

shrink^{to} **GROW**

How to Engage Your Church
through **SMALL GROUPS**



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Chapter. ONE

ABOUT THIS EBOOK

Your church's ability to engage your congregation in what you do will be the most important predictor of your success in the coming years. Nothing drives church engagement quite like small groups. *To grow your church's engagement, you'll need to shrink your church (through small groups)*. In this book, you'll learn why small groups are so critical to church engagement and how your church can get more people involved. You'll also be introduced to five different small group strategies and how those strategies impact church engagement.

Chapter. TWO

ABOUT TOBIN PERRY

Tobin has served as a writer and editor for Saddleback Church, the North American Mission Board, and the International Mission Board, where he has frequently focused on church leadership issues. He has also served as the lead pastor of a church in Southern Indiana. He has written for numerous publications, including Christianity Today, HomeLife, ParentLife, Baptist Press, and On Mission magazine, and has ghostwritten for a number of Christian ministry leaders. He has served as managing editor for Rick Warren's Ministry Toolbox and as the editor of the pastor's version of On Mission magazine. He was also a contributing writer for Zondervan's The Jesus Bible. A graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism and Gateway Seminary (formerly Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary), Tobin lives with his wife and three children in Evansville, IN. For more information about Tobin, visit www.tobinperry.com.

All of the first person pronouns in this book are his.

Chapter. THREE

WHY SMALL GROUPS CAN DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

Imagine you have a guy in your neighborhood named Tom. You can't really call anyone average, but Tom comes close. He has a good job, a growing reputation in the community, a sharp wife, and 2.5 kids. (His middle child, Pete, is short for his age.)

Tom grew up in church, but he gave it up when he left for college. He'll show up for Easter, maybe for Christmas, the occasional funeral, and whenever his wife makes him join her for a wedding.

When you drew up a model of the kind of person your church was trying to reach a few years back, Tom was the bullseye.

But Tom doesn't have a single good memory from childhood. He has about as much desire to step foot in your church as you do to attend a convention for clam diggers (unless you're into that sort of thing).

Three or four decades ago, your church would have been a success if you could simply reach out to people like Tom, get them into your church, share the gospel with them, and watch

them respond affirmatively to it. You'd know that as soon as Tom became a Jesus-follower, the rest would fall into place. He'd attend regularly, prioritize Sunday School, and start to give consistently.

Attendance used to be the Rolls-Royce of church metrics. But that's just no longer true.

"The shelf life on that strategy is limited because the number of people who want to attend church drops every year. Consequently, in the future church attendance won't drive engagement; engagement will drive attendance," [writes Toronto pastor Carey Nieuwhof](#) on his blog. "The goal will become to get people engaged faster and to engage people more deeply in the true mission of the church... In the future, the engaged will attend because, in large measure, only the engaged will remain."

Today, your goal isn't to get Tom into your worship service. Or, more precisely, your goal isn't just to get him into your worship service. Your goal is to engage him in the mission of your church.

For more about why engagement is so important for your church and how you can increase it, check out the free ebook, [The Definitive Guide to Successful Church Engagement](#).

WHY SMALL GROUPS ARE THE KEY TO ENGAGEMENT

No single part of your church will help Tom get more engaged (or more involved) in the mission of your church than small groups.

[Ed Stetzer says](#): "Small groups are an absolute necessity for involving as many people as possible in the life and ministry of your church."

Why?

1. **Small groups provide positive peer pressure.**

Involving people more deeply in your church will fight against everything our culture teaches them. We're busier than ever with things like kids' sporting events, work responsibilities, and endless recreation choices.

Small groups can help your church counteract that pressure through positive peer incentives. Involvement doesn't have to be an independent endeavor. Small groups attend worship together. They serve in ministry together. They go on mission trips together. When the rest of your small group gets involved, you're more likely to get involved.

2. **Small groups provide accountability.** Let's face it. The bigger our worship services get the more easily people can slip in and out without being noticed. Sometimes that's a key draw for spiritual seekers who want to check out Christianity without awkward brushes with Christians. But this strength becomes a weakness when it comes to engagement.

Taking small groups to the next level can counteract this. When a person joins a small group, they can't disappear. Every week they have other people in their lives encouraging them to take their next steps spiritually, from baptism to volunteering to inviting friends to church to giving. All of those issues should come up within group discussion time. It's infinitely harder for those in small groups to disappear than those who are not.

