

DNA GROUPS - FAQ

WHY SHOULD I BE IN A DNA GROUP?

As disciples who've been saved and made righteous, Paul exhorts us to "be transformed by the renewing of your minds" (Romans 12:2). Discipleship requires life-on-life interaction, and can only happen in community. We grow primarily through the experience of life in gospel community. A DNA group can be a key catalyst for growth and transformation in our lives.

One of the main ways this happens is by giving each other regular reminders of the truth of the gospel. Hebrews 3:12 warns, "Take care, brothers and sisters, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God." We are often tempted to forget who God is, what He's done for us in Christ Jesus, who we are as a result, and how we live out of our new identity. Hebrews 3:12-13 says one of the major ways to prevent this "falling away from the living God" is to "encourage one another daily...so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

Every single day we need to be encouraged with the truth that we are deeply loved and accepted by the Father purely on the basis of what Jesus has done! Our new identity as sons and daughters of God shapes everything about our life as disciples of Jesus. Understanding this new identity also gives us the boldness and humility to be honest with our DNA partners when we are tempted to hide our sin or to blame others. Regular encouragement from our DNA partners can be a significant help in our battle against sin and against the lies of the enemy.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM A DNA GROUP?

The members of a DNA group should be committed to meeting together regularly, usually for about 90 minutes. These meetings consist of sharing personal stories and struggles, asking questions, listening to each other, reading scripture, praying, speaking the truth in love, repenting and confessing sin, and listening to the Holy Spirit, and submitting to one another. Beyond the weekly meeting, however, DNA groups should seek to build trusting relationships by sharing everyday life together. Ideally, gospel friendships will form, and people will enjoy hanging together in all kinds of ways.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A DNA GROUP MEET? AND WHERE?

As far as a more structured meeting, DNA groups should plan to meet on a weekly basis for about 90 minutes (though often they go longer!). If a group only plans to connect every other week, the busyness and unpredictability of life (travel, sickness, holidays, schedule conflicts) will often mean long stretches between solid meetings.

Meetings usually happen in coffee shops, restaurants, pubs, or homes. Focus is a key factor to consider: it's hard for three moms to have a DNA group meeting while their kids play at the park or for three commuters to talk on a crowded bus. Meet in a place where everyone is comfortable and that is reasonably free of distractions.

DNA GROUP LEADERSHIP

The nature of group dynamics reveals that every group has a leader. Acknowledging this reality will help DNA groups function in a more healthy manner. Each DNA group's make-up will be unique. The nature of the group will determine the type of leadership that's needed.

For some groups, where all participants have similar experience and maturity, the leader will simply be the person who makes sure the group meets. For others, the leader will clearly drive the discussion. Sometimes, the leader will essentially form the group by inviting them together, and other times the group will need to work together to clearly identify the leader.

Regardless of who initially plays the role of leader, each member of a DNA group should get experience leading within the group. Ideally, over the course of a year or so, each person will spend a few months leading the group. As disciples, each person should be equipped to guide a group of at least three people through a discussion that is centered around Jesus. A DNA group provides a great training ground for disciples to learn the basics of leading in a group setting.