

# **GROUP LEADER** *Guide*



# TABLE OF *contents*

<b>Groups at Liberty</b>	<b>01</b>
Liberty's Mission + Vision	01
Find Community	01
ESPN	03
Dig Deeper: Next Steps	04
Semesters	05
 <b>The Role of a Group Leader</b>	 <b>06</b>
What Does a Group Leader Do?	06
Building Relationships	06
Becoming a Group Leader	06
Dig Deeper:	07
How to Create Good Group Dynamics	07
Confidence as a Group Leader	07
Starting Your Group in 3 Easy Steps	09
Dig Deeper: Starting Your Group	10
 <b>Leadership Support</b>	 <b>11</b>
Groups Coaches	11
Dig Deeper: Staying Connected with Leadership	11
 <b>Appendix</b>	 <b>13</b>
Group Leader Covenant	14
Group Covenant	15
Group Attendance	16
Group Inquiries & Registration (subject to change)	18
Childcare Reimbursement	19
RightNow Media	20
Dig Deeper: Choosing Curriculum	20
Types of Groups	21
Affinity Groups	21
Discipleship Groups	22
Topical Groups	24
Helpful Scripture References	25

# GROUPS *at Liberty*

## LIBERTY'S MISSION

Liberty exists to change lives, communities, and the world for Jesus Christ.

## LIBERTY'S VISION

God is moving Liberty to launch campuses within a 30-minute drive of every home in Hampton Roads and to launch groups where our people are.

## FIND COMMUNITY

The purpose of groups at Liberty is to find community by gathering together and growing together. God created us to live in community and experience life with others in meaningful relationships. Groups provide a place to connect with others, share life experiences, and grow in faith together.

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 - Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.*

At Liberty, we believe church involves both big and small groups – temple and house to house worship. We gather together and grow together in groups!

*Acts 2:46-47a - So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people.*

We base our group model on the early church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts, where we read about the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem, where group meetings in homes helped lay the foundation.

*Acts 5:42 - And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*

What makes the gathering of believers unique is the purpose behind our gathering. We gather for life change. We keep life change a focus of the group so that group meetings are purposeful. We want to help people take their next step of faith! Groups offer people:

#### 1. A Place to Gather

*Deuteronomy 31:12 - Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully observe all the words of the law.*

#### 2. A Place to Grow

*Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting the meeting together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

It is through life together that our problems become smaller, and God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

## What does a group look like?

Groups can look like a lot of different things! We have many different groups that meet in a variety of places. Some are centered around a shared interest, topical study, stage of life, or other activity. (You can see more info on types of groups on page 21). They can meet in a variety of places including homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops, office buildings, and campuses. Though each group is unique, all groups at Liberty are made up of E.S.P.N.:

**E: Encouragement** – Our group leaders and members encourage each other and walk through life together. We celebrate life's exciting times and are there for each other in hard times.

**S: Scripture** – Spending time in God's Word is foundational to groups. Whether groups may gather around an activity like frisbee or outreach or sermon discussions, Scripture is always paramount.

**P: Prayer** – Groups pray together and pray for one another. They share their prayer requests and pray together during group as well as during the week for each other.

**N: Next Steps** – We want each person to take their next step of faith. That may look different for everyone depending on where they are in their journey.

# Dig Deeper: next steps

## Here are some potential next steps a person can take:

- Start attending Sunday services
- Start reading the Bible regularly
- Start praying regularly
- Be baptized
- Complete Life Track
- Join the Life Team by finding a place to serve
- Start tithing
- Participate in 20 Days of Prayer
- Invite a friend to group or Sunday service
- Become a group leader

## How can I tell if group members are taking their next steps?

Ask! Make it part of your discussion whether in a group setting or individually. Here are some great questions to guide your conversation.

- How did you get connected to this group?
- Do you attend services at a Liberty campus?
- Which campus do you attend?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?
- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- Have you ever served on the Life Team?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- What brought you to Liberty?
- Have you ever been a part of a group before?
- Are you familiar with 20 Days of Prayer?
- Have you attended Life Track?
- Have you taken your Spiritual Gifts Survey?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- How can I pray for you?

