

## One-to-One Meetings and Group Development

How a campus minister apportions his time changes as a ministry grows. When he first steps on campus, the only ministry he has is talking to individuals. When he begins a Bible study, he divides the time he spends with people between that group activity and 1-1 meetings. As he trains students to lead, they begin to do an increasing amount of the 1-1 ministry, and what 1-1 time the minister does will be largely with the leaders. It must never be exclusively with the leaders or he will lose touch with the group and be seen as a distant figure. However, if the minister fails to pull back from the 1-1 ministry with the membership, he will communicate a lack of trust in his leaders and eventually his ministry will stagnate or shrink. By definition the leaders in a Stage 5 ministry<sup>1</sup> will be doing most of the ministry activity beside the campus minister who is mentoring them. They will be capable of handling all but the extreme cases of pastoral need. If this is not the case, then it is not a Stage 5 group.

Stage 5 is essentially impossible to reach in some situations (e.g. 2-year schools), and no pastor in such a situation should doubt his value for ministering to those students. Where it *is* possible for a group to grow to Stage 5, but has not, several factors may be in the way.

- 1) Time. It takes years to develop a Stage 5 ministry. It cannot be rushed.
- 2) Ignorance. The campus minister may not know how, or have developed sufficient skill to grow a group to Stage 5. He needs time and training.
- 3) Ego. Some pastors may not want to share ministry with others. They want students to come to them for help, not to other students. This will permanently stunt the growth of the group.
- 4) Fear. Some pastors are afraid something may go wrong if they invite students into ministry. This is a well-founded fear; something will *definitely* go wrong. But the cost of a stunted group is greater than the cost of a few mis-steps by students.
- 5) Providence. Sometimes God has strange ideas about how a group should develop.

A common mistake in ministry is to think that unless a person is in a 1-1 relationship with a more mature Christian, he is not being discipled. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of ministry and of spiritual growth. The foremost means by which God matures His people is through preaching. God also works through small group Bible studies and all the other activities of a ministry: prayer meetings, social events, seminars, retreats, casual conversation, etc. The *whole ministry* disciples its members to the extent it is saturated with the means of grace. If a ministry is mature, there should be little need for 1-1 time with the pastor except for special situations. The two most significant reasons for 1-1 time with the pastor are difficult situations (emergencies, complex questions, extreme counseling issues, etc.) and special training (e.g. a leadership role). Otherwise all the other elements of ministry do the work of sanctifying individuals.

Each campus is different and each minister is different, so there are no rules for how to do this. The table following should be understood to provide a *framework for thinking* about how 1-1 time changes as a ministry grows. Each minister must discern how to apportion his time considering his own specific circumstances. This table is offered to help with that discernment.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Part 2: Stages of Group Development" (p. 4) in <https://cdaavidgreen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/group-development.pdf>

Time spent meeting with people							
	Total Time in Avenues			1-1 Time			
	1-1	Small Gps*	Lg Gp**	Fringe	Members	Leaders	Emergency
Stage 1	75%	15%	10%	90%+		0%	10%
Stage 2	60%	25%	15%	20%	60%	10%	10%
Stage 3	45%	35%	20%	10%	50%	30%	10%
Stage 4	35%	45%	20%	5%	25%	60%	10%
Stage 5	25%	55%	20%	0% ++	10%	80%	10%

\* This includes Bible studies, Ministry Team meetings, various committee meetings, etc.

\*\* This includes Large Group Meeting, retreats, conferences, social events, etc.

+ At the beginning of a ministry membership has little meaning.

++ An important way to connect with fringe and members in a mature group is during informal time at Large Group, conferences, social events, etc.

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