

Starting a New Journey Group

There are a few principles to remember if you are considering starting a new group:

1. Feelings of not being worthy or equipped are natural. In fact, many in the Bible that God called felt this way, including Moses, David and Jeremiah, and some of Jesus' disciples. God loves to equip those he calls. God loves to show off his power and grace through weak people like us.
2. Pray. Pray about leading. Pray about people to ask. Pray about how God wants to use you.
3. Begin praying and preparing to multiply in your 3rd year of being in a group. Begin looking for people to ask. Begin leading some of the meetings. Begin working on areas of leading you want to grow in.
4. Selection is so important! It's important who you invite to be in your group. See section on Selection.
5. **Your primary aim is your own spiritual growth.** Much of discipleship is simply inviting others into your own pursuit to enjoy God, to feast on his grace, and walk by His Spirit.

Selection

The goal of selection is to identify 3-5 faithful, available, teachable and hungry men or women to disciple with the hope that they will grow spiritually and be able to use the gifts God's given them to disciple others or lead and serve in other ways.

I. WHO TO LOOK FOR:

1. Model: Mark 1:14-20; Luke 6:12-16; John 1:35-51; 17:6
Q) What principles of selection emerge from these passages?
2. Qualities: Eph. 4:12-16; Col. 1:4-12; 2 Tim. 2:1-7;
Q) What qualities of a disciple emerge from these passages?

Faithful: To God - there are no major areas of unrepentance or addiction
To church - they make effort to attend worship every weekend and be involved
To family - there are no major red flags in their family
Available: Willing to make time for weekly group time and some time to do "life together"
Teachable: Willing to be taught, not acting like they have it all figured out
Hungry: Demonstrate some eagerness to grow spiritually

Notes:

- 1) *You aren't looking for already mature disciples, but those with desire to grow spiritually.*
- 2) *Some of these you can discern beforehand, some when you invite, and some only after in the group.*
- 3) *Hungry is probably most important, as faithfulness, availability and teachability tend to flow out of a hunger to know and enjoy God*
- 4) *There's wisdom to look for those who have relational capacity, some desire for deeper relationships*
- 5) *4-6 people is a good group size. Having more than this leads to increased difficulty having vulnerability in group time and getting life-on-life time outside of group time.*

II. WHAT TO DO NEXT:

- ▶ **Make a list** of people you know that might be interested. You could know them well or very little.
 - Although it's not necessary, there's wisdom in finding people you already know, have overlapping activity, and even live close to.
- ▶ **Pray and discern** qualities of a disciple in them (F.A.T.H). Have informal conversations with them in passing or over a meal to discern if they are faithful, available, and hungry.
 - **Faithful:** Are they faithful to the church, consistent in weekend worship? Are they faithful to their spouse and children?
 - **Available:** Do they have margin in their schedule and desire to meet weekly to spend time with a group? Are they willing to make adjust their schedule to make time for it?
 - **Teachable:** Do they listen well or do they talk way too much? Do they demonstrate a willingness to learn from others?
 - **Hungry:** Are they consistent in worship? Are they hungry for deeper relationships and community? Some questions you might ask them: *What books have you been reading recently? How have you seen God working in your life recently? What do you normally do for your Bible reading or quiet time with God? What is an area of life where you are wanting to grow spiritually?*

▶ **FIRST Conversation with them**

1) Meet with them. Ask them questions and just enjoy getting to know them and their story. Share your story. You'll be able to discern much about how faithful, available, teachable, and hungry they are by simply doing this.

IF you DON'T sense a level of being FATH, then don't proceed. IF you DO, you can proceed to:

- 2) Share the vision of Life-on-Life Journey Discipleship Groups
 - Groups are not advertised
 - Goal of spiritual maturity, life-transformation, Christ-likeness
 - Not a small group:
 - Not just teaching and prayer, but includes equipping, accountability, Mission
 - Has curriculum, but not "curriculum on life" —> **It's life-on-life**
 - Multiplication in mind
 - Higher commitment, but high reward! - (ex. weekly meeting with prep, life-on-life, etc)
- 3) Share commitments of being in a group (summarize group covenant — 1 year commitment)
- 4) Ask if they have any reservations or concerns
- 5) Ask them to think, pray, and including their spouse. Communicate that you'll follow up with them.

- ▶ **Pray and discern** qualities of a disciple in them (F.A.T.H)
 - Try to discern from your FIRST conversation to what extent they are willing to make themselves available and be taught. Discern whether or not they are really eager to grow spiritually. What was their response to the vision of LOL?
 - Don't be afraid to say no. Give them an easy way out.
- ▶ **SECOND Conversation (IF YOU CHOSE TO CONTINUE)** — preferably within 2 weeks, with spouse
 - 1) Discuss what they and their spouse think about it.
 - 2) Discuss any questions or concerns they might have. Give an easy way out if hesitant.
 - 3) Get a commitment and celebrate the opportunity to grow spiritually together over the next year!