



Healthy Group Essentials: DISCIPLE

DEFINE

As the Church, we are charged by Jesus to make disciples who obey everything that He has commanded in Scripture. So, what is a disciple? A disciple is a follower or a student of a teacher. In our case, we are called to be disciples, or followers, of Jesus.

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

EXPLAIN

We at TPCC say it a little differently: a disciple is someone who follows Jesus, is being transformed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus. Each of these is crucial in a person’s discipleship to Jesus. They first must make the decision to follow Jesus and submit to Him as Lord of their life. This begins the process of transformation in the heart and the mind of the disciple, and over time, should lead to a deep commitment to see Jesus’ mission carried out here and abroad.

IMPLEMENT

When striving to help those in your group grow in their discipleship to Jesus, here are a few practical, tangible ways to put this into practice:

- Prioritize your own personal relationship with God as the leader. One of the best ways that you can help your group grow in this area is by leading out in it.
- Provide spiritual guidance to those who are newer to the faith. Consider meeting 1:1 with those who need additional guidance in their walk with Jesus. Help them to better understand what Jesus has commanded us in our walk with Him!
- Empower the spiritually mature with more responsibility within your group. Don’t be afraid to delegate responsibility within your group to those who are ready for it. Have them lead group 1x/month or have them meet 1:1 with group members to help them continue to grow.

EVALUATE

On a scale of 1-10, use the following questions to measure the health of your group when it comes to discipleship:

- Are group members engaging with spiritual disciplines (Bible reading, prayer, attending church regularly, worship)?
- How evident are the fruits of the Spirit in my group members?
- How open is my group about the sin in their life?

Healthy Group Essentials: CARE

DEFINE

Care within groups means group members are aware of and paying attention to the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental health and wellbeing of each other. It is a healthy byproduct of building community and growing relationships.

“I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” – John 13:34-35

EXPLAIN

Creating a culture of care within a small group reflects the heart of Jesus. In the passage above, Jesus leads His disciples to love as he has loved. Throughout Jesus’ life, he is attentive to the needs of others, caring for those who have lost loved ones, tending to those who are battling illnesses, and most importantly, caring for their spiritual wellbeing pointing them to God the Father. Part of care within groups is knowing members’ lives and what’s going on in their worlds.

- As a group leader, go first! Members will follow your lead in vulnerability when you are open about what challenges and celebrations are going on. It can be difficult to feel safe enough to share vulnerably if the leader is not modeling it and inviting it.
- Reiterate often that the group environment is a safe place to ask questions, share honestly, and be authentic.
- Stay up to date on what is going on in the lives of group members and commit to checking in and following up. If you share highs and lows or updates from the week, take note of what group members are sharing and check in mid-week or to follow up next time you meet or when you see them at a Sunday gathering.
- Encourage group members to care for one another. As the group leader, you can lead out on this while also inviting the group to be unified in this goal. A healthy group will work together to make sure each group member is cared for.

IMPLEMENT

Reactive

- Consistent availability is a marker of a group that cares deeply for one another. This means your group is willing to extend a hand in times of need and to show up at the most important times, whether to celebrate or support.
- Responding to hardship/crisis in group members’ lives with presence, prayer, and tangible needs such as providing a meal.
- Pray for members during group when needs are shared or at the end of the night. Don’t neglect celebrating answered prayers!

Proactive

- Reaching out to group members through group text during the week to check in and encourage group members individually.
- Planning to celebrate birthdays & anniversaries, graduations, new jobs, etc. Place reminders in your calendar to remember these important dates or delegate this role to another group member.

EVALUATE

On a scale of 1-10, use the following questions to measure the health of your group when it comes to care.

- Are group members praying for each other?
- Is there a culture of support within the group?
- Are you leading with vulnerability as a leader?
- Are group members' needs being voiced and met?

Healthy Group Essentials: SERVE

DEFINE

Serving is using the life of freedom by which we are called to recognize and then act on the needs that we see. A good measure of our spiritual health is our depth of concern for other people. As our hearts become more in tune with what Jesus is doing around us, He begins to use us to meet the needs of others.

“For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.” - Galatians 5:13

EXPLAIN

In all that we do, we look first to Jesus and what he did and said about it. He himself, the Son of God, was the ultimate servant. In John 13, Jesus thought more of others than himself by washing his disciple's feet. Afterwards, he told his disciples, "I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you." Jesus led and loved by serving people and chose to spend time with the marginalized and forgotten. He also fed thousands of people, went out of his way to heal the sick and raise the dead to life. He slowed down to be intentional with those who needed healing physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. He lived a life of humility and showed us that serving, and humility go hand in hand.

To be a servant like Jesus means we genuinely need to care about people. We not only need to keep our eyes and hearts open for the Holy Spirit to prompt us, but we also need to keep our schedules open to act. Time and tasks were not things that got in the way for Jesus to care, serve, and love people. No task was beneath Jesus and no person was unworthy.

IMPLEMENT

Serving is more than simply acting on the needs we see, but it's also seeking out opportunities to meet the needs of others. Here are some questions to think through as you help your group to take action.