3. **Small groups help participants "try on" involvement on a smaller scale.** Participants can take a small step toward participation by bringing a snack, leading group

worship, organizing a ministry opportunity, or hosting a party before stepping up into broader, church-wide service. As participants build confidence, they can transition to deeper involvement within the small group and the church.

4. Small groups help close a church's "back door."

People may show up at your church for many different reasons. A neighbor invites them. They see an advertisement you've placed somewhere in your community. They notice your church as they drive by during their morning commute. They are touched by one of the ministries of your church.

A few of those who visit your church will stay because of the preaching or the music, but most will stay because of the relationships they've made. They've met people at the church they want to connect with on a deeper level. They must continue to attend to do so. Small groups help visitors meet new people and stick around longer.

It sounds counterintuitive, but it's true. *You grow engagement by shrinking your church.* Get more people involved in small group ministries, and you'll get more people to volunteer for ministries, participate in mission trips, give to your church, and invite their friends to church.

So how do you get more people to attend your small groups? Read on...

Chapter. **FOUR**

HOW TO INCREASE **GROUP INVOLVEMENT**

It's a common refrain among church leaders in charge of small groups: *How do we get more people involved?* The average church has [6 out of 10 attendees](#) involved in some kind of small group ministry. That means 40 percent of your church is likely not connected to a group.

Connecting that other 40 percent won't be easy, but it can be done. Here are a few time-tested ideas to get you started.

- 1. Get more leaders!** Obviously, the number of your small groups is typically dependent upon the number of leaders you can enlist. It's certainly easier said than done. But start by raising the profile of small group leaders. It's not hard. Small group leaders are on the frontlines of your church. *Their ministries are flush with stories.* Tell their stories from the pulpit. Share them on your website. Speak of these leaders as *heroes*, those who make great sacrifices to make an impact in your church and in the broader community.

Also, take a look at your requirements and expectations for group leaders. Your strategy may dictate your expectations, but make sure you don't have any outdated expectations that don't fit today's culture. Make your requirements a conscious choice by going over them regularly and confirming that you have good reasons for continuing them.

- 2. Leadership must model small group involvement.** Small groups can't just be something your church leadership talks about. Your leaders must actually participate. This includes your senior leader. Small group involvement for leaders, particularly senior leaders, has its pitfalls. Depending upon the personality of the leader and the others in the group, having senior leaders step into a small group can stifle natural conversation. Senior leaders may also find it tough to be completely open during group discussion.

But it's so crucial to the overall success of the small group strategy, that leaders and the groups they're in must choose to work through these difficulties together. You need senior leaders to talk about their small group involvement. You need them to be open about the impact the group is having on their lives. Church bodies can smell a "small group faker" from a mile away. If your leader encourages people to participate in groups he isn't a part of, it'll seem hollow and ultimately fail.

- 3. Make a big deal about small groups in your membership class.** You'll find no better way to plug new members into the life of your church than small groups. Make that clear right from the beginning of a person's involvement in your church. Have somebody come to the class and share a testimony about small group involvement. Consider involving participants in an abbreviated small group within the class.

4. Consider using multiple types of small groups.

Nothing says you have to follow a particular small group strategy rigidly. Many of the strategies out there accommodate (and even encourage) an investment in other kinds of groups. Just because you offer sermon-based small groups, doesn't mean you can't have some missional groups (in fact it doesn't mean your missional groups can't also do sermon-based studies as well). Just because most of your groups are closed doesn't mean some of them can't be open.

Options typically increase engagement. Certainly, you need boundaries. Employing different strategies within your church may increase the time and costs necessary for effective training. It could weaken the church's collective spirit. But it's worth considering, particularly if you have leaders who are predisposed toward multiple groups.

5. **Give people a short-term group option.** You'd be surprised what a person would be willing to do for four or six weeks that they don't want to commit to indefinitely. Even if your church prefers models that support long-term small groups, start a few short-term groups at key points in the year (after Easter, beginning of summer, the start of school, etc.). Target times when people's schedules may be in flux (like at the beginning of new seasons or the start or end of school).

If possible, pick topics for these short-term groups that connect to felt needs such as parenting, managing money, marriage, fear, worry, getting healthy, etc. Once these new groups form, encourage participants to consider extending their time together by suggesting a follow up study.

