

Core Group Servant Leader Training Manual



Leadership Retreat 2016 Schedule

Friday

8:00 am – 8:30 am	Arrive at Clements House Breakfast: Chik-Fil-A Core Leader assignments Announcements
8:30 am – 1:30 pm	Vehicle Assignments Drive time Lunch: on your own - fast food on the way
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Canoeing
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Dinner: Jimmy's chicken
8:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Settle into Family Farm Share and Prayer with Co-Leaders Snacks!

Saturday

8:00 am – 8:50 am	Breakfast: something hot!
8:50 am – 9:30 am	Wins of a Core Group
9:40 am – 10:20 am	Session 1
10:30 am – 11:10 am	Session 2
11:20 am – 12:00 pm	Session 3
12:10 pm – 1:10 pm	Lunch: Sandwiches
1:20 pm – 2:00 pm	Session 4
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Freshen Up for pictures
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	Pictures
3:30 pm – 6:15 pm	Snacks! & Free Time
6:15 pm – 7:45 pm	Dinner: Mimi and PopPop's Tacos
7:45 pm – 8:15 pm	Worship and Word
8:15 pm – 9:15 pm	Calendar and Sign-ups Snacks!
9:15 pm – 11:00 pm	Planning Time with Core Group Leader(s)

Sunday

8:30 am – 9:00 am	Travel to McDonalds Breakfast: Sausage biscuits from McDonalds
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Church at Malvern First Assembly of God
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch: Church provided
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	Travel to Family Farm
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Final XALT meeting Clean-Up & Head Home Dinner: on your own

Why Core Groups?

*The Vision Statement of Chi Alpha:
Chi Alpha at Ole Miss is a passionately-devoted, diverse, missional community of the Spirit—building lifelong followers of Jesus.*

Defining the “Win” for Chi Alpha:

We believe that discipleship happens most naturally in the context of meaningful relationships. We believe that discipleship happens best with a group of people who are “doing life” together. We believe that meaningful relationships are most likely to be developed in the dynamic of a vibrant small group.

- Simply stated the “Win” for Chi Alpha is to see students get involved in a vibrant _____.

Defining the win for Core Groups:

- _____ with one another (Great Commandment)

Anchor #1: Real _____

Are the members of your core group hanging out together outside of core group and developing deeper friendships with each other?

What are we doing as a small group to provide opportunities for relationships to grow throughout the week?

- _____ in their relationship with Jesus Christ (Great Commandment)

Anchor #2: Real _____

Is Christ’s passions (deals with desires) and character (deals with actions) growing in their life?

Is the core group engaging in authentic discussion of Scripture and Spiritual topics? Are the leader’s having proactive one on ones with the members of their group?

- _____ out to pre-christians (Great Commission)

Anchor #3: Real _____

_____ is good and _____ are fun!!!

Can each core group member tell you 1 or 2 people that they are purposefully making a big deal of to influence them towards Christ?

What is the core group doing to partner with them in reaching out?

Pre-First Core Group

The three WINS of Core Group:

A healthy Core Group must first _____ in order to form, then _____ in order to center the group on their relationship with God. However, for a Core Group to thrive in the long-term, they have to commit themselves to _____ others!

Think about what it means to turn a _____ into a _____.

The 3 stages of Fall startup:

1. Before school starts:

Returning Members

- Make sure that everyone knows that core group is back in action
- Send a _____ telling everyone you're back
- Encourage _____ to get involved during
 - o Challenge them to each bring a friend to your next Core Group event
- _____ with the guys and girls you expect to return – invite them again and make it personal!
 - o Take them baked goods
 - o Write a letter/note
 - o Go to Cookout or McDonalds
 - o Catch up on everyone's summer break!
- Be clear about when and where Core Group is starting again!
- Hang out _____. You don't have to wait for the first service!
 - o Go to dinner, have a movie night, hit lamar park

Target referrals and summer orientation contacts

2. Pre-first service: names from the Get Involved Fair
3. Post-first service: names received after the first service

Things to remember:

- _____ that God will lead you to guys or girls that desire to be in a Core Group.
- Think specifically with your co-leader about names of friends in class or extracurriculars whom you could invite to Chi Alpha service - include pre-christians.

The _____ follow-up:

- After first meeting, we must make _____ contact with the student within 48 hours about core group. A week later is too late!
- Personal contact means _____. So if your contact isn't home, come back again later!
- Take someone from your _____ with you – start right now to infuse your Core Group with a _____ mentality.

Follow-up: What do you do with these names?

1. _____ that God would guide you and go before you! Ask for divine appointments.
2. _____ – sounds simple, but is often forgotten [*Let them know where your home town is, your major, what activities you enjoy, etc. There may be an opportunity to make a connection!*]
3. Take a _____ in the student.
Ask questions! Everyone's favorite topic is generally _____!
4. _____ what a Core Group is to the new friends you are making.
Core Group is: (*have them write and then shout out definitions*)

These opportunities may provide a chance to share your testimony from core group, and maybe even the good news of Jesus to someone who has never heard it clearly.

5. _____ the person to come at a time and place that you have predetermined. They can't say yes if you don't ask!
Next Core Group Event (*what are some good ideas for a first hang out?*)
Core Group – the time/day/place you meet
First XA service

Remember to be on _____ to meet them, and make it _____ for someone to make it to Chi Alpha – going and picking them up, walking with them.
This could be what it takes for someone to hear the Gospel for the first time!

First Service/Every Service

1. Be a _____!

- IN _____
- F _____
- O _____
- R _____
- M _____

2. In the first _____ of an event, a person decides whether or not they will ever come back.

3. _____

- Meet someone
- Find out what they like
- Find a friend who you can introduce them to with something in common
- Pass them on – but don't abandon them!

