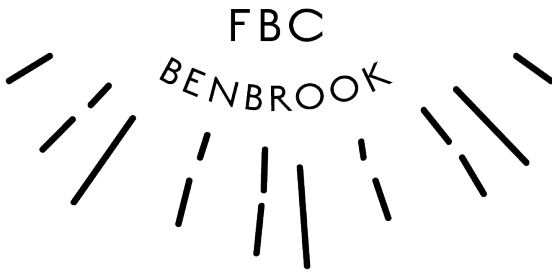




FIELD GUIDE



Fall 2023



THE D-GROUP FIELD GUIDE

First Baptist Church of Benbrook
Fall 2023

D-Groups are groups of 3 to 5 people who meet weekly for the express purpose of being disciples who make disciples.



D I S C I P L E

First Baptist Church of Benbrook
1015 McKinley, Benbrook, Texas 76126
www.fbcbenbrook.org

Before Jesus returned to the right hand of the Father, He gave His disciples this command:

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, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20 ESV)

The Great Commission is to “make disciples,” and it is incumbent upon each local church to have a strategy to fulfill this great commission.

But, what is a disciple? Our church defines a disciple as one who is...

- Developing the mind of Christ
- Obeying the commands of Christ
- Being transformed into the image of Christ
- Participating in the mission of Christ

But not only is each follower of Christ on a life long journey to mature as a disciple, we are also called to be involved in disciple making, in helping others mature as a disciple also. D-Groups are designed to both help one mature as a disciple but also to equip one to invest in the disciple making of another. Through D-Groups, we grow in the knowledge and image of Christ.

D-Groups are our church’s primary strategy to make disciples who can make disciples.

D-Groups are based on three pillars: Scripture, Prayer, and Accountability.

CORE VALUES

Peer to peer discipleship groups – D-Groups are not modeled on a “teacher-student” format where the students come to be taught by the teacher. In a peer to peer group, each member of the group is expected to bring something to the group discussion.

Scripture based – D-Groups do not follow a curriculum or study a book. Instead, D-Groups read Scripture together.

Spiritual disciplines – D-Groups are designed to teach and practice the core spiritual disciplines of Bible reading, meditation, Scripture memory, and prayer. We want to develop disciples who are equipped to feed themselves and to feed others.

Multiplication – D-Groups are designed to multiply! Our goal is for each D-Group to become 2 D-Groups within a year. We will strive to avoid the “tick tock the game is locked” temptation because we always want to have an empty chair for new believers in our church’s discipleship efforts. To have room for new disciples, we must always be forming new groups.

TYPICAL D-GROUP MEETING

Fellowship (10 minutes)

Scripture Memory (5 to 10 minutes)

Each person recite the verse

As you meditated on this verse, what stood out to you?

Bible Readings (25 to 35 minutes)

Is there a promise to keep?

Is there a sin to avoid?

Is there an example to follow?

Is there a command to obey?

Is there knowledge of God I need to reflect upon?

Accountability (10 to 25 minutes)

Prayer (10 minutes)

How can we pray with you or for you this week?

SCRIPTURE

This fall, our D-Groups will follow a different way of reading Scripture together. Each member of the group will engage with the same Scriptures each week. Prior to the weekly meeting, each member will have read the following Scriptures, completed a Bible reading journal, and memorized the weekly memory verse from the Sunday morning bulletin.

The Bible Reading Plan comes from “The Word,” a guided Bible reading plan that leads us to focus on the key passage of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. A weekly study guide is available on the church website that provides the weekly readings, commentary helps, study questions, and application suggestions. You can access these Weekly Guides by scanning the QR code or at <https://fbcbenbrook.org/dgroup-resources>.



JOURNAL SUGGESTIONS

One of the key spiritual disciplines that we want to develop as disciples of Christ is to meditate on His Word. Meditation simply means to slow down and to think deeply about the Scriptures. Too often, we read the Bible and forget what we have read before even close the book. We simply must find a way to capture what the Lord is saying to us through His Word.

One way to do that is to develop the habit of journaling.

There are a variety of ways to keep a Bible reading journal, but one simple way is the HEAR method. HEAR is an acronym that stands for "Highlight, Examine, Apply, Respond." For each day's reading, **highlight** at least one verse that stands out in your reading by writing it down in your journal. Then **examine** that verse for a truth to be learned, the character of God revealed, a conviction of sin, a command to obey, guidance, etc., and write that down in your journal. Then ask the Lord how that verse **applies** to your life today, and write that down. Finally, **respond** to God by praying about these verses.