Chapter. FIVE

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT GROUP STRATEGY FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT PRIORITIES

One of the issues that makes it tough for churches to fully embrace and thrive through their small groups is the plethora of strategy choices out there. Just as an example, a quick Google search and survey of small group resources will provide information on the following group strategies:

- **Seeker small groups**
- **Purpose Driven small groups**
- **Missional small groups**
- **Sermon study groups**
- **Community groups**
- **Bible studies**
- **Sunday School**
- **Semester elective small groups**

- **Closed small groups**
- **Cell churches**

It can be overwhelming. Look through that list (and really it's just the tip of the iceberg) and you'll see strategies that God has used to connect tens of thousands in meaningful community throughout the years. Each of them seems to have their own strengths and weaknesses.

As far as engagement is concerned, the key differences between them is *what kind of engagement* they encourage. Some will encourage balance, others will encourage outreach, and others will encourage Bible learning.

So how do you choose?

- 1. Consider your church's unique background.** Every church is different. You have a different personality, vision, and strategy than the church down the street. Frankly, each of the strategies mentioned above (and throughout the rest of this ebook) can make a Kingdom-sized impact on your church and your community. None of them will cause you to discard your biblical sensibilities.

The choice, above all else, is *which strategy helps us further the unique vision God has given our congregation*. No one can answer that question for you. Just because a certain strategy flourished in a church you respect doesn't mean it'll do the same in yours.

Your church's senior leader plays a key part in this. You'll have much more synergy in your efforts if it's a system that fits him. There are multiple reasons for this. First, if the system fits him, he'll be more likely to make it a priority in his own life and speak about it from the pulpit.

It'll also be more likely to fit the DNA of your church. Unless your senior leader is new to the job or is in some sort of leadership crisis, the church's personality and makeup probably matches that of your senior leader.

- 2. Consider your leaders.** A small group ministry rises and falls on leadership. Unless you match the skills, personalities, and backgrounds of your leaders and potential leaders to the strategy you're choosing, you're doomed.

Take for example, seeker small groups. Seeker small groups require leaders who have an opportunity and a desire to rub shoulders with unchurched individuals on a regular basis. You may love the idea. You may really want to get seeker groups up and running in your church, but if you don't have an outreach-minded leader to run the group, it'll be a waste of time.

Take stock of those who will be leading your small groups. Get a feel for what kinds of groups they'd feel most comfortable leading. If you recruit a whole new group of leaders to run a new strategy, it'll send an awful message to the established leaders. It may sideline them from getting involved in further ministry.

- 3. Consider the amount of control you think you'll need to have over the groups.** Not every small group format needs the same level of control. Models like the Purpose Driven model tend to emphasize growth over control. Employing video curriculum and hosts rather than traditional teacher-leaders means the group system should grow more quickly, but it will likely loosen your control over them. (Although that's a matter of perspective. The curriculum is delivered via video, so

you'll usually have a high amount of control over what's being taught in these groups.)

Methods like traditional Sunday School systems tend to emphasize control over growth. Because your groups are on campus, you'll be able to monitor what's going on in them more easily. Every small group strategy falls somewhere on the growth-control continuum.

In the next few pages this ebook will introduce you to some of the most popular small-group strategies in the church world. You'll find many more options out there, but these represent some of the most significant from an engagement perspective.

MISSIONAL GROUPS

Churches organize missional groups not around age or life stage but around geography. They'll encourage everyone who lives in a certain neighborhood to attend a particular small group and center their ministry efforts upon that neighborhood.

The overarching purpose behind these groups is to engage the surrounding neighborhood in ministry and mission. In many ways missional groups act as a course correction for generations of small groups that had become inwardly focused and centered on the development of "community."

"Community on this side of heaven isn't primarily about us though. Community is about God's glory being displayed to the world," [writes Todd Engstrom for The Gospel Coalition](#) as he describes missional groups.

You'll find lots of variety around how churches actually execute these groups. Most missional groups do all the

group elements that would be familiar to most other methods. They study the Bible. They fellowship together. Many eat meals together.

But the emphasis of missional groups is on impacting the neighborhood around them. Sometimes they meet at public places. They frequently get involved in neighborhood activities. They organize service projects in the area.

“The distinction (between a missional group and a Bible study) is primarily in expectations: a missional community expects that an individual is participating in the community to contribute something, whereas someone comes to a Bible study to consume something,” Engstrom writes.

ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHS

- **They'll greatly enhance community engagement.**
As the name missional implies, the energies of missional groups are focused on the fulfillment of the mission of God in the surrounding neighborhood. If mission is an important engagement metric in your congregation, this strategy would serve you well.
- **Missional groups tend to be particularly significant in communities with well-defined neighborhoods.**
Typically this means urban environments. Well-defined neighborhoods provide ready-made opportunities to plug into already-existing local efforts.
- **Larger churches with multiple groups in a neighborhood can encourage them to work together to serve the neighborhood.** Having multiple groups focus on a particular neighborhood helps them engage

more fully in the neighborhood by expanding their level of effort. Multiple small groups joined together can take on bigger projects.

ENGAGEMENT WEAKNESSES

- **Organizing groups by geography has limitations.** If you urge members to join groups in their neighborhood, you give them fewer choices on when they can plug into a small group. There may be only one group that meets in a potential attendee's neighborhood. If that group meets at an inconvenient time or if the group dynamics aren't a great fit, that attendee has no other options.
- **These groups require a higher level of commitment.** All small groups require a significant level of commitment, but missional groups require a particularly high level. To be an effective missional group, participants will often need to take their intra-group relationships to the next level and be willing to engage their community at a rate that some will find uncomfortable.

PURPOSE DRIVEN GROUPS

As you might expect, Purpose Driven small groups comes from Southern California-based Saddleback Church. The Purpose Driven group strategy is based upon Rick Warren's book [*The Purpose Driven Church*](#) and Steve Gladen's book [*Small Groups with Purpose*](#).

The strategy centers on developing groups that balance Warren's five purposes of the church:

- **Fellowship.** The groups help people connect and, as Steve Gladen writes in the article [A Balanced Small-Group Strategy](#), move “its members from coffee and cookies to true community.” The hope is that group members learn to *live life together*.
- **Discipleship.** Group members grow in Christ-likeness through biblical teaching and accountability in the spiritual disciplines.
- **Ministry.** Groups help their members discover their unique ministry calling (or their SHAPE as Saddleback calls it). They are also challenged to serve together, therefore providing accountability and deepening intra-group relationships as participants discover and employ their gifts and talents together.
- **Evangelism.** Group members are challenged to share their faith both locally and internationally. They pray for the salvation of their neighbors and plan outreach activities together.
- **Worship.** Small groups help members learn to more fully “surrender their lives to God.”

Although the balanced nature of the groups form the core of the strategy, the Purpose Driven model goes beyond that as well. Integral to the strategy are the spiritual growth campaigns that allow church members to make a six-week commitment to small group involvement at the beginning of a campaign (with the hope they'll choose to continue to meet once the campaign is over).

Another significant (and at times controversial) aspect is the Purpose Driven model's redefinition of the leader role. Instead of recruiting group leaders with a significant spiritual

maturity level, they recruit HOSTs, who agree to open up their homes and play video curriculum where a pastor teaches the Bible study.

ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHS

- **These groups encourage balanced engagement.**
Many other strategies focus on engaging participants more fully in fellowship, discipleship, or outreach. Because of the Purpose Driven system's focus on balance, small group participants' engagement will be spread throughout a variety of areas of the church. Participants will engage more completely in ministry, mission, and worship as well.
- **You'll have the opportunity to start more groups.**
By lowering the workload on your small group leaders, you'll likely be able to increase the number of small group leaders (or hosts in this system). It should be easier to find people willing (and able) to host a group of people in their home for a video Bible study than to prepare lessons on a weekly basis.

ENGAGEMENT WEAKNESSES

- **Lowning the leadership standard may result in less qualified leaders.** Traditional small group leadership strategies will develop leaders beyond your small group system. Once they sign on to leading a small group, group leaders often lead in other areas. Because this system focuses on recruiting hosts rather than leaders, you could stunt the growth of potential leaders and make it less likely those people will lead in other areas.

- **Campaigns in general will require more administrative support from your church.** Running a spiritual growth campaign can pay tremendous benefits to the spiritual development of your congregation and the growth of your small group system, but it'll also take more administrative support for that season of your church.

SEEKER GROUPS

Seeker small groups aren't like the other group systems in this ebook. You can't have a thriving small group ministry with only seeker groups. Seeker groups are really part of a strategy not all of it. But because they can lead to engagement valued heavily by many churches (bringing new people into the church), they are an important model to consider.

