

DIVIDED



**BECOMING UNITED
IN A DIVIDED WORLD**

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Tips To A Successful Group	3
Tips for Online Small Group	5
Part 1 DIVIDED: Becoming United in a Divided World "HOW TO DE-ESCALATE ANGER"	6
Part 2 DIVIDED: Becoming United in a Divided World "PEACEMAKERS"	18
Part 3 DIVIDED: Becoming United in a Divided World "SEPARATION OF CHURCH & HATE"	28
Part 4 DIVIDED: Becoming United in a Divided World "HOW TO AVOID ELECTION INFECTION"	40

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- 1. WELCOME NEW PEOPLE.** Take time to introduce new people.
- 2. START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
- 3. BE REAL, AUTHENTIC & TRANSPARENT ABOUT WEAKNESSES & STRUGGLES.** Some people in your group may be new to faith or new to small group often think there's a *right* way to answer discussion questions—or at least a few *wrong* things to say. So, they show up and listen in, but don't feel permission to say what's really on their minds. Set examples by sharing honest vulnerable answers. Sharing with a level of vulnerability sets the tone and gives permission for everyone—regardless of spiritual maturity—to respond authentically.
- 4. PLAN SOMETHING FUN.** Due to our current COVID-19 social distancing recommendation from the local government and CDC, we ask that any special and fun gatherings in person be postponed until further notice in order to safeguard the health and safety of everyone.
- 5. NO GUILT, NO SHAME.** This series is not meant to guilt or shame anyone into doing anything.

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

6. SILENCE CELL PHONES. As a courtesy to those who are sharing in your group, please try to stay off your phones unless for emergencies. It is okay with the exception of the use of your smartphone device for online meeting (Zoom).

7. BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE. Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.

8. MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY. Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by calling and/or texting your host.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT. Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." Nothing, nobody, never...Share *nothing, to nobody, never*" outside of the group.

10. TECHNOLOGY CAN BUILD REAL RELATIONSHIPS. Using a group texting app like GroupMe or WhatsApp makes it easier than ever to send quick logistical updates, share prayer requests, or just check in with someone mid-week. Connecting beyond your once weekly meeting communicates to your group member that *I see you and I'm thinking about you.*

11. AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH. Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.

TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

- 1. SEND OUT AN EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform (NHWW Small Group meets through Zoom.)
- 2. SEND OUT A REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting. You can do this by using text message and/or email.
- 3. ONCE ON THE CALL, START ON TIME.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time.
- 4. MUTING OF MICROPHONES.** Get familiar with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid outside noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
- 5. STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
- 6. DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your lap top PC or iPad device.
- 7. HOSTING AN SG MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. NHWW small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available weekly.
- 8. BREAK INTO SMALLER GROUPS.** For larger online groups on Zoom, it is best to break up into groups of 3-4 people during the discussion segment. Zoom has a feature that allows individuals to be grouped together in smaller clusters. This can increase more transparent conversations and provide more time for each person to join the conversation.

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BECOMING UNITED

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2. PEACEMAKERS

ICEBREAKER

If this is a new group or there are new people, please take a moment to **introduce yourselves**.



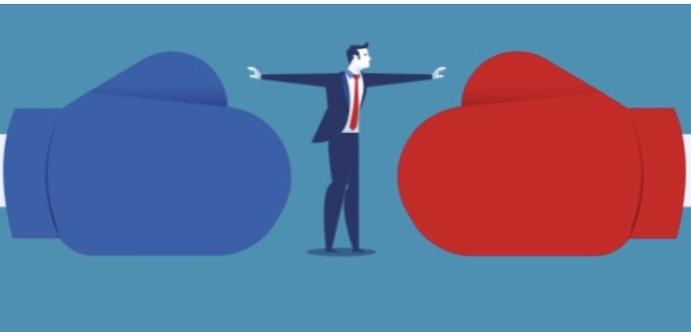
To start off your small group, briefly share your response to the following questions:

When did you learn to ride a bike for the very first time?

Share with your group.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Let's get a big picture of what we'll be learning today...



