



PRAYER DOME

PRAYER DOME MINISTRY · 2026 EDITION · FELLOWSHIP

Small Group Discussion Guide

Meetings, questions and covenant

Small groups are the living rooms of Prayer Dome — where a large ministry becomes a family. Sundays gather the crowd; circles grow the disciple. This guide helps leaders and hosts create groups that are biblically rooted, pastorally safe and missionally fruitful.

1. Purpose and Vision

A Prayer Dome small group is:

- **Word-centred:** opening the Bible together, listening to the Holy Spirit, and applying truth to life.
- **Relational:** sharing presence, prayer and practical help — rejoicing together and weeping together.
- **Accountable:** speaking truth in love and keeping one another from drifting.
- **Missional:** praying for the lost by name, inviting guests, and serving the neighbourhood together.

We want groups where newcomers quickly belong, believers are matured, leaders are formed, and outsiders are reached. Success is not a perfect evening but a faithful pathway.

2. Values That Shape Our Gatherings

- **Welcome:** every person is greeted by name, introduced, and seated in conversation, not isolation.
- **Honour:** we listen without interrupting, disagree without dishonour, and emphasise edification over winning points.
- **Confidentiality:** what is shared in the group stays in the group, except where harm or legal disclosure requires action.
- **Participation:** the leader facilitates, everyone contributes; we avoid one person dominating and draw out quieter voices.
- **Christlikeness:** we practise forgiveness, generosity, hospitality and humility as disciplines, not mere ideals.

3. Meeting Pattern — 80 Minutes That Work

A simple, repeatable rhythm keeps groups focused and on time. Adjust minutes to your context but keep the proportions.

| Phase | Time | What Happens | |-----|-----|-----| | Welcome & Worship | 10 min | Light refreshments, brief informal worship or thanksgiving, introductions if guests are present | | Check-In | 10 min | Each person shares one joy, one challenge and one prayer request in 60-90 seconds | | Word — Discussion | 30 min | One passage or lesson with guided questions (see below) | | Prayer & Care | 20 min | Pray in triads or as a whole circle, with specific naming of needs | | Outreach Planning | 10 min | Identify one person, family or practical need to serve before next meeting |

Start and finish on time. Families, workers and students all need dependable boundaries. Publish the venue, time and reading before the week so members arrive prepared.

4. Leading the Discussion — How to Facilitate Well

Before the Meeting

- Read the passage or Academy lesson twice. Pray: “Lord, what do You want us to hear and obey?”
- Choose four to six questions that move from observation to application. Prepare one story from your own life to model vulnerability.
- Set up seating in a circle, Bibles and pens ready, distractions minimised, children cared for where possible.

Five Kinds of Questions

- **Observe:** What does the passage actually say? What words, repetitions or contrasts stand out?
- **Interpret:** What did this mean to the first hearers? What does it teach us about God, humanity, grace, sin and salvation?
- **Apply:** Where is obedience required personally — a belief to renew, a habit to start or stop, a relationship to mend?
- **Share:** Who needs help, follow-up, salvation or pastoral care among us and around us?
- **Do:** What will each of us do before the next meeting, and who will we tell for accountability?

Practical Tips

- Ask open questions rather than quiz questions. “What struck you in verses 4-6?” opens; “What was the Greek word in verse 5?” closes.
- Allow silence. Count to seven after asking. Depth often arrives after a pause.
- Summarise well: “It sounds like we heard God calling us toward ... Do we agree?”
- Keep answers tethered to the text, not only to opinions. Gently bring the group back: “Where do you see that in the passage?”
- End by naming actions — specific, measurable, achievable, personally chosen.

5. Prayer in Smaller Circles

Corporate prayer in a group teaches people to pray. Keep it accessible:

- Pray briefly and plainly — sentences, not sermons.
- Pray Scripture — turn a verse from the passage into petition.
- Pray for one another by name — use the check-in list and the outreach name.

- Make space for the Spirit — invite Him to lead, keep silence before closing, and test impressions by Scripture and community.

Encourage members to keep a simple group prayer journal: requests, dates, updates and answers. Review it monthly to encourage faith.

6. Spiritual Conversations Beyond the Meeting

The real test of a group is not the discussion but the life between meetings. Encourage:

- **One-to-one check-ins** between hosts, co-leaders and newer members during the week — a message, a call, a coffee.
- **Shared meals** where Christ is naturally spoken of around kindness, not pressure.
- **Bible reading together** — many groups read one chapter a day from the same plan and message a short reflection.
- **Serving together** — one termly outreach or practical project binds hearts more than talk alone.

7. Covering Pastoral Needs

Leaders are shepherds, not counsellors beyond their breadth. Stay attentive:

- Listen Pastorally: notice changes in mood, attendance or language that may signal distress.
- Ask Gently: “How are you really?” and give room not to answer immediately.
- Refer Early: connect to a pastor or professional where needs exceed the group — mental health strain, domestic tension, financial crisis, doctrinal confusion or safeguarding matters.
- Follow Up: record confidentially, pass to the right person, and check that contact was made.
- Protect Boundaries: do not promise secrets where safety requires disclosure; explain why you must escalate and stay with the person through it.

8. Hospitality, Safeguarding and Administration

- Provide a welcoming, safe, clean space with clear entry, seating, toilets, lighting and exit routes. Two adults present; sign-in for minors; glassed or open doors.
- Communicate: a WhatsApp group for logistics, a simple weekly message with time, venue, passage and prayer focus, and monthly attendance to your pastoral leader.
- Pray for multiplication from day one. Healthy groups birth new groups. Identify an apprentice leader early, involve them in hosting, facilitating and praying, and plan to raise a new circle when fellowship becomes overcrowded — typically 12-14 adults.
- Celebrate: share testimony in Sunday gatherings, note baptisms and salvations, and thank hosts warmly.

9. Group Covenant — Our Shared Commitments

We, as members of this small group, commit ourselves to:

- Keep confidence, except where harm or danger requires disclosure.
- Listen without interrupting and speak with kindness and brevity.

- Be present regularly and communicate absence in advance.
- Complete the shared reading before meeting where able.
- Speak truth in love, bear with one another, and pursue reconciliation quickly.
- Pray for each other daily and carry each other's burdens practically.
- Invite visitors, welcome newcomers and serve our street or neighbourhood together.
- Multiply: be willing to join a new group when birthing occurs, trusting God's expansion.

Review this covenant every term and reaffirm it by signing below — a visible “yes” to belonging.

10. Discussion Starters for Any Lesson

If your group is working through the Academy lessons, use these alongside the lesson's own questions:

- What verse or phrase stood out most, and why?
- What did you learn about God today that you had forgotten or never seen?
- What has stopped you from applying this truth in the past?
- What is the Holy Spirit asking you to believe, stop, start or share?
- Who can help you remain accountable this week?

Bring at least one of these to every meeting and your discussion will deepen without you needing to invent new questions each time.

Appendix — Sample First Meeting Agenda

| Time | Item | |-----|-----| | 0:00 | Host welcomes, brief worship and thanksgiving, introductions with names and one-sentence story | | 0:10 | Leader casts vision: purpose, values, rhythm, confidentiality and the covenant | | 0:20 | Word: John 1:35-39 “Come and see” — observation to application using five question kinds | | 0:50 | Prayer triads with written requests | | 1:10 | Choose outreach name, serving opportunity and reading for next week | | 1:20 | Finish on time; linger informally for fellowship |

May your home, group and heart remain open to Jesus and to others. As you gather in twos and threes, He gathers with you — and His promise to build His church still holds.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” — Psalm 133:1

“He hath done all things well.” — Mark 7:37