How to Start a Core Group

_____ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

_____ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

1. _____ is the most important part of leading a core group

- Start practicing now!
- This is ongoing _____

2. Initial 1/1's

- When does the first 1/1 happen? _____
- What happens at the first 1/1?
 - Your _____
 - Your _____ for the group
 - EXPECT NOTHING IN RETURN!
 - _____ them to be a committed member
- Realistic Expectations: How many 1/1's do you have to do in order to have four-six people come to your first core group? _____
 - Social norms (and event planning)
 - _____ of those you invite (meet with 1/1) will come
 - About _____ of those who would come, their schedules won't work out or at the last minute they will simply not come.

3. First Core Group: _____

- You and your co-leader go first

4. CONSISTENCY in 1/1's

- When do you do the next 1/1? _____
- How do you think they will feel if they open up at first core group, and you do not meet with them within the week for a 1/1? _____

5. _____

- They will not come back every single week just to play a game or to eat or to hang out with you. You must _____, give them meat to chew on.
- _____ is the biggest attraction factor

Stages of Core Group

This year you are going on a journey with your Core Group! You will start in a few weeks with a group of strangers. The goal for your group is to be transformed into a brotherhood/sisterhood that is dynamically living out the three anchors by the end of the year.

For a Core Group to succeed on the journey, the leader must lead well. There are four distinct leadership styles, and some can hinder the Core Group's progress on the journey.

Styles of Leadership

1. _____

Characteristics

- Maintains total control, treating group members as listeners and followers.
- Determines goals and policies.
- Makes all decisions, disregarding others' views.
- Talks too much.
- Focuses attention on self.
- Regards group members as puppets.

In Bible study

- Asks and answers all questions.

This is not an appropriate leadership style for a Core group.

2. _____

Characteristics

- Exercises minimal control, allowing members to direct.
- Doesn't prepare; lets discussion drift.
- Doesn't seem to care.
- Causes the group to accomplish very little.
- Encourages fragmentation through lack of discipline.
- Makes no attempt to regulate events.
- Lacks courage in making plans.

In a Bible study

- Asks general questions, then is silent.

This type of leadership is highly discouraged. The vacuum allows a domineering member to take charge.

3. _____

Characteristics

- Maintains strong control, yet actively involves members in the discussions.
- Is active and energetic, and seeks the involvement of others.
- Is prepared to give necessary direction and support.
- Uses communication skills to involve others.
- Takes responsibility until others can assume it.
- Uses personal power to empower others.

In Bible study

- Prepares and asks questions, then elicits members' responses.

This style of leadership is helpful in the beginning stages of a group's life. As the group matures, flexibility and sensitivity become imperative.

4. _____

Characteristics

- Shares control with members.
- Shares leadership responsibility.
- Believes in other people.
- Creates a sense of security and belonging.
- Ensures that others have leadership opportunities.
- Makes certain that if he withdraws, the group will not fall apart.

In a Bible study

- Involves others in leading the Bible study.

This is the most appropriate leadership style for a small-group Bible study.

Stages of Core Group

A year is a long time! What is supposed to happen in your Core Group over the course of the academic year? What is possible? What is your goal as a leader? The 3 stages of Core Group help define your role as a Core Group leader throughout the year. While there is a general sense of progression, these stages are never “complete” and can occur simultaneously.

A. Starting the Journey: _____

a. _____ versus _____

i. The kick-starter: _____

1. _____ is essential.

a. You set the _____ by sharing first. People will only share to the depth of what the leader shares. Think through what you are going to say, don't just show up without putting any thought into your story.

b. How you _____ to what people share can make or break a group. Affirm vulnerability when it happens.

2. Your first Core Group should start with sharing

_____ and _____

_____.

ii. The glue: _____

1. Commitment is an absolutely essential ingredient to the development of a trust-filled group.

Commitment must be:

a. _____: Talk about commitment the first night.

- b. _____: Follow up on students that don't show up to Core Group or events. Show them that you care about them and that they were missed!
- c. _____: As leaders we need to model commitment by attending and being on time to XA events.

2. You must talk about commitment the first night! This issue of commitment must be discussed at the very first Core Group meeting. Use the Key Ingredients for a Healthy Core Group sheet (see sample in the Appendix).

b. First Week of Core Group

- i. Ice Breaker
- ii. History Giving

• What is Christian community? What are characteristics of it? What are its benefits?

Talk about the importance of getting to know each other. Our goal is to walk with Jesus together and if we are going to go on this journey together then we need to get to know each other. You can use the analogy of our lives being a book. We just met recently, but our book is on page 230 and we have no idea what pages 1-230 say. So, if we are going to walk out the next pages together then, we need to get the Cliffs notes version of what the beginning of the story says. So, we are going to spend the majority of the first weeks building relationships and really getting to know each other. Then we will be ready to grow leaps and bounds in the weeks ahead.

- iii. Look at *Key Ingredients for a Healthy Core Group (appendix)*
- iv. Call for commitment!
- v. Pray to dismiss

B. Hit the Road: _____

- a. Discipleship is both _____ and _____

b. _____

i. Affirmation says _____

ii. It is an affirming experience to share from your personal life and have a group of people who are interested in you and care. But, what is called for here is a planned session in which affirmation is the primary focus. This is an opportunity to go beyond the non-verbal expressions of acceptance and verbalize your growing love and concern for each other.

iii. This is a time to express to each other the strengths you have observed and the _____ qualities you most appreciate. It is also appropriate to use this time to celebrate _____ that has occurred!

iv. Proverbs says more about the _____ than any other topic!

a. Proverbs 12:25:

b. Proverbs 25:11:

v. Affirmation will be your _____ Core Group of the year. (But should be done throughout each semester!)

C. The Destination: _____

a. _____ versus _____

b. WE WANT TO _____ AND _____!

Core Group FAQ's

How large should a Core Group become?

Experience has demonstrated that _____ to _____ including the leaders is close to ideal size. Remember, the larger the group, the less personal "air time" and thus the slower the relational growth. It is **OK** to have a small group.

How long should a Core Group meeting last?