There are lots of things we learn at home. From riding a bike to playing basketball, or maybe surfing or cooking a great meal. Many of the lessons we learned were unintentional. By watching our parents be affectionate to each other—or not—we may gain some expectation about our own handling of relationships. One lesson that you learned that you may not even realize is how to handle conflict. Did you learn the right way? In this lesson, let's take a look at God's Word and discover how to be peacemakers in a divided world.

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH. Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.

Tip: CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT. Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: “*What is said in small group, stays in small group.*” Nothing, nobody, never...Share nothing, to nobody, never” outside of the group.

ONLINE Tip: SEND OUT A REMINDER DURING THE WEEK. Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting. You can do this by using text message and /or email.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) Jesus wants us to be peacemakers. In a world where we are more divided by our differences than united by our hearts, He has given us the task of making peace with each other. Here is what happens when we do that:

Those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.
James 3:18 (NLT)

The three most important lessons about peacemaking that we can learn are:

- How to de-escalate a conflict
- How to resolve a conflict
- How to reconcile after a conflict has strained or broken a relationship

Some of us are good at conflict, while others of us lack in this department. Some of us think we're good at resolving conflict, but maybe we aren't as good as we think we are. There are usually two types of people, those who embrace conflict and those who run from it. You could say it's "fight or flight".

When it comes to conflict, are you "fight" or "flight?" Do you shut up or shout out. Do you like to get in the middle of it and get it resolved right away? Or do you let it linger hoping it goes away on its own?

2.) The Bible gives us a roadmap on how to plant seeds of peace in our lives.

Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody.

Romans 12:18 (GNT)

This verse really has four parts, each one of them with its own application. In the next four questions, we'll look at these parts.

"Do everything possible..."

Whenever we face conflict, we are given an opportunity to do something. If we do nothing, we may not be making the best choice. Our reason for inaction could be that we are just too scared or frustrated to do anything.

Is there an unresolved conflict where you haven't done "everything possible" on your part to be at peace with someone? Is there someone you have pulled away from that you need to move towards to try to "do everything possible to be at peace with them? You don't need to share their name but share what you will do next to try to be at peace with them.

3.) "...on your part..."

When we face conflict, it's normal to point the finger of blame at the other person. But the wise thing to do is ask ourselves what role we may have played in the situation.

Search me, oh God, and know my heart, prove me and know my steps.

Psalm 139:23 (ABPE)

Ask God to show you what you might have done wrong. Then, own up to it. Ask forgiveness and commit to try to do better next time.

Think about the last time someone apologized to you for something they admitted they did wrong. How did it make them feel? How did it make you feel when they apologized? How might owning up to your own mistakes help make peace with others?

4.) "...to live in peace..."

What does it really mean to live in peace? Is it just the absence of conflict, or is there something more? How do we make peace when neither side wants to make the first move? Paul handled a lot of conflict in his days, and here's what he had to say about it.

Each one of you is part of the body of Christ, and you were chosen to live together in peace. So let the peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts.

Colossians 3:15 (CEV)

Another way to translate this is “let the peace of Christ be your referee.” Sometimes it feels like we need a ref to figure out our conflicts. As the family of God, we have Jesus to do just that!

What are some practical ways we can let Jesus be the referee in the midst of a conflict? (Examples, stop and pray, ask the Holy Spirit to help you control your reactions and to show you how to respond to the conflict, ask a trusted friend or family member to help you process, etc.)

5.) “...with everybody.”

Wait a minute! Everybody? Surely He doesn’t mean everybody. Each one of us can come up with at least one person we know that we just can’t get along with. Here’s how we should think about this:

Show respect for everyone. Love Christians everywhere. Fear God and honor the government.
1 Peter 2:17 (TLB)

Think about that person who you disagree with most. Now, how can you show them respect the next time you see them?

DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 1

SCRIPTURE...

Respect everyone , and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.
1 Peter 2:17 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 2

SCRIPTURE...

A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.
Proverbs 14:30 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it.
Psalm 34:14 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

It is never fun to be corrected. In fact, at the time it is always painful. But if we learn to obey by being corrected, we will do right and live at peace.
Hebrews 12:11 (CEV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.
Romans 5:1 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...



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