**Everyone in your group will be at different places spiritually.** The vision of helping them take their next step is not to get them to do everything at once, it's to help identify where they currently are spiritually and offer a practical next step to help them grow. Here are some great ways you can share depending on where a group member is spiritually:

- Invite them to go to a Sunday service with you.
- Share your personal story and what God has been teaching you.
- Invite them to participate in 20 Days of Prayer with you.
- Encourage them to take a Spiritual Gifts Survey and find a place to serve on the Life Team. Check out [libertylive.church/serve](http://libertylive.church/serve).
- Invite them to consider being baptized. Invite your group to be there to celebrate anyone getting baptized.
- Share how you find time regularly to pray, worship, and read God's Word, and encourage them to make their own plan for time with God.
- If they are ready to receive Christ, offer to pray with them.

# GROUP *semesters*



Groups meet in 3 semesters throughout the year. They are each 3 months long.

**Fall: September – November**

**Winter: January – March**

**Spring/Summer: May – July**

Semesters provide easy start and end dates that help more people find community in different types of groups. It also gives the leader and group natural breaks built into the year. We encourage all of our groups to meet weekly during each semester to build genuine relationships.



# THE ROLE OF *a group leader*

## **WHAT DOES A GROUP LEADER DO?**

Group Leaders help people find community by gathering together and growing together. They lead their group in E.S.P.N.: Encouragement, Scripture, Prayer, and Next Steps.

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

Groups are all about meaningful relationships. A group leader's role is to build and cultivate relationships. This happens through connecting with your group members throughout the week outside of group and encouraging them to do the same. It happens when you walk through life together or encourage and care for group members in crisis or difficult times. It happens when you spend time just having fun together or going to church together. It happens when you pray daily for your group members and check in with them to see how they're doing. It happens when you help your group members take their next step. Pray for authentic community in your group.

## **BECOMING A GROUP LEADER:**

All group leaders complete the following before leading:

- Attend Life Track
- Have become a member of Liberty Live Church
- Have been baptized
- Attend New Group Leader Training
- Complete Group Leader Registration Form
- Sign Group Leader Covenant

# *Dig Deeper: group dynamics & leader confidence*

## **HOW TO CREATE GOOD GROUP DYNAMICS**

**Set expectations:** Letting people know what to expect will help them feel comfortable. Share how the group will flow, what times you'll start and end, how discussion/activities will happen, how to share prayer requests, etc.

**Follow the 70-30 rule:** Give your group space to speak and discuss. About 70% of the talking should come from members and 30% from the leader. Encourage everyone to participate.

**Guide the discussion:** Keep the discussion in a healthy place. If someone needs to dive deeper into a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or ask your coach for help if needed. Keep the conversation relevant to your group members. Groups are not a place for business, offerings, unapproved materials or speakers, or controversial topics such as political discussions.

**Respect boundaries:** Have men minister to men, and women to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our groups. These boundaries help protect leaders and members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

**Keep multiplication in mind:** Your influence can continue past your current group through multiplication. Consider raising up a co-leader to share responsibility of caring for and leading your group, with the end goal of multiplying your group.

## **CONFIDENCE AS A GROUP LEADER**

If you only do what you feel comfortable doing, you don't need God. God's best is often found outside your comfort zone. When you serve God and people by leading a group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.

*Philippians 4:13 - For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*

*2 Timothy 1:7 - For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.*

## CONFIDENCE AS A GROUP LEADER CONTINUED

When you feel uncertain about leading a group, use Scripture to overcome the lies of the enemy:

1. When you feel like you don't have the time, remember God has created you for this, and His timing is perfect.  
*Ecclesiastes 11:4 - If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.*
2. When you feel unqualified, remember God has equipped you.  
*2 Corinthians 3:5-6 - It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant.*
3. When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember God uses imperfect people.  
*2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your Group, remember ESPN:

E: Encourage

S: Share Scripture

P: Pray

N: Next Steps

### **What should you do if someone asks a question you can't answer?**

It's okay to not have all the answers. Thankfully, we can find guidance through prayer, God's Word, and the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to get some information and get back with them at your next group meeting. Do some personal research and call your coach to get advice.

### **What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?**

If you encounter a difficult situation within your group, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement, and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your coach. Also, you and/or the group member can contact campus staff, if needed.

# STARTING YOUR GROUP *in 3 easy steps*

- 01** Choose what type of group you'd like to have (video based, Bible study, prayer, discipleship, health/fitness, military/first responders, life skills, special needs, work/occupational, or other). Check out more info on group types on page 21.
- 02** Choose a time and place for your group to meet and register your group with our groups staff.
- 03** Invite people to your group and pray for God to move!

