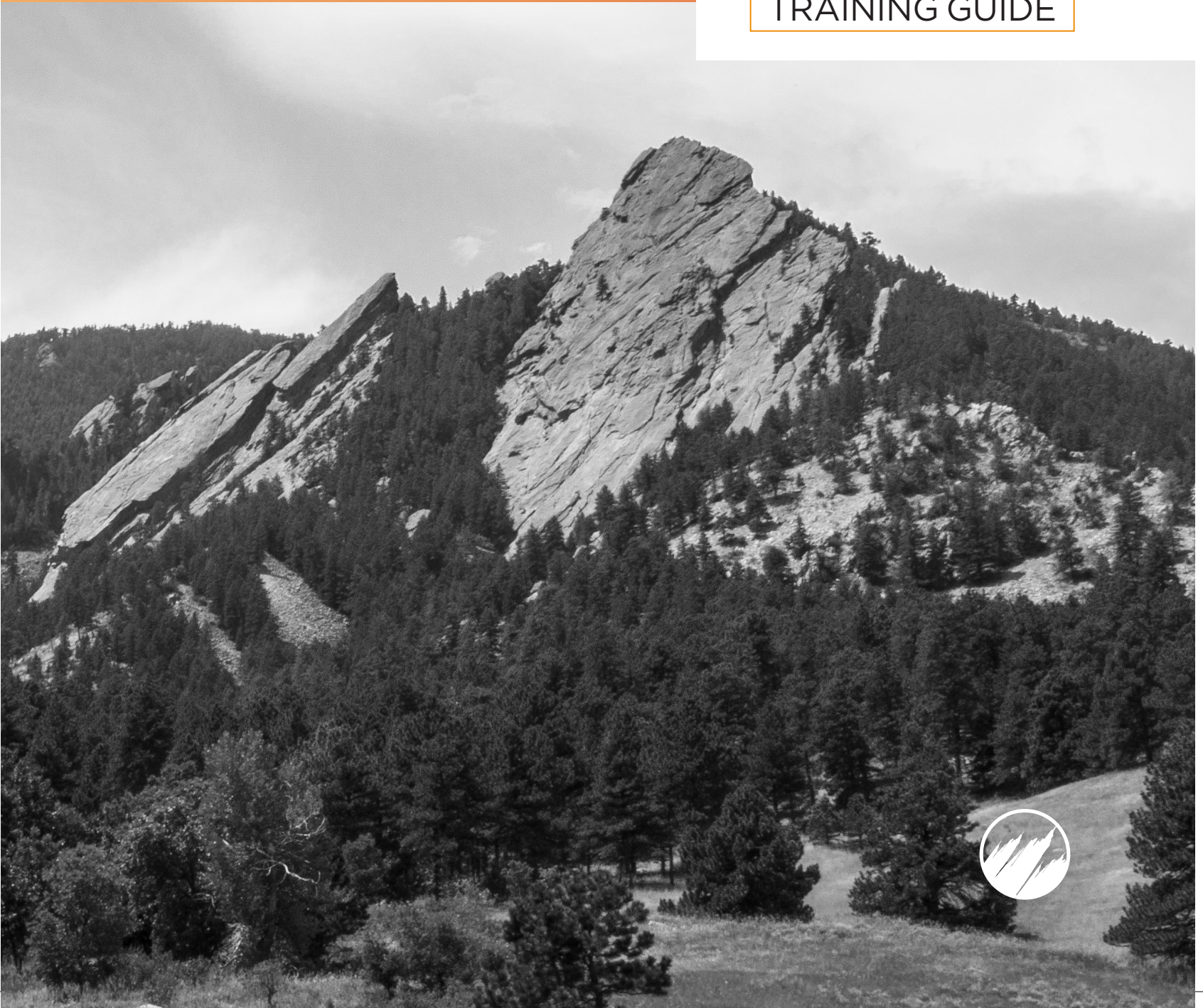


# ***DISCIPLESHIP COHORT***

TRAINING GUIDE





# VISION & FOUNDATIONS

## WHAT IS A DISCIPLESHIP COHORT (DC)?

A Discipleship Cohort (DC) is not just another small group or Bible study. It's a high-accountability, high-relationship space designed for deep spiritual formation. In a DC, 3-5 men or women walk together through a season of intentional growth, learning to know God deeply, love others authentically, and impact the world through discipleship and service.

These are gender-specific groups that commit to a 3-18 month journey where vulnerability, honesty, spiritual practices, and growth in Christ take center stage. This isn't about checking off curriculum. It's about becoming the kind of people who live and love like Jesus.

## WHY DO DCS MATTER?

At Flatirons, we believe Jesus gave us a clear mission:

*"Go and make disciples of all nations..." —Matthew 28:19-20*

That mission wasn't just for the early church. It's for us. It's for you. It's about using our lives to live on mission, to share the good news of Jesus, serve others, and help others go on a journey of freedom only found in a life surrendered to Jesus.

Jesus modeled a life-on-life approach to discipleship—He spent intentional time with a few people, helping them become who God created them to be. DCs follow that same path. They are designed to help ordinary people grow in extraordinary ways and learn to live on mission as a way of life.

This is about more than gaining knowledge. It's about transformation. It's about impact. Every DC leader plays a role in shaping disciples who will go on to shape others.

# *The Big 3: Our Discipleship Journey Big 3*

When Jesus beckoned people to follow Him, He set in motion a profound transformation, catalyzed by three mighty forces that we affectionately call the BIG 3.

We firmly believe that when we wholeheartedly embrace and embody the principles of the BIG 3, our lives become an irresistible testimony, drawing others closer to personally experiencing the love of Christ and we experience change.

As DC leaders, it is our sacred privilege to walk alongside others on this transformative journey, and here's a glimpse of what this exhilarating BIG 3 adventure entails:

## **THE BIG 3 OF DISCIPLESHIP**

### **1. KNOW GOD**

We place a high priority on assisting our group members in coming to a true knowledge of God. This entails creating an atmosphere where strong bonds with God can develop. We delve deeply into His Word, and biblical teachings to discover its wisdom, direction, and truths. Inviting the Holy Spirit to reveal more about God's nature and His purposes for our lives, we promote both private and communal reflection and prayer. We assist our group members in establishing a sincere and passionate connection with God through focused study, worship, prayer, and conversations.

