

Four Components of a Small Group

Your small group experience together can consist of four elements: connection, Bible discussion, prayer and/or worship, and mission. By participating in these four components together, the group members begin to fulfill their purpose: to know and worship God, connect in community, and participate in His mission in the world.

Plan your regular meetings around the four components. The **percentage of time** you spend on each element may flex from week to week. For example, the first couple of meetings, spend more time connecting so people can begin to build community, and do a shorter Bible discussion. Balance it out during the following group meetings. You can jot down your ideas using something like the planning grid at the end of this article.

Often the components overlap. For example, pray regularly for yet-to-believe friends—prayer and mission. Or spend a couple of weeks learning to communicate the gospel message—Bible discussion and mission.

Although you plan your regular meetings to include all four elements, once in a while, you can **spend an entire meeting time** on one or two. For example, you may prayer-walk around a group member's workplace—prayer and mission. Or make Christmas cookies together—connecting. Or pray for each person in the group—prayer. Or write your own psalms of worship to God—worship. Whether you plan those times or the Holy Spirit orchestrates them organically, pick up the other components the next time you meet.

What each component looks like:

Connection (suggested 20 minutes): **Build community through life sharing.**

- Ask a question that invites life sharing. Choose one from [“Relationship Builders”](#) or a personal sharing question that will lead into the Bible discussion topic.
- The facilitator answers first, modeling transparency.
- Share a snack during the conversation. Members can take turns bringing the snack.

Bible discussion (suggested 30 minutes): **Facilitate meaningful discussion and life application of Bible passages.**

- Choose a short passage. Ask discussable questions. Include questions that promote personal sharing from the Scripture. Bring the group to a specific action to apply the passage.
- Facilitate the discussion. Limit your own contributions so others can talk.
- See [“Build Your Own Bible Discussion”](#) and [“Leading An Effective Discussion.”](#)
- Use *Tools for Mentoring Bible Module*.

Prayer and/or worship (suggested 15-25 minutes): **Pray for each other's needs and/or worship Jesus.**

- Pray and/or worship in groups of 2 or 3 or as a whole group.
- Model and teach members how to minister to one another with the supernatural gifts of the Spirit.
- See [“Prayer Ideas for Small Groups”](#) and [“Worship Ideas for Small Groups.”](#)
- Use *Tools for Mentoring Prayer Module* and *Worship Module*.

Mission (various amounts of time): **Pray for those yet to believe, tell your story and the gospel, and meet practical needs.**

- Pray together for yet-to-believe co-workers, friends, and family. Pray for opportunities to tell your story or some aspect of the gospel.
- Practice telling your story and telling the gospel message.
- During the week, look for opportunities to tell your story or pray for people that may not know Jesus yet. Share with the group what happened.
- As a group, meet a practical need of someone that doesn't know Jesus yet, especially someone the group's been praying for. Or do something to assist a missionary. (Plan one per semester.)
- Use *Tools for Mentoring Evangelism Module* and *Missions Module*.

Idea Planning Grid

Date	Connection	Bible Discussion	Prayer/Worship	Mission
Sept. 10				
Sept. 17				
Sept. 24				
Oct. 1				