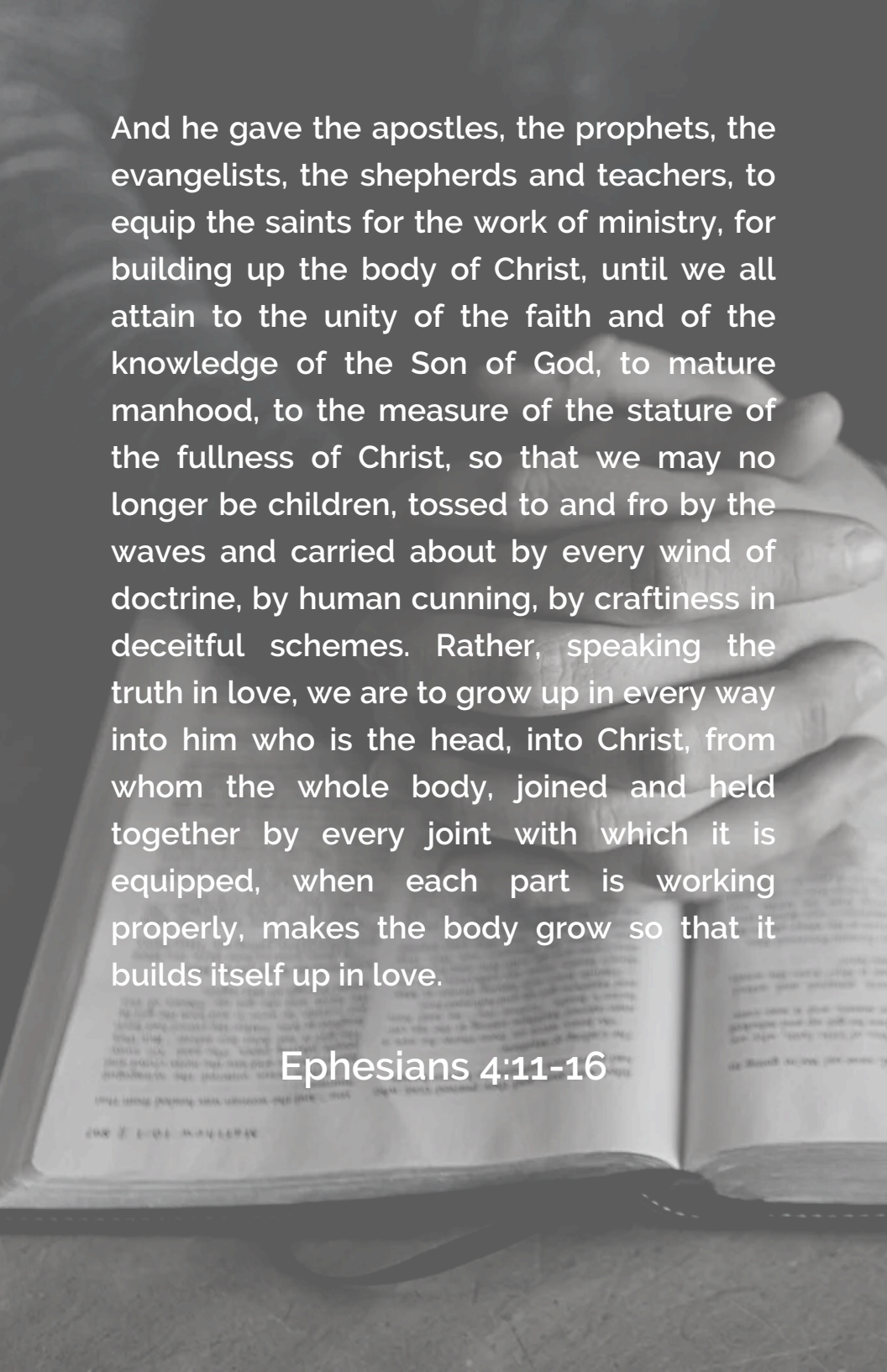




DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

GUIDE

An open Bible is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. Two hands are resting on the pages, with fingers slightly curled. The text on the pages is visible but mostly obscured by the hands and the white text overlay. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A D-GROUP?

Discipleship Groups are gender-specific groups of 3-5 Christians that meet regularly for 16 weeks each semester to study Scripture and grow in spiritual maturity.