FIND COMMUNITY  
FIND COMMUNITY

# *Dig Deeper: starting your group*

**Here are a couple conversation starters to help people get talking as your group gets to know each other:**

- What are your hobbies?
- Where are you from?
- What are you looking forward to this year?
- What brought you here?
- What are you hoping to get out of this group?

## **Planning a Group Meeting:**

- Send a message to your group members reminding them about the first meeting.
- Arrive early and welcome your group members as they arrive.
- Consider nametags to help everyone learn names for the first few weeks.

## **How can I invite people to my group?**

- Start with people who are already in your sphere of influence (co-workers, friends, and neighbors).
- Find people around you who are new to the church, are new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.
- Look for people you think you can help to realize their potential.
- Ask God to send the right people to your group.

# LEADERSHIP *support*

## GROUPS COACHES

As a group leader, know you are not alone! Your pastors, staff, and coaches are working alongside you to invest in groups at Liberty.

## WHAT'S A GROUPS COACH?

A coach is someone who helps you get the support you need to get started, flourish, and multiply. They provide "soul care" through a listening ear, encouraging word, and prayer support. Your coach is there to help you as you need support throughout the semester. Your coach's priority is to pray daily for you. Reach out to your coach if you have a need, prayer request, or concern.

## *Dig Deeper: staying connected with leadership*

Our staff, pastors, and coaches are here to support and give resources and tools for leading groups. Throughout the semester, respond to your coach and the groups staff about group attendance, potential new group leaders, and how members are taking their next steps. We also love hearing stories of God moving in your group. You can send your group stories to [groups@libertylive.church](mailto:groups@libertylive.church). We have a facebook group and leader tools on our website where we share and give resources and recommendations for groups.

# Leadership Pipeline



A GLOBAL LEADER LEADS  
THE CHURCH THROUGH VISION  
AND PHILOSOPHY

GLOBAL LEADER



LOCAL PASTORS/DIRECTORS  
LEAD GROUPS MINISTRY AT  
DIFFERENT CAMPUSES

LOCAL PASTOR/DIRECTOR



A COACH HELPS 5 LEADERS  
TO SUCCEED WHILE PROVIDING  
SOUL CARE

COACHES



GROUP LEADERS HELP PEOPLE  
FIND COMMUNITY BY GATHERING  
TOGETHER AND GROWING TOGETHER

LEADERS



EVERYONE WHO IS IN A  
PARTICULAR GROUP

GROUP MEMBERS

# APPENDIX



# GROUP LEADER

## covenant

1. I will make it my highest priority to pursue Christlikeness daily by spending time in God's Word and in prayer in order to love God and others more. Matthew 22:37-40
2. I will regularly attend and actively worship Jesus with Liberty because God has called believers to be a part of a local church. Hebrews 10:24-25
3. I will refrain from all forms of immorality by applying the Scriptures through the power of the Holy Spirit in order to live a morally pure life. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
4. I will contribute my tithe and offerings to God by giving to Liberty in order to advance the Gospel in Hampton Roads and beyond. Malachi 3:10, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-12
5. I will work to resolve any conflict between me and any other person in a God honoring way. Matthew 18:15-20
6. I will be wise in my social interactions by refraining from gossip or posting questionable images/language on social media. Proverbs 10:18-19, Ephesians 4:29
7. I will be supportive of the Pastor, staff, and church vision, and strive to maintain unity in the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Hebrews 13:17
8. I will refrain from doing anything that would hurt my testimony or the testimony of our church, understanding the dangers of controlled or illegal substances and other potential stumbling blocks. Proverbs 20:1, Proverbs 23:31-32, Romans 14:13-21, Ephesians 5:18
9. I will share the gospel with all people. Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 26:17-18, Romans 10:14-15
10. I will actively use my spiritual gifts, abilities, and passions to serve God, my community and the world. Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 4:10
11. I will make thorough preparation for my ministry responsibilities in order to serve with excellence, and I will participate in leadership and training meetings to be better equipped to serve. 2 Timothy 2:15

*By signing the covenant, I am saying that I will do my best to keep the commitments above. If breaking these expectations becomes a habit, I understand that I may be asked to step down from my leadership role, and that it will be carried out in a loving and constructive manner, encouraging reconciliation, restoration and healing.*

# GROUP *covenant*

*To provide a predictable environment where participants can gather and grow together in a Christ-centered community.*

## VALUES + GOALS:

**Relationships:** While prayer and discussion of curriculum are key elements of a group, the driving force behind the group is the building of relationships inside and outside group meetings.

