



A balanced small group strategy

by Steve Gladen

Saddleback added over 2,000 small groups during 40 Days of Purpose. If you'd like to try 40 Days of Purpose in your church, call 1-800-SADDLEBACK or visit www.PurposeDriven.com.

Small groups at Saddleback do five things that relate to each of the purposes of worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and missions. We believe it is critical to balance the five purposes within every small group.

Not that you would come to your small group each week and do 15 minutes on each purpose. But over the course of six months you could evaluate your group according to how much time you collectively spend on each purpose.

If it's not balanced, take one evening to work out how you - as a group - will balance the purposes of worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry and missions.

Now, what does each purpose look like in group life?

Fellowship

A small group helps people connect, moving its members from coffee and cookies to true community. I like to say it this way: my best friends don't have to ask my prayer requests because they already know the details of my life. This type of small group fellowship encourages the other group members to reveal themselves, and also discover the real you.

Discipleship

A small group helps people grow. Everyone is on a spiritual path full of twists and turns, forks in the road, dead ends, and pot holes. Group life helps you in your spiritual journey and supports you as you navigate the road.

If you're on a smooth part of your journey, your small group can rejoice with you. On the other hand, if you find you're *off-roading* or moving away from your Christian commitments, the group will help draw you back.

Service

A small group can help you discover your spiritual gifts, allowing you to discover your SHAPE and to get involved in the types of ministries God designed you for.

But service/ministry should also be a group effort as you collectively as a group, you want to serve the people in your church.

Evangelism

A small group will help you learn to share your faith. We encourage every small group at Saddleback to be involved in local missions and world missions.

For instance, small groups are a great way to encourage people to pray for their neighbors, and then through the small group, they can begin planning activities designed for fellowship with those neighbors.

Worship

Small Groups help people to surrender their lives to God, and we continually remind people at Saddleback that worship is more than just music or communion.. We want people to live out their lives as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1) fully surrendered to Christ.

In addition, group life helps you be transparent and real and life together provides the support you need as you walk out your commitment to Christ.

So, we teach that worship is praise, but we also teach that it involved daily action.

Small groups help real life change happen!

We added over 2,000 small groups during our **40 Days of Purpose** campaign. If you'd like to see this type of growth and maturity in your church, consider using **40 Days of Purpose** this fall. The campaign runs October 11 through November 23, but the registration deadline is July 1. For more information, call 1-800-SADDLEBACK or visit www.PurposeDriven.com.

-Pastors.com-

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