

LAMPLIGHTERS INTERNATIONAL – DISCIPLE-MAKER TIP #20

TITLE: "WOULD SOMEONE PLEASE VOLUNTEER ...?"

As a discipleship leader, it may seem unnecessary (and even awkward) to consistently ask for volunteers to read or pray, but you should ask for a volunteer every time. Don't presume upon someone's reading skills or reading comfort level. Unknown to you, a group member may have dyslexia or may feel uncomfortable reading out loud in front of others. By asking for a volunteer to read or pray, you show grace to the group members and eliminate an avoidable, embarrassing situation.

There is another important reason for always asking for a volunteer to read or pray. As a discipleship leader, you want your group members to invite new people. Suppose one of the group members invites a new person to the group who had only attended church infrequently in the past and was now showing some spiritual interest. He has never been part of a small group before and is curious about what happens when the group meets each week. The group member summarizes the group meetings by saying, *"Well, we meet in the backroom of a restaurant and we always start promptly at 7:00 am so we can complete the entire lesson by 8:00 am."* (Sounds good so far, doesn't it?). But then he makes a fatal mistake. He says, *"The leader usually asks one of us to pray for our time together and then picks someone else to read the Bible passage before we start the lesson."* Ouch!

What is this potential new member thinking? He is likely thinking he may be asked to pray or read the Bible if he ever attends the group. He says to himself, *"No way, I am not ready for that. I would like to check out the group, but not if I am going to be embarrassed."* So, he graciously declines the group member's invitation and a great outreach opportunity is lost. **The discipleship leader should always ask for volunteers to pray or read the Bible for two important reasons: 1) He doesn't put anyone on the spot and, 2) He eliminates a major obstacle when group members invite new people to the group.**

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