**Authenticity:** The atmosphere of a group should encourage openness and transparency among members. This is an environment where people should feel free to be themselves.

**Confidentiality:** For authenticity to occur, members must be able to trust that issues discussed with a group are not to be shared outside of the group.

**Respect:** Group Members should never say anything that will embarrass their spouse or members of the group.

**Priority:** A primary responsibility of community is to prioritize for group meetings and take the time to complete homework. Attending regularly and completing the home assignments prepares us to contribute to a life changing group discussion.

**Multiplication:** Group members recognize that one of the key goals of their group is to start a new group within 12-24 months or when the group grows larger than sixteen people. This allows others to experience the group relationship.

**Care & Support:** The group is to provide care for every member, especially in times of crisis.

**Filling the Empty Chair:** Group members commit to prayerfully invite unchurched people to join the group and fill the empty chair. The group will pray for a person to fill the empty chair at each group meeting.

## GROUP GUIDELINES:

1. The group will meet on \_\_\_\_\_. (Day of the Week)
2. The group sessions will begin at \_\_\_\_\_ and end at \_\_\_\_\_. (Time)
3. The group time will typically consist of \_\_\_\_ minutes of sharing, \_\_\_\_ minutes of study/discussion and \_\_\_\_ minutes of prayer time.
4. Group members will attend and participate on a regular basis. Members agree to pray for other group members on a weekly basis.

Group Leaders: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

# GROUP *attendance*

## LEARNING HOW TO USE MOBILE TOOLS

- Mobile Tools is where you will be able to mark your attendance, view your group members, view your group's past attendance, email your group, and add or remove group members.
- Make sure you have an account or create one by going to [mp.libertylive.com/portal](http://mp.libertylive.com/portal)
- You can log in by going to [mp.libertylive.com/portal](http://mp.libertylive.com/portal) and clicking "For Group Leaders" on the right-hand side of your screen, or simply go to [mp.libertylive.com/mobiletools](http://mp.libertylive.com/mobiletools) and log in there.
- You will also receive a reminder email asking you to mark your attendance the day after your group meets. The email will contain a link that will bring you to the attendance marking page in Mobile Tools.

## ADDING GROUP MEMBERS

- Once you are logged in, click on "Groups Manager" and then click on your group. That will bring you to your group's home page. To add a group member, click on the "Add" button on the right side of your screen, above the list of your group members.
- When you click "Add", you will be able to add new members. You must have an email address for the new person to add them to the group. You cannot add a new person without an email address. Fill out the name, email, and phone numbers and click "add person". After they have been added, a box will appear saying they have been added and you can click "back to group".

## REMOVING GROUP MEMBERS

- To remove someone, navigate to your group's home page. Once there, you will see a list of your group members on your screen.
- Click on the person that you would like to remove. Click on the "Action" button to the right of the person's name. A list of possible actions will drop down. Select "Remove from Group".
- Once you click "Remove from Group", the below screen will appear, asking you for the reason you are removing this person. Fill that out and then click "Remove this Person".

# GROUP *attendance continued*

## MARKING ATTENDANCE

- Follow the link from the attendance email you receive or login and click on “Groups Manager” on the left side of the screen, and select your group.
- Now, click on the blue button near the center of the screen that says “Record/Review Attendance”.
- Click the drop down box and choose the date you would like to mark attendance for.
- You can now see your group members and choose which members were present. To select a person, click their name. Once you have selected everyone who was present, click Save/Update.
- After clicking Save/Update, you will see a green box at the top of your screen confirming that your group attendance has been updated.

## ADDING GUESTS

- If there are guests who attend your group for one week and may not be ready to commit to attending regularly, please mark one or more of these new “guest” records to add to your total attendance count.
- Please still add new group participants by name if they will be a regular part of your group. Do not mark the new generic guest records for those you are actually adding to the group by name.
- The character “z” is used to sort these guests alphabetically at the end of the regular group roster.
- If you have more than five extra guests at one group meeting, please send an email to let us know, so we can add to your total attendance number.