### **2. LOVE PEOPLE**

Next, we lead our group members in the practice of unconditional love. As group facilitators, we design environments where individuals may feel recognized, listened, and supported. We cultivate an environment where everyone is respected and inspired by a culture of inclusion and empathy. We encourage group members to seek out opportunities to lend a helping hand, exercise forgiveness, and show Christ-like love in their everyday encounters both within and outside of our groups.

### **3. IMPACT THE WORLD**

Lastly, we empower our group members to Impact the World around them. Flatirons is more than just a place we call home; it's filled with opportunities to make a difference. As DC leaders, we push our group to go beyond their comfort zones and become involved with the needs of our group and community. We support gestures of generosity, advocacy, and service that demonstrate the love



of Christ in concrete ways. We become agents of transformation through engaging with others, giving back to our community, and actively taking part in projects that improve our world.

You want a group that looks more like Jesus? Then help cultivate a culture of the BIG 3 and watch what a world craving love does. It becomes irresistible and magnetic and a great way to show Jesus.

*These aren't just nice ideas—but essential marks of someone becoming like Jesus. As a DC leader, you're helping your group live out the Big 3 in real time.*

### THE 5RS: A PATHWAY OF FORMATION

We've also built our DC process around five intentional rhythms:

- **Raise:** Let God raise your awareness of what's really going on in your heart, habits, and relationships.
- **Reevaluate:** Let God show you what needs to shift or be surrendered.
- **Reprioritize:** Let God reorder your time, energy, and attention around what matters most.
- **Rebuild:** Let God shape new foundations and healthy patterns.
- **Replicate:** Let God use you to disciple others.

This process isn't linear, but it is powerful. As you lead, you'll see each of these R's play out in different ways. Stay faithful. God will do the forming. We created a 5R guide that provides more detail in our Spiritual formation pathway you can find in our resources link.

### WHAT MAKES DCS DIFFERENT?

While all our groups settings provide a space for connection and growth. DCs focus on these four areas:

- **High-Accountability:** You'll ask hard questions. You'll create space to wrestle with struggles. You'll challenge one another to actually live out your faith.
- **Relational at the Core:** Deep trust is built through meals, stories, laughter, and honest prayer.
- **Spirit-Led:** You don't have to be the expert. You just need to be surrendered and faithful.
- **Missional-Oriented:** From day one, we assume God is raising up future leaders. Your group isn't the end goal. It's the beginning of a movement to people living on mission for the kingdom.

## GENTLE CHALLENGE TO YOU AS A LEADER

Stepping into leadership isn't about perfection. It's about saying "yes" to the invitation to grow while helping others grow, too. You may not feel ready. That's okay. Most leaders don't. But if you love Jesus, want to see people grow, and are willing to walk closely with a few others, you're already halfway there.

This is a sacred assignment. Not flashy. Not always easy. But deeply rewarding. Through your yes, lives will be changed—including yours.

Let's go.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Take 5–10 minutes to reflect and respond to these questions before moving on to the next section. These are just for you—but feel free to share your thoughts with a coach or campus staff member if you'd like.

1. What stood out to you most about the vision for DCs? Why?
2. Which part of the Big 3 or the 5Rs feels most meaningful—or most challenging—for you right now?
3. Where do you feel excited or nervous as you step into this leadership role?

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**DISCIPLESHIP COHORTS**  
VISION & FOUNDATIONS

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# THE ROLE OF A DC LEADER

## YOU'RE NOT A BIBLE EXPERT. YOU'RE A GUIDE.

Leading a DC doesn't require seminary knowledge. Your role is to create space, guide conversation, model vulnerability, and follow the Holy Spirit. Think of yourself less as a teacher and more like a shepherd—a faithful presence who walks with others.

You don't need all the answers. You just need a heart that says, "Let's follow Jesus together."

## YOU SET THE TONE

People will follow your example more than your words. When you:

- Show up prepared, they will too.
- Share honestly, they'll feel safe to do the same.
- Ask thoughtful questions, they'll dig deeper.
- Listen well, they'll feel heard.

This is the power of spiritual leadership—not perfection, but presence.

## CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

Here's what you're committing to as a DC Leader:

- **Pray regularly**—for your group members.
- **Model consistency**—show up, on time, every week.
- **Create a safe space**—foster confidentiality and grace.
- **Encourage transformation**—challenge your group to apply what they're learning.
- **Guide, don't dominate**—facilitate conversation, don't control it.
- **Multiply**—help your group dream about who they might disciple next.

## KEY LEADERSHIP POSTURES

- **Be Humble** – You’re not above anyone. You’re in this together.
- **Be Bold** – Ask the hard questions. Speak truth in love.
- **Be Curious** – Lean into their stories. Let God show you what’s under the surface.
- **Be Flexible** – Trust God more than the plan. Listen to the group’s needs and pace.

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Every DC leader has support. Your campus Discipleship staff are here to help. Whether it’s handling a tricky group dynamic or just needing encouragement, don’t hesitate to reach out.

DCs are a team effort, and you’re never expected to lead in isolation. We’re in this with you.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Which part of the leader’s role do you feel most confident in? Which part feels like it might stretch you the most?
2. When you think about setting the tone for your group, what values or behaviors do you want to model?
3. How can you prepare your heart to lead from a place of humility, curiosity, and courage?
4. Which 2-3 people do you currently know that you could ask to join your DC?

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# DISCIPLESHIP COHORTS

## THE ROLE OF A DC LEADER

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# THE FLOW OF A DC

## » *Know - Grow - Go*

Every DC has a rhythm, and that rhythm flows in three parts: KNOW, GROW, and GO. Each section has a unique purpose, and your leadership helps the group move through them at a Spirit-led pace—not rushing, but not stalling either.

### *Know* | Weeks 1–6: Building Trust & Sharing Stories

This first phase is all about relational foundation. Trust is the soil where transformation grows.

#### **Goals of this phase**

- Build authentic connection
- Establish group rhythm and expectations
- Share stories and begin practicing vulnerability

#### **WEEK 1: KICKOFF + SHARED MEAL**

- Share vision, purpose, and expectations
- Create a safe, welcoming environment
- Begin learning about each other's lives

#### **WEEKS 2–6: STORY SHARING**

- Use the DC Story Template
- Each week, one or two people share their life story
- Emphasize listening over fixing
- Build a culture of “me too,” not “you should”

**Leader Tip:** Start by sharing your own story first—it sets the tone for honesty and depth.

## *Grow* | Weeks 7-X: Spiritual Formation & Discipleship Practices

This is the heart of the DC. In this phase, the group moves deeper into God's Word, prayer, spiritual habits, and obedience to Jesus.

