



Small Group Covenant

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Small group challenges often arise when expectations aren't clearly established from the get-go, or when a healthy group cruises on auto-pilot, and bad habits creep in. Many issues can be averted by establishing a community covenant.

A covenant is an agreement expressing group practices, expected behavior, and shared values. When members sign their "Jane Hancock" on the document, it validates mutual agreement and responsibility for a positive community experience.

A covenant also serves to avoid unmet expectations and misunderstandings. The best agreements specify a time limit. Will it last for one year, or for the length of a particular study? At subsequent intervals, review key points of the covenant during a group meeting. As the leader, you'll be expected to winsomely enforce the guidelines as need arises.

Below are eight suggested values to include in a group covenant. Customize it to fit your group needs.

1. Confidentiality

What I hear and see in the group will stay in the group.

2. Authenticity

I will be as open with my life as I can be at this time.

3. Love

I will affirm the members of the group no matter what some may have said or done in the past. I will love you now and pray for God to continue to transform everyone into the likeness of His Son.

4. Accountability

I will ask the group to hold me accountable for specific areas of my life. With my permission members can ask me about the goals I set regarding God, my family, my personal life, and the world. I expect you to lovingly not “let me off the hook.” On the basis of Proverbs 27:17, I ask the group to please share with me areas in my life that do not reflect Jesus, because I want to grow in personal holiness.

5. Prayer

I promise to pray for others in my group on a regular basis, lifting them up to the Lord.

6. Encouragement

I understand every woman in this group is at a different point in her journey with the Lord. I will accept each group member as you are, but will encourage each member to progress in becoming more like Jesus.

7. Commitment

I will have my work completed when I come to group. I will choose to attend each weekly meeting even if I fall short. I will make every effort to be present and on time. It will have high priority in my schedule.

8. Participation

I will do my part to keep the discussion centered on biblical truth and the text we're studying. I will contribute to the discussion without dominating. I will be sensitive in allowing members to share equally as we grow in Christ together. Scripture will be our final authority.