

This Month's Focus: D-group Basics

Discipleship Group (D-group) is a time to apply the gospel to our hearts and grow deeper in the gospel through community.

As we begin the year, we want to start, or restart, our D-group times in such a way that they help everyone in the group think more clearly about the gospel and apply it to every area of their lives. Every person in every group will begin in a different place. D-group is different from the Bible study rhythm, where God's Word is the starting block. In D-group everyone's faith, spiritual maturity, and blind spots influence where one starts. Because of this, we need to remember three core ground rules for every D-group meeting:

- We all have blind spots. We need brothers or sisters to help us identify our own.
- We have to slow down and talk candidly in order to renew our minds.
- We must trust that God wants to use others in this process; therefore we must be vulnerable and open with our D-group.

In each D-group meeting, your group will divide into men and women. This increased intimacy will best facilitate asking and answering the three core D-group questions. This smaller, gender-specific time will also facilitate everyone having more time to engage in the group conversation. Here are the questions:

1. **What am I experiencing?** (emotions, events, and relationships)
2. **Why am I experiencing this?** (circumstances, empathy, and sin)
3. **How should I respond?** (repentance and reconciliation)

This D-group's focus is on restarting our habit of asking each other these three questions. Question 1 allows everyone in the group to share something they are currently experiencing, positive or negative, that strongly affects their life or faith.

Question 2 helps us to slow down and assess how our heart (belief) is engaged in the struggles or circumstances we shared in question 1. Question 2 will be the most important part of your D-group time. Most of us need significant time, and help, to fully wrestle with how our belief in Christ is interacting with our day-to-day circumstances. Renewing our mind takes reflection on the details of our lives and on God's Word. This aspect of D-group should almost always include members opening their Bible to edify and reproof one another.

The third question facilitates the development of an action plan or accountability structure that turns right belief into right actions. We will always run the risk of skipping over deep reflection on our belief (question 2) and jumping into surface-level solutions. Don't do it! The power that defeats sin in our lives is the gospel. The gospel is clearest when it is shared (and received) in the midst of community.

1) What am I experiencing? (emotions, events, and relationships)

A. Share a current or recent experience that has been a struggle for you.

B. As you describe this experience, consider and talk about whether or not it is a routine occurrence in your life. Is it related to other experiences in any way?

2) Why am I experiencing this? (circumstances, empathy, and sin)

A. While engaged in this experience, what were your heart and mind trusting in or fearful of?

B. Do you ever attempt to separate your biblical knowledge or faith from this situation in your life?

3) How should I respond? (repentance and reconciliation)

A. How does your faith shape how you respond to this experience in the future?

B. Do you need any accountability in your life to more faithfully engage in this circumstance?