



GETTING STARTED GUIDE

WHAT IS A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP?

A Discipleship Group (DG) is a small group of people (3-4, same gender) committed to getting real about life and helping one another grow up in love for God and out in obedience to God as disciple makers.

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A person who trusts and follows Jesus in obedience.

A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP MEETS AND DOES THE FOLLOWING:

<LOOK BACK

Talk about life, confess sin and share vulnerably with each other, then celebrate progress together.

^LOOK UP

Read and discuss the Bible, talk about how it applies to your life, practice scripture memory, then pray together.

>LOOK AHEAD

Share and pray for people in your life. Practice sharing the Gospel with one another, set goals, then **go**.

As you go, be intentional to commune regularly with God, worship with your church, invite people into your life, share the Gospel with them, and start new Discipleship Groups when they trust Christ.

WHAT ARE THE WINS OF A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP?

The aim of a DG is that with the help of the Holy Spirit and one another, we would:

- Grow deeper in love and obedience to God, becoming more like the one we follow - Jesus.
- Multiply DGs by making disciples and starting new DGs with new followers of Jesus.
- Know the places and people God has intentionally put around us, and take next steps of obedience towards sharing the Gospel and making disciples.

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

1. Determine a time when you can all meet together regularly.
2. Pick a **start** and **end** date for your discipleship group to give a time period for everyone to commit to.
3. Meet together for the first time to get to know everyone, share your stories of how you came to trust Christ, and determine what you're going to focus on in the Bible going forward.

HOW LONG SHOULD A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP LAST?

There is no set length of time. Each group could look a little different. However we suggest setting a specific a time period, and then reassessing with what is best for everyone and to always include new believers at the table of a DG. If the DG wants to keep going, or take a break and then pick it back up, that is great. We just always want to remember we are meant to make disciples and multiply, so starting a new group for and with new followers of Jesus should always be on the table and something we are working towards.

HOW DO WE MULTIPLY DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS?

1. Have multiplication as a goal from the beginning. Let everyone know up front that our aim is always to make disciples and start new DGs with new followers of Jesus, which may, and probably will, mean starting new DGs at some point to include new disciples of Jesus.
2. When you lead someone to life in Jesus, start a new DG with them and use the same DG model with them going forward. The important thing is to walk with a new follower of Jesus to grow as a disciple.
3. Share with your DG the people, places, and next steps of obedience for yourself so you can all hold each other accountable along the way.
4. Take the initiative to invite new members from your Community Group / Austin Life into a DG with you.
5. Let your CG leader know if you have space in your DG or are looking to start a new one.

WHY DO WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE IN A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP?

Fully trusting Jesus and following Him in obedience does not just casually happen. There will be times when it is easy to love God and to do what He says. But there will also be many times, perhaps even more, when trusting God and following Him in obedience is tough. We cannot do this alone. Which is why we need a few people who have access to our lives, who we are honest with, who will commit to helping us, to building us up, to walking with us in this relationship as a disciple of Jesus.

We believe a Discipleship Group offers the best environment for this to happen. We believe it offers the needed depth, intimacy, and accountability to help us press on as a disciple of Jesus. We believe when a group of people are centered around God's Word and committed to building one another up to trust and obey Jesus, then growth as a disciple will follow!

We also believe Discipleship Groups are instrumental in fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus tells us to make disciples who make disciples. As we invest in one another, and send each other out to do the same with others, the Kingdom of God will expand to all people in all places!

WHAT TOOLS ARE THERE FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS?

The Austin Life Church App will always feature the latest and up to date tools for your DG such as your weekly notes to take, next steps to write down, and people to reach out to. Plus a new believers resource and any other resources will be available by clicking on DGs within our App or by going to Discipleship Groups at austinflifechurch.com

WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS?

You can contact anyone on our staff at Austin Life Church or Mike Mobley at mike.mobley@austinflifechurch.com