It seems that a minimum of _____ to _____ hours is necessary to accomplish the purposes and goals of a Core Group. It would be quite difficult to do so in less time. End on time; leave them wanting more.

How often should the Core Group meetings occur and when?

The pace of the university scene is very fast and changing. Much happens from one day to the next. So, to stay current with each other, it becomes necessary to have a meeting once every week. The best times are in the evenings. To really stay connected, it is important that the members of the Core Group have time together _____ of the Core Group meeting as often as possible.

Real Community: Acts

This study is meant as an introductory study, not an in-depth study. We typically suggest 15–20 minutes for the study. It can easily be expanded with more discussion questions.

This bible study would be good to use in the beginning of the school year to call for commitment.

Acts 2:42–47

This passage gives us a glimpse of what the 1st century church was like.

What did they do when they were together?

- They shared their lives—How much of their lives did they share?
- They ate together and prayed together; fellowship literally means to share the substance of your life. They learned together. They worshipped together. They were full of joy and sincere—we need to have sincere community, not superficial.
- What do you think are some of the keys to having a sincere community rather than a superficial one?

How often were they together? How often do you think people have to be in contact with each other in order to experience *real community*?

What was the result of their time together?

They were filled with an awe of God (Encouraged), God did works among them (Power), and the Lord added to their number daily (Fruit).

How do we accomplish it?

In our lives what are some things that stand in the way of experiencing this kind of community?

What can we do purposefully to see *real community* happen in our Core Group and be able to experience the awesome blessings of it?

After discussing the above question, pass out and go over the *Key Ingredients for a Healthy Core Group*.

Key Ingredients for a Healthy Core Group

Commitment—The backbone to a healthy Core Group is commitment. Commitment to Jesus and commitment to one another which results in a commitment to the Core Group.

Openness and honesty—For us to get the most out of Core Group we need to be real with one another. We need to be able to say when we are doing well and when we are not.

Confidentiality—In order for people to be real and open we need to be able to trust one another that what is shared in the Core Group is confidential to the group.

Affirmation—A healthy Core Group is a place where people feel valued and accepted. There is nothing you have done or can do that will make us not love and care for you.

Accountability— A healthy Core Group is a group in which people are accountable to each other.

Prayer—A healthy Core Group is a group that lifts each other up before the throne of grace and asks Him for the blessings they need.

Core Group Format

What should occur in a typical Core Group meeting? What are the basic aspects of a healthy, productive meeting of sharing, learning, and growing in Christ?

A. _____

This might be the most important part of Core Group format, because it's where the magic really happens. Planning should happen weekly, and include, prayer, preparation for your weekly meeting, and bonding time with your co-leader(s).

B. _____

In a Core Group, worship could be anything from conversational prayer and a song to expressing adoration for God in other creative methods. No doubt your worship experience will be determined by the style with which the individual members feel comfortable. Whatever expression it takes, worship is a time to transition from the concerns of the day to coming together with other believers to praise God.

C. _____

From worship, we now move to the study phase. This is the appropriate time to have a discussion-based study of either a book of the Bible or a Spiritual topic/book. Whatever material is covered, some principles in this interactive time are important to remember:

- The content phase should have a primary goal of calling each member to an _____
- The teaching should be done in a discussion mode and not in a lecture style.

Learning should be accomplished by assisted self-discovery. The members should be encouraged to be mutually supportive of each other's applications. Everyone should be involved, learning, and sharing.

D. _____

The handicap of content-only-oriented-meetings is that it often misses the relational aspect of meeting together, which is just as important as the content. Members bring personal needs with them to the Core Group meeting. The Core Group needs to continually stay current with each other – to update one another of the joys and sorrows of the past week, to express praise for answers to prior prayers, or to tell one another the needs to be faced during the next few weeks. Without this sharing time, the Core Group will grow relationally stale.

E. _____

Now that you have heard each member's application to the Bible study and/or their need expressed in the sharing time, you can pray very specifically for each other. Communion grows between people when they pray for each other. When the answers to prayer start to return to the group, all kinds of excitement will occur! Through prayer for each other, the members will then recognize that God truly does care for them and love them dearly (and it doesn't hurt to start off a Core Group in prayer either).

Planning

Before you have a single Core Group gathering, you and your co-leader should invest time in planning and preparing for the semester.

Three Reasons to Plan:

1. Prayer

Prayer is consequential. It reminds us of our position for God, and how we depend entirely on His Spirit to move in our Core Groups. Without His power, we are just a social group that gathers without any real eternal purpose.

2. Preparation

What looks organic and natural to your Core Group members is actually the result of intention and planning.

- If you are organized, your group will run more smoothly. Spontaneity is only helpful if it is the product of careful planning and discipline.
- If you plan ahead, you will be less stressed out. You will be able to run your Core Group, rather than your Core Group running you (off the edge of a cliff).

3. Partnership

Planning will unify you and your co-leader(s) as you spend time together in the trenches

- Spend time getting to know one another. Choose now to be committed to each other and to love each other sacrificially.
- Your relationship with each other as co-leaders will be an example to your Core Group members. They will learn from you as you collaborate and spend time with each other, and work together and serve each other.

Plan Ahead Now

Choose a study and plan the layout of your first few weeks of Core Group.

Spend time together as co-leaders building relationship and dreaming together for what you want Core Group to look like.

Plan Together Regularly

Set a time to meet weekly to plan Core Group. This could be for an hour, or at minimum a half an hour. It might be difficult to coordinate schedules, but **planning is so important, it will be worth the effort!**

See “3 Reasons to Plan” in the Appendix for more on Planning, as well as FAQ’s and a sample schedule for an hour-long planning time.

Worship

Below are some tips of how to lead worship in your Core Group:

Music

- Sing familiar songs; if you are going to do a new song, take time to teach it to the group.
- ALWAYS _____
- If you don't play an instrument, sing songs a cappella or use YouTube or a CD (preview YouTube videos before you use them!!!).
- Have a group member bring an instrument and play to accompany singing.
- As you sing, encourage people to change their posture (kneeling, bowing, standing, etc.)
- Have people draw a picture of what they think of when they hear a certain worship song.