Birthered at Willow Creek Community Church, seeker groups provide opportunities for spiritual seekers (people who are interested in considering biblical Christianity) to learn more about Christianity. In his book *Seeker Small Groups: Engaging Spiritual Seekers in Life Changing Discussions*, Gary Poole recommends half of each group be made up of people who have not yet converted to Christianity. These groups either meet in marketplace situations or in homes and offer a first step for people who may not be ready to check out a worship service yet. These groups can also do the converse, offering a place to connect spiritual seekers who attend a worship service but have not made a profession of faith yet.

[In an article on smallgroups.com](#), Poole described three key advantages of using this method to reach out to spiritual seekers.

- **Safe.** Seekers can come to the group and feel “safe” to express their questions and doubts about Christianity. They can also connect with other spiritual seekers in a similar place in life. Poole suggests this gives seekers a feeling of “safety in numbers.”
- **Effective.** Poole admits that seeker groups are not a “quick fix” when it comes to improving evangelism with seekers. You can’t just open a group and expect seekers to flock to it. You must still do the hard work of developing relationships with seekers and building their trust. But if those who lead these groups are willing to delve into the lives of spiritual seekers, Poole asserts, the church will be effective in reaching non-Christians. He points to a 25-year track record of Willow Creek using the method and seeing results as an example.
- **Transferable.** These groups work well within a variety of ministry settings and formats. Radical changes in the church aren’t necessary.

ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHS

- **These groups will move your church forward in a key area of church engagement.** If you want to grow your church by reaching people who have not previously made a spiritual commitment, seeker groups can help.
- **Seeker groups will give your church a place to refer people who have attended a worship service but still have questions about Christianity.** Most churches really have no place for spiritual seekers to plug into the life of the church while they’re considering the claims of Christianity. You could invite them to “normal” groups, but the discussion will likely focus on topics that aren’t

particularly relevant to these seekers. Having a group where they can dig further into Christianity with other spiritual seekers can be a great help in their journey.

ENGAGEMENT WEAKNESSES

- **Using this strategy will guarantee you'll need multiple training and support systems for your group leaders.** These groups can't fulfill all the small group needs of your church. You'll need other kinds of groups. This means you'll need a broader support system to help all of your leaders succeed.
- **You'll need the right kind of leaders.** Not every small group leader will be able to effectively lead one of these groups. You'll need leaders who have an evangelistic mindset. They'll need to be able to engage non-Christians and gather them into a group. Leaders without a history of nurturing relationships with spiritual seekers likely won't fare well with these groups.

SERMON-BASED GROUPS

Sermon-based small groups aren't a new concept. Many churches have been experimenting with them and employing them for decades, but it was Larry Osborne's 2008 book [*Sticky Church*](#) that brought the concept national attention and laid out a strategy for employing it.

Osborne's North Coast Church in northern San Diego County counts 80 percent of its attendees involved in one of its official small groups. (They don't count in that figure groups that form outside of the structure.) But it's more than just North Coast's high level of participation that makes this system something to

consider, but it's also the method's scalability. The church has seen a relatively stable 80 percent involvement rate when they had a few hundred in attendance as they do now when they are a megachurch of thousands.

The method is relatively simple. The church creates an easy-to-use curriculum based upon the weekly sermon series. The curriculum includes ice-breaker questions, questions on the biblical text, and application questions.

North Coast's system asks participants to come to the study with written-out answers to the questions ahead of time. Osborne believes this helps those less disposed to talking in groups to speak up more often. Not all the churches who use sermon-based small groups do this though.

ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHS

- **Sermon-based groups will deepen engagement with weekend sermons.** Often we spread out our teaching too broadly. Most people struggle to apply one biblical text to their lives each week, much less multiple passages. When your church uses sermon-based small groups, you'll focus your participants' attention on a specific topic or biblical text at least twice during the week.
- **Sermon-based groups will drive engagement in areas where you most want people to engage.** Most churches design their weekend services around the areas of engagement they most value. The sermon series typically align with what God is doing in the life of the senior leader. When small groups choose their own curriculum, the topics will be varied. They may or may not focus on the kinds of engagement your church

values. Sermon-based groups guarantees the small group studies will align with the heart of your church.