- Goals of this phase**
- Practice regular spiritual disciplines
  - Engage in study (HEAR Journals, Freedom, Operation Timothy, etc.)
  - Develop discipleship rhythms
  - Identify areas of transformation

- Possible resources**
- HEAR Journaling plans
  - Discipleship Essentials
  - Operation Timothy
  - 40 Days of Prayer
  - Freedom Group Content

**Leader Tip:** Don't rush this part. Follow where God is leading and allow space for group members to process and grow.

## *Go* | Final 4-6 Weeks: Living on Mission

This final phase is about more than just launching new groups—it's about launching people into a life that reflects the mission of Jesus. While some group members may feel called to lead a DC or disciple others, others may feel led to step more fully into their families, workplaces, neighborhoods, or serve within the church. Our goal is to help each person discern and follow their next step in living a life on mission.

- Goals of this phase**
- Help each member discern how God is calling them to live missionally
  - Equip them to take practical next steps in discipleship, service, or leadership
  - Celebrate the journey and commission each person toward their next faithful step

# DISCIPLESHIP COHORTS

## THE FLOW OF A DC

- Leader Tip:** Help group members see that every season and setting is a chance to live out their faith. Invite them to pray, reflect, and dream with God about what He's calling them into next. Some may multiply now. Others may simply take the next faithful step—and that's a win.

In the final meetings, dedicate time to pray over each person. Celebrate the growth you've seen, the trust that's been built, and the ways you've seen God move. Then, with encouragement and intentionality, commission them to go and live out their faith in the world—wherever God is sending them.

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# BEST PRACTICES & TROUBLESHOOTING AS A DC LEADER

Even the most meaningful discipleship experiences will have bumps along the way. The goal isn't perfection—it's growth. This section offers some of the most helpful tips and common challenges you may face while leading your DC, along with ways to navigate them with grace and purpose.

## CREATING A RAW & REAL CULTURE

Authentic discipleship doesn't happen without trust. It takes time, intentionality, and your willingness to go first.

### Best Practices:

- Lead with vulnerability—share real stories, not polished versions.
- Celebrate honesty and create space for processing hard things.
- Remind the group often: “This is a safe place. What’s shared here stays here.”
- Keep it real—don’t be afraid to say, “Me too.”

## ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT

Sometimes people start strong, then begin to disengage. That's normal—but as the leader, your gentle encouragement makes a huge difference.

### Best Practices:

- Follow up between meetings (texts, check-ins, prayers).
- Ask open-ended questions that invite reflection, not just surface responses.
- Reinforce the value of each person's voice.
- Honor the space—start and end on time, and stay focused on what matters.

## NAVIGATING COMMON CHALLENGES

Here are a few personality types you might encounter—and how to lovingly guide them:

### **The Overtalker**

- Solution: Set simple guidelines like “2-minute responses” or a talking piece.
- Encourage pauses and allow others to respond before jumping in.

### **The Closed-Off or Silent Member**

- Solution: Don’t force vulnerability. Offer 1-on-1 encouragement. Give space and affirmation.
- Ask, “What’s one thing you’d be willing to share this week?”

### **The Extremely Needy or Draining Member**

- Solution: Show compassion without trying to fix everything.
- Redirect focus by asking them to support others in the group too.

### **The No-Show or Inconsistent**

- Solution: Follow up with grace and curiosity—not guilt.
- Clarify commitment expectations and offer a chance to re-engage.

## KNOWING WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

If group conflict arises, or you sense someone is wrestling with a deeper issue (mental health, trauma, addiction), don’t carry it alone.

- Reach out to your campus staff.
- Use wisdom and care—sometimes the most loving thing is connecting someone to additional support.

## KEEP THE END IN MIND

Remember—discipleship is slow work. Progress often looks like small steps: a vulnerable moment, a breakthrough in prayer, a new rhythm of time with God.

You’re not responsible for producing fruit. Your job is to cultivate good soil, plant seeds, and trust God with the growth.

**DISCIPLESHIP COHORTS**  
BEST PRACTICES & TROUBLESHOOTING

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# RESOURCES, TOOLS & FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

## TOOLS TO SUPPORT YOUR LEADERSHIP

These tools will help you lead with confidence and clarity. Use them freely, adapt them as needed, and don't hesitate to ask your campus team for more support.

### *Core Resources*



- **DC Story Template** – Helps guide the story-sharing phase.
- **HEAR Journaling Plan** – A simple and powerful method for daily Bible engagement.
- **Discipleship Essentials** – A workbook-style guide to foundational truths.
- **Operation Timothy** – A mentoring-based discipleship pathway.
- **Freedom Study** – (Coming Soon) A group study focused on identity, healing, and growth.

### *Leader Support*

- Regular check-ins from your campus staff or DC coach
- Leader gatherings for encouragement and ongoing training
- Access to future trainings, resources, and digital libraries

## ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE JOURNEY

You've said yes to something that matters deeply. It's not just about information or attendance—it's about seeing lives transformed by the power of Jesus. You may not always see it in real time, but trust this: God is moving.

Don't underestimate the impact of your faithfulness. Every conversation, every prayer, every night you show up tired but willing—it's all being used to shape disciples and grow the Kingdom.

When it's hard, press in. When it's slow, trust the process. When it's beautiful, celebrate it. When in doubt, pray.

You're not alone. We believe in you, and we're cheering you on. Let's go make disciples who make disciples—and see what God will do next.







## 40 Days of Unceasing Prayer: Leader Overview & Weekly Guide

### Quick Overview

*40 Days of Unceasing Prayer* by Bill Elliff is a 40-day, daily devotional journey designed to help individuals and groups develop a consistent, life-giving rhythm of prayer. Each day includes a reading and reflection, while weekly gatherings provide space to deepen learning and practice through discussion and prayer. The study is supported by high-quality video lessons that unpack key prayer principles.

### Why Use 40 Days of Unceasing Prayer?

- ✓ Equips participants to build a meaningful daily prayer life.
- ✓ Deepens understanding of God's heart for prayer.
- ✓ Strengthens unity and vulnerability within your group through shared prayer experiences.
- ✓ Builds confidence in personal and group prayer, critical foundations for spiritual growth.

