

Discipleship at Vertical Life Church

Scriptural Root: Mt 28: 18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Discipleship is for everyone at VLC

Format should match needs of group:

- There is no set format of process, but options are available if needed.
- There is no set format for meetings, but there are common characteristics that each group should contain.

Non-negotiable characteristics of discipleship at VLC

- Men meet with men and women meet with women.
- Regular Meetings (Preferably weekly)
- Accountability for both spiritual growth and personal struggles.
- A purposeful, organized basis of study.
- A continual, spiritual moving forward of disciples.
- A progress toward shared leadership, with everyone eventually leading the group
- A long term goal of disciples leading their own D-group

Important understandings for D-groups:

- This IS more than just a Bible study.
- Conversation and discussion should be encouraged, not a lecture or sermon
- A D-group is a confidential place.
- Honor each other emotionally: Rom. 12:5 Rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep
- Have a scheduled regular time to meet. e.g. Wednesday at 6, every other Tuesday at 7.
- Have a regular place to meet that does not financially bind or embarrass members
- Even if 2 members can meet, the scheduled meeting should occur.
- While there may not be a designated group leader, choosing a person to remind of meetings/events is a good idea.

Suggested Elements of every meeting:

- Spiritual check in: How has this week been spiritually?
- Bible study: Based on chosen process.
- Prayer requests / praises
- Prayer

Suggestions for process:

- Pick a book of the Bible and work through it section by section
- Have a basic training series for new Christians focused on: The Gospel, Prayer, Bible Reading, etc.

Building Community: An important first step. It is important that the group get along. If the group gets along, they will then: want to meet, want to learn, put in effort, and work together.

- Do activities outside of group, sometimes including families
- Pray for one another between meetings - text thread can be a prayer chain
- Look for ways to serve - one another and others

3 levels of discipleship

Level	For:	Description:
1.)	Non-believer	Informal meetings as a matter of natural rhythms of life. Every believer should be engaged in this level of discipleship, independent of their own D-group.
2.)	New Believer	Specific set of basics to be taught to each new believer. Not a specific curriculum as long as basics are covered, but a curriculum will be available. Consuming milk. This group has a dedicated leader. There should be a definite graduation, maybe even marked by recognition.
3.)	Mature Believer	Long term accountability and continuation of sanctification. Consuming meat. This group has a facilitator, but each member should be trained and encouraged to lead the group. While this does not have a length of time for running its course, this is not meant to be permanent. As time goes by and more people need this level of discipleship, groups will split, with 1-2 members of each group each starting their own group. Challenge should be given at this point to see if people are called to work with new believers.