

## Accountability and Encouragement Group Guidelines

Brookwood Church - Pastor Bob Felts

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (NIV)*

**Hebrews 10:24** *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (NIV)*

**James 5:16** *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (NIV)*

**2 Timothy 4:2** *Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. (NIV)*

### Ground Rules:

1. **Christ Centered** – The focus of the group to encourage and help one another to be like Christ, and to love God, love people, and change the world the way he did.
2. **Confidentiality** – What is said in the group stays in the group. All relationships are built on trust, and talking to others outside the group about what someone is dealing with is the quickest way to destroy trust and the group. The exception would be if someone is threatening to harm themselves, someone else, or the unity of the church.
3. **Honest, Authentic, and Accepting** – We commit to being honest and authentic with one another. It defeats the entire purpose of the group if we lie to one another. We are committed to love and accept one another regardless of our sins and struggles.
4. **Faithful** – I commit to meet with the group every week unless I am sick or out of town. This group will be a priority.
5. **Prayer** – We commit to pray for one another consistently. We are in a spiritual battle for one another.
6. **Accountability, not counseling** – This is an accountability group, not a counseling group. Do not give advice unless asked to. Encourage each person to grow in their ability to hear the Holy Spirit direct them. Ask questions such as, “What do you think God wants you to do?” Each person is to set their own goals and the others are to help them think through those goals and then help them reach them. Members should not be pressed to be more specific about personal struggles than they feel comfortable sharing with the group.
7. **Grace** – Grace is unmerited favor; provide help to each other, that which the individual cannot do for themselves. Grace is not just giving forgiveness; it is coming along side someone to provide what they don't have. Ask, “How can we

help?" Don't just tell someone to try harder, come along side of them and help them.

8. **Short Accounts** – Sometimes in speaking truth to one another someone will get offended. We commit to not carry an offense against each other. We will follow the guidelines of Matthew 18 and approach one on one anyone in our group that we have a broken relationship with. Right relationships with God and one another are the goal.

**Group time** - (typically 90 minutes, and everyone must get the chance to talk)

You will not be able to ask every question every week – vary things up from week to week and stay flexible as the Holy Spirit leads your time together. Make this more of a conversation time rather than just a rapid fire bunch of questions.

1. Have someone, or everyone, share a short devotional insight from their personal time alone with God. Sharing from the journal normally keeps it short and to the point, and provides accountability that journaling is happening.
2. Ask a general lead question to everyone: How are you doing?
3. Love God – How is your daily personal time of worship (quiet time) going?
4. Love God – How full are your “tanks?” ESPM Emotional, Spiritual, Physical, Mental? What can you do to refill any drained areas of your life?
5. Love People – (if married) How is your marriage doing – are you growing closer or drifting at the moment? What have you done this week to show love to your spouse? How is your relationship with your children? If single – How are your friendships going? How is dating going?
6. Change the World – How are you doing with praying, investing, and inviting those on your FRAN list? (FRAN – friends, relatives, associates, neighbors)
7. Where are you stuck? How can we pray? How can we help you and give you grace?

**Other possible questions to ask from time to time:**

1. If Satan were to trip you up somewhere, where would he attack you? What are you doing to safe guard that area of your life?
2. Where do you find yourself resisting God these days?
3. If I were to ask your spouse about your ESPM tanks, what would the response be?
4. When was your last date with your spouse? When was your last weekend away? What plans do you have to get time alone with your spouse?
5. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Entertainment? Strongly connected to your spouse?
6. What are you reading these days?

7. What are you doing to play and refresh?
8. Where are you financially right now? (Things under control? Anxious? In great debt?)
9. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
10. What kind of time have you spent with anyone who is a non-Christian this past month?
11. What challenges do you think you're going to face in the coming week? Month?
12. What would you say are your fears at this present time?
13. Are you sleeping well?
14. What three things are you most thankful for?
15. Do you like yourself at this point in your pilgrimage?
16. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God?
17. Have you misused any power or trust placed in you at home/at work?
18. Have you just told a lie in answering any of our questions?