SAMPLE "HEAR" JOURNAL

Date and Reading: May 2, Philippians 4

Highlight - *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4.13).*

Examine - *Paul was telling the church at Philippi that he has discovered the secret of contentment. No matter the situation in Paul's life, he realized that Christ was all he needed, and Christ was the one who strengthened him to persevere through difficult times.*

Application - *In my life, I will experience many ups and downs. My contentment is not found in circumstances. Rather, it is based on my relationship with Jesus Christ. Only Jesus gives me the strength I need to be content in every circumstance of life.*

Respond - *Lord Jesus, please help me as I strive to be content in You. Through Your strength, I can make it through any situation I must face.*

COMMUNITY BIBLE READING JOURNAL

Another journal method is to use the Community Bible Reading Journal. This method guides you through exploring the following questions for each Bible reading:

- Stop and ask the Lord to speak to you through His Word
- How does this Scripture help you ADORE the Father (His attributes and actions)?

- How does this Scripture help you give THANKS to Jesus for his saving work (past, present, and future)?
- How does this Scripture help you to CONFESS your sins?
- How does this Scripture help you to ASK for the Spirit to transform you?
- How has God impacted you the most through today's Scripture reading?

Journals are available in the church office by request, while supplies last.

PRAYER

D-Groups will close each session by praying for and with each other. Each member will be asked, "How can we pray for you or with you today?"

In addition to answering that question, each member should ask the group to pray for at least one lost person by name.

The group will then take turns praying out loud for each other's requests.

ACCOUNTABILITY

One of the values of a D-Group is to hold each other accountable to be maturing in Christ. To that end, the following accountability questions will be asked of each member of the group each week.

- What have you been most grateful for this week?
- What did you learn from your Bible reading this week?
- What does God want you to do or be this week?
- How have you been praying for and investing in your ONE this week?
- Have you honored God and your spouse with your thoughts, words, and actions this week?
- Have you spent quality time with your family this week?
- Have you given in to any addictive behavior this past week? (alcohol, tobacco, video games, work, TV, etc.)
- Have you told any lies or half-truths this week?
- Have you damaged another person by your words, either behind his or her back or face-to-face?
- Have you participated in anything unethical this week?

D-GROUP COVENANT

In order to get the most out of my discipleship relationship, I commit myself to the following standards:

- I will pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated spiritual transformation.
- I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis prior to my D-Group in order to contribute fully to the discussion. This includes the Scripture readings, journal entries, and Scripture memorization.
- I will make every effort to meet with my D-Group for approximately one and one-half hours each week to discuss the Scripture readings from the previous week and how it applied to my life.
- I will contribute to an atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and personal vulnerability for the edification of others in the group as well as my own spiritual growth.
- I will pray for the other disciples who are on the discipleship journey with me every week as well as praying for the lost who are on our group's list.
- I will begin praying about replicating the process with a group of at least two other people when this group is ready to multiply.

MORE INFORMATION

- D-Groups should meet once a week for 13 weeks at a time and location chosen by the group.
- Group members are asked to commit to attending every meeting if at all possible.
- Group meetings should last about 1.5 hours.
- Each group will have a “point person” who will keep in contact with the pastor to give updates about how their group is progressing. However, D-Groups are “peer discipleship groups” which means that each member is expected to contribute to the conversation. D-Groups are not “student/pupil” groups where the students sit and listen to a teacher.
- New members can be added to D-Groups in the first couple of weeks, but after that the group should be fixed. In order to develop an atmosphere of trust and accountability, the group should remain constant.
- D-Groups are designed to multiply, so this D-Group should strive to multiply into two D-Groups next semester. So, by the end of the 13 weeks, the group should be looking for who will become the “point person” for the two groups of next semester.
- D-Group members can be personally recruited by the group or potential members may come from the D-Group Kickoff Event held in February or September by the pastor.

IN THE BEGINNING

THE
WORD

SESSION SNAPSHOT

THE CONFLICT THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY

NARRATIVE PASSAGE:

Genesis 2:18-25; 3:1-6

GOSPEL FOCUS:

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

TAKEAWAYS:

- God created everything, but sin corrupted everything
- God redeemed us through Jesus

LAST WEEK'S READING:

- Genesis 1-2
- Genesis 3-4
- Genesis 6-7
- Genesis 8-9
- Job 1-2

KNOW THE WORD

PASSAGE OVERVIEW

The creation and fall of humanity is one of the most famous passages in Genesis. Here, we see God's perfect design for mankind--two parts of the same flesh working together to carry God's image across the Earth. But, as we know, something goes terribly wrong, and sets a plan in motion that plays out over the course of human history.

COMMENTARY AND STUDY MATERIALS

2:18-19 After seeing a whole chapter's worth of "God saw that it was good," we are introduced to the first instance of "It is not good" here. Perhaps God used Adam's work of naming the animals He brought before him to instill in him, even if it was subconsciously, the desire for someone like him, the way it seemed that the animals had other animals like them.

v.20 "No helper was found corresponding to him" is not a reflection on God's inability to provide for Adam's need. This was not a moment when God saw that He'd made a fatal error in only making one man. Rather, He'd given Adam something of Himself. Adam bore God's very image: he had a capacity to consider himself in light of his surroundings, to decide, to long for something he'd been made for, even if he didn't know what it was. Adam didn't need a companion because he needed something to subdue; he needed Eve because he was missing that other element from God's nature. Adam was simply not complete--it was not "good" yet.