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

Together, through men's and women's discipleship groups, we seek to foster a culture of knowing, following, and enjoying God together by deliberately doing spiritual good to one another.

WEEKLY DISCIPLINES

ACTIVE BIBLE
READING
JOURNALING
ACCOUNTABILITY
SCRIPTURE
MEMORY
PRAYER



MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

SCRIPTURAL
HUMBLY-HUNGRY
ACCOUNTABLE
REPRODUCIBLE
COMMUNAL
MISSIONAL

WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT?

- Give yourself fully to the Lord and those in your group.
- Commit to meet regularly for the semester.
- Commit to actively reading the material.
- Meet weekly with my Discipleship Group (1-2 hours).
- Commit to Scripture Reading and Study, Accountability, and Prayer.
- Contribute to a group atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency.
- Pray weekly for fellow Discipleship Group members.
- Pray and look for others in my life whom I can begin a new Discipleship Group.

HOW DO I JOIN A GROUP

First, pray for 2-4 people that you can invest in over the next 12 months and see who God puts on your heart. While Life Groups are a great place to look for these people, make yourself known to others in the congregation. Once you have someone in mind, pursue that person.

Ultimately, if you are struggling to find people for a group, ask one of the pastors or men/women's ministry leaders and we would love to help get you connected.

A NOTE FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUP LEADERS

At Fairview, we encourage every member to eagerly grow in their maturity in Christ, deliberately seek to enjoy God and his Word, and intentionally help others in these ways as we all make our way to heaven. As a Discipleship Group Leader, you are responsible for preparing ahead of time for group study & discussion, for asking the difficult questions of the passage and application of the passage, and modeling what living in the light with others looks like. Furthermore, not only are you increasing in your knowledge and love of God, but in doing so, you are raising up other Christians in maturity so that they can lead other discipleship groups.

Commit to doing three things:

PRAY - Pray daily for these people.

Ask God to make them aware of Christ's love and their need for Him (2 Cor. 4:4; Matt.13:15) and to give them a zeal for righteousness and unity with one another (2 Cor. 7:10-13; Eph. 4:1-7).

INITIATE - Initiate deeper questions of the text and application

As you initiate interest and concern in someone's life, you build trust, which creates more opportunities to deepen the relationship and fellowship in Christ.

MODEL - Model joy, confession, grace, and looking to Christ

Sometimes modeling and implicit teaching goes further than explicit teaching. Sometimes the best way for someone to grow in Christ is to watch someone, who has gone before them, demonstrate faith, hope, and love. Deliberately seek to disciple others through praying for them, initiating relationships, and modeling the Christian life.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP OVERVIEW

HOW TO USE THIS

The next 12 months of your life will be an exciting time as you enter a season focused on spiritual growth. The Discipleship Group environment encourages us to engage with God's Word and His people in a way that most of us never have before. As His Spirit works in our lives, it creates a passion to help others experience the same thing.

The Discipleship Group Overview is designed to introduce each element of the group and help your group start strong. We would encourage each member of the group to have a booklet and use it to guide you through the first few weeks of meeting together.

This resource will help your group have three important conversations:

WEEK 1 - GETTING STARTED:

During the first meeting you will set clear expectations for the group and get to know one another. This booklet provides a couple of simple exercises to help you lay a strong foundation for your group.

WEEK 2 - SCRIPTURE STUDY AND MEMORY:

In the second week, you will begin to get into the rhythm of the five weekly disciplines. You will learn about the C.O.M.A. method and why Scripture Memory is so important.

WEEK 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER:

During the third week you will continue your weekly rhythm through the disciplines while also beginning to grow in accountability questions and explaining how you will pray for one another.

SET EXPECTATIONS

It's important that we all have the same expectation for this group. Below is an image called the Discipleship Group DNA. This image and the next couple of pages explain what is unique about this Discipleship Group.

WEEKLY DISCIPLINES

ACTIVE BIBLE READING
JOURNALING
ACCOUNTABILITY
SCRIPTURE MEMORY
PRAYER



MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

SCRIPTURAL
HUMBLY-HUNGRY
ACCOUNTABLE
REPRODUCIBLE
COMMUNAL
MISSIONAL

WHAT WILL WE DO?

1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8

“Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promises for both the present life and the life to come.”

