

Small Group Meeting Guidelines

(Suggested agenda for creating a consistent & balanced group meeting in 90 minutes)

Study for the week of: **Jan 01-07, 2012**

The Office : Finding God in a Dysfunctional Workplace - The Gossip

Getting Started: (15 minutes)

People arrive (meet & greet time)

Icebreaker: (5 minutes)

Think of a time when someone spoke positively or negatively about you to someone else without your prior consent? How did that make you feel? How did it affect your relationship with that person? What was the end result?

Gather The Group for Announcements: (5 minutes)

1) Welcome new people, 2) Pass around the roster and 3) Announce group plans for upcoming meetings or socials

Worship: (5 minutes)

Options: 1) Use a CD player and play two songs, 2) Ask someone to lead with guitar, 3) Read a hymn
4) Do a meditative scripture reading and/or 5) Ask people to share something for which they are thankful

Discussion & Application: (30 minutes)

We experience many types of dysfunctional aspects in our place of work that tears down communication and productivity. God's Word gives us wisdom to help us in our personal walk with Him and also in our decisions and actions with others in the workplace. In today's lesson we study how to identify Gossip as a divisive and damaging tool and discuss ways to deal with it as well as ways to avoid it.

Read Proverbs 16:7

Share: Reflect on your working relationships as you read this verse. How does an understanding of God's pleasure in your decisions and actions in the workplace reinforce your confidence and ability to work effectively with others?

Read Proverbs 16:27-28; 18:8 and 26:20

Share: How do these verses help you remember what Gossip does to relationships? What are some descriptive references (e.g., scorching fire) that you observe in these passages? How do you see Gossip affecting your relationships with others in the context of these passages?

Thought questions: Do you know someone who is speaking negatively about you or others in your workplace? How has Gossip affected your working relationships and how did that make you feel? How could spreading Gossip affect your career?

Read Proverbs 12:17-19, 22 and 16:13, 24

Share: How do these verses help you remember what God says to do concerning Gossip? How does knowing that God's presence surrounds you in times where you might be tempted to listen to or share Gossip?

Thought questions: How do these verses provide comfort to you when you have learned of someone spreading Gossip about you? How do these verses provide strength to do the 'right' thing?

Share: In what constructive ways can you contribute to some or all of the following characteristics of Healthy Communication in your relationships with others? Confidentiality and Affirmation, Honesty, Constructive Words, Clear and Direct Communication.

Share: What are some ways that you can reduce or avoid some or all of the characteristics of Unhealthy Communication that you see in relationships: Gossip/Slander, Dishonesty, Destructive Words, Unclear and Indirect Communication.

Thought question: What have you taken away from today's discussion that would be of help to you in your job this week?