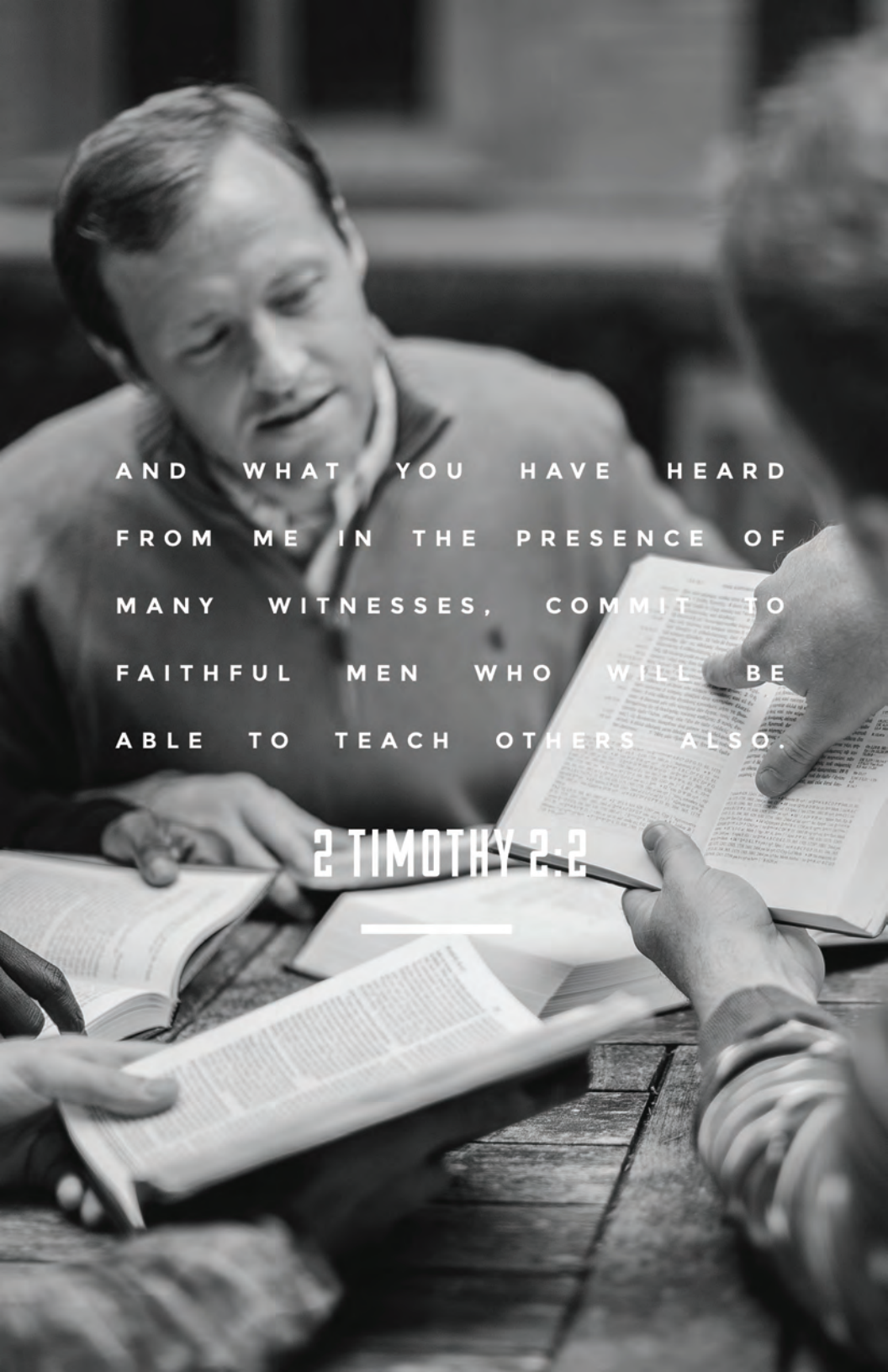
D-GROUPS

THE CHAPEL


AND WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM ME IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY WITNESSES, COMMIT TO FAITHFUL MEN WHO WILL BE ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO.
2 TIMOTHY 2:2