## SENDING AN EMAIL TO GROUP MEMBERS

- Navigate to your group’s home page in Mobile Tools. Click the button that says “Action” and select “Send an Email”. You will be brought to a page where you can type your email and choose who to send it to.
- It will automatically be set to send to the whole group, but to change this, simply click on the box next to “To:” and select specific people. All group members will appear, and you can choose which ones you want to receive the email. If a name appears in grey and you are unable to click them, it means they do not have an email address on file.
- Underneath the box where you can type the text of your email, you will see an option to attach a file. You can use this to attach anything that you would attach to a regular email (pictures, documents, etc.)
- Once you are ready to send your email, click “Send”. After clicking send, you will be brought to a page that

# GROUP INQUIRIES & REGISTRATION

When someone selects your group on our online Group Finder, they have two options:

- **Contact This Group**
- **Sign Up For This Group**

Contact This Group:

- This option will send you an email with the person's contact information and optional message. They may have requested information from a few different groups, so when you contact them we recommend sending some information about your group and answer any questions they may have. Once they decide to attend and join your group, you will need to add them to your group on Mobile Tools.

Sign Up For This Group

- If someone chooses to directly sign up for your group, they will be automatically added to your roster. [You will still receive an email that they have signed up, and you'll need to contact them with the details of your group (study plan, meeting location, etc.)]
- If they don't end up attending your group, you may remove them from your group on Mobile Tools.

# CHILDCARE

## *reimbursement*

If your group meets on campus, check with the local campus staff on availability of childcare. For other groups, we offer a childcare reimbursement program.

Please refer to the Childcare Reimbursement Request Form for complete guidelines, which is available online at [libertylive.church/childcarereimbursement](http://libertylive.church/childcarereimbursement).

Here are our current reimbursement rates:

	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours
<b>1 child</b>	\$ 9.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 27.00	\$ 36.00
<b>2 children</b>	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 40.00
<b>3 children</b>	\$ 11.00	\$ 22.00	\$ 33.00	\$ 44.00
<b>4 children</b>	\$ 12.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 48.00

# RIGHT NOW *media*

rightnow MEDIA



You and your group have access to the largest video Bible study library in the world. You can stream Bible studies anytime, anywhere.

Here's how to get started:

1. Go to **libertylive.church/rightnow**. You can also text "RIGHTNOW LLC" to 41411 or use the QR code in the corner of the page!
2. Fill out your information under "my profile". You can also select interests you have there as well.
3. Be sure to save your password.
4. Once logged in, you'll be able to see and select any of the studies.
5. When you click on a study, you can play the video sessions as well as find links for study guides or books that go along with the study.

## *Dig Deeper: choosing curriculum*

Along with RightNow Media, we have some group studies by Pastor Grant which are available for you to download on the leader tools page of our groups website. You can also request a study by emailing your Campus Pastor/Groups Director. If you would like to do a different study, you can get it approved by emailing your Campus Pastor/Groups Director as well.

Before each semester, your groups staff will be in touch to see what study you plan on doing that semester to ensure our groups website is current.

# TYPES OF GROUPS

Groups can look like a lot of different things! They can meet at a variety of places and can center around a topic, shared interest, or go through a RightNow Media study together. They might meet based on a shared life stage or professional community. Groups can also meet for the intentional purpose of disciple-making. Below we talk through Affinity, Discipleship, and Topical Groups and what they are, though groups don't have to fit into any specific "type".

## AFFINITY GROUPS

### What is an Affinity Group?

An Affinity Group is a common-interest or activity group formed around one thing that every group member shares in common. Examples can include bicycling, knitting, softball, photography, movies, camping books, cooking, or fitness.

Hobbies and common-interests can be more than just fun, they are opportunities for community and discipleship. Bonding with others around shared interests, vocations, family life stage, or hobbies can create the context that help people gather and grow together in their walk with Jesus.

The shared mission is the Great Commission:

*Matthew 28:18-20 – And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Affinity, bonding, or even friendship is not the end goal, they are only stepping stones for something far more important: sharing the gospel.



# TYPES OF GROUPS

## DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

### What is a Discipleship Group, or D-Group?

A disciple is one who follows Jesus and brings others with them. Disciple-making is a group of three. Throughout the ministry of Jesus, we see Him several times doing personal training with His three: Peter, James, and John.

Disciple-making is both daily and weekly. D-groups do life together daily through devotional reading and prayer by group texting, and also meet together weekly.

Disciple-making will make more disciples. Disciple-making is the movement that Jesus started to reproduce and spread His disciple-makers throughout the world. True disciple-making groups will make disciples who are able to then start their own groups discipling others.

