

# The Group Multiplication Strategy of The Connection Church

Our Connection Groups are intended to be “Ministry Multipliers.” Obviously, if we are going to have more people involved in meaningful fellowship, ministry, discipleship, leadership, and evangelism, which is what our Connection Groups are to do, then we MUST multiply groups!

Some Group Leaders can successfully launch out on their own and start a group from scratch, but they are few and far between. That’s why our strategy is to develop Co-Leaders before we multiply because we believe a leader team helps guarantee success when multiplying groups.

Ideally, we want to send out a new Group Leader with someone who will serve as their Co-Leader and someone left with the old group who will also serve as Leader and Co-Leader. Additionally, we would like to send some from the old group to help start the new group.



## 1. Prioritize the spiritual and relational health of the members.

Remember, our overall goal of community life is not the total number of groups we can launch and sustain over a period of time. The goal is the formation of disciples who make disciples and developing leaders.

Thus, if we neglect our members’ spiritual and relational health—which we have been investing in for months or years prior to multiplication—during the process, we’ll win the battle and lose the war.

## 2. Remind group members that God draws us in to know Him, and He sends us out to make Him known.

In Genesis 12, God speaks to Abram, draws him into an experience of His presence, and promises to make him a blessing to all the nations. Then the moment Abram has been drawn in, he is sent out. God says, “Go, leave your country and your people and go to the land I will show you.”

In Exodus 3, Moses is a murderer running for his life when God appears to him in a burning bush. Moses falls on his face in worship. The Lord tells him, “I have heard the cry of my people... Now go: I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.”

In Acts 13, as the church in Antioch is praying, fasting and worshiping one evening, God gives them a powerful experience of His presence. He draws them in and speaks by His Spirit: “Set apart Paul and Barnabas for me to go to where I have called you.”

Over and over again this is the pattern of mission: God draws us in and then sends us out. He draws us in to know Him, and He sends us out to make Him known.

Too often in our small groups, we want the blessing to reach us but not move through us. No one wants to be excluded from a group, but once we are in, we want to close it off. As a result, we as Group Leaders need to put the biblical vision of multiplication before our people regularly.

### **3. Set a multiplication expectation at the first gathering.**

This goal must be explicitly taught by the Group Leaders, and it must be established from the beginning of the group - not just before a needed multiplication. For example, when launching your first group, or as soon as a new group begins, the leaders need to give a vision for multiplication and a general timeline.

### **4. Keep the mission before the group.**

Group Leaders should be continually reminding the members of their missionary identity in Christ. We should frequently see new people join the group—both from the church and through relationships in the community. So, members will feel the growth and know multiplication is evidence of their growth in godliness and necessary to continue to create space for new people.

### **5. Multiply when leaders are ready, not when you have too many people.**

Several factors will determine how many adults and kids a group can have while remaining healthy and open to visitors. Some of members' houses can accommodate 12 adults; others can handle 30 adults. Some groups will need to multiply once there are about eight kids coming regularly; others can have 20 or more kids and not run into too much trouble.

But still, the number of people should not be the determining factor in when you multiply. *Nothing is more important than your leaders' readiness.* A group can be too big or too small, but with the right leaders, it will remain healthy and growing. As soon as new leaders are identified, trained, and ready, a new group can be deployed. Typically, six adults are enough to start a new group—a Leader couple, a Co-Leader couple, and two other adults, for example.

### **6. Let members choose their group.**

Don't make the mistake of trying to figure out which people should go with which group. Instead, set two options in front of your members and let them choose. Do they want to go with the new group or stay with the sending group?

### **7. Celebrate with a "Reunion" party!**

In the off month between waves, have a "Reunion" party with the group you launched at the beginning of the wave. The folks who stayed with the sending group will get to see all the people reached by the new group and the folks who went to start the new group will get to see all the people reached by their old group.