Scripture

- Divide the group in half and have them read _____ a passage that you have chosen. The Psalms are great for this.
- Open a group time with a response to God in silence giving them a verse or thought to meditate on
- Have people write down a name of God from Scripture that is meaningful to them right now and have them explain why it is meaningful at this particular time and pause and give Him glory for who He is.
- Go around having each member of the group read a verse and put their own name in the verse. For example, Mary reads aloud Psalm 13:5-6 as "But I, Mary, trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I, Mary, will sing to you Lord, for you have been good to me."

Other Worship Ideas:

- Ask someone before the meeting to share a testimony of God's working in their life over the past week or so.
- Have time for people to write their own Psalm and read them out loud.
- Have each student tell the group an attribute of God that has been especially meaningful to them and why.
- Use art or writing to challenge the group to find new ways to worship God.

Remember this is a great part of the meeting to begin to _____ . It gives people responsibility and responsibility will cause people to begin to take ownership of the group.

Content

Options for Content:

- Scripture
 - A book of the Bible
 - Go through scripture topically (cover a different relevant topic each week—decide before the semester starts what topics you want to cover)
- A book written by a Christian author based on Scripture

Fall semester we want you to study a book of the Bible to teach people how to study a book of the Bible in its context. This is a great opportunity to begin to ground students in a strong biblical foundation.

Choosing What to Study:

- Pray and ask God what He is working in your own heart
- Ask your Staff Coach for ideas
- Gauge group needs during history giving
- Consider an overview of the Bible
- Use the curriculum that suits your needs.

We have studies on a good number of books of the Bible. You can find those on our website.

Preparing Content

The most important part of Bible study is to know how to ask good questions.

3 types of questions:

1. Observation questions:

- What is the text saying? What information is given and what are the facts of the passage. The purpose of observation questions is to simply get the group acquainted with the text.
- These are simply factual questions, which are clearly evident in the text. It takes no imagination or interpretation to answer these questions, nor does it take any prior knowledge of the Bible or even Christianity. It will require you to pay closer attention and notice details that you might not have seen before.
- Most observation questions will begin with **what, who, or when**. For example: “Who are the main characters in this passage?” “Who is Jesus addressing in this passage?”

2. Interpretation questions:

- What is the meaning of the passage? What was the original author’s purpose of writing it?
- You are not yet applying the scripture to your life. Your goal with the interpretation questions is to ask questions that will help the group discover the meaning of the passage.
- Good interpretation questions may look like this: “What is the significance of...?” “Why do you think Jesus chose to heal in this way?” “What is the purpose of this action?” “How is this relevant to the people?”

3. Application questions:

- How and in what way is this passage relevant today? Of what value is it?
- How do we apply the passage specifically to our lives?

Tools for Communicating Content

1. **Listen-** We need to be attentive, active listeners. Being a good listener is an art and is as important as any other form of communication. Remember the importance of body posture.
2. **Clarify-** When the meaning of what has been said is vague, clarification is needed. Example: "I am not sure what you meant. Could you please restate that?"
3. **Paraphrase-** Part of active listening. Listeners restate the speaker's thoughts in their own words. Example: "What I heard you saying is.... Is that it?" "Mark, your central concern is..." "David, your reaction seems to be..."
4. **Justify-** This involves asking people to give reasons for what they said, and should be done in a positive, non-argumentative way. Example: "Where do you find that in the passage we are studying?"
5. **Redirect-** When a group member continues to address all his questions and comments to the leader rather than the group, use redirecting. Example: "Tom, what do you think about Mike's last question?" "How would you answer that, Tom?"
6. **Extend-** This involves expanding a line of thought in a discussion. Example: "Does anyone have anything they would like to add to what has been said?"
7. **Summarize-** At various points in a group discussion, it is helpful to briefly summarize and highlight what has been said.
8. **Affirm- This is HUGE.** It is always important to recognize and affirm the person who is talking. You might say "Thank you for that comment." "That is an interesting point." Never come out and say that is wrong... but be affirming and gentle in offering correction. Affirm the person before you offer any **criticism**.
9. **Be personal-** Use "I" messages instead of "you" messages. To say "I feel" or "I think" is much more direct and helpful than "Some people think" or "some people believe."
10. **Ask personal questions-** Ask questions like "What is your opinion about that?" "How does that personally affect you?" "How does that make you feel?" "Have you ever struggled with this issue yourself?" "How does this scripture affect my daily life?" DO NOT ask Yes or No questions.

A note on handling talkative and silent members:

For **talkative** members use non-verbal communication. Don't let them sit right across from you but instead maybe next to you. Limit eye contact and when they pause, break in and regain the floor.

For **silent** members do the opposite. Make frequent eye contact. Sit across from them. Call on them to answer a question you present to the group, do not be afraid to use names, e.g. "Jason, how does that apply to your life?"

Application of Scripture

In Core Group, there should always be some application time involved and discussed. The goal is not lecture, but group discovery of how to integrate truth into living.

A good application is not simply "how does this apply to your life?" It is much more specific. Some better examples would be:

- Let's talk about why it is so hard for you and me to start spiritual conversations with seekers.
- Are there fears or other barriers you face in communicating the Gospel?
- How do you feel when you picture yourself talking to an unsaved person about Christ?

These questions will get at people's _____, _____, _____, _____. Only then can we truly encourage and pray for one another.

A good guide for application from 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for **teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training** in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work"

Teaching—Ask "How will this truth change my life, my church, my family, my work?"

Rebuking—Ask "Where do I fall short? Why do I fall short? How can we evaluate ourselves as a group?"

Correcting—Ask "What will I do about it? What will I correct? How will others help me do this?"