### How do we make disciples?

Disciple-making is best done by Jesus's strategy in Luke 24:

**Bible:** Jesus made it clear that we begin with the Bible when making disciples.

*"Then He said to them, 'These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets must be fulfilled.'" (Luke 24:44)*

Jesus took His disciples through the Bible. Making disciples always starts with God's Word. It is His Word that disciples our lives to be like Jesus (Luke 17:17, Romans 12:2, Romans 8:29). In a one-hour disciple making session, the first 15 minutes may be used to catch up, talk about life, and just enjoy general conversation. The second 15 minutes should be used studying God's Word. This is more of a discussion about how God speaks to each person through that week's passage than one of the group members teaching a lesson. It is very important to keep the disciple-making group discussion-oriented so that every member is being disciplined to make more disciples.

**Gospel:** The next step to make disciples is by a gospel-centered understanding of the Bible.

*"Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.'" (Luke 24:45-46)*

# TYPES OF GROUPS

## DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS CONTINUED

In verse 45, Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. A true understanding of Scripture is not just by Systematic Theology, the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, a trip to the Middle East, etc.

Jesus clearly said that a mind opened to understand the Bible is one that sees all Scriptures through the lens of the suffering death of Jesus and His resurrection. This is a gospel-centered understanding of every book, chapter, story, character, law, event, etc.

The third 15 minutes of every disciple making session should be spent in a discussion to understand the passage read in a Gospel-centered way about the person of Jesus, His life, His death, and His resurrection. How does that passage point you to the person and work of Jesus?

**Personal:** The last step in disciple-making is getting personal by applying the passage to each disciple's life of failures and faith, struggles and strengths.

*"And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47)*

When a disciple's mind has been opened to a gospel-centered understanding of the Bible, they can't help but live their life on mission by proclaiming repentance, forgiveness, and being a witness. Before disciples can proclaim those three, they must first experience them personally.

The personal portion of the disciple-making session should be centered around areas of needed repentance, forgiveness, and witnessing. Disciple-making is the best place to confess these areas because of the intimacy and trust these tight groups foster over several weeks. When disciples experience the joy of repentance and forgiveness, they will naturally witness these things to the lost!

The fourth 15 minutes of every disciple-making session should be spent confessing these areas, praying for each other, and encouraging each other to live lives of repentance, forgiveness, and witness from the gospel. (It is important to build trust among all members of the disciple-making group. Sometimes members may share their need for repentance and forgiveness in areas that must remain confidential within the Discipleship Group, and must feel confident to do so.)

# TYPES OF GROUPS

## TOPICAL GROUPS

### What is a Topical Group?

A Topical Group is a group that can be based on a wide variety of subjects. Examples include DivorceCare, GriefShare, Financial Peace, and other topics like marriage or parenting.

Topical Groups are a great way to help people find community because they create common ground based on a particular subject or topic that group members relate to or are interested in.

Topical Groups can create specific growth in areas of life based on the topic that is being studied.

*Proverbs 27:17 – As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*

*Galatians 6:2 – Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 12:21, 27 – The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

# HELPFUL SCRIPTURE *references*

At Liberty, we believe ministering through the Word of God is the most powerful way to care for people. As you pray over a group member, try inserting that member's name in the Scripture to make it more personalized.

As a group leader, when you are walking someone through a tough situation, we encourage you to find and memorize at least three Scriptures. This will not only equip you as you help that person, but it will also give you strength as a leader throughout the semester.

Here is a list of powerful Scriptures that you can apply to any situation:

*Mark 12:30-31 - "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

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

*Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

*Isaiah 55:8-9 - My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.*

*1 John 5:14-15 - This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

*Isaiah 54:17 - No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me," Says the Lord.*

*Ephesians 6:10-18 - Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

*Romans 8:28 - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

*Ephesians 2:10 - For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

*Jeremiah 29:11 - "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

*Matthew 5:14-16 - You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*

*Romans 8:39 - No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*Hebrews 13:5-6 - Stay away from the love of money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never, never fail you nor forsake you." That is why we can say without any doubt or fear, "The Lord is my Helper, and I am not afraid of anything that mere man can do to me."*

*Isaiah 41:10 - Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.*

*Philippians 4:6-7 - Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*James 1:2-4 - Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

*1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

*Romans 10:17 - So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

*Luke 17:5-6 - One day the apostles said to the Lord, "We need more faith; tell us how to get it." "If your faith were only the size of a mustard seed," Jesus answered, "it would be large enough to uproot that mulberry tree over there and send it hurtling into the sea! Your command would bring immediate results!"*

*Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

*James 1:5 - If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

*Proverbs 11:14 - Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.*

*Romans 8:1-2 - So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.*

*Isaiah 1:18 - "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."*

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 - Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.*

*notes*



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.