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# Multiplying House Churches

## Lesson 3: House church planning workshop

Before we move into more topics related to multiplying house churches, we're going to take some time to begin shaping our new house church using some of the ideas and tools we've learned so far. By now, you might already have some dreams and visions about your new church, so we want to get those ideas on paper to design some rhythms and practices, but also taking into consideration the heart of your group and the environment that will draw people into this beautiful lifestyle of relational intimacy with Christ and his church.

### **Pray for your house church**

Before we begin, take some time to invite the Holy Spirit into your time of thinking and planning. Ask the Spirit how he sees your group and what ideas he has in store for you. After you pray, spend a few minutes, just being silent before the Lord and listen for his voice. Write any ideas or thoughts that come to your mind, however seemingly related or unrelated. Then take a few minutes to share these ideas with your group.

### **Plan your house church**

Below is a list of questions to discuss with your group about your new house church. If at any point you cannot agree or the ideas just aren't flowing, simply stop, pray, and be silent for a few minutes. See what the Holy Spirit has to say.

1. Consider how you will engage in corporate worship (scripture readings, praise reports, prayer, song, etc.).
2. We see in the first century that gatherings centered around a simple meal and the Lord's Supper. Discuss what this might look like for your group. How could the group share in the responsibilities for this part of the gathering? What will devotion to breaking bread together look like for your group?
3. Consider the practice of self-examination during the Lord's Supper, both its purpose and its practices. How could you implement this practice in your time of remembering the Lord? This practice can be done silently, corporately, or in small groups and can easily lead into a time of personal sharing, confession, and praying for one another's inner needs.
4. Discuss various options for learning the Word of God together as a group. Consider The Kite Method or Discovery Bible Studies (see The Kite Method, which also includes Discovery Bible Study questions), methods that allow for group sharing and revelation. Explore the idea of studying themes, reading books of the Bible together, or using the Discovery Bible app. Create a study plan for the next several weeks. You can also incorporate times where everyone shares a revelation, a word of instruction, or something from their own times with God that week. What will devotion to the Word of God look like for your group?
5. Discuss how you will incorporate prayer and worship into your meeting, your weekly schedule, or your individual times together. What will devotion to prayer look like for your group?
6. Consider how you will handle the giving of financial gifts within the house church, among a body of house churches, or even churches outside your fellowship that may be in need. What will caring for the church and the needs of others look like in your group?

7. Explore how members of your group can use their spiritual and physical gifts to contribute to the church, including food and communion preparation, worship and song, facilitating Bible discussions, praying one for another, administering offerings, or something else.
8. What will commitment to the gatherings look like? How often will you meet for worship, prayer, and/or teaching?
9. Consider how your group will encourage one another during the week outside weekly gatherings (beyond texting), i.e. prayer / discipling partners or groups, one-on-one phone calls, coffee times, meals, outreach, or just doing life together. Discuss what it means to care genuinely for each other and what weekly and monthly rhythms would be most encouraging and strengthening.
10. Consider how often your group will meet for planning and assessing the group's growing needs.
11. Work through some of the practical aspects of your gatherings:
  - a. What time will you meet and where? Will one person host or can others host as well?
  - b. Create a schedule for your meetings. Will you do the same thing each week or will it vary? Consider the meeting itself as well as the weekly and monthly schedule.
  - c. How will you communicate with your group (i.e. email, text, Whatsapp, etc.)?
  - d. What are the different roles for your gatherings? How will you delegate these roles?
  - e. Discuss transportation needs and arrangements, if anyone needs rides to meetings.

While you, your group, and the Holy Spirit know what is best for your group, and we encourage you to let the Spirit lead, here is a sample house church model and sign-up plan for a visual, if needed:

**House Church Meeting Time:** (2.5 hours or more for extended fellowship time)

Greeting (10 min)

Meal (30 min)

Welcome and Worship (10 min)

Lord's Supper with self-examination (10 min)

Pray one for another's spiritual needs (10 min)

Bible discussion OR time of sharing testimonies, prophecy, revelation, words of instruction, etc. (40 min)

Prayer requests / closing prayers (10 min)

Discuss financial needs / give direction for offerings (5 min)

Communicate the schedule for the week / upcoming events (5 min)

Fellowship (15 min)

Clean up (5 min)

**Sign-up Plan**

Hosting

Meal planning and preparation

Worship

Lord's Supper facilitation

Bible discussion facilitation

Closing prayer

Offering management

Other