Training in righteousness—Ask "What practices, relationships, and experiences will I pursue so that I might train myself to be like Christ?"

Sharing

Core Group is as much about building relationship as it is about studying the Bible

Each person comes to community with three social needs:

1. The need for _____. We meet this with history giving and participation.
2. The need for _____. We meet this by affirming them.
3. The need for _____. We meet this with responsibility.

Five levels of sharing:

1. Cliché _____
2. Sharing information and _____
3. Sharing ideas and _____
4. Sharing _____
5. _____ Communication— Involves openness, transparency, and self-disclosure.

Note: As the levels move up in number, the risk increases. This is a sign of how your group is doing and how they can grow, not how good of a leader you are.

There are several opportunities to share in Core Group:

History Giving
Group Openers
Sharing questions during the study

Three types of sharing questions:

1. Personal

What was the most memorable thing you did with your family when you were a child?
What quality do you most appreciate in a friend?

2. Spiritual

Describe any spiritual milestones that have occurred in your life.
If you were asked to define “a Christian,” what would you say?

3. Deeply Spiritual

Has God become “real” to you? When?
In what one area of your Christian walk would you most like to grow?

Group Openers

Using group openers is a basic, yet essential, small group skill. Icebreakers and share questions are designed to facilitate discussion about members’ personal lives and to help them open up more freely. They are **not** designed for simple **yes** and **no** answers.

Use your own judgment with these questions and statements. Some of them are built to share deep emotions; others are more surface level and fun. Gauge where your group is

and plan your icebreaker accordingly. As your group moves deeper throughout the semester/year, feel free to use deeper icebreaker questions.

Sample Group Opener Questions:

- If you suddenly lost your eyesight, what would be the thing you missed seeing the most?
- My favorite way to waste time is _____.
- Who is the most famous person you've known or met? How did it happen?
- What is your biggest fear about death?
- What's the worst storm or disaster you've been in? What was it like?
- What day of your life would you most like to relive? Why?
- What has been one of the greatest adventures you have ever been on?
- If your house was on fire, what three items (not people) would you try to save?
- Talk about a powerful "God moment" in your life and how it has impacted you.

Sharing should also occur organically. As a leader, look for opportunities to get to know your Core Group members as you pursue them in conversation. As you have learned already, discipleship is as much about doing regular life activities together as it is having meetings and Bible studies.

For more on **facilitating sharing**, check out the **Facilitating Sharing Handout** in the Appendix.

Prayer

Prayer is an extremely important part of any Core Group meeting. It reminds us that we need God and it invites His power and presence into the Core Group meeting.

1. Prayer teaches your members to connect personally with God.

- Many students have not experienced prayer, and others might not have a well-developed idea of what prayer is.
- You will model prayer for your group, and disciple them by example and by teaching them to participate in prayer.

2. Prayer is consequential.

- When you pray, God moves and will act on behalf of your Core Group and Core Group members
- Pray to open each Core Group. Invite God's presence into the meeting.
- Pray to close each Core Group. You might want to take prayer requests and pray for each other. This is a great way to learn to be vulnerable with needs and to bear one another's burdens.

Tips for Prayer in Core Group:

- When you pray out loud in the group, keep your prayers honest, authentic and from the heart.
- S-Guide: Short, Simple, Spirit-led, and Silence is ok!
- You may have to limit time for prayer requests.

Some Ideas for Prayer in Core Group:

- Hot seat prayer- put someone in the middle and pray for them and then everybody takes turn in the hot seat.
- Divide into groups of two or three and pray for each other.
- Pray for the person on your right and left and go around the circle and the rest of the group agrees in prayer.
- Have each person write a prayer out and read it to the rest of the group.
- Pray through a Psalm out loud together.
- Pray at different times during the meeting each week.—Sometimes at the beginning, end or middle.
- Pick a portion of scripture to pray for one another during the week. (Col 1:9-14)
- If there is someone in the group with a special passion for prayer, make them the prayer coordinator for the group. Each meeting they write down the requests and keeps track of the answers. If the group has an emergency, they call the prayer coordinator, who will notify the rest of the group.
- Have each member write down a request for the week on a piece of paper. Fold the piece of paper and put it in a hat. Pass the hat, each member agreeing to pray for the person they pick and to call and encourage them during the week.
- Pick a country or need on campus to pray for and make that the sole purpose of your prayer time.

Atmosphere

In what kind of environment should a Core Group take place to facilitate sharing and help people feel more welcomed?

1. _____ off, _____ on.
2. Keep it _____
3. Make it refreshing- Something to _____ and something to _____. Serve your group when possible.

Luke 22:27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

4. Get your group members involved in helping to set the atmosphere. The more they feel responsible, the higher a level of _____ they will exhibit.
5. Make a big deal of _____ who enters the room.
6. _____ on time, and _____ on time.
7. Make sure that there is _____ between Core Groups so that a level of familiarity can be reached. This will make people comfortable and more likely to share.
8. Obstacles to a successful Core Group atmosphere can include:
 - Strange or low _____.
 - People passing through all the time.
 - Allergies
 - Unusual seating arrangement
 - _____ should try to sit on level or below Core Group members.
 - Too much or too little _____.
9. Where should your Core Group be?

What can you and your co-leaders do to make Core Group a more comfortable space?

Mentoring

Why do we value discipleship?

1. Because _____ told us to!

Matthew 28:18-20 “Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make *disciples* of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

2. Paul teaches us about _____ discipleship. We are to pour into someone in such a way that they will, in turn, pour into others. We are to reproduce ourselves as core group leaders by the time we leave.

2 Timothy 2:2 “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

This is the Master’s plan of Evangelism - that we would make disciples who make disciples who make disciples.

