

Further Resources on Small Groups

Further reading and training is invaluable for developing small groups and developing as a leader especially in reflecting on how things are going and what could be done even better. Further reading is especially recommended for anyone who leads Bible studies or is responsible for making sure pastoral care happens. The following are some suggested books and/or resources:

Specific Reading on Small Groups

Home Groups by Steve and Mandy Briars (Authentic, 2007)

The sub-title of this book is 'the everything you need to know guide'. It might not quite live up to that but it certainly covers most things in about 150 pages. Well worth reading for home group leaders.

Iron Sharpens Iron by Orlando Saer (Christian Focus, 2010)

Not as comprehensive as *Home Groups* by Steve and Mandy Briars but particularly good how to lead the Bible study and manage the group.

There are many other books available but most cover much the same material as the book by Steve and Mandy Briars mentioned above. Books on small groups do not cover the practice of pastoral care or preparing a Bible study in any depth. The following books are suggested for these categories:

Reading on Bible Study Preparation for Small Groups

The books below will help readers understand the Bible better (absolutely essential when preparing a Bible study) but for specifics on how to prepare good questions for a group, see *Iron Sharpens Iron*, mentioned above.

- The ESV Study Bible, NIV Study Bible or NIV Life Application Study Bible
A good study Bible is almost essential in preparing a Bible study (unless you have access to a library of Bible commentaries). The three mentioned above are particularly recommended.
- The Bible Speaks Today commentary series (IVP)
If you are leading a Bible study through a particular book then this commentary series is especially useful. There are also books in the series on themes such as the cross or mission.
- *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* by Robert Plummer (Kregel, 2010)
This is a very accessible book on hermeneutics (the study of interpreting the Bible). It is aimed at first year Bible college level but is also very useful to anyone prepared to read more in depth to increase their effectiveness in preparing Bible studies. As with all books like this there may be areas where the reader has a different view to the author but he is generally very balanced.
- *Dig Deeper* by Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach (IVP, 2010)
This relatively short book on understanding the Bible (less than 200 pages) provides some useful tools for Bible study.

Pastoral Care in Small Groups

Most books on pastoral care are about one-to-one care which has been the predominant model in the Western church until recently. However the following is very helpful:

- *What Could I Say* by Peter Hicks (IVP, 2000)
This book provides an easy reference to many pastoral situations.

The pastoral care course available from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is also recommended for small group leaders or the person responsible for pastoral care in a small group. See www.presbyterianireland.org/boards/ct_pastoralcare.html for more details.

Worship in Small Groups

- *Distinctive Worship* by Andy Flanagan (Authentic Media, 2004) has a section at the end which gives plenty of ideas for worship which would lend themselves well to small group settings.
- *All the World is Singing* by Frank Fortunato (Authentic Media, 2006) has a collection of stories of how God is at work in worship from around the world. Many of these stories are very short and could be used to stretch the groups' imaginations about what God is doing globally. It also has a CD of songs and movie clips.
- *Voicing God's Psalms* by Calvin Seerveld (Eerdmans, 2005) has a CD of Calvin reading his own interpretation of each psalm.

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