

## **1. Love God Above All Else**

***Matt. 22: 37***

Love the Lord in a passionate devotion expressed by worship and prayer, and by reading, studying, and meditating on His word with the goal of understanding, believing, and obeying. Our time together as a small group must reinforce the simplicity, centrality and supremacy of our devotion to Christ.

The next 4 stars point to ways that we are called to love our neighbor. These outline the kind of care to be given in and through our small groups. See ***John 21:15-17 and John 13:34***

## **2. Care and Nurture of One Another**

***Luke 4:18***

Love our neighbors by caring for and nurturing one another's hurts, needs, and personal growth edges. Our small groups must help God's people become fully empowered by the Holy Spirit and established in His love, acceptance and forgiveness.

## **3. Maturing and Development of Our Identity in Christ Col. 1:28**

Love our neighbors by encouraging them in their new identity:

1. Foundationally as sons and daughters of God.
2. In our unique roles and station in life, ( husband, wife, son, daughter, boss, employee, etc. ).
3. In understanding and growing up into our gifts and calling.

## **4. Outreach to the World Around Us**

***Luke 19:10***

Love our neighbor by helping one another become proactively involved in the lives of non-believers in order that we might win as many as possible. ***1Cor. 9:19.***

This begins with regular, specific, persevering prayer for those in your circle of influence, and then, as a group, making plans to work together to reach out to this group on a monthly (regular) basis.

## **5. Discipleship and Leadership**

***Development. 2 Tim. 2:2***

Love our neighbors by passing on the things we have learned to others who will in turn teach others also. This step occurs as group members relate one on one, developing intimate and trusting relationships where lessons learned from God's word and life's experiences can be passed on. This also involves identifying and developing other small group leaders at the formative stage of the group.



## ***Why is involvement in a small group important?***

***Whole Hearted Devotion***

Most often our greatest need is not for new revelation or for more information. Our greatest need is to be encouraged and inspired to do what we already know we are called to do!

The statement "*When all is said and done, more's been said than done*" is all too often true in much of church life. A small group can provide the environment where we can receive the needed encouragement to follow through on our commitment to whole heartedly follow the Lord.

***Friendships***

Who are your friends? Do you have people in your life that really know you? Who do you call when you are faced with difficulties, temptations, need council? For many people, even good church going people, having deep, open relationships are rare if existing at all. This shouldn't be! The body of Christ is designed to be an expression of God's love to his people and to the world around us. Joining yourself to a small group of like minded people is essential to become all that God intends us to be.

***Real Maturity, Real Love***

"I love God, it's people I can't stand", or, "I wouldn't mind church so much if it wasn't for the people". Ever heard something like that? Ever thought it? Such sentiment is not uncommon and for good reason! It's not easy to love people! And yet that is exactly what God has done and He invites us to follow in His steps.....*Love one another...as I have loved you.* That's what He said and you know what? When you put Him first and begin to learn His ways, loving people becomes the adventure of a lifetime. Our maturity may well be gauged by the way we have learned to love. To opt out on growing in love is to opt out on growing up. It may be easy to love people we see for only a few minutes a week or hardly know but the love we are called to share is deep, personal, giving, patient, kind, tells the truth, and never gives up. A small group is the perfect place to really grow up.

Our small group ministry here at Church on the Mountain is the way we have chosen to live out our beliefs together. Connecting to our church life really begins when you find your way into one of our family groups.

We must be willing to evaluate, to look hard at our lifestyles, and see if they are being faithful and true to our stated beliefs. The body of Christ was God's idea and much of his grace and wisdom is often withheld from us until we specifically connect to that body. The varying gifts and perspectives present in a small group can help us see God's truths from a broader perspective. We will learn to look at ourselves from God's point of view in ever increasing dimensions. In this atmosphere we more deeply assess our lives and actions, finding greater affirmation in our new identity as believers and encouragement to run the race set before us.

Small circles of intimate friends motivated by love to see each other grow up into Him and to accomplish the great commission is what the "5 Star" small group model is all about.

### How about you? Are you ready for the challenge of a lifetime?

### *What does it mean to be a part of a "5 Star" small group?*

Entering a "5 Star" group is an outward commitment to the values expressed in the "5 Star" outline. It is a way that we can move toward maturity individually and as a church body and fulfill our responsibility to the great commission (Go in to all the world....).

This is no small commitment. In order for the Lord to fulfill this vision in us we may need to let go of other things in our lives or ministries. This is OK, even expected. There are, no doubt, many ways to mature in God's plan for our lives. The dynamic of a passionate relationship with the Lord, committed

relationships, and the vision of reaching the lost are the key elements of the maturity in Christ we are pursuing.

Our plan and method of doing this is simple.

We must:

1. Commit to weekly meetings with specific people where healthy loving relationships can grow.
2. Commit to pray for one another's growth and care.
3. Commit to practically working out these relationships by prioritizing our time and energy toward that end.
4. Hold the vision of winning the lost high in our lifestyle by praying for the people in our circles of influence with regularity, and planning at least monthly to reach out to this group in an appropriate fashion.
5. Prepare in advance to become actively involved in small group life, i.e. no spectators.
6. Prepare to multiply the group in an appropriate period of time through reaching the lost in our world. This will mean giving...giving relationships away, giving time away, giving security away, all for the purpose of winning the lost.
7. Prepare to allow a group that is not growing/not reaching the lost and/or not in the process of duplicating in a reasonable amount of time to end and committing to start over again under new circumstances.



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## *The Five Star Small Group Model*



*Loving God*



*Caring for One  
Another*



*Maturing*



*Reaching Out*



*Discipling*

### **Matt. 22:37-38**

*Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."*