A Mentor’s Job Description: or What Do We Expect From You

1. What is Discipleship?:

2. Pastoring Versus Discipling.

- a. _____ in your core group should be met up with once a semester.
- b. _____ all the names with your co-leaders.
- c. **Disciple the FAT students**

F _____

A _____

T _____

- Jesus did.
- Relationship will be easier: less walls, more health.
- Content will be eagerly received, digested, and applied

d. Pastor the other students

- A. More _____, more listening, and counseling
- B. Less content: more about the _____ (*real devotional life*)
- C. Focus on helping them take the next step to knowing more of Christ.

3. Scheduling a meeting:

- A. Have a _____.
- B. Some parts of the discipleship process are _____, they're not _____.
- C. How often do we need to meet?

We'd like you to have no more than _____.

“But how can I get them all done if that’s the case?”

1. The **myth** of every student every week:
Meet with the FAT students **consistently**. Meet with everyone else **once a month or once a semester!**
2. **Schedule a 2:1** (see 2:1 resource). It’s a great way to encourage spiritual friendships and vulnerability among your core group. Make sure members that you are pairing together for a 2:1 would be **comfortable** and **compatible** with each other.
3. **Raise up a FAT student** within your Core Group to aid in discipleship meetings on a case by case basis. (see Raise-Up Resource)
 - a. Use this student to meet-up with 1 or 2 Core Group members that they can relate to and help encourage
 - b. Be sensitive of **timing**. This strategy may serve best 2nd semester. You want every core group member to be able to enjoy being a member before you give them a task (especially true for first year groups).
 - c. Make sure to **continue to meet up** with the raised up student to give them help where they need it.

Content: BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

Beforehand:

Pray

Ask the Lord how you can partner with what He has in store for those students.

Ask if there is any way your Core Group member needs to be _____,
_____ or _____.

Prepare

Is there anything from the previous discipleship meeting that needs _____?

During:
Content

-
1. Be sure to process relationship before task.
 - a. They may not always remember what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel!

 2. _____.
 - a. Core req's are an easy, no brainer way to do this.
 - b. What if you brought something from your own devotional life?
 - c. What if you turned to the Scripture instead of just paraphrasing it?
 - d. What if you agreed to read some things before your next meeting to partner with what the Spirit is teaching them?

 3. We want to be proactive not always just reactive.

After:

Follow-up

1. Pray for them!

2. _____ your discipleship meeting so that you remember!

3. _____.

Some Helpful Meeting Thoughts.

1. Put the phone away.
2. Find a place where people can truly be vulnerable.
3. You are just one part in their relationship with Christ.

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Beginner's Bible Study

This three-part Bible study provides a good foundation of the basics of Christianity. Great for those new to the Christian faith, especially international students. This study was originally published in *Chi Alpha's International Student Friendship Ministry* handbook.

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Lesson 1: Introduction

Overview of the Bible

What kind of books do you enjoy reading? What have you heard about the Bible? The Bible is a unique book.

- Written by over 40 men: shepherds, doctors, priests, tentmakers, kings
- It was written over a time period of around 1600 years (~1500BC to ~AD100).
- Parts were written on three different continents (Asia, Europe, & Africa) and in Hebrew and Greek.
- Big Book with 66 smaller books.
- Its influence on our world and on many people's lives has been tremendous. It's the most translated book ever. Portions translated in over 2,000 languages (Shakespeare only has 50).
- A living document with power to change the reader. The Author is alive and meets us as we read.

Look at the Bible's table of contents to see the Bible's two main divisions.

1. The Old Testament books were written hundreds of years before Christ. Show God's plan of redeeming the world, God's dealing with ancient Hebrews.
2. The New Testament books were written after Jesus' earthly life. They show Jesus's ministry and the founding of the Christian community.

Christianity: What is it?

What were your previous impressions of Christianity?

1. Christianity is NOT:
 - a. Just a code of behavior. Going to church, doing good things, living a moral life. Some who do these things are not Christians. Eph. 2:8-9
 - b. Just a philosophy of life: Believing the right things; the right mental attitude. Some people have good philosophies of life, but are not Christians! (Mt. 7:21-23)
 - c. Just a way to get to heaven; a decision; only a way to relieve our fear of death. Christianity affects a person's daily life now and their eternal future later on.
 - d. Just an American religion; Simply a part of American culture or family tradition. It began in the Middle East. There are more Christians in S. America & Africa than U.S. Many Christians come from families that are not Christian.
2. Christianity IS: A RELATIONSHIP with God.

3. A true Christian is: A person who has CHOSEN to believe in Jesus, RECEIVED Him, and let Him be THE LORD/BOSS of their life.

God: Who is He, and what is He like?

Read Genesis 1:1.

- If God made the material universe, what does this tell us about God what He is like?

Read Genesis 1:26–30.

- Verse 26 says people were made in the image of God. In what ways do you think God and man are alike? In what ways are they different?
- How does God relate to and treat the first people? (See verses 28–30.)
- What gives God the right to tell people what to do?

Read Psalm 139:1–12, 23–24.

- The poet writes of how much God knows him and that God has placed His hand on him. How does the writer think and feel about God? How does it make YOU feel?

For further reflection

- If God is as we have looked at here today, how does that make you feel about Him?
- Why do you think God wants a person to do more than just believe in his mind that there is a God?
- Was there anything in the talk on Christianity that was surprising to you? Any questions?

Lesson 2: After creation, what went wrong?

Broken Covenant

1. COVENANT: another name for Testament is covenant.
 - How would you define a covenant? A strong agreement between two people wanting to form a relationship.
 - God who created man wanted to form a relationship with Man...a very personal God!

Read Gen. 2:16–17.

- God provided all food they could ever want.
- God made just one rule in the covenant for relationship.
- Adam/Eve broke the covenant by disobeying that one rule.

Read Gen. 3:1–7.

2. SIN: to miss God's standard which breaks the relationship.
 - Obeying God's rules is the standard. When we disobey God, we are in rebellion to God. When Adam disobeyed, the covenant relationship was broken. Adam & Eve realized they were naked and ashamed.
3. SEPARATION: sin causes a separation from God.

Read Gen. 3:8–10.