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNITY GROUP AND D-GROUP

COMMUNITY GROUP		D-GROUP
A life- changing community where you can belong, believe, & become. **Belong:** Where you are welcomed and accepted. **Believe:** Where you can encounter Jesus through His Word & people. **Become:** Where you can become who God designed you to be.	DESCRIPTION	A time-stamped, gender-specific, closed group that meets weekly for accelerated spiritual transformation.
Open Group	MODEL	Closed Group
Believers and non-believers	MAKE-UP	Believers
Varies, but usually 12-20 people	SIZE	3-5 people
Co-ed or gender-specific	DYNAMIC	Gender-specific
Connect people into life-changing community	PURPOSE	Grow people as disciplemakers of Jesus Christ
Exists for a period of time and then launches new groups	TIME-FRAME	A smaller group that exists for 12-18 months
Flexible expectations of members, largely dependent on the Community Group as a whole	EXPECTATION	High expectation of participants, upheld by covenant commitments and consistent accountability
Designed for each member to find a place where they can belong, believe, and become	MEMBERS	Designed for each to show the MARCS of a healthy member: Missional / Accountable / Reproducible / Communal / Scriptural
Community Groups move people into D-Groups and over time, multiply into multiple groups	GROUP	One group multiples into multiple groups
Intentionally inviting / Fun / Gospel centered (Prayer, Worship, Word) / Caring, Praying & Serving each other	COMPONENTS	Accountability / Bible Reading / HEAR Journals / Prayer / Scripture Memory /

DEFINITIONS

DISCIPLEMAKING is intentionally entering into someone's life to help them know and follow Jesus (evangelism) and to teach them to obey His commands (discipleship).

EVANGELISM is sharing the Gospel (Good News) of Jesus Christ with someone to help them know and follow Jesus as Lord through repentance and faith.

DISCIPLESHIP is intentionally equipping believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Christ.

WHAT IS A D-GROUP?

A Discipleship Group (D-Group) is a time-stamped, gender-specific closed group that meets weekly for accelerated spiritual transformation. A person joins a D-Group by invitation only.

While Community Groups exist for the purposes of community growth and fellowship, they have an underlying additional purpose: evangelism. Community Groups are designed to reach lost people by getting them involved in a group. A D-Group, on the other hand, consists of believers who desire a deeper walk with Christ. It is not evangelistic in its form or function, but in its fruit: It makes disciples who will then go on to make more disciples.

The format of a D-Group is not one of a teacher-student, but a round table discussion. In their book *The Invested Life*, Joel Rosenberg and T. E. Koshy suggest that a discipleship relationship is "more personal, more practical, and more powerful. A teacher shares information, while a disciple shares life; a teacher aims for the head, while a disciple aims for the heart; a teacher measures knowledge, while a disciple measures faith; a teacher is an authority, while a disciple is a servant; and a teacher says, 'Listen to me,' while a disciple says, 'Follow me.'" This blueprint, sketched by Jesus Christ through His personal example, is how discipleship is accomplished in the lives of believers, and, ultimately, within the local church. When this plan is followed, those involved will participate in three dynamics that result in growth in their personal lives, as well as in the Kingdom: community, accountability, and multiplication.

WHY DISCIPLESHIP?

MAKING DISCIPLES: A COMMAND TO OBEY - As believers in Christ, we have been commanded to "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20).

MAKING DISCIPLES: A WORK TO DO - God didn't just save us from something; He saved us for something. Paul wrote that we are His "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do" (Eph 2:10). When we make disciples, we fulfill the purpose for which we were created and accomplish the good work God has planned for us to do.

MAKING DISCIPLES: A WORLD TO REACH - Malachi 1:11a says, "My name will be great among the nations, from the rising of the sun to its setting." A prerequisite to Jesus' return is that His disciples will share the Gospel with all the peoples of the world (Mark 13:10). We are to make Him known to all nations and this is best accomplished by making disciples who will make disciples (2 Tim. 2:2).

MAKING DISCIPLES: A LIFESTYLE TO MODEL - Jesus prayed for those who would be "with Him" and spent more time developing the twelve than He spent with the crowds (Mark 3:14). Jesus didn't just tell His followers to make disciples; He modeled discipleship for them.
If devoting His life to the development of a few was important to Jesus, then it should be important to us! Jesus said, "My Father is glorified by this, that you produce much fruit and prove to be my disciples" (John 15:5). Jesus came so that we might have abundant life (John 10:10). A part of the abundant life is the joy of sharing the love of Jesus with others and helping them to become fully devoted followers of Christ.

HOW DO I CHOOSE DISCIPLES?

As with everything in the discipleship process, we take our cues from Jesus. Before He selected disciples, He spent time in prayer (Luke 6:12-16), so that's where we should begin, too. Ask God to make it clear to you, regarding the 2-4 people you should invite into your D-Group.

Remember that the word disciple means "learner," so begin by asking God to send you a group of men or women who have a desire to learn and grow. You should look for people that first and foremost have high character.

A helpful way to identify people to invite into your group is to look for F.A.T. people: Faithful, Available, Teachable.

Faithful: Is this person faithful in following Jesus at whatever stage of life they are in currently?

Available: Is this person available enough to fulfill the time commitment of a D-Group?

Teachable: Does this person display a humble desire to learn from those around him or her?

