

DISCIPLESHIP. SUPPLEMENT 7

[LEADERSHIP] LEADING A HOUSE FELLOWSHIP

A house fellowship or house church is a group of about 10 believers that meet together in a house at least once a week to build one another up.

1. Practical suggestions for a house fellowship (house church, small group).

Build up a house fellowship by taking into account your local circumstances.

Some house fellowships have the following characteristics.

- Meet once every week.
- Every week meet in the home of the same group member or take turns to meet in the homes of the different group members. Meet in a place where you do not disturb the neighbours and where you do not attract attention.
- When the group becomes larger than about 10 persons, split into two groups and meet at different places.
- Do not attract attention by singing or speaking and praying loudly. Speak and pray softly. In difficult situations, you should not be able to hear the group from the outside of the house.
- Arrive at the home and leave the home alone or in pairs, but not all at once.
- Decide together what you may tell others about your house fellowship.
- Only invite a new person to come to your house fellowship when everyone in your house fellowship agrees.
- The group leader of the house fellowship should have an assistant and train his assistant to become a new group leader of a house fellowship.
- Only the group leader has a copy of the manual for group leaders. The other group members make their own written notes.
- The purpose of the house fellowship is to build one another up by allowing everyone to participate actively.

2. Programme of a house fellowship (house church).

The manual is intended for group leaders only and suggests a weekly programme. See the contents of a manual. It is best when a house fellowship meets every week. Otherwise once every 14 days.

Week 1. Discipleship training [A]

- WORSHIP (20 min)
- sharing quiet times (20 min)
- TEACHING (70 min)
- reaction/response in prayer (8 min)
- preparation at home (2 min)

Week 2. Discipleship training [B]

- MEMORISATION (20 min)
- sharing quiet times (20 min)
- BIBLE STUDY (70 min)
- intercession (8 min)
- preparation at home (2 min)

Worship service [C]

- singing (30 min)
- PREACHING (15 min)
- PRAYER and intercession (15 min)
- Lord's Supper, baptism, fellowship meal (30 min)
- drinks and fellowship

Midweek activity [D]

As *discipleship group* together you take on an activity in your area, for example:

- an evangelistic workgroup
- conduct language learning for asylum seekers in your area
- set up some sports with young people in the area
- a project in which a women club teach other women to make clothes
- a project in which a men club do odd jobs in homes of needy people
- a children club, a painting club, a walking club, etc.
- a community service to pick up rubbish in your area once a month
- a community service to organise an outing for the handicapped, old people or strangers once a week

Training only in a discipleship group

Discipleship training [A] every 1st and 3rd week: worship and teaching.

Discipleship training [B] every 2nd and 4th week: memorisation and Bible study.

Training also in a house fellowship

Discipleship training [A] in 1st week and house fellowship (church) meeting [C] in 2nd week.

Discipleship training [B] in 3rd week and house fellowship (church) meeting [C] in 4th week.

Training also in the area or district

Discipleship training and a meeting with the congregation as above together with an activity during the week.

3. A house fellowship should be wise.

In some places the neighbours may be hostile. Jesus Christ exhorts the believers to be especially wise in difficult circumstances. Do not meet together in a way that may offend the neighbours. Consider whether it is wise to sing songs during the house fellowship meeting. Do not speak or pray loudly during the house fellowship meeting. Speak and pray softly so that no one can hear your group when he stands outside the door. Practise and practise to become a wise fellowship or group!

4. A house fellowship should believe in accountability.

The house fellowship is a genuine part of the Body of Christ (the one Church in the world)!

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-28.

- If the house fellowship is a part of an existing congregation, follow the above programme [A] and [B].
- If the house fellowship is not a part of an existing congregation, follow the above programme [A] and [B], but consider how to deal with the issues of baptism, the Lord's Supper, marriage, leadership by elders and, if necessary, discipline.
- If the house fellowship is not a part of an existing congregation, then the above programme [A], [B], [C] and [D] may be followed.
- The participants of the house fellowship regard their house fellowship or house group as meeting of which Hebrews 10:24-25 speaks. The participants of the house fellowship are determined to come to each house fellowship meeting. During the week they prepare for the next meeting by especially having a daily quiet time, by memorising the Bible verse and if possible by preparing the next Bible study.
- The participants of the house fellowship promise to learn to apply what they are taught. They help one another to grow, encourage one another, share their needs with one another, share the progress they are making and pray for one another.