ENGAGEMENT WEAKNESSES

- **Someone must create the sermon-based studies, which will pull time away from other engagement priorities.** You won't be able to depend upon pre-made curriculum. Time spent on curriculum creation won't be spent on mobilizing your church for mission, engaging your community, or other critical ministry tasks. Volunteers can be mobilized to help with this process. Experienced small group leaders and writers/editors can help with the weekly curriculum needs.
- **If the curriculum isn't done well, you risk groups becoming dry.** Asking small groups to focus on the same content for two separate sessions (weekend sermon and the small group time) can lead to boredom. The curriculum creator(s) will have to pay special attention to keeping the biblical text fresh, either by adding new scripture to the mix or by adding additional background material to the study.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER GROUPS

You won't see the name "divide and conquer groups" in any other list of small group strategies. It's a compilation of a variety of strategies that urge groups to remain open indefinitely and then divide once they get to a certain size (often around 12 to 14 people).

For years strategies like this dominated home-based small groups. In theory, they lead to a quickly growing small group system. Every small group leader has an apprentice, who will take the next group once the original splits. Because every group needs a leader and an apprentice, it includes a built-in leadership development pathway.

The other important element to these groups is their always-open nature. Because of this, the groups always have entry points to plug-in guests. Often these groups will leave an open chair in the room to symbolize friends or family which the group prays will join them. Particularly when plugged into growing churches, these groups have the potential to take outreach efforts to the next level.

ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHS

- **You'll have a built-in leadership pathway.** As you train apprentices to become future small group leaders, you'll have future leaders in every group. When you need to start a new group, you'll be able to ask one of those apprentices to help.
- **You'll have a potential to grow your group system quickly.** Every small group will have a seed within it for the next. Right from the beginning of the study, you'll make it clear that the group will one day split. Setting that expectation from the beginning will help groups understand the significance of outreach and growth.

ENGAGEMENT WEAKNESS

- **Success can get frustrating with this method.** You want your groups to grow and split, but when they do, group members must learn to develop new

group relationships. After doing this several times, group members may begin to feel as if they are being punished for their success. It also may stunt the ability of the groups to develop intimacy.

Chapter. **SIX**

HOW TO SUPERCHARGE GROUP ENGAGEMENT THROUGH YOUR MOBILE APP

The hub for churches in the 21st century is changing—and quickly. For most of church history, local congregations centered around a physical building. Churches focused on engaging their members during the one to three times a week they were on campus. Thanks to technology, that's no longer true. The hub of your local church is becoming the mobile phone.

Your congregants [spend 87 hours a month](#) (or about three hours a day) pecking around on their mobile phones. They order dinner on them. They connect with colleagues on them. They keep up with their grandkids on them. They pay their bills on them. They play games on them.

But more importantly for you, they're watching worship services, signing up for ministry opportunities, posting prayer requests, and expressing generosity on your church's smartphone app. Your congregants don't have to wait until they show up to your

building to engage with you. *They can engage wherever and whenever God leads them to do so.*

Small groups must be a part of this equation. Because most small groups are held off campus today, your church's mobile app can play an important role in taking your small group ministry to the next level. Here are a few important ways you can improve engagement with your small groups through your church's mobile app.

- 1. List all of your small groups within your app.** This is the most basic way every church can include small groups within its mobile app. Simply list each group, what it is studying, where it meets, and when it meets. If possible, provide small group leaders the ability to see your groups on a map so they can easily find the one closest to them.
- 2. Provide small group leadership training via your app.** You'll never want to completely get rid of face-to-face leadership training. Gathering all your leaders and helping them learn from one another will always be important. But through your app, you can provide leaders with regular training and leadership insights through videos and podcasts. Leaders can access these resources on a break at work or while relaxing after dinner. These don't need to be overly produced projects that drain your time and resources either. Short videos made on your smartphone can prove incredibly helpful for on-the-go leaders.
- 3. Allow potential group visitors to add the group their calendar.** Most of us depend upon our smartphone calendars to keep us on schedule throughout the day. Your app can allow people to add their small group

meeting (with the address of the location where it will be held) to their daily calendar with a single tap.

These ideas are simply the beginning. As you creatively look at your church's small group system, you'll find a variety of opportunities to improve engagement through your mobile app. You could choose to deliver your curriculum to small groups via your mobile app. You could provide your groups a platform to share prayer requests. You could put small group registration right on your app.

If you can dream it, you can likely do it—or you will be able to do it in the near future.

If you need help developing a mobile app that can supercharge your church's small group ministry, [contact echurch](#) to set up a mobile engagement demo.

Let us help equip your church to grow.
Get in touch with us here.

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