It does not matter if a person has been walking with Jesus for two months or two decades. If they have a track record of Faithful, Available, and Teachable, then they would be a great person to consider inviting into your next D-Group.

HOW DO I KNOW IF IT IS WORKING?

Five Grace-Filled Disciplines of a Chapel D-Group:
Are your people consistently practicing the following?

Prayer
Bible Reading (Chapel Reading Plan)
H.E.A.R. Journal
Accountability
Scripture Memory

Five M.A.R.C.S. of a Healthy Group:
Are your people displaying the five M.A.R.C.S. of a healthy group?

Missional
Members should be engaging with those unengaged with the church.

Accountable
Members are open and transparent about how one is allowing the Gospel to impact their life.

Reproducible
Members should pray and plan to multiply out and lead their own D-Groups.

Communal
Members intentionally share life with each other.

Scriptural
Members meet around the Bible as their textbook.

HOW TO START A D-GROUP

Pray: about whom God would have you ask to be in your D-Group.
Approach: those individuals and invite them into your D-Group.
Covenant: with them to be committed and accountable to each other.
Invest: your life into the D-Group members for the next 12-18 months.

EXAMPLE D-GROUP MEETING

Communal: 10 minutes
* Spend the first 10 minutes catching up with your group. A great way is for each person to share his or her "high" and "low" of the week.

Scriptural/Accountable: 30-60 minutes
* Quote your ***memory verses***.
* Share ***H.E.A.R. Journals*** from the ***F-260 plan***. A great question to ask is "Which of your H.E.A.R. Journals stood out the most to you this week and what are you doing about it?" As you focus on the Response section, it should start an accountability discussion.
* Ask additional ***accountability questions*** specific to the person.

Missional: 15 minutes
* Each member will chose a family member, friend, neighbor, co-worker that is not engaged in the church and the member will commit to:
Pray daily / ***Invest*** weekly / ***Invite*** them to the right event
* Weekly, each member should share how he or she prayed, invested, and/or invited someone in their life.

Reproducible: 5 minutes
* Finish with prayer for current group members and future ones too.

Optional book: 10-20 minutes
If you read a supplemental book, discuss it last. The Bible is comes first.

SAMPLE H.E.A.R. JOURNAL ENTRY

Read: Philippians 4:10-13
Date: 11-30-13
Title: Secret of Contentment

H (Highlight): *What is a verse(s) that stood out to you in your reading?*

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13

E (Explain): *What was the author trying to communicate to his audience back then?*

Paul was telling the church at Philippi that he has discovered the secret of contentment. No matter the situation in Paul's life, he realized that Christ was all he needed, and Christ was the one who strengthened him to persevere through difficult times.

A (Apply): *What does this text mean for believers today?*

In my life, I will experience many ups and downs. My contentment is not found in circumstances. Rather, it is based on my relationship with Jesus Christ. Only Jesus gives me the strength I need to be content in every circumstance of life.

R (Respond): *How will I personally respond (an action or prayer) to this text today?*

Lord Jesus, please help me as I strive to be content in You. Through Your strength, I can make it through any situation I must face.

Sample H.E.A.R. Journal taken from Robby Gallaty's book
Growing Up: How To Be A Disciple That Makes Disciples.

DISCIPLEMAKING COVENANT

As the Spirit leads, I will commit to:

* Give myself fully to the Lord during this time with the anticipation that I am entering a season of accelerated spiritual transformation.

* Meet with my D-Group (60-90 minutes) each week, unless absolutely unable.

* Complete all assignments for each D-Group meeting prior to the meeting.

* Contribute to a group atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency.

* Pray every week for the other members of my D-Group.

* Pray and look for others in my life with whom I can replicate the process, when my current group ends.

Leader Name: _____

Member Name: _____

Date: _____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MANY PEOPLE SHOULD BE IN THE GROUP?

Because accountability works well in a smaller setting, the ideal size of a D-Group is 3 to 5--you and 2 to 4 other people. We recommend that you do not have more than 5, and believe that a one-on-one relationship is not ideal.

WHERE SHOULD WE MEET?

Find a meeting place away from the church. Restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, diners, and homes are all good options. Meeting outside the church in the community encourages your group members to publicize their faith, teaching them it is okay to read the Bible at a restaurant or pray in public. Be sure to select a place that is convenient for all group members.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE MEET?

Ideally, you should meet once a week for about an hour to an hour and a half. You can meet more frequently, but it is important that you meet at least once a week. This schedule does not prohibit those you are discipling from calling you throughout the week or coming by for counsel when needed. It is important to remember that discipleship is about the relationship between you and your group members, not about checking a requirement box. Disciplemaking is a way of life, not a program.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

IS THERE AN ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT?