3:1 Genesis 3:1 is connected to 2:25 with a clever bit of wordplay. We see Adam and Eve as *arummim* (naked), whereas the serpent was called *arum* (shrewd). Adam and Eve's nakedness represents the fact that they were unaware of evil and the need for protection, and the serpent's shrewdness demonstrates that he was ready to take advantage of it.

It is worth noting that "shrewdness" and "craftiness" are not necessarily bad things by themselves. Jesus tells His disciples to be as shrewd as serpents but as innocent as doves (Matthew 10:16). The problems come when that shrewdness is paired with evil intent instead of innocence.

Since we live in the conflict initiated in these verses still today, we must be aware of the snares of the Enemy and ready to thwart them so that we can continue the task He set before us when He made us: to take His image to the ends of the Earth.

STUDY THE WORD

Every now and then, the perfect piece of advice comes along, usually from someone you respect. “Work before you play, but make sure you play,” your father might have told you. “It’s okay to not be okay,” your friend might have said when you were having a rough day.

What is a piece of advice you’ve been given that has stuck with you?

In Genesis 2, God made an observation about the very first people that remains true to this day: it is not good for us to be alone. Each of us has something that someone else needs. Together, let’s discover how this truth will help us overcome a conflict that has been around since the beginning.

OUT LOUD, READ GENESIS 2:18-25

As you read, pay attention to the experience Adam had--especially as he noticed that each of these animals had other animals like them.

What do you think God meant when He said, “It is not good for the man to be alone”?

How have you experienced your own need for other people?

God knew from the beginning that mankind wasn’t supposed to be alone. He built us in His image, with qualities that look like His. And more than that, He built us as beacons that point back to Him: creations that carry the fingerprint of their creator.

What do you think it means that mankind was made in the image of God?

How does being God’s image-bearer affect the way that you live your day-to-day life?

As God’s image-bearers, we are the physical representations of our invisible Creator. But not by ourselves. Adam by himself was not complete until God made him a counterpart.

From the very beginning of time, God designed us to need one another. We need each other physically, spiritually, and with regard to the mission God handed us--to be His image-bearers on Earth.

Do you think it’s true that God designed us to be in relationship and community with one another? Why or why not?

What does it look like to use our relationships with the people around us in a God-honoring way?

OUT LOUD, READ GENESIS 3:1-6

After you read, compare what the serpent said to what God's instructions were in Genesis 2:15-17. Pay special attention to the way that the serpent twisted God's Word.

What are the differences between what God told Adam and what the serpent said?

Was there any element of truth in what the serpent said? What does that tell you about the nature of the lies the enemy tells?

The slope that the serpent led Eve down was a tricky one. It was untruth masked by innocent-sounding questions and lies wrapped around a kernel of what God told them.

That is the way temptation usually comes to us: in gradual increments. At first, it doesn't seem like anything outlandish--just the simple question "Did God really say?"

How have you found temptation coming in your own life?

How did Eve respond to the serpent's temptation?

What do you think we can do to avoid falling into the same response?

Without much of a fight at all, Eve weighed her options and decided that what the tempter offered her was more enticing than the relationship she shared with her Creator.

This is the exact same struggle that persists to today. Temptation will still come in subtle forms, and so we must be careful to be on our guard against it. With the help of the Holy Spirit, along with having God's Word hidden in our hearts, we can learn how to better resist it every day.

What advice have you picked up through the years about how to resist temptation?

What benefit do you think surrounding yourself with life-giving community will have as we fight the temptation to disobey the Lord?

APPLY THE WORD

Since the Fall in Genesis 3, humankind has battled temptation. Simply put, temptation is a choice about which fruit you prefer: the fruit that the tempter offers or the fruit that is produced by a life lived in obedience to the Lord. What the tempter offers is enticing--that is what makes it a temptation.

In a lot of cases, even though temptation comes in a million forms, it looks the same when you boil it down: it becomes a question of who is on the throne of your life. Are you tempted to trust your own standard above God's? Are you tempted to listen to your own voice instead of the Lord's?

Before you close your time in prayer, encourage those in your group to take a few minutes when you are done to answer the following and share updates next week:

In what form does temptation come most often to me, personally?

What specifically should I do to combat it when it looks like this?

How can I better prepare for when it comes next?

PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK

Next Week's Reading:

- ***Job 38-39***
- ***Job 40-42***
- ***Genesis 11-12***
- ***Genesis 15***
- ***Genesis 16-17***

FBC  BENBROOK
