

Approaching the Holidays Well as a Group Leader

The Holidays can be a substantial challenge for groups. Our already busy schedules are compounded by holiday shopping, Christmas vacation plans, family arrangements, and normal life distractions and obstacles that don't take a break. While this season can be a challenge for groups, we also believe it has the equal potential to give you group a powerful boost of momentum heading into the New Year. Here are some helpful tips for your group during the holiday season.

- **Serve together.** There are plenty of organizations in town who would welcome your support during the holiday season. You could help serve at a soup kitchen on Thanksgiving day. You could additionally sign up to serve at our family Christmas dinner. The important thing is that you serve together, and you make a plan to do so.
- **Share a meal together for group.** Take a week to prepare some food that isn't necessarily thanksgiving themed, and share it together the week before or after Thanksgiving. Use this as an opportunity to meet together simply for the purpose of fellowship and prayer.
- **Plan an early December Christmas Party.** We understand that by the second week of December your commitments are already through the roof. Make a plan to exchange white elephant gifts, or wear ugly sweaters. Schedule a time that works for everyone, whether that is during your group time, or on a different evening where everyone is free.
- **Take a short break.** We have found that groups that try to meet every week through the Holidays tend to lose interest and momentum. It can be discouraging when 80% of your group fails to show up for a month in a row. Take a season to invest in your family. We also recommend creating an email thread where group members can update prayer requests over the holidays.
- **Get your first meeting for the New Year on the calendar.** While a break is healthy, we believe it will benefit your group the most if they have a target date for return. Our recommendation would be to start around the second week of the New Year. Take the time in an upcoming group meeting to establish that date, as well as the last time you will meet before your break. It may also be helpful to establish what study you'll be doing to give you group members something to look forward to.