

# FACILITATING A MEN'S GROUP ONLINE

Jesus Christ launched his divine plan to redeem mankind by making disciples out of a small group. He used that small group to create momentum and keep it going. The question, of course, is why would He do that? Why a small group?

Most meaningful change takes place in the context of relationships—men sharpening men with truth, encouragement, and commitment. **THANK YOU** for your willingness to be a part of this transformative time in the lives of your group members.

**“Never doubt the power of a small group of people to change the world. That’s about the only way it has ever happened in the past.”**

—Margaret Mead,  
Anthropologist

## YOUR ONLINE MEN'S GROUP: RECOMMENDED TOOLS

1. **Start by choosing a video conferencing platform** to meet together when you can't meet face-to-face. Our go-to tool for meetings is [Zoom](#).
  - Pros: The free version allows large groups to meet, set recurring meeting times, send calendar invites, use breakout rooms for smaller groups to talk or pray together, and more. With its easy-to-use interface and features, it may seem like the perfect solution to a simple problem.
2. **Then, consider creating a [Facebook Group](#)** to promote interaction amongst the men, take prayer requests, and share stories between group meetings.
  - Pros: It's FREE! Just about everyone on the planet already has a Facebook account, so that's one less thing for your guys to figure out, as most of them will already know how to use many of the features.

## YOUR ROLE AS FACILITATOR

In the case of these groups, your primary role is to help facilitate the groups—*not teach*. Your leadership will be geared toward steering discussion and making men **feel cared for and supported**.

We ask that you **call or text your group members each week**. This can be a short call that simply expresses, “I’m glad you’re in the group and I’ll see you Thursday,” for example. Calling each man helps him feel like a valued member of the group and encourages him to prioritize the weekly meeting.

It is up to you to set the tone for the group: **be authentic, enthusiastic and affirming**. Remember—a small group is many things, including a hospital for men with broken wings; make yours a safe place for men. Don’t put pressure on them to conform to certain behavior. Instead, simply show men Christ. Make sure group members know that anything mentioned during meetings is **confidential** and is not to leave the group.

It’s also important that you **honor the time** during your group meetings. Aim to start and end on time every week. Always thank group members for joining before they leave.

## THE FIRST MEETING

At your first group meeting, **start on time and open with prayer**. Have each man introduce himself; you may want to have a light-hearted icebreaker question prepared to help guys open up.

Consider asking each man to take a few minutes to **share briefly where he is on his spiritual journey**, and what he hopes to give and get out of the group study. Don't try to go too far too fast; be sensitive to men who may take longer to decide to share.

Continue with a discussion of the four-week GO men's study. Ask each group member to **watch that week's video PRIOR to the group meeting**. Have a weekly time set for group meetings to discuss the video topic and the discussion questions. Alternatively, you could watch the video together by having the host of the video conference sharing the video screen.

## LEADING EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION

Your goal for discussion: **Air time for every man every week**. Draw out the quiet man without making him feel uncomfortable. Sense his pace. If you have a man who talks too much, ask him privately to help you draw out the more reserved men.

**Don't talk more than 25% of the time.** If there is silence when you ask a question, don't try to fill the space. The weekly videos and devotions each have discussion questions in them. Use these to steer the direction of the group meeting.

**Ask open-ended questions.** For example, instead of asking, "Do any of you struggle with making good decisions?" ask "What kind of decisions do you find difficult, and why?" Encourage more than one person to answer a particular question with a statement such as, "Does anyone else have a thought about that?" **Affirm men's answers** and be authentic with your own answers.

**Thank you for volunteering your time and investing in your group members! You are an invaluable part of where our church is going and what we hope to accomplish in the lives of the men.**