

HOW TO DISCOVER - NUTURE - ACT

Putting the D-N-A in our DNA's

HOW TO 'DISCOVER'?

The Discover step is all about seeing and knowing God through the truth of His word together. This is why it's placed first in the process. Starting with God's Word first helps us to remember that the world doesn't revolve around us but that our lives revolve around Him and His story. Overall, in this step the group will choose a passage of Scripture to study, pray for God's help, have someone read the passage or take turns reading the passage, then work through the passage together using the 4 questions or Reap Method (http://cbccorpuschristi.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/REAP_DNA_4Qs.pdf)

As far as how to choose a passage to study, there are a few different options. Keep in mind that you might want to try different things in different seasons as you seek The Lord together as a group...

Option 1 - Start by using a reading plan calendar to choose a passage to study. We suggest using the Discipleship Journal Bible Reading plan calendar (<https://www.navigators.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Discipleship-Journal-Bible-Reading-Plan-9781617479083.pdf>) or the M'Cheyne Reading plan calendar (http://www.edginet.org/mcheyne/year_classic_single_a4.pdf)

Option 2 - The group can also decide to study a certain book of the Bible together and plan to study a section of verses or chapters at a time. In this case, it may be helpful for each group member to read the chapter or passage ahead of time and to come ready to discuss what they learned or what they had questions about.

Option 3 - Another option would be to have each group member or one group member share what they've learned and discovered on their own throughout the past week from their own reading plans or devotionals. The group could then work through the passage(s) using the 4 questions or REAP method together.

HOW TO 'NURTURE'?

If the 'Discover' step is mainly about knowing and loving God, the 'Nurture' step is mainly about knowing and loving each other. In this step, group members will share some of what's going on in their lives, listening to each other, speaking the truth in love to each other and shepherding each other with the gospel. Some of us may not feel capable of shepherding others like this but remember, The Holy Spirit lives in *each* disciple of Jesus, empowering them to shepherd and disciple one another. Each group member may have experienced victory over temptation, the Spirit may have convicted them and led them to repentance and faith, they may have struggled with sin/unbelief in the past week.

As the members of the group are talking, everyone should listen compassionately and with discernment. This begins with praying and asking the Spirit to give the group ears to hear what is really happening under the surface. Ask Him to help the group show empathy and compassion by simply paying close attention. Nothing cultivates nurturing more than showing genuine care and concern for others, especially when they are hurting. Trust is built when DNA members demonstrate mutual love for one another. As J.I. Packer noted in 'Knowing God', how well you know someone largely depends on how much they are willing to reveal to you. So if we truly want to grow together in Christ it will require a willingness to be vulnerable and honest with one another. Without love, compassion, empathy, and care, it will be extremely difficult to nurture.

There are 3 basic steps to good gospel shepherding...

1. **Listen for the heart** by focusing on the person and not the problem. Rather than listening for the mere facts about a person's circumstances or situation, we should listen for how they are responding to their circumstances. Try to help each other get the root underneath the fruit in each other's lives.
2. **Ask good questions** before offering any advice. When people share their struggles with us, sometimes the temptation is to offer simplistic advice or quote scripture in a moralistic way. Questions are so valuable because they lead to self-discovery and implication. In order for real change to occur, the Holy Spirit must bring conviction of sin (John 16:8).

3. **Speak the truth in love.** This truth should be centered on the gospel and our *identity* much more than on our actions. For example, if someone confesses worry, point them back to their identity as beloved children of the Father rather than telling them that the bible says not to worry. This should also be done in humility. If we have preconceived judgments about a person's heart ("I know for sure why they did that!"), it will come through in our communication, and our speech will not be filled with grace. We need the Holy Spirit to purify our motives *before* we speak. That's why it's important to ask a lot of good questions *before* speaking the truth in love. Additionally, part of speaking the truth in love will also involve calling each other to repentance from time to time. Sometime it might be helpful to ask something like, "Is there anything that would prevent you from repenting right now?" or "Do you want to pause and pray about that right now?" This simple but direct question can help people cross the threshold of repentance and renewed faith in Christ and the good news of the gospel.

HOW TO 'ACT'?

The 'Act' step is all about helping each other put truth into action. Once we've discovered the truth about who God is and what He's done, and once we've repented of our sin/unbelief and renewed our faith in Jesus, we can ask the Spirit to guide us in changing the way we live. True repentance will always have a practical impact on our lives. In this step, the group will spend time praying either in silence individually or together (or both) asking The Lord two main questions...

1. What do you want me to do?
2. Who do you want me to tell?

After a few minutes of praying, listening, and seeking The Lord together. The group will discuss what the Lord may be putting on their heart. We often need the input of our brothers and sisters to help determine exactly how to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Praying, listening, and discussing this together is a prime opportunity to practice mutual submission. In light of the repentance the Spirit has granted us, and in light how the Holy Spirit may be leading the group, clear action steps can be determined and discussed together