Yes, and it is not negotiable. Since you will to spend your lives together for the next twelve to eighteen months, commitment is necessary. Some people have said after the initial meeting, "Uh, this isn't really for me. I'm not interested." That's okay. I allow Potential disciples may opt out of the group on the front end after understanding the expectations of a D-Group. Remember, you are looking for people who want to be discipled, people who have a desire to grow and learn. An unwillingness to commit reveals that they are not ready to be in a D-Group. It's the example Jesus set for us.

WHO CAN LEAD A D-GROUP?

The only absolute requirement for leading a D-Group is that you be intentionally pursuing Christ. You do not need to be a master teacher or have all of the answers; you do not need to be able to say, "Listen to me." If you can say, "Follow me; I'm pursuing Christ," you have the tools you need to lead a D-Group.

As a D-Group leader, you set the tone for the group's atmosphere. You are not lecturing students; you are cultivating an intimate, accountable relationship with a few close friends. Joel Rosenberg and T.E. Koshy wrote in their book The Invested Life that the discipleship relationship is "more personal, more practical, and more powerful. A teacher shares information, while a discipler aims for the heart; a teacher measures knowledge, while a discipler measures faith; a teacher is an authority, while a discipler is a servant; and a teacher says, 'Listen to me,' while a discipler says, 'Follow me.'"

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DO I CHALLENGE MY D-GROUP TO MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE?

Proverbs 25:11 says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver." How many times has a Scripture come to mind when you needed just the right words in a situation? Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance all that He said (John 14:26). Those passages of Scripture we have memorized will be brought to our memory at the right moment —but we must learn them. Group members will memorize Scripture if you hold them accountable through reciting verses to one another at every meeting. Chapter 8 of *Growing Up* by Robby Gallaty contains a thorough explanation and a practical system for Scripture memorization.

SHOULD I INVITE NON-BELIEVERS INTO MY D-GROUP?

The preferred method is a gathering of born-again believers seeking to grow in their faith. We recommend that you use your Community Group as a place to invite non-believers to gather around the Word of God and experience the love of Christ through His people.

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO A QUESTION?

There is no shame in not knowing all of the answers to every question. Simply confess that you may not have all the answers, but you will find them. Then do so before the next meeting. Ask your pastor or another spiritual leader to help you with the answer. Never give the impression that you have all the answers.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

It is less important to know answers than it is to know how to seek them. It is better to say, "I am not the smartest man in the world because I know all the answers, but because I know where to find the answers." You may not have total recall when it comes to biblical history, theology, and doctrine, but with time you can locate them!

WHEN DO I ASK SOMEONE TO LEAVE THE D- GROUP?

These are some reasons for asking someone to leave the group: they don't possess a teachable spirit, they are not faithful in attending meetings, they are not completing assigned work and putting in the kind of effort you require, they are living a lifestyle of blatant and unrepentant sin, etc. Teachability is an indispensable quality for growth. One situation where someone may be asked to leave is if he or she monopolizes the group discussion week after week. It will be obvious they want to demonstrate their superior knowledge of the Word rather than learn from interacting with others.

Additionally, laziness will breed complacency in the group. Missing meetings, refusing to memorize Scripture, failing to log HEAR entries, or sitting idly by during discussion times lowers the morale of the others in the group. This type of behavior must be addressed immediately. Meet with this individual privately to inquire about his or her attitude and actions. Remind him or her of the commitment made at the outset of the discipleship relationship. Like Jesus' relationship with His disciples, ours is a serious relationship, as well: a relationship built upon a mutual commitment to Christ and each other. Tragically, some will not follow through with that commitment, forcing you to confront them about their unfaithfulness.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN DO I SEND OUT DISCIPLES TO MAKE DISCIPLES?

Always begin with the end in mind. Your group should meet for 12 to 18 months, and they should expect that final date from the very beginning. Some groups develop a closer bond, which results in accelerated growth; others take longer. We do not recommend meeting for longer than 18 months. Some will be eager to begin their own group but others may not. Remind them that the goal is for the men and the women of the group to replicate their lives into someone else.

HOW DO I FIND A D-GROUP?

At The Chapel, D-Groups ideally form out of our Community Groups. For our leaders, these Community Groups are the "fishing ponds" for those who will join their next D-Group. As people form friendships and bonds in Community Groups, handfuls of them will decide to take the next step and begin a discipleship journey together in a D-Group.

SUBSCRIBE

The Chapel has a Disciplemaking Podcast!

We believe that life change happens in circles, not rows. So, whether your circle is a Community Group, D-Group, or family, this resource exists to help equip you to make disciples that make disciples!

A new episode is released each Wednesday! Subscribe today! Find us on Apple or Soundcloud. https://soundcloud.com/user-706360554

REGISTER

REGISTER your D-Group:
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