

Next Steps:

to create small groups with a Christian atmosphere that nurture all phases of discipleship.

Growing churches have generally developed a system of small groups where individual Christians can find intimate community, practical help, and intensive spiritual interaction. This is especially necessary for churches that grow larger than 75 in weekly attendance.

The world's largest church in Seoul, S. Korea, has over a half million members. Don't you think it would be easy to become lost in a church that size? How on earth would people get their spiritual needs met? With that many people, wouldn't it just be too anonymous?

The truth is, that church (and nearly every other large church) has a growing number of small groups that meet together almost every week. There is nothing anonymous or impersonal about that. In fact, these groups meet needs that no pastor could ever meet (even in a small church).

These groups meet needs for belonging, identity, friendship, spiritual growth and mentoring, outreach, . . . but here, I'm getting ahead of myself.

All throughout the Bible, God has organized people into small groups. Even when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness after leaving Egypt, God had them organized into small groups.

Here at Cornerstone, we have a plan for small groups. They are called Next Steps Groups.

First, and foremost, they are the **PRIMARY** means of Evangelism for the Cornerstone SDA Church.

Engel Scale: explain range of reach

Marys and Marthas: explain personality types

With a well designed system of Small groups, we can reach all of the people that we know and love – everyone from the unbelieving to the already-Christian – from the task-oriented to the highly relational.

Secondly, the Next Steps Groups can be the **PRIMARY** means of integration for new members.

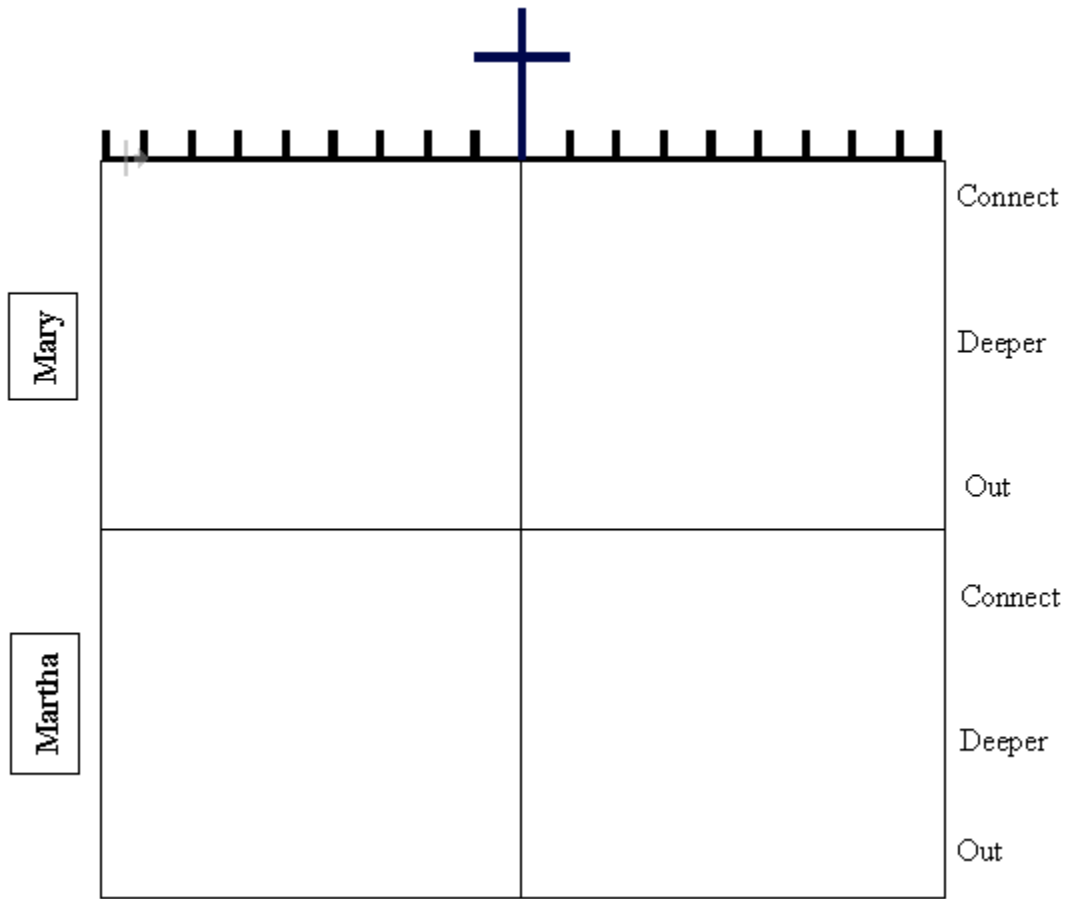
Studies have shown that for people to really feel that they are a part of a church, they have to do three things:

1. Connect – get to know 7 people.
2. Go Deeper – they must continue to grow spiritually.
3. Reach Out – they must have a way of sharing their faith/spiritual gifts.

This is why our Next Steps Groups fall into three headings:

1. Get Connected.
2. Go Deeper.

3. Reach Out.



The Next Steps Groups can be anything that anyone likes to do (not illegal or immoral) . . .
It must just fit into this box somewhere.
It must have one spiritual element in it - prayer, a Bible study, a testimony.
You should recruit a co-leader within the first 2 weeks.

Some Past Groups (place in the grid):

- Rappelling
- Women's Bible Study
- Feeding the homeless at an area soup kitchen
- Choir
- Experiencing God

Some time restraints:

This Next Steps Period goes from September 6 through Thanksgiving.
(no hard and fast ending date)

How will people find out about my group?

1. **You** will invite them!!! (Free market cells)
2. Maybe some will come from the information in the Next Steps Catalog/Bulletin.

Prayer time and brainstorming about your next step:

groups of 3 - 5

Questions:

- What kind of group is God calling me to start?
- How would I get people to come to it?
- What help would I need from the church to be able to do this?
- Who would make a good co-leader?

Sharing with the rest of us

Writing the description:

Look at the examples

Catchy/Interesting

What materials

What cost to the participant

What times/dates