 - God asks, "Where are you?" Why do you think he asks that?
 - God knows the relationship is broken; the closeness with God is no longer available. We cannot overcome the gap between God and man in our own efforts.
4. RECONCILIATION
 - What does reconciliation mean? To restore a broken relationship. Bringing 2 parties together. When he made man, God could have forced man to be in a relationship with Him. Why do you think He did not?
 - God throughout history wants man to come back into relationship with Him. God could have killed Adam when He sinned, but instead He provided for him.

Read Gen. 3:21.

- The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. God still cared about them.
5. GOD'S PLAN
 - Creator God had a plan from the beginning to reconcile man...He promised to send someone who would pay the penalty for sin so that we can be brought back into relationship. Jesus, who was God and perfect, would come to earth as a man. When He died on the cross, He would bridge the gap between Man and God so we would have a way to enter relationship with God.

What is the rest of the Old Testament about?

1. After creation, the people continued to multiply. God chose Abraham and his descendants to be God's people through whom Jesus would be born. This nation of Israel was to have a covenant relationship with God.
2. The Old Testament tells the history of the people of Israel, the Jews. Creator God provided special laws for them to follow and gave them kings and prophets to direct them on how to live. He wanted them to have faith in God that would lead to obedience. Much of the time they failed. Creator God continued to tell them that a Promised one, a Messiah, would come and pay the full penalty for their sins. These Jews were then

supposed to tell the rest of the world about the One True God and the opportunity to be reconciled and have an intimate relationship to God. That was God's plan.

3. Prophecies: Jeremiah was a prophet that let them know there was coming a new covenant, not based on obeying laws, but on God's forgiveness.

Read Jeremiah 31:31–34. Discuss.

- Look at the list of prophecies written in the Old Testament hundreds of years before Jesus was born. (born in Bethlehem, of a virgin, pierced side, etc.) Creator God prophesied what would happen ahead of time so that when Jesus came, they would recognize Him and enter in the new covenant with God. Next week we'll talk about Jesus in the New Testament.

Reflection

- What strikes you about these prophecies? Since Jesus fulfilled the prophecies perfectly, what do you think that tells us about God and His plan? Do you have any questions about what we discussed?

*Content adapted from Storyteller's Bible Study (Bill Perry, Multi-Language Media, 2002) and "Discover Jesus" study (Kelly Brown)

Lesson 3: Life of Jesus in the New Testament

Review last week. Who do people think Jesus is in your culture?

Jesus fulfilled the Covenant

1. Jesus' Birth: Glorious plan, not accident
 - Luke 1:26–38 miraculous conception
 - Micah 5:2 Birthplace foretold—fulfilled prophecies.

2. Jesus Life/Ministry/Teaching/Claims
 - Healed people, taught them about God, claimed to be the Savior. His life and ministry reflects God's desire to have a relationship with us.
 - a. His example: By His example we see a:
 - Humble servant: washed disciples' feet
 - Holy One...without sin
 - Friend to the friendless: tax collectors, prostitutes, doctors
 - b. His Teaching: By His teaching we see:
 - He honors the authority of Scripture... "Thus it is written"
 - Reveals the truth about life. He did not misrepresent for popularity.
 - c. His ministry: (Our Need-Meeter)
 - Compassionate: healed lepers by touch, blessed children
 - Met big & small needs (sickness/death vs. the hairs on our head)
 - Powerful: even raised the dead!
 - d. His claims: He said, "I AM the..."
 - Savior, Son of God, The Bread of Life, Light of the World, The Way, the Truth, the Life, etc.

3. Jesus' Death
 - At Passover, Jesus said, "This cup...is the new covenant in my blood." Luke 22:20.
 - His death was NOT accidental or man's idea.
 - Jesus told Pilate, "For this reason I have come..." (to lay His life down).
 - Jesus was Redeemer...man's final payment/punishment for our sin.

4. Jesus' resurrection
 - Jesus came back to life! He conquered death! Soon after His resurrection, Jesus spoke to 2 discouraged disciples..."And beginning with Moses & the prophets, He explained things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." The prophecies were fulfilled!
 - Resurrection shows God's acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice for man. Jesus returned to heaven and is available to us through prayer.

Covenant Relationship

- God's reconciliation plan is far older than 2,000 years. He's been calling "where are you?" from the beginning. The way back to God came by Jesus' death & resurrection.
- Plan: to win us back into an intimate Covenant relationship with God forever. We come to relationship by faith in His grace. Can't be good enough or pay debt.
- Made new life possible by His plan. 2-way COVENANT:
 - o Our part: We must choose to repent (confess & turn from sin). We must accept His free gift of salvation and follow Him.
 - o His part: He will forgive us, fulfill our lives, and allow us to be with Him forever.
 - o Read John 3:16–17 and John 14:6. What do these 2 verses tell us about Jesus? After this talk, what new impressions do you have about Creator God? About Jesus? Would you like to study His life?

*Some content adapted from Storyteller's Bible Study (Bill Perry, 2002, Multi-Language Media) and "Discover Jesus" study (Kelly Brown)

2:1 Resource

Some notes taken from *Michelangelo or the Tumbler* by Richard Lamb

Jesus said to “Go and make disciples.” With Jesus as our example we must look to his discipleship methods. One observation is that there’s no record of Jesus spending one on one time with any of his followers. His sole disciple-making context was a gathered group of disciples. Because of this and because of our experiences with the two on one method, we have chosen to adopt this as our new context for discipleship.

