

Strategic Alliances Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. If you were going to be a contestant on something like “The Amazing Race,” whom would you choose as a partner?
2. What are your plans for Christmas?

Read the following passage: Luke 1:39-56.

Mary received the stunning message that she was going to supernaturally conceive and give birth to the Savior of the world. Who would possibly believe her story? With whom could she celebrate? With whom could she share all the thoughts racing through her mind? Mary needed a strategic alliance, and God provided one for her in the person of her relative, Elizabeth. To effectively walk in the mission God has for our lives, we, too, need strategic alliances.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Generally speaking, we are rewarded when we follow the script that our culture hands to us, and resisted when we deviate from cultural expectations. What are some ramifications of this reality when it comes to walking in God’s vision and purpose for our lives? What are some ways we might feel pushback if we attempt to accomplish something meaningful for God’s kingdom?
2. Why do you think community can make such a big difference in helping someone achieve a goal? Have you ever personally experienced this reality? Explain.
3. How can strategic alliances bring clarity and confirmation to vision? In general, do you find it easy to talk with other people about nontrivial matters like vision and mission? Explain. Do you find that other people open up to you about dreams or vision they may have?
4. Increasingly, many men and women are putting much greater emphasis on their individual calling, and less emphasis on discovering those with whom they are to walk out their calling. Why do you think this is? What are some ways we might practically put fresh emphasis on the “Who?” question? (Here, “Who?” refers to strategic partners or alliances along the lines of the principle articulated by Jim Collins, “First who, then what.”)
5. How can strategic alliances energize vision? Read Romans 1:11-12. How can we strengthen and encourage one another spiritually?

6. What is a vision or mission that you think God has given to you? How might this connect with a vision or mission that God has given to others?
7. How can strategic alliances make vision more fun? Why is celebration important? Do you have any non-family members who genuinely celebrate your successes? Explain.
8. What are one or two ways you think you can strengthen or expand strategic alliances in your life?

Pray