fellowship: Designed for Relationships

I am genuinely open and honest about who I am.....	0	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly use my time and resources to care for the needs of others.....	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have a deep and meaningful connection with others in the church	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have an easy time receiving advice, encouragement, and correction from others	0	1	2	3	4	5
I gather regularly with a group of Christians for fellowship and accountability .	0	1	2	3	4	5
There is nothing in my relationships that is currently unresolved	0	1	2	3	4	5
There is nothing in the way I talk or act concerning others that I would not be willing to share with them in person	0	1	2	3	4	5

Fellowship Total _____

Discipleship: Designed to Grow Spiritually

I am quick to confess anything in my character that does not look like Christ	0	1	2	3	4	5
A review of how I use my finances shows that I think more about God and others than I do about myself.....	0	1	2	3	4	5
I allow God's Word to guide my thoughts and change my actions	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to praise God during difficult times and see them as opportunities to grow ..	0	1	2	3	4	5
I find I am making better choices to do what is right when I am tempted to do wrong .	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have found that prayer has changed how I view and interact with the world.	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am consistent in pursuing habits that are helping me model my life after Jesus	0	1	2	3	4	5

Discipleship Total _____

Doesn't Partial Strong
Match Match Match

Ministry: Designed to Serve Others

I regularly use my time to serve God	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am currently serving God with the gifts and passions he has given me	0	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly reflect on how my life can have an impact for the Kingdom of God	0	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy meeting the needs of others without expecting anything in return	0	1	2	3	4	5
I often think about ways to use my God-given gifts and abilities to please God .	0	1	2	3	4	5
Those closest to me would say my life is a reflection of giving more than receiving	0	1	2	3	4	5
I see my painful experiences as opportunities to minister to others	0	1	2	3	4	5

Ministry Total _____

Evangelism: Designed to Share the Story

I feel personal responsibility to share my faith with those who don't know Jesus	0	1	2	3	4	5
I look for opportunities to build relationships with those who don't know Jesus	0	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly pray for those who don't know Christ	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident in my ability to share my faith	0	1	2	3	4	5
My heart is full of passion to share the good news of the gospel with those who have never heard it	0	1	2	3	4	5
I find that my relationship with Jesus comes up frequently in my conversations with those who don't know him	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am open to going anywhere God calls me, in whatever capacity, to share my faith	0	1	2	3	4	5

Evangelism Total _____

Spiritual Health Plan

After completing the Spiritual Health Assessment, you can create a plan for growth in each of God's purposes. Start with Fellowship and Discipleship as those are the two areas we've discussed so far. Pick one next step for each of the areas. Then each week you can pick one more next step with your spiritual partner for that week's area.

Purpose	Next Step
Fellowship: Deepening my relationships with others.	
Discipleship: Growing to be like Christ.	
Ministry: Serving others with my God-given shape.	
Worship: Connecting with God	
Evangelism: Sharing the story of what God's done in my life.	