Purchase books & access videos/leader guide free at: [billeliff.org/pages/resources](http://billeliff.org/pages/resources)

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## Recommended Weekly Flow

### Personal Daily Reading (Monday–Friday/Saturday)

- Participants complete 6–7 daily devotionals each week.
- Daily readings include scriptural reflections, practical challenges, and personal application prompts.
- Encourage journaling insights, prayers, and what God reveals each day.

### Weekly Group Gathering (Once a Week)

- Meet for 60–90 minutes.
  - Watch the week's video lesson together or have members watch it before the meeting.
  - Discuss the video's main themes and participants' personal experiences with prayer that week.
  - Share testimonies of answered prayers, struggles, and growth.
  - Practice group prayer, modeling different types of prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication).
-

# Example Weekly Breakdown

## During the Week

- Complete daily devotionals days 1–6.

## Video

- Watch the corresponding weekly video lesson (video access included with the study).

## Group Meeting

- Open with a short check-in: “What impacted your prayer life this week?”
  - Watch (or review) the video lesson together.
  - Discuss key takeaways and real-life applications using open-ended questions.
  - Practice prayer as a group, inviting members to pray aloud as they feel led.
- 

# Expected Outcomes

By the end of the 40 days:

- ✓ Participants will have developed a daily, sustainable rhythm of prayer.
  - ✓ They will grow in intimacy and trust with God.
  - ✓ Group members will experience deeper unity, encouragement, and support through prayer together.
- 

# Leader Tips

- ✓ **Model Vulnerability** – Share your own prayer experiences, victories and struggles, to inspire honesty.
- ✓ **Guide with Questions** – Use open-ended questions to prompt deeper discussion (e.g., “How has God been speaking to you through prayer this week?”).
- ✓ **Emphasize Practice** – Don’t just talk about prayer; prioritize praying together each week.
- ✓ **Encourage Journaling** – Suggest members keep a prayer journal to track growth and answered prayers.
- ✓ **Leverage Videos** – Videos by Bill Elliff enrich discussion; don’t skip them!

## Final Encouragement

This 6-week (40-day) study is a powerful tool for helping your group cultivate unceasing, heartfelt prayer. As you lead, remember prayer isn’t just a discipline to master, it’s an invitation into deeper relationship with Jesus. Your leadership will set the tone for openness, faith, and spiritual growth.



## Commissioning Guide: Moving Your DC into the Go Phase

### Introduction

As your Discipleship Cohort nears the end of its journey together, it's time to help members shift from personal growth to outward mission. The *Go Phase* is where we empower disciples to live intentionally and multiply their faith, whether by starting new groups, serving in other discipleship environments (Connect, Re-Engage, small groups), or stepping into missional living in everyday life.

Remember:

Biblical maturity is measured by character, not age or knowledge (1 Timothy 4:12; Psalm 119:99; James 3:13-18).

There's no strict timeline, some may be ready to lead or step out within months, others may need longer.  
Be sensitive to each person's journey.

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## Assessing Readiness: Key Questions

As you prepare to commission your group, use these questions to help discern if members are ready to step into disciple-making or more intentional mission:

- ✓ Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in their life? (Galatians 5:22-23)
  - ✓ Are they transparent about doubts, fears, and victories?
  - ✓ Are they engaged with your study materials, showing understanding and growth?
  - ✓ Can they assess their own heart condition and recall relevant Scriptures?
  - ✓ Are they committed to pursuing personal holiness?
  - ✓ Do they run to God's Word in moments of temptation?
  - ✓ Have they inspired others to deepen their faith?
  - ✓ Do they show a growing love for the Bible and desire to know it more?
  - ✓ Is their prayer life consistent and healthy?
-

## Begin with Prayer

Encourage your group members to **pray specifically** during this phase:

- ➡ Ask God for clarity on their next steps in faith.
- ➡ Pray for boldness to step out of comfort zones.
- ➡ Seek guidance about people in their lives they might disciple or serve intentionally.

Build time into each weekly meeting for focused prayer on these themes.

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## Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Help each member complete the **Spiritual Gifts Assessment** (available here):

👉 [Take the Flatirons Spiritual Gifts Assessment](https://my.flatironchurch.com/SpiritualGifts?AssessmentId=0) -

<https://my.flatironchurch.com/SpiritualGifts?AssessmentId=0>

Once completed:

- ◆ Schedule time to go through their results individually or in your group meeting.
- ◆ Discuss the strengths of their Dominant and Supportive Gifts. Help them explore the following websites for more information and places they can use and grow their gifts:

- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/serve/>
- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/local-outreach/>
- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/get-involved/global-outreach/>
- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/get-involved/give/>
- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/get-involved/church-planting/>
- <https://www.flatironchurch.com/community/>

- ◆ Brainstorm together how their unique gifting could shape how and where they serve, lead, or disciple.

### Why This Matters

Knowing our spiritual gifts helps us:

- ✓ Understand how God designed us for unique impact.
- ✓ Serve more effectively and joyfully.
- ✓ Avoid frustration by aligning efforts with our God-given strengths.
- ✓ Build a diverse team where each member's gifts complement others'.

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## Weekly Encouragement During the Go Phase

Use these tips each week over your final 4–5 gatherings tied to the provide content:

- ◆ **Week 1:** Challenge the group to start praying daily for clarity on next steps. Introduce the idea of spiritual multiplication (Matthew 28:18-20).
  - ◆ **Week 2:** Complete and review the Spiritual Gifts Assessment. Discuss where each person might be called to lead, serve, or invest.
  - ◆ **Week 3:** Encourage members to identify 2–3 people they could disciple or invite into a new group.
  - ◆ **Week 4:** Share practical ideas: joining Connect, serving in Re-Engage, starting a small group, or living missionally in family, work, or community.
  - ◆ **Week 5:** Pray over each member, celebrating growth, affirming gifts, and commissioning them for what's next.
- 

## Tips for Leaders

- ✓ **Encourage Self-Reflection** – Lead conversations that help members identify personal strengths and growth areas.
  - ✓ **Provide Practical Guidance** – Share your own experiences; offer real-life examples of leading groups, discipling others, or serving missionally.
  - ✓ **Foster Peer Support** – Invite members to encourage one another, share fears, and celebrate wins.
  - ✓ **Pray for Clarity and Courage** – Dedicate intentional time to pray for group members' next steps.
  - ✓ **Celebrate Progress** – Call out and celebrate growth, highlighting the ways you've seen God work in each person's life.
- 

## Planning a Meaningful Final Meeting

Make your last gathering together special, it's a chance to reflect, celebrate, and send each member out with encouragement. Here's how:

- ✓ **Create Space for Reflection** – Dedicate time for every person, including you as the leader, to share what they've learned about themselves and about God through your DC journey.
- ✓ **Prepare Tangible Next Steps** – Ask everyone to come prepared to share one specific, practical step they'll take to live more missionally, whether that's starting a new group, serving in a new area, reaching out to neighbors, or another step God has laid on their heart.
- ✓ **Commissioning Prayer** – After each member shares, gather around them for individual prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide, strengthen, and empower them as they take their next step. Make this a sacred, intentional moment of commissioning.
- ✓ **Celebrate Together** – Consider sharing a meal, dessert, or meaningful keepsake to mark the occasion and honor what God has done in your time together.

