



RECOGNIZING HIS VOICE
IN A WORLD FULL OF NOISE

HEARING GOD

THANK YOU

Thank you for leading a *Hearing God* Small Group!

God is a communicator. He wants to speak to us. But many people struggle to hear His voice. This study will examine the common ways God speaks to us: through His Word, through the Holy Spirit, through trusted voices, through our conscience and inner witness, and through events in our life.

Through this study, the people in your Small Group will cultivate a deeper capacity to hear from God. Your role, as a Small Group Leader, is vital. As you lead, our prayer is that God would use you and fill you every step of the way.

To help you on your journey, we've provided you with this Leader Guide. It has everything you need to lead your group each week.

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**KEYS
FOR
SUCCESS**

HOW TO USE YOUR LEADER GUIDE

Your *Hearing God* Leader Guide has everything you need to lead a successful Small Group. Each week of your guide contains two parts.

PART 1: PREPARING FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP

Review this section early in the week to help prepare for your next Small Group meeting. It includes points on:

- What to Communicate
- What to Pray
- What to Expect

Maximize your group by making sure everyone has their own copy of the study guide. They can be purchased at **leadtowin.com**.



PART 2: LEADING YOUR SMALL GROUP

Use this section to lead your Small Group meetings. Read through the section in advance so you can be prepared. As you read, make notes in the margins and select the questions and prayer points you would like to cover. This section includes:

WARM-UP AND INTRODUCTION

Begin each week by discussing an easy warm-up question and then reading a short introduction to help focus everyone's attention on the topic of the lesson.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATION

This section provides questions for your Small Group to discuss. The questions are also included in the *Hearing God* participant guide. Encourage your group to work through the questions on their own. This will create the richest discussion during your group time. But it's okay if people don't answer the questions ahead of time—the discussion will still be great!

Finally, don't feel pressured to discuss every question. Select the ones that seem most appropriate for your group, and give everyone plenty of time to share their thoughts. If you don't get through all the questions, that's okay.

PRAYER

Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of a Small Group. This section will give you prayer points to help focus your group's prayer time. Also, use this time to take prayer requests and pray for each other's needs.

HOW TO LEAD A GREAT SMALL GROUP

The next six weeks in your Small Group will be incredible! Here are some practical tips to help you lead a great group.

1 PRAY

It may sound obvious, but praying for your group is the best thing you can do. Your Leader Guide provides prayer points each week to help focus your prayers. Remember, your prayers don't have to be long. Just try to be consistent and watch what God does!

2 PREPARE

Preparation is key to a successful group. Consider the following:

- **Always communicate with your group before and after you meet.** Follow the points in your Leader Guide to know exactly what to communicate every week.
- **Make sure your meeting location is clean and tidy.** If you're meeting in a home, play soft worship music in the background while people arrive. Providing snacks is also great. If you have pets, be sure they are out of the way.
- **Get others involved.** Don't do everything yourself. Ask your group to help organize and bring snacks each week.

Bringing snacks will create a sense of “ownership” in the group. Remember, someone who signs up to bring a snack is more likely to show up for the group. Look for other ways to involve your Small Group. Can someone bring a fun ice-breaker question next week? Can someone send out prayer requests to the group? Can someone plan a fun outing? The more you involve your group, the more committed they will be.

- **Read through your Leader Guide and review the discussion questions each week before you meet.** This will help you familiarize yourself with the content and give you the chance to select the questions that will be most helpful for your group.

3 FOLLOW A SCHEDULE

Following a consistent schedule each week is important. Try not to let the group run long. Here is a simple 75-minute schedule you could follow:

- **Meet, Greet, Mingle** (*15 minutes*)
- **Warm-Up and Introduction** (*5 minutes*)
- **Discussion** (*45 minutes*)
- **Prayer** (*10 minutes*)

4 FACILITATE, DON'T TEACH

Your goal as a Small Group Leader is to facilitate a great discussion and draw out the contribution of others. A successful group is one where every person shares. As a facilitator, aim for an 80/20 ratio—where 80% of the talking is done by group members and only 20% by you.

SMALL GROUP VALUES

The following values will help set the commitment level and expectations for your Small Group. Please take time during your first meeting to discuss these values as a group and commit to follow them.

VALUE

COMMITMENT

Group Attendance

We commit to prioritizing our Small Group by attending every week and communicating if we will be absent or late.

Safe Environment

We commit to listen to each other and support one another without judgment.

Spiritual Health

We commit to allowing the members of our Small Group to speak into our lives and encourage us to live according to God's principles.

Building Relationships

We commit to contribute to our time together as a Small Group and get to know each other. We will pray for each other regularly and support each other through life's ups and downs.

**WEEKLY
SMALL
GROUP
GUIDES**



WEEK ONE

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD

PREPARING FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP

Your Small Group kicks off this week! Focus on fostering connection.

WHAT TO COMMUNICATE

- Contact everyone in your Small Group a few days before the group starts to remind them of the key details (day, time, location, childcare, etc.).
- Let everyone know you are praying for them and you're excited for the group to begin.
- Tell everyone to read Week 1 of *Hearing God* before your group meets, so you can discuss it. If someone doesn't read the chapter, that's okay, but reading ahead of time will provide the best discussion.
- If anyone wants to go an extra step, encourage them to answer the discussion questions at the end of each chapter. This will help people process the content and prepare for the Small Group discussion, but this step is completely optional.

WHAT TO PRAY

- Pray that God would bring the people to your group that He wants there. Trust His hand in forming your group.
- Pray that everyone would feel comfortable and that friendships would begin to form at your first meeting.
- As you've stepped out to lead a Small Group, pray and believe that the Holy Spirit will be with you and will help you.



WHAT TO EXPECT

The first week of your Small Group is always exciting! If you have a new group, you might not know who will show up. Contacting each person beforehand is a great practice. Some people may be joining a Small Group for the first time. If so, they might feel nervous or excited.

Plan on spending 10-20 minutes breaking the ice with everyone. Have snacks ready when people arrive and spend time getting to know each other. Setting out name tags for everyone is also a good idea. Before you start the Small Group discussion, go around the room and have everyone share a little bit about themselves (name, family, job, hobbies or interests, etc.).

Prepare a couple of fun ice-breaker questions that everyone can answer. These questions should be fun, easy to answer, and help people connect. Spend extra time this week getting to know each other, even if it shortens your discussion.

LEADING YOUR SMALL GROUP

WEEK 1

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD

WARM-UP

Who would you describe as someone that God speaks to? Why did you pick this person?

INTRO

Most people know someone they would describe as being close to God—someone God speaks to. But God wants to speak to everyone! Today, we will look at the prophet Samuel and the first time God spoke to him. From his story, we'll discuss how God speaks to us today.

DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever felt God speak to you before? What was it like?
2. **Read 1 Samuel 3:8-10.** Why do you think God repeatedly calls out to Samuel?
3. Samuel's response in verse 10 is so simple. What does his response teach us about hearing from God?
4. How can we position ourselves to hear God's voice more?
5. One of the ways we hear from God is by reading the Bible. Why are commitment and discipline necessary to read God's Word?
6. The purpose of reading the Bible is relational not informational. How does this affect the way you read your Bible?



7. Do you have a regular time and place to hear from God? Explain.
8. What are the benefits of having a set time and place to hear from God?

APPLICATION

What is something you will do this week to position yourself to hear from God more?

PRAYER

- Pray for everyone to follow their plan to hear from God this week.
- Ask God to speak to everyone as they dedicate time to hear from Him.
- Take prayer requests and pray for the needs of the group.