Benefits of 2:1s

1. Emphasizes Peer Relationships - “Connecting”
 - A. Helps build relationships among Core Group members.
 - B. Helps create community for some who may not have it already.
 - C. Helps friendships go deeper & become more God-centered.
 - D. Models vulnerability and trust needed for relationships.
 - E. Provides more community-mindset instead of individualism.
2. Time Management for Leaders
 - Allows leaders to meet up with all of the Core Group members who are Faithful, Available & Teachable.
3. Truly allows for your Core Group to - “Reach”
 - Allows room for members to bring friends or new people to join the Core Group and be met up with.
4. Lifelong Disciples and Disciplers - “Growing”
 - A. Provides an easier transition from college to the local church where 1:1 discipleship is rare.
 - B. Prevents “discipler idolatry” where the younger disciple becomes dependent on and loyal to their mentor for spiritual growth & they can’t learn easily from someone else.
 - C. Prevents people from seeming helpless to grow apart from a ready-made 1:1 discipleship relationship.

FAQs about 2:1s

1. How should I pick pairs?

There are a couple of different ways to go about this. You can pick pairs based on current relationships, to help foster them towards greater vulnerability and God-centeredness. You can also choose people who don’t know many others in your group so that it gives them a friend. Sometimes it is also beneficial to pair a quiet or guarded person with a person who is naturally more open.
2. How often should we meet?

Meetings happen every week.
3. Where should we meet?

You can meet with 2 people anywhere you would have previously met with 1 person. Keep in mind that the setting of your 2:1s (and 1:1s if you happen have any of those) is important. Make sure there is enough privacy that the students can feel safe sharing personal information.
4. What should we talk about?

The first couple of meetings are good for sharing, sharing beyond what has been shared already in Core Group. Come prepared with a few questions for them that dive deeper into their lives (family, school, dreams, spiritual) than you have gone already in Core Group. Remember to share first – you set the tone
 After the first meeting or two you can shift to a content-based 2:1 where you might all read a book of the Bible together (there in the 2:1 or for homework), read a book or study the core req's together. Don't forget to continue to have share-time as part of your 2:1 – Jesus often seized “teachable moments” which were usually times when someone was ready to learn because of their own immediate circumstances.

Here are 5 questions that are always good to bring with you – you can choose one or two for everyone to share or they can choose themselves, which they would like to share:

1. How are relationships between you and your significant others?
2. What has God been speaking to you lately?
3. How do you feel about yourself?
4. How is your schedule and how are you using your time?
5. How have you seen the Spirit at work in your life this week?

5. What should I do at the first meeting?

Talk about expectations for your 2:1s.

- A. Vulnerability
- B. Frequency
- C. Content
- D. Best friends?

6. What is my role as a mentor?

Being a disciple-maker is a process of “iron sharpening iron” and there will surely be conflict, reconciliation, time spent, communication, learning to work together & challenging one another. You are not a passive observer in your 2:1s, rather you're setting the tone and providing a place for growth in maturity and spiritual understanding of God that leads to a deeper relationship with Him. The people in your 2:1s will learn *from* you, but also learn *with* you. We're commanded to love one another (John 15:12,17) and to serve one another (John 13:14). As you love and serve the people you are mentoring you are following Christ's example.

Raise-Up Resource

Occasionally core group leaders find themselves in a situation where, due to time constraints and sheer numbers, they cannot effectively meet up with every member of their core group. This is ok! We have several effective solutions including time management/adjusting the frequency of meetings, the option for 2:1's, and raising-up a member of your core group to help. This resource dives into the details of how to empower a strong member of your core group to help with discipleship.

Benefits of the Raise-Up Strategy:

- Time management for core group leaders: You will have more time and energy to focus on the Faithful, Available, and Teachable students. By reducing the number of meetings you have, you will be able to up the quality each meeting!
- A great way to help ALL members of your core group get effectively met up with.
- A chance to empower and encourage a strong member of your core group. They will feel honored and blessed that you saw potential in them.
- Truly allows for your core group to be a reaching core group. By increasing the mentorship capacity of core group, you make more room for new members!
- Will help encourage deeper peer friendships among your core group.

How to select a Raise-up member:

This person should be one of your strongest core group members. Think of someone you plan on recommending for leadership. They should be:

- Faithful, Available, and Teachable.
- Have a strong commitment to your core group.
- Have a solid walk with the Lord and a strong devotional life.
- Have the ability to connect well with others and listen well.
- Perhaps this is someone who could have qualified for leadership but chose not to for various reasons.

What they will do:

The Raise-Up member will strategically meet with 1 or 2 core group members every week.

The Timing:

We want core group members to enjoy the benefits of and function within the core group structure before we empower them to serve the core group. This means, if you are mentoring new students in the ministry, the Raise-up strategy may not be recommended until second semester.

The Raise-Up Role

You are choosing a member to raise-up to intentionally meet with 1 to 2 core group members maximum. You are NOT raising up an additional core group leader to help with the other aspects of leading. We want this to be a positive encouraging experience for the Raise-up member, and one that would encourage them to want to continue on into official leadership. Therefore we recommend the following things.

- Strategically choose the 1 or 2 people they meet with. It needs to be someone they naturally get along with and will enjoy meeting with.
- You, as the core group leader, should be meeting with the FAT people in your group. Utilize the Raise-up member to meet with someone who may not yet be in this category. Hopefully the intentional focus of the Raise-up member will help bring that student into the FAT category.
- Help set the framework for what their meetings should look like. Since they have not been through official core group training, help take the pressure off them. Some of their meetings may go deep, others may look more like an intentional accountability friendship.
- Equip them with any resources they may need. Introduce them to the resources on the website and the core req's.
- Continue to meet with the Raise-up member! Because you have asked them to serve, they should now be one of your number one focuses! Ask how their meetings are going. Give encouragement. Offer insight when helpful.
- Pray together with them!

The ABC's of Ministry

(Sample)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Assess The Need While you were home for Christmas break, you got into several disagreements with your father. It culminated with a big argument over your choice of Social Work as a major. Your father wants you to be in pre-law and then go to the law school he attended. You came back to school not on speaking terms with your father. You feel Social Work is where the Lord wants you. Your father is not a Christian.

Build a Biblical Foundation

The issue is reflected by two contrasting principles:

1. We are to honor our parents (Dt. 21:