We train in godliness by weekly committing to the five disciplines.

FIVE WEEKLY DISCIPLINES

- Active Bible Reading
- Journaling
- Accountability
- Scripture Memory
- Prayer

Which of the five weekly disciplines are you currently doing well?

Which do you need to grow in the most?



WHAT WILL GOD DO?

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

HEBREWS 4:12

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Each of these verses speak to how the Holy Spirit uses God's Word to change our lives. Though we commit to the disciplines above, it is not our effort that changes us, but the Holy Spirit through His Word.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

As we allow the Word of God to work in our lives we will see its impact through the areas known as the Marks of a Disciple.

SCRIPTURAL: A disciple experiences intimacy with Christ through regularly reading, meditating on, and obeying God's Word.

HUMBLY-HUNGRY: A disciple exhibits humility and hunger for growing in Christ.

ACCOUNTABLE: A disciple lives in the light with others unto God.

REPRODUCIBLE: A disciple invests in men and women who are Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

COMMUNAL: A disciple intentionally shares life with other believers.

MISSIONAL: A disciple engages with those who are unengaged with the church.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP COMMITMENT

OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, I WILL DO MY BEST TO:

- Give myself fully to the Lord and those in your group.
- Commit to meet regularly for the semester.
- Commit to actively reading the material.
- Meet weekly with my Discipleship Group (60-90 minutes).
- Commit to Scripture Reading and Study, Accountability, and Prayer.
- Contribute to a group atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency.
- Pray weekly for fellow Discipleship Group members.
- Pray and look for others in my life whom I can begin a new Discipleship Group.

CONTENT

Purchase the resource material your group will use and begin reading. (NOTE: Starting January 2025, men and women of the church will begin studying books of the Bible in these discipleship groups.)

GETTING STARTED

WEEK 1

Welcome to week one of your Discipleship Group! Today's meeting will look different than your normal weeks. You will focus on getting to know one another, setting expectations, and committing to one another.

GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

Below is a list of questions you can discuss as a group. You most likely will not have time to go through all of them, but pick 1-2 and designate half your meeting time to discuss them.

- Share a 2-3 minute version of your testimony.
- What are you most looking forward to in this group?
- Tell us about your family, work, and personal hobbies.
- What are three areas of life that you're looking to grow spiritually?

NOTE: In the future, you can spend more time getting to know one another. A great way to do this is by asking a different member each week to share their story in 7-10 minutes.

SCRIPTURE STUDY AND MEMORY

WEEK 2

Every week we will follow the same rhythm that includes each of the weekly disciplines. The example below is meant to be a helpful guide, but it is far from an exact science. Ultimately, the pace and content of the conversation is set by the discernment of the group. The times will vary depending on the length of your Discipleship Group meeting and the amount of people in your group. Today, we will introduce two disciplines: Active Bible Reading and Scripture Memory.

NORMAL GROUP RHYTHM

FELLOWSHIP

10 minutes: Start by catching up. Have each person share his or her “high” and “low” of the week.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

5 minutes: After everyone quotes the week’s memory verse, ask, “As you meditated on this verse, what stood out to you?” We want to store God’s Word in our heart, not just be able to recite it.

STUDY OF GOD’S WORD

40 minutes: As you share from your week of study, a great question to ask is, “Which journal entry stood out the most to you this week?” and then, allow everyone to share. Be sure to engage members as they share. Help them go deeper.

APPLICATION OF GOD’S WORD

30 minutes: Each week, you will want to dig a little deeper, addressing the dark spots of our lives. There are sample questions later in the guide.

PRAYER

5 minutes: Finish the time by having each person share prayer requests.

APPLYING GOD'S WORD: ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER

WEEK 3

This week, you will continue your normal rhythm of Discipleship Group. You will spend extra time on the accountability and prayer section as you introduce this element more fully into the group. Upon completion of this week, your Discipleship Group routine will be established. You will simply continue to meet and grow together, until it is time to multiply groups.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Below is a list of possible questions to ask during your meeting as you think about applying the passage of Scripture you studied. While time might not allow you to ask all of these questions, these are the types of questions you will want to discuss each week. Remember these questions should be asked with a spirit of honesty, confidentiality, and prayer. Along with other prayer requests, let the answers to these questions help guide your time in prayer for one another.

