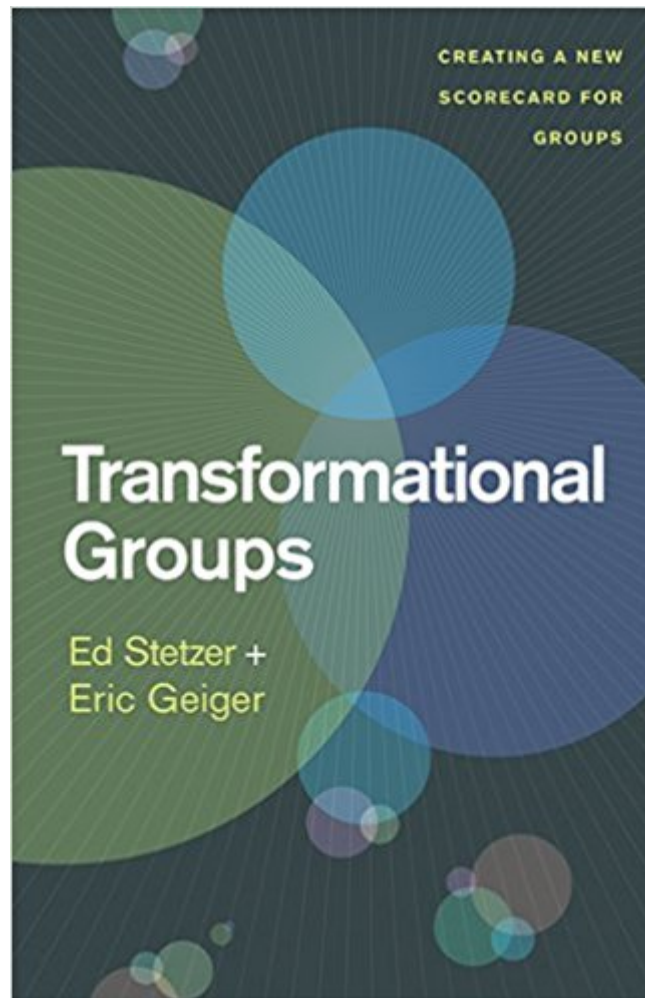




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Transformational Groups: Creating A New Scorecard For Groups



Synopsis

God declared through the Apostle Paul that the church would be a place of transformation. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 we find, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, and look, new things have come. Despite this, the church seems increasingly to be a place where transformation fails to occur. Surveying the landscape, however, there are some bright spots where churches are faithfully producing transformed disciples. Furthermore, as shown in Scripture and supported by new research, God designed such transformation to often happen in the context of smaller groups of people. But what characteristics are true of churches that are making transformed disciples through group-based ministry—whether small groups, missional communities, Sunday school, or some other expression of groups? In *Transformational Groups*, Ed Stetzer and Eric Geiger have created a new scorecard that will provide a map to transformational success for your church's groups ministry. Using data from the largest survey of pastors and laypersons ever done on the condition of groups in the church, they define a simple process to lead your groups from where they are to where God wants them to be.

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Customer Reviews

Ed Stetzer is vice president of research and ministry development at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tennessee. He holds two masters and two doctoral degrees and has written dozens of articles and acclaimed books including *Planting Missional Churches*, *Breaking the Missional Code*, *Comeback Churches*, and *Lost and Found*. Ed and his wife, Donna, have three daughters and live

in Nashville,

Tennessee. Eric Geiger serves as one of the Vice Presidents at LifeWay Christian Resources, leading the Resources Division. Eric received his doctorate in leadership and church ministry from Southern Seminary. Eric has authored or co-authored several books including Creature of the Word and the best selling church leadership book, Simple Church. Eric is married to Kaye, and they have two daughters: Eden and Evie. During his free time, Eric enjoys dating his wife, playing with his daughters, and shooting basketball.

Transformational Groups is part of the Transformational Church series by Lifeway. The authors point out that while transformation is the goal, groups are the tool. Here you will find the reasons for establishing groups (which could be Sunday School, discipleship classes, home life groups, etc.), research on group characteristics, attributes of effective group leaders, and an explanation of the need for a new leadership culture in our churches, among other things. This is an excellent primer for church leaders seeking to move their church from a collection of people facing forward in a worship service to a community that gathers in groups for the purpose of formation (teaching and study), connection, or mission/outreach. Of course, larger worship gatherings continue, but real growth and mission work take place in smaller groups. If you are in search of a book with details on how to actually form and implement a small group, this is not that book. The target readers are obviously pastors and church leaders who need a more strategic view of developing groups and leaders, not the small group leader per se. I would highly recommend reading Transformational Church prior to reading Transformational Groups. It provides a research-based foundation for churches that want (and need) to move into the business of transforming lives and communities in Christ. Transformational Groups is just one aspect of a Transformational Church.

Good research, strong application steps. Inspiring stories that group leaders can relate to. You should also give this book to your pastor.

I used this book to teach a practical ministry class in Northwest Indiana. Our students were inspired to 'rethink' discipleship training in their local churches. Thank you for your stewardship of the ministry of transformational discipleship.

Great book! A fresh look at how to make a church come alive.

“Doing life together is an unquestionable essential in the disciple-making process.” (page 7). There can be no doubt that groups are important. Ed Stetzer and Eric Geiger provide a great resource to ministry leaders in their book *Transformational Groups*. Statistics provide insight and the Stetzer/Geiger duo utilize research numbers to bolster the biblical emphasis of ministry in relationship. Stated at the outset, Stetzer and Geiger state that “Transformation is a communal experience, not an individual exercise” and “Doing life together is an unquestionable essential in the disciple-making process” (7). If making disciples is the goal of the church, then groups are a non-negotiable vehicle, regardless of their moniker (Small Groups, Sunday School, Life Groups, Men’s Bible Study, etc.) When Christians are a part of a small group they are much more likely to practice the spiritual disciplines of Bible-reading, praying, and confession. They have a greater proclivity to be intentional in spending time with other believers and to use their gifts in ministry. Their beliefs are more likely to coincide with a Biblical worldview as opposed to the syncretism and pluralism so prevalent in our culture today. In addition, their research identified eight areas of discipleship in which small groups play an essential part: Bible Engagement, Obeying God and Denying Self, Serving God and Others, Sharing Christ, Exercising Faith, Seeking God, Building Relationships, Unashamed (Transparency). This book is of greatest value in hands of leaders who need rationale and strategy for developing an over-arching small group ministry. *Transformational Groups* is replete with statistics, quotes, anecdotes, questions, and Biblical references. From the selection of small group leaders to questions one can process with a leadership team, the basics of small group organization are described. Seekers and small group leaders can also benefit from this work. The evidence is conclusive and their case is persuasive. Christians need to be in a small group. I highly recommend *Transformational Groups* for those who are seeking to understand Jesus’ call to “make disciples.” 5 out of 5 stars. “No matter how you define groups—Life Groups, Sunday school, discipleship classes, or Bible fellowships—the importance is the same. Church leaders—including pastoral staff, elders, deacons, and leadership teams—must see community as a biblical nonnegotiable, an essential for transformation, a necessity for building lives that stand the test of time.” (page 7). *Transformational Groups* - Ed Stetzer

Inspirational, instructive and intensely practical. Great read for leaders getting ready to start groups or wanting to take their groups to the next level.

I love this book. I consider it to be the next must read for pastors and small group pastors. Finally, here is proof that small groups make a difference.

An immensely helpful book outlining some of the "best practices" for small groups, as well as a continued manifesto emphasizing their importance. If you are looking at rolling out small groups at your church, or revamping the groups you have, this book is for you.

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