



DISCIPLESHIP GROUP VISION GUIDE

The following guide will help your community group understand the importance and goal of discipleship groups. *Discipleship groups are gender-specific groups of three or four who gather regularly to know and encourage one another in their walk with Jesus.* You can find a full description of discipleship groups and frequently asked questions in the Community Group Handbook on pages 39–48. To help you understand our vision for discipleship groups, take time during a family meal to work through the following:

STEP 1: PRAY

Goal: Pray for fruitful and healthy discipleship groups.

Spend about *2 minutes* asking for God’s favor and grace as you talk about and prepare to launch discipleship groups. In particular, pray that God would mature your group and help you all to better disciple one another.

STEP 2: CAST VISION

Goal: Explain what discipleship groups are and why they matter.

Take up to *10 minutes* to consider the “what” and the “why” of discipleship groups. Your group may read aloud the Community Group Handbook sections entitled “What Is a Discipleship Group” and “What Does a Discipleship Group Do?” on pages 41–43. Or the leader might summarize these sections for you in their own words. Regardless of how you talk about discipleship groups, you should remember the following big ideas:

- Discipleship groups are gender-specific groups of three or four who gather regularly to know and encourage one another in their walk with Jesus. By keeping our discipleship groups small and consistent, we are able to go deeper together in discipleship and friendship.

- Instead of “religious” or “irreligious” discipleship groups, we want to have gospel-centered groups. These kinds of groups confess sins, point each other to Jesus, and encourage each other to live in line with the gospel.
- Discipleship groups work through a weekly guide that includes four movements: Scripture, Sharing, Spread of the Gospel, and Spirit-Filled Prayer. These movements help a group become more balanced, biblical, and fruitful.
- Discipleship groups are an important rhythm within our community groups. They are an essential tool for how our church develops and equips you for Christian maturity.

STEP 3: REVIEW

Goal: As a group, review the Discipleship Group Guide.

Hand out the Discipleship Group Guide and take *5 minutes* to walk through it together. This guide will be used with each discipleship group gathering. Be sure to take note of the following elements:

- Discipleship groups will invite one person at a time to share for up to 15 minutes. Once they have finished, the group should take 5 minutes to respond with Spirit-filled prayer for that person. Then repeat for the remaining members until everyone has shared and received prayer.

Setting a Time Limit. By having a set time-frame for sharing, each person has the opportunity to work through the guide at each gathering. While using a timer might feel insensitive, nothing is more disruptive to a group than a person who consistently dominates the conversation. Of course, facilitators should be sensitive to moments in which a person needs more focused attention and prayer. But these situations should be the exception, not the rule.