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## Staying Connected After Your DC

One of the best ways to sustain the impact of your DC is to maintain relationships with your members even after the group formally ends. Here are a few ideas:

**Set Up a Group Text or Chat** – Keep the conversation going by sharing prayer requests, encouragement, or scripture reflections.

**Plan Periodic Meet-Ups** – Meet individually or as a group every couple of months for coffee, a meal, or a service project.

**Check In Personally** – Schedule a reminder every 1–2 months to reach out to each member individually.

**Celebrate Milestones** – Celebrate birthdays, answered prayers, or spiritual wins together.

**Keep Praying** – Commit to continue praying for your former group members as they step into their next season.

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### Final Thought

Your leadership doesn't end with your last meeting; it's the beginning of your members' next chapter of living missionally. Celebrate what God has done, send them out with confidence, and keep walking alongside them as a friend, encourager, and fellow disciple-maker.



**FLATIRONS**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



## **Discipleship Cohort (DC) - Story Instructions**

**Introduction:** Welcome, to the sacred space of storytelling within our DC. As we gather to share our life journeys, let us embrace vulnerability, authenticity, and the power of connection through our lives.

**Instructions:** Prepare to embark on a journey of self-reflection and shared experiences. As you craft your story, remember to be open, honest, and real. Your fellow group members desire to know the real you, and God moves through our authentic testimonies. You will share your story to the group by answering the following questions in a narrative format (*Note: Don't just say, "#1 is..., #2 is..."*) But instead answer all the questions in the form of one story that starts from your childhood and makes its way towards the present time.

**Questions To Form Your Story:** Reflect deeply on the following prompts as you compose your story:

1. What's your origin? (ex. Where you from)
  1. Parents, siblings, family
  2. Hometown, school, etc.
2. What were some big moments in your life?
  1. What moments do you cherish (e.g., childhood memories, marriage, career, family)?
  2. What moments brought pain (e.g., relational challenges, hurts, difficult circumstances)?
  3. Where have you experienced redemption (e.g., moments of salvation, significant spiritual seasons)
3. What does life look like for you today?
  1. What is God teaching you?

2. Where are you struggling in trusting Him?
3. What are some of your hopes and dreams?

**Time Management:** Respect the 20-minute time limit for sharing your story. Focus on conveying the essence of your experiences rather than recounting every detail. Preparation, practice, and organization will help maximize your sharing time effectively.

**Preparation:** Prioritize prayerful reflection as you prepare to share your story. Consider organizing your thoughts in chronological order to enhance clarity and coherence during your narrative. We encourage you to write your story and bring it as a guide as you share with your DC.

**Encouragement:** Your story has the power to inspire, encourage, and unite our brotherhood. Embrace vulnerability and trust in the transformative potential of sharing your journey with others.

**Facilitator Support:** Reach out to your group leader(s) for any questions or guidance you may need throughout the storytelling process. They are here to support, encourage, and journey alongside you in this sacred endeavor.

Let us approach this time of storytelling with reverence, humility, and anticipation for the ways God will move among us through our shared journeys.

# Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building a Life That Looks Like Jesus

**Author:** Greg Ogden | **Format:** 24-week workbook | **Focus:** Foundational truths for spiritual growth and disciple-making.

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## What is *Discipleship Essentials*?

A practical, Bible-based workbook designed for small discipleship groups of 3-4 people. The study guides participants through essential doctrines and practices of following Jesus, helping them move from belief to action.

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## Key Goals

- ✓ **Ground Participants in Scripture** – Deepen understanding of core biblical teachings.
- ✓ **Build Accountability** – Foster transformative relationships in small groups.
- ✓ **Equip for Multiplication** – Prepare believers to disciple others, creating ripple effects of growth.

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## Structure of the Study

- **24 Sessions**, divided into 4 major sections:
  1. **Growing Up in Christ** – Spiritual disciplines, assurance, and identity.
  2. **Understanding the Message of Christ** – Foundational doctrines: salvation, grace, faith, Holy Spirit.
  3. **Becoming Like Christ** – Character transformation, obedience, fruit of the Spirit.
  4. **Serving Christ** – Stewardship, spiritual gifts, evangelism, mission.
- Each session includes:
  - **Memory Verse**
  - **Bible Study**
  - **Reading**
  - **Discussion Questions**
  - **Personal Reflection & Practice**

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## Example Weekly Flow

Each chapter has four sections:

- 1 **Core Truth**
- 2 **Memory Verse Study**
- 3 **Inductive Bible Study**
- 4 **Reading**

- **Daily Plan:**
  - Review and study the memory verse each day.
  - Complete one section a day for 4 days.
  - Make space throughout the week to review notes and jot down questions.
- **When You Meet:**
  - Go over each section together.
  - Share your notes.
  - Discuss what stood out, challenged you, or encouraged you.

This rhythm helps keep the group engaged throughout the week, deepens understanding, and fosters accountability.

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## Why It Matters for Discipleship

*Discipleship Essentials* aligns perfectly with Jesus' model of life-on-life transformation (Luke 6:40; Matt. 28:19-20).

The workbook's design promotes **conversation, accountability, and deep personal application**, ideal for Discipleship Cohorts focused on authenticity and growth.

By completing the study, participants not only grow spiritually but become equipped to **lead others**, multiplying discipleship as Jesus commanded.

