

NEPC MEN

BUILDING SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Discipleship Groups: Overview

Introduction: The vision of the NEPC men's ministry is to **build spiritual leaders** in our churches, our homes, and wherever God would call us. The men's ministry has other goals as well – to build friendships, to do fun activities together – but our main goal is to build spiritual leaders. This document will provide an overview of our primary strategy to build spiritual leaders: **Discipleship Groups**.

1. **What is a spiritual leader?** A spiritual leader is someone who is providing godly leadership in a place where it is needed (home, church, etc.). Though far from perfect, spiritual leaders lead by example, demonstrate a servant's heart, and love God, his Word and others. At NEPC, some examples of spiritual leaders are elders, deacons, Sunday School leaders, and youth leaders.
2. **Who can be a spiritual leader?** Anyone with the right attitude and heart. We believe that God does not call the equipped, but rather that he equips those he calls.
3. **What is a discipleship group?** A discipleship group is a gathering of men who are encouraging and challenging one another on a weekly basis to reach the next level of spiritual maturity.
4. **How is a discipleship group different from a small group bible study, or home group?**

There are similarities, of course, but the key distinguishing features are as follows:

- a. **Length** – A discipleship group is a one-year commitment. That's it.
 - b. **Intentionality** – A discipleship group is about setting spiritual goals and then aiming to reach them by the power of the Holy Spirit, hard work and help from other guys.
 - c. **Commitment** – This group requires a higher level of commitment than an ordinary small group setting. The group will meet most weeks during the year, and there will be a moderate amount of 'homework' during the week. Unless a person is sick, out of town, or tied up with a serious commitment, they are expected to make it to the group.
 - d. **Accountability** – Whether it's a besetting sin, a goal of praying every day with your spouse, whatever, this group will include accountability to other men.
5. **What is the make up of the group?** A discipleship group contains guys at every level of spiritual maturity (and hopefully life-stage). It is not composed of the 'pros' and then everybody else.
 6. **What happens when the one-year commitment comes to a close?** There are a number of options: Be deployed at NEPC for greater kingdom service, become a Discipleship Group leader, stay in the group for another year, or simply step back and pray about what God has for you next.

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Discipleship Groups: Next Steps

Here are the steps to take to join and commit to a Discipleship group.

1. **Prayerfully Consider this Commitment:** Pray about this. Talk to your spouse. Make sure you can make the commitment. Consider whether or not you would need to temporarily step away from another commitment at NEPC. We do not want a guy in a men's bible study AND in a discipleship group, for example. You are more than welcome to rejoin your bible study group when the one-year is up. Other NEPC commitments are, of course, up to the individual.
2. **Take the one-page Spiritual Assessment:** In addition to the curriculum, this spiritual assessment will serve as your guide throughout the year. Be honest and specific on the assessment. If you commit to the group, the other guys in the group will read your spiritual assessment to help keep you accountable and encourage you to meet your goals. This assessment is the first step in transparency for these groups. Please remember everything in a discipleship group is confidential.
3. **Review the One Year Curriculum and Meeting Schedule:** You will need to commit to doing the reading and making the meetings. If you are not a huge reader, well, never too late! That being said, these are accessible materials, not seminary textbooks.
4. **Meet with the leaders in the discipleship group program:** Before signing on the dotted line, meet with Rev. Josh Desch, Pastor of Community and Discipleship, and other leaders in this program to determine if this is the right time and season for you to make this commitment.
5. **Make the plunge!** Sign the one year discipleship covenant and begin the journey of growing deeper in your faith through a discipleship group.

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