- 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?
 - 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?
 - How should you pray based on this passage?
 - Have you shared the gospel or biblical truths this week?
 - What can you praise God for based on this passage?
-

WHY MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE?

I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking than memorizing Scripture. No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.

Every week, we will have a verse that we will memorize. This is a largely neglected discipline that has an amazing benefit for the believer. The discipline's purpose is to store God's Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11). For this reason, we do not want to only memorize verses, but to meditate on them as we do it.

The more aligned our group is in this discipline, the more beneficial it will be. The group can decide together which verses to memorize along with the preferred translation. One recommended resource is Fighter Verse from Truth78. Though it is not a requirement that everyone uses the same translation, it is beneficial when everyone is able to work as a team to say the same verse in the same translation. Lastly, we will periodically review previous verses.

- What experience do you have with Scripture Memory?
- How could you see Scripture Memory being beneficial in your life?
- What verses will we commit to and what translation will we use?
- How can we be intentional about reviewing verses so that we don't forget them?

THIS WEEK

Continue reading using the C.O.M.A. method and begin memorizing and meditating on the weekly verse. Two resources: Fighter Verses from Truth78 and Andy Davis' Memorizing Scripture for Life.

THE C.O.M.A. METHOD

The COMA Bible Study Method

C - Context



- What sort of writing is this?
- What circumstances surround the writing?
- What has come before this?
- What comes after this?
- Any other Bible passages connected to this one?

O - Observation



- How does the text divide into sections?
- What is the main point or points?
- Any surprises or ironies? Key words?



M - Meaning

- How does this portion relate to other parts of the book it is in?
- What does it teach about God, Jesus, man, sin, salvation, the church, etc.?
- How could we sum up the meaning in a few words?

A - Application

- How does this change or strengthen my understanding?
- Is there some attitude I need to change?
- How must I change the way I live?



Founder of this Bible Study Method: David Helm

www.davidhelms.com

GOOD QUESTIONS FOR CONTEXT OF THE TEXT

When considering context, you are considering the entire passage: how it is impacted by the genre of the book, where it fits in the book you are studying, and where it fits in the story of Scripture. Consider the context first because context keeps you from interpreting a passage in isolation.

LITERARY CONTEXT

- Where does this passage fit into the book as a whole and why did the author put it here?
- How do the passages before and after impact this text?
- How does this passage reflect the themes of the book as a whole?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Who wrote the book?
- When and to whom was it written?
- Why was it written?
- Are there cultural or historical references in the passage?

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- How does this passage contribute to the Bible's story of redemption?
 - How does the story of Scripture help me understand this specific passage?
 - How does this passage speak of or point to Christ?
-

WHAT IS THE C.O.M.A. METHOD?

We follow a study method in order to make sure we aren't imposing our own meaning on the text. Instead, we want to discover the meaning God intended through the author of the text to have and allow the Holy Spirit to apply it to our lives. Sometimes the meaning of a text is fairly clear. In this case, a method of study produces a deeper understanding. Sometimes the meaning isn't clear, and a method of study can protect us from misinterpretation.

COMA is a somewhat unfortunate acronym for the steps we follow when studying the Bible. Other Bible study methods might name or order the steps slightly differently, but all useful methods should include these steps.

C (CONTEXT): Bible passages weren't written in isolation and weren't meant to be read in isolation either. Context allows us to understand how the surroundings of a passage impact its meaning.

O (OBSERVATION): The point of observation is to understand the content of the passage. You are not looking for meaning in this step. Once you've observed a passage well and understood its content, the meaning will become clear.

M (MEANING): Ask the question, "What did this text mean to its audience?" This step proceeds and builds upon observation. Additionally, this step takes into account God's purpose in the whole history of redemption. A correct understanding of the text's meaning sets you up to apply it well.

A (APPLICATION): Answer the question, "What does this text mean for me or for us today?" Faithful application is based on a correct understanding of the text's meaning.

Preparing to study

When you are doing Bible study it is easiest if you look at one section at a time. What do we mean by a section? A section is one story, one psalm, one parable, or one unit of teaching. Our modern Bibles delineate sections for us and often even give them headers. Studying one section at a time will make the task easier. It's also helpful to study through an entire book.

Pray! How easy it is to overlook this step. We all need the Holy Spirit to help us understand and apply the Bible.

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