

CHAT GROUPS

WHAT IS A CHAT GROUP?

CHAT is an acronym for:

- CHECK YOUR PROGRESS
- HEAR THE WORD
- ACT ON IT
- TELL OTHERS

A CHAT group is made up of two or three people, all of the same gender, who meet weekly for 60-90 minutes for personal accountability for their spiritual growth and development. It is recommended the group not grow past three but rather multiply into two groups of two once the fourth participant has proven faithful to the process.

A CHAT group is a simple way to release the most essential elements of a vital spiritual walk to people who need Jesus to change their lives from the inside out. This tool empowers the ordinary Christian to accomplish the extraordinary work of reproducing spiritual disciples who can in turn reproduce others.

There is no curriculum, workbook or training involved. There is no leader needed in the group. A CHAT group is the simplest form of spiritual community and provides ongoing accountability to learn, obey, and pass on spiritual truth. It incorporates the values of living a balanced spiritual life which results in the development and reproduction of disciples.

There are only two suggested qualifications for starting or joining a CHAT group:

1. A desperate need for Jesus Christ (Luke 5:29-32).
2. Faithfulness in the process itself (2 Timothy 2:2).

THOUGHTS ON ACCOUNTABILITY

CHAT groups involve the sharing of an extremely personal nature. It is imperative that you come to a clear agreement on the confidentiality of whatever is shared in the group. Discuss the limits of confidentiality, (e.g., how things will be handled if information is revealed which involves the safety of someone or illegal activities).

Consider using 2 Timothy 3:16 as an outline for application to your life:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (NIV)

- TEACHING- what we should know
- REBUKING- what we should avoid or stop doing
- CORRECTING- what we should do differently
- TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS- what we should begin or continue doing

Remember that accountability to Scripture involves not only applying it to one's own life, but also blessing others by passing on to them what you are learning. Always consider if there is someone outside the CHAT you should be sharing spiritual truth with and make this part of the accountability process.

Be specific when developing an application plan. Think through when, how, and with whom you will put what you are learning into practice. Make sure to follow up with checking on progress in succeeding weeks.

FORMAT OF A CHAT GROUP

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

FELLOWSHIP: We are motivated by sharing struggles in mutual accountability. Start the time together by going over the Accountability Questions with one another (45-60 minutes).

HEAR THE WORD

DISCIPLESHIP: We grow spiritually as we read Scripture in context and in community. Continue the time by discussing what the Lord has impressed on you from your weekly Scripture reading. Your group should read 25-30 chapters per week (e.g. read the book of 1 Samuel or read the book of Ephesians 5 times.) Many people find it helpful to read aloud. If you prefer to listen to Scripture, you can download "The World English Bible" which is a public domain audio version, for free at: <http://www.audiotreasure.com/webindex.htm>. If someone doesn't finish the reading in a given week then the entire group takes the same assignment for the following week.

ACT ON IT

MINISTRY: We serve as we apply the truths of Scripture to living in love towards others day by day. Live out what the Lord impressed on you in the reading to apply it to your life and pass the truths on to others (5-10 minutes).

TELL OTHERS

EVANGELISM: We pray for those who need the Lord and reach out to them as we have opportunity. Close in a time of prayer. Pray for one another. Part of this time should be praying for the lost friends, family, and acquaintances for whom the group has been praying throughout the week (5-10 minutes).

WORSHIP: We acknowledge God in prayer and through our obedience. In your time of prayer, do not forget to praise and thank the Lord for who He is and what He is doing in and through you as a group and as individuals. Remember too, your obedience ("Act on it") to the Lord is in itself worship! (5 minutes)

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

CHAT GROUPS

These questions are to be asked of one another in a weekly meeting of accountability (Proverbs 27:17). They are to stimulate conversations of character and confession of sin to God and one another in a safe environment which values honesty, vulnerability, confidentiality, and grace.

1. How have your insights from last week's reading shaped the way you think and live?
2. Who did you pass your insights from last week on to and how was it received?
3. How have you seen God at work?
4. Have you been a testimony this week to the greatness of Jesus Christ with both your words and actions?
5. Have you been exposed to sexually alluring material or allowed your mind to entertain inappropriate sexual thoughts?
6. Have you acknowledged God's ownership in your use of money? How are you giving your firstfruits back to God?
7. Have you coveted anything? How are you practicing radical generosity?
8. Have you hurt someone's reputation or feelings by your words?
9. Have you been dishonest in word or action or exaggerated?
10. Have you given in to an addictive (or lazy or undisciplined) behavior?
11. Have you been a slave to clothing, friends, work, or possessions?
12. Have you failed to forgive someone? Who do you need to apologize to?
13. What worries or anxieties are you facing? Have you complained or grumbled? Have you maintained a thankful heart?
14. Have you been honoring, understanding and generous in your important relationships?
15. What temptations in thought, word, or action have you faced and how did you respond?
16. How have you taken opportunities to serve or bless others, especially believers?
17. Have you seen specific answers to prayer?
18. Did you complete the reading for the week?

EVANGELISTIC PRAYER

Each person in the CHAT group is to list two or three individuals who need the Lord's salvation. Write down the names of all those identified in the group on each card so that all of you pray for each of the lost souls weekly. Keep this card in your Bible as a bookmark for your daily reading so that each time you open your Bible you are reminded to pray for these people.

1. Lord, I pray that You draw _____ to Yourself (John 6:44).
2. I pray that _____ hear and believe the Word of God for what it really is (1 Thes 2:13).
3. I pray that _____ seek to know You (Acts 17:27).
4. I ask you, Lord, to prevent Satan from blinding _____ to the truth (2 Cor 4:4; 2 Tim 2:25-26)
5. Holy Spirit, I ask You to convict _____ of his/her sin and need for Christ's redemption (John 16:7-14).
6. I ask that You send someone who will share the gospel with _____ (Matt. 9:37-38).
7. I also ask that You give me or _____ the opportunity, the courage and the right words to share with _____ (Col. 4:3-6).
8. Lord, I pray that _____ turn from his/her sin and follow Christ (Acts 17:30-31; 1 Thess 1:9-10).
9. Lord, I pray that _____ would put all of his/her trust in Christ (John 1:12; 5:24).
10. Lord, I pray that _____ confess Christ as Lord, take root and grow in faith and bear fruit for Your glory (Rom. 10:9-10; Col. 2:6-7; Luke 8:15).

PRAYER LIST

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

GROUP LIST

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer for them is for their salvation.

- Romans 10:1