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## Tips for Leaders

- Model vulnerability by sharing your own stories and struggles.
- Emphasize transformation over just completing the material.
- Use the sessions as a framework but adapt to your group's pace and needs.
- Set clear expectations for preparation, each participant should complete homework beforehand.
- Encourage prayer and regular check-ins to build trust and support.
- After a few weeks, begin asking members of your group to take lead on the once a week meeting by guiding the discussion.

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## Outcome

Participants will:

- ✓ Gain a solid grasp of biblical truths.
- ✓ Develop consistent spiritual habits.



- ✓ Experience life change through community.
- ✓ Grow in confidence to disciple others, multiplying their impact for God's Kingdom.

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 **Get the Book:** [Purchase \*Discipleship Essentials\* on Amazon](#)



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## GO - Dash with Craig Roberts

### RightNow Media Study Summary

#### Overview

*Dash* is a compelling 4-session video series by Craig Roberts exploring how we live out the short, precious life God has given us, represented by the “dash” on our gravestone between our birth and death dates. This study challenges believers to live intentionally, invest in others, and focus on what truly matters: loving God, loving people, and making disciples.

#### Session Breakdown

- 1 What Will You Be Remembered For?** – Reflecting on the legacy your life is building today.
- 2 Loving and Investing in People** – Seeing relationships as eternal investments, not temporary connections.
- 3 Being Generous with Your Life** – Embracing a mindset of generosity with your time, talents, and treasures.
- 4 Finishing Well** – Staying faithful and intentional to the end of your life.

#### Why It's Great for the GO Phase

- ✓ Encourages group members to live missionally and think beyond themselves.
- ✓ Inspires participants to invest their lives in eternal purposes, including disciple-making.
- ✓ Equips believers to leave a Christ-centered legacy at home, work, and in the world.

#### How to Use It with Your Group

- ◆ Assign one video per week during the final weeks of your DC's Grow phase or after *The Reproducing Disciple*.
- ◆ Have participants watch the video beforehand or watch together in group time.
- ◆ Use included discussion questions or craft your own to prompt personal reflection and action.
- ◆ Challenge members to identify intentional next steps for living on mission in their unique circles of influence.

#### Access the Videos & Leader Guide

Watch and download the free leader guide through your Flatirons RightNow Media account:

[Dash on RightNow Media](https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/724742) - <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/724742>

#### Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Members gain clarity on how to live intentionally for Jesus with the time they have.

- ✓ They feel inspired to invest in others, serve, and disciple.
  - ✓ The group develops a deeper commitment to living a life of purpose, impact, and faithfulness.
- 

### **Leader Encouragement**

*Dash* is a powerful tool to wrap up your DC, challenging members to use every day of their “dash” for God’s glory, investing in people, making disciples, and leaving an eternal legacy.

## GO - The Reproducing Disciple with Crawford Loritts

### RightNow Media Study Summary

#### Overview

*The Reproducing Disciple* is a powerful 4-session video series by pastor and author Dr. Crawford Loritts. This study challenges and equips believers to move from being disciples to becoming disciple-makers, just as Jesus called us to do. Loritts explores how true discipleship isn't complete until it multiplies, emphasizing practical ways to invest in others with intentionality and purpose.

#### Session Breakdown

- 1 **Why Disciples Reproduce** – Understanding the biblical mandate for multiplication and why every follower of Jesus is called to make disciples.
- 2 **A Reproducer's Mindset** – Developing the convictions, values, and perspective needed to see disciple-making as a lifestyle, not a program.
- 3 **The Reproducer's Methods** – Practical tools for building relationships that lead to transformation, including modeling, coaching, and teaching.
- 4 **The Legacy of Reproduction** – Seeing the bigger picture of spiritual generations: how investing in others leaves a lasting impact far beyond ourselves.

#### Why It's Great for the GO Phase

- ✓ Reinforces the **commissioning mindset** at the heart of DC's Grow & Multiply stage.
- ✓ Inspires group members to **embrace their role as disciple-makers**, not just disciples.
- ✓ Provides **practical strategies** for identifying, investing in, and multiplying into others.

#### How to Use It with Your Group

- ◆ Assign one video per week during the final 4–5 weeks of your DC's Grow phase.
- ◆ Have participants watch the video before meeting, or watch together during group time.
- ◆ Use the included discussion questions or create your own open-ended prompts to help your group apply the teaching.
- ◆ Challenge members to identify 2–3 people they could begin discipling as they move forward.

#### Access the Videos & Leader Guide

Watch and download the free leader guide through your Flatirons RightNow Media account:

[The Reproducing Disciple on RightNow Media](https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/804825) -

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/804825>

#### Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Members see disciple-making as their personal calling, not just the church's job.

- ✅ They gain confidence and practical tools to start discipling others.
  - ✅ The group catches a **vision for spiritual multiplication**, carrying forward the DC mission.
- 

### **Leader Encouragement**

As you wrap up your DC, *The Reproducing Disciple* is an ideal study to cast vision and equip your group to live missionally, making disciples who make disciples, just like Jesus commanded.



## Bible Reading & HEAR Journals: Leader Overview & Weekly Guide

### Quick Overview

Bible Reading & HEAR Journals is a flexible, structured reading approach designed to help groups engage directly with Scripture through the H.E.A.R. method, Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond. This tool empowers group members to connect God's Word to their personal journey of faith without needing to be Bible experts. As they read and journal, participants learn to hear God's voice, apply His truth, and build lifelong habits of consistent Bible engagement.

We've created a variety of reading plans to guide your group through books, sections, or themes in Scripture, allowing you to tailor the journey to your group's needs.

### Why Use Bible Reading & HEAR Journals?

- ✓ Makes personal Bible study approachable and engaging.
- ✓ Helps group members build confidence in reading and understanding God's Word.
- ✓ Promotes daily interaction with Scripture, not just once-a-week faith moments.
- ✓ Encourages shared reflection and accountability through weekly discussions.

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## Recommended Weekly Flow

### Personal Daily Reading (Monday–Friday/Saturday)

- Each participant follows the selected reading plan, reading one passage per day.
- Journal each reading using the H.E.A.R. method:
  - **H:** Highlight key verses.
  - **E:** Explain what the passage means.
  - **A:** Apply the truth personally.
  - **R:** Respond through prayer or practical steps.
- Encourage members to journal honestly, capturing what God shows them.

### Weekly Group Gathering (Once a Week)

- Meet for 60–90 minutes.
- Review the week's readings together.
- Invite members to share a highlight from their journal: What stood out? How did they apply it?
- Discuss insights and questions as a group.

