

Group Evaluation and Celebration

Plan to Conclude Your Year with Your Group in a Positive Way

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References: Josh 4:1-24

Plan on bringing your group to a positive conclusion this year. Here are some suggestions to help your group celebrate the good things God did in your midst.

- *Growth*
Have each person share one area where they experienced growth in the past year. Then have them share how they would like to continue growing in the next three months. Pray about each person's past and future growth.
- *Praying Scripture*
Using Scripture, pray specifically for each person in your group. Ask God to lead you to particular passages for each person.
- *Clean the "Slate"*
Provide an opportunity for people to admit where they have failed the group or individual members. (This works best if the leader goes first). Respond with an abundance of grace and forgiveness.
- *Memorial Stones*
Bring enough rocks for everyone in the group. Have each person pick one. Read Joshua 4 or tell the story and read a few verses in summary. Have each person tell ways they have seen God's faithfulness, and place their rock on the growing pile. Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.
- *Love Bombardment*
Each group members gets a chance to be "it." Give the rest of the group the opportunity to finish this sentence: "One thing I have appreciated about you this year is..."
- *Group Appreciation*
This time it's the group as a whole we are appreciating. Give each member the opportunity to finish this sentence: "One thing I have appreciated about our group this year is..."

Effective group closure also involves honest evaluation and planning. Following are some questions your group can discuss. You can have your group rate from 1 to 10 anything for which you desire feedback. Hand out questions to each group member. Give everyone time to fill them out and then discuss your answers together. Afterwards, reflect on your discussion to make the necessary adjustments to your group's purpose, content, goals, logistics and leadership style.

- The thing I liked the most about this small group was...
- I wish we would have done more...

- I wish we would have done less...
- I wish we would have tried...
- In thinking about my own participation, I wish I would have...
- How do you feel about the following aspects of our group this past year?
 - Format
 - Social get-togethers
 - Materials/topics studied
 - Length of group meetings
 - Frequency of group meetings
 - Location
 - Snacks
 - Length of commitment to group expected
 - Policy on being open to new members
 - Group covenant
 - Group goals

Coupling evaluation with celebration can build a strong sense of community and keep your group's purpose Christ-centered.