Is your heart struggling to see and love others? Pray for heart change.

Pray that your heart will be stretched beyond its comfort. This may mean that you'll have to address some things and make changes, but it's worth it! This is part of being sanctified to look more like Jesus!

Look at your schedule and commitments. Are you doing too much?

Do your current commitments align with purpose and being on mission? If you don't know where to begin to set new boundaries, pray that He will show you what needs to be done each day and what needs to be set aside.

Are you beginning your day by putting others first?

Pray for opportunities to put the needs of others before your own. Does a neighbor need their lawn mowed? Does a struggling mom need to go in front of you at the check-out line? God will provide you the opportunities!

Are you making time to listen to God and doing what He says?

Follow God's prompting as you navigate your day to day. If you are prompted to help someone, do it! This does not mean that you take on every opportunity presented to you. This is where you get to pray, lean into where God is leading, and then act on what He says.

Encourage and challenge your group members to look for ways to serve their family, neighbors, co-workers, and within areas of the church!

- Go first! Serve regularly within a ministry at your campus. Go to tpcc.org/serve for a comprehensive list and description of all the serving opportunities at Traders Point.
- Rally your group to serve together with one of our local partners.
- Stay up to date and regularly talk about opportunities that are available throughout the year to serve.
- Encourage your group to take a spiritual gifts assessment at: tpcc.org/SpiritualGifts to see how God has gifted them. Pray about where God can use your group to meet the needs of others at your campus and in their community.
- Have each group member make a list of possible areas where they are feeling led to meet a need.

EVALUATE

On a scale of 1-10, use the following questions to help your group measure where they are when it comes to serving. Depending on where people are, you may want to offer a serve experience that the group can do together.

- Are you generous with your time and money?
- Are you sharing your faith with others?
- Are you looking for ways to meet the needs of others and then acting on it?

Healthy Group Essentials: MULTIPLY

DEFINE

Multiplication is the process of raising and equipping potential leaders in order to continue to make room available for people to get connected in life giving relationships.

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” - Matthew 28:19-20

EXPLAIN

There are many methods to “go and make disciples.” God has designed us to be relational beings, and as such we believe that small groups are a great way for Him to grow his people. Community is essential when it comes to successfully living out the Christian walk. The math is simple: more community = more disciples.

Groups that don't multiply run the risk of disbanding or becoming stagnant. Not only does multiplication provide additional group space, but future leaders learn to achieve their full potential when groups make multiplication an important priority.

God will use the openings in your group to place new people according to their specific needs. He'll use your group members as disciples; not just the leader, but everyone according to their specific background, experience, and life story. We can cut off God's work if we keep our group to ourselves.

IMPLEMENT

Qualities of a Potential Leader

- Possess a desire to grow in your relationship with Jesus and love people with His love
- Be an example of a biblically mature Christian in lifestyle, character, and beliefs
- Baptized through immersion, or learning more about baptism
- Nurture a consistent devotional life in prayer and spending time in God's Word
- Faithfully attend a TPCC weekly weekend service
- Seek to balance ministry with the responsibilities of family life, and vocation
- Consider contributing both financially and with your time and talents through service

Having an ICNU Conversation with a Potential Leader

- Be in prayer about the conversation. Pray for the heart of your potential leader and ask that God reveal to you the work He is doing through them.
- Plan out what you will say. Think through the following as you plan the conversation:
 - What are their strengths?
 - What potential do you see in them that they may not see in themselves?
 - When have you seen them thrive or make a difference in the lives of others?
 - How could God use them in leading a small group?
- Remember the goal of the conversation is to encourage the individual and invite them into an apprenticeship relationship.

Example

Hey John, you have done such an amazing job sharing your thoughts and prompting great conversation in our group. Because of that, you have impacted the culture of our group to be more transparent and vulnerable.

I've also noticed that you aren't afraid to lovingly challenge others and hold them accountable to things that they share while you continue pointing them to Jesus. That is a great skill that I really believe comes from your own quiet time with God.

I can see you leading a small group in the future. I would love to delegate some leadership responsibilities to you and have you lead in the future. I can provide feedback and help you along the way, but I believe this is an opportunity for God to really use you to build the Kingdom!

Three Ways to Successfully Multiply a Group

- Leader raises another leader in the group and has them take over while the initial leader starts a new group.
- Leader raises another leader in the group. Group multiplies. The new leader leads one half, initial leader leads the other half – creating space for others to join either group.

- Leader raises two leaders. Group multiplies. Each new leader leads one half of the group and the initial leader starts a new group.
- Always reach out to your Groups staff member once you've identified a new leader in your group so they can follow up to appropriately vet that person.

EVALUATE

On a scale of 1-10, use the following questions to measure the health of your group when it comes to Multiplication.

- Are you delegating leadership responsibilities to potential leaders in your group?
- Does your group look to include others who are seeking a small group?
- Are you encouraging group members with leadership potential to step up and lead a small group?
- Have you set the expectation to your group members that the goal of the group is to multiply?