- Close with prayer, asking God to keep shaping hearts through His Word.
- 

## Example Weekly Breakdown

### During the Week

- Complete the daily reading assignments.
- Journal daily entries using the H.E.A.R. method.

### Group Meeting

- Open with a check-in: “How was your time in the Word this week?”
  - Share insights from journals, focusing on what God revealed and how members applied it.
  - Guide discussion with open-ended questions (e.g., “What challenged you this week?”).
  - Pray together, reinforcing commitments to stay in the Word.
- 

## Expected Outcomes

By consistently practicing HEAR Journals:

- ✓ Members will develop daily Bible reading habits.
  - ✓ They will gain deeper understanding of Scripture.
  - ✓ They’ll learn to apply biblical truths to everyday life, leading to personal transformation.
- 

## Leader Tips

- ✓ **Check In Weekly** – Start meetings with personal check-ins and memory verse reviews.
  - ✓ **Encourage Consistency** – Remind members that small daily steps lead to long-term growth.
  - ✓ **Celebrate Progress** – Highlight faithfulness over perfection; celebrate members who stay engaged.
  - ✓ **Model Vulnerability** – Share your own journal entries when appropriate.
  - ✓ **Guide Discussion** – Use open-ended questions to draw out insights and foster conversation.
- 

## Bible Resources & Commentary Support

To help you and your group dig deeper, these free resources provide excellent explanations, context, and multimedia tools to enrich personal study and group discussions:




 **[BibleProject](https://bibleproject.com/)** - <https://bibleproject.com/>

Offers short, engaging videos, study- notes, and visual resources explaining the themes, background, and big story of each book of the Bible. Great for personal learning or showing in group meetings to spark discussion and set context before starting a new book.

 **[Enduring Word Commentary](https://enduringword.com/)** - <https://enduringword.com/>

A verse-by-verse commentary that provides historical background, practical insights, and clear explanations. Perfect for personal study to help clarify difficult passages or for preparing deeper questions for group discussions.

### **How to Use These Tools:**

-  Before meetings, use videos or commentary to get context for the week's readings.
-  In group time, pull up resources on your phone or screen-share key sections when a passage sparks questions.
-  Encourage group members to explore these resources on their own to deepen understanding and engagement with Scripture.

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### **Final Encouragement**

Bible Reading & HEAR Journals isn't just a study plan; it's a way to help your group learn to listen to God's voice, apply His truth, and walk in deeper faith. You don't need to be a Bible scholar, your willingness to journey with your group and point them to God's Word is what matters most.





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## Operation Timothy: Leader Overview & Weekly Guide

### Quick Overview

Operation Timothy (OT) is a proven, 3-book discipleship journey developed by CBMC over 50 years ago, modeled after the Apostle Paul mentoring Timothy. It equips participants to grow deeply in faith, build strong biblical foundations, and multiply by discipling others. Over the years, OT has helped tens of thousands become mature, multiplying followers of Jesus.

### The Three Books & Flow

**Book 1: Life Questions** – Answers the foundational questions of faith like: Why am I here? Who is Jesus? Can I be forgiven?

**Book 2: Life Foundations** – Equips believers in core truths: new life and identity in Christ, spiritual warfare, prayer, sharing your faith.

**Book 3: Life Perspectives** – Develops a mature perspective on God's will, character, relationships, stewardship, and personal calling to multiply.

Each book contains 6–7 chapters (20 chapters total), with a Leader Guide offering key points, outlines, and discussion questions to support you in mentoring your group effectively.

### Why Use Operation Timothy?

- ✓ Proven discipleship path focused on spiritual growth and practical application.
- ✓ Helps participants move from knowing about Jesus to living like Jesus.
- ✓ Designed for multiplication: every participant can become a disciple-maker.
- ✓ Available online for free at [advance.cbmc.com](https://advance.cbmc.com) in multiple languages.

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## Recommended Weekly Flow

### Personal Study (Monday–Friday)

- Each participant completes one chapter weekly, working through Bible readings, study questions, and practical applications.

### Group Gathering (Once a Week)

- Meet for 60–90 minutes.
- Open with prayer and a personal check-in.
- Discuss that week's chapter content using the Leader Guide's questions.

- Share key insights and practical next steps.
  - End by praying for each other's growth and opportunities to share their faith.
- 

## Example Week Breakdown

### During the Week

- Participants read the assigned chapter (e.g., Book 1, Chapter 1: What is the Purpose of Life?), work through questions, and reflect on application.

### Group Meeting

- Open with an icebreaker or sharing moment.
  - Ask: What stood out from this week's reading?
  - Discuss chapter questions from the Leader Guide.
  - Explore practical ways to apply the topic to daily life.
  - Assign the next chapter for the week.
- 

## Expected Outcomes

By completing all three books:

- ✓ Participants will gain a clear understanding of God's Word and foundational Christian beliefs.
  - ✓ They will develop a deeper relationship with Jesus and confidence in sharing their faith.
  - ✓ They will grow in character, purpose, and readiness to disciple others, creating a ripple effect of spiritual multiplication.
- 

## Leader Best Practices

- ✓ **Go First** – Model transparency by sharing your personal journey with each topic.
- ✓ **Foster Dialogue** – Use open-ended questions; avoid turning meetings into lectures.
- ✓ **Prioritize Application** – Encourage practical steps, not just head knowledge.
- ✓ **Empower Multiplication** – Remind participants the goal is not only their growth but helping them disciple others.

### Final Encouragement

Operation Timothy is more than a study, it's a journey of transformation. As a leader, you have the opportunity to help others experience the life-changing power of Jesus, grow in faith, and multiply their impact by investing in others.



## The Grow Phase: Commissioning Disciple-Makers & Living Missionally

### Overview

Discipleship Cohorts (DCs) aren't just about personal spiritual growth; they're designed to multiply! As members grow in faith, the ultimate goal is to help them live missionally: becoming disciple-makers who bring the life of Jesus into their families, communities, workplaces, and beyond.

Jesus said,

- “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”  
*John 20:21*

And Paul challenged us,

- “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”  
*1 Corinthians 11:1*

This commissioning mindset is the heart of the *Grow* phase, empowering your group members to **go and make disciples** in every sphere of life.

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## Why This Phase Matters

- ✓ **It's About Multiplication** – Jesus' disciples didn't just grow; they went out to make more disciples. Your group members are called to do the same.
- ✓ **It Expands the Kingdom** – By commissioning participants, you help create a ripple effect of life change far beyond your own DC.
- ✓ **It Equips for Everyday Mission** – Discipleship isn't confined to church groups; it's lived out at home, at work, in generosity, in service, and in community.

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## What Living Missionally Can Look Like

**Starting New Groups** – Leading a new DC or stepping into leadership in Connect, Re-Engage, or other discipleship environments.

**Serving Your Family** – Applying biblical principles to love, serve, and disciple those at home.

**Meeting Needs** – Actively seeing and responding to needs in your neighborhood, workplace, or community.

**Growing in Generosity** – Giving more freely to the church and to others in need.

**Going on Mission** – Engaging in local outreach or global mission trips to share Jesus' love with the world.

**Daily Imitation of Christ** – Reflecting Jesus' character and pointing people toward Him through your everyday life.

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## Leader Note: Preparing for Commissioning

As your DC approaches the final 4–5 weeks, guide members through intentional reflection and preparation. This is your opportunity to help them:

- ✓ Recognize the call to disciple others.
- ✓ Gain confidence in their ability to lead or serve.
- ✓ Seek God about who they could invest in next.

Use these key **readiness questions** to discern if someone is ready to lead or step into a greater missional role:

- Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in their life? (Galatians 5:22-23)
  - Are they honest about doubts, fears, and victories?
  - Do they show growth and engagement with DC content?
  - Can they self-assess their heart and recall relevant Scripture?
  - Are they pursuing personal holiness and running to God's Word in temptation?
  - Do they inspire others to greater faithfulness?
  - Do they have a growing love for God's Word and a healthy, consistent prayer life?
- 

## Commissioning: The Journey Continues

Think of this *Grow* phase as your group's **commissioning stage**, a time to pray over each member, affirm their growth, and empower them to step boldly into what God is calling them too next. Encourage them to seek God for the ways He is asking them to embrace the call to make disciples and our vision to Bring the Awesome Life of Christ to a lost and broken world. In this section we will provide a recommend a couple of Right Now Media studies to help you go on the commissioning journey with your group.

This is where discipleship becomes a movement, one life impacting another, over and over again.



## Unlocking the Awesome Life of Christ: Leader Overview & Weekly Guide

### Quick Overview

*Unlocking the Awesome Life of Christ* is an 8-week, daily devotional journey rooted in Galatians 5:1, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.” Each week features 5 days of personal readings and challenges, plus group discussions. It helps people break free from lies, sin, shame, and old patterns, and step into the awesome life Jesus offers. This study isn’t just knowledge, it’s a transformational, practical guide to freedom.

### Expected Outcome

Participants will:

- ✓ Confront lies and strongholds with truth.
- ✓ Experience healing from past wounds and shame.
- ✓ Establish rhythms for walking daily with Jesus.
- ✓ Build confidence to live and share their freedom.
- ✓ Lay a foundation to disciple others.

### Why Start Here?

We recommend every DC begin with this material. It establishes a shared foundation of freedom, identity in Christ, and intentional spiritual rhythms. This shared experience builds authentic connection and sets the tone for deeper growth together.

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## Weekly Flow & Leader Handles

### Personal Work (Monday–Friday)

- Each member completes 5 daily readings per week.
- Each day includes scripture, teaching, reflection questions, freedom confessions, and closing prayers.
- Encourage group members not to chase perfection but aim for progress, remind them they have weekends to catch up if needed.

### Group Gathering (Once a Week)

- Meet for 60–90 minutes.
- Discuss the week’s reflections and the chapter of Galatians assigned that week.

- Use end-of-week questions from the guide or the prompts below to spark conversation.
  - End with prayer for each other.
- 

## **Week-by-Week Summary**

### **Week 1: The Foundation of Freedom**

Lay groundwork by defining biblical freedom and challenging areas of spiritual bondage.

Discuss: Where do you feel stuck? What stood out from Galatians 1?

### **Week 2: Freedom from Lies**

Expose lies we've believed; replace them with God's truth.

Discuss: What lies were exposed this week? How is God rewriting your story? (Gal. 2)

### **Week 3: Freedom from the Past**

Break free from guilt, shame, and regret; embrace new life in Jesus.

Discuss: What part of your past still tries to define you? (Gal. 3)

### **Week 4: Freedom from Sin**

Understand sin's grip, learn repentance, and walk in grace-fueled obedience.

Discuss: Where have you seen progress? Where do you still need freedom? (Gal. 4)

### **Week 5: Down with the Strongholds, Up with the Standard**

Identify mental strongholds and tear them down with Scripture.

Discuss: What strongholds did you name this week? (Gal. 5)

### **Week 6: Walking in Freedom**

Establish daily spiritual rhythms, prayer, Word, community, that keep you anchored.

Discuss: What rhythm helps you stay connected to Jesus? (Gal. 6)

### **Week 7: Standing Firm in the Fire**

Learn to remain grounded in freedom when life gets hard or unfair.

Discuss: How do you handle resistance or setbacks? (Re-read Gal. 5)


### **Week 8: Living the Freedom Life**

Celebrate growth, craft your freedom story, and explore how to share and multiply it.

Discuss: What did God do in your life? Who can you invest in next? (Re-read Gal. 6)

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## **Leader Best Practices**

 **Stay Ahead** – Read the week's content before your group meets so you can guide discussion confidently.

- ✓ **Prioritize Vulnerability** – Model openness in your sharing; it gives others permission to do the same.
  - ✓ **Use Group Questions** – Lean on weekly reflection questions to create meaningful conversation.
  - ✓ **Pray Together** – Close every meeting with prayer; encourage participants to pray aloud as they're comfortable.
  - ✓ **Keep Galatians Central** – Each week includes a chapter reading in Galatians; anchor discussions here for scriptural depth.
- 

## Next Steps After This Study

This study prepares participants to move confidently into new studies or discipleship opportunities. Consider transitioning to additional DC Grow-phase materials, such as:

- **Operation Timothy** (for structured discipleship fundamentals).
  - **HEAR Journals** (for Bible reading and reflection rhythms).
  - **40 Days of Unceasing Prayer** (for deepening prayer life).
- 

## Final Encouragement

Freedom isn't just a concept; it's the foundation for a new way of life. As you lead your group through this journey, you're not just helping them experience freedom but equipping them to help others find it too. You are building a multiplying movement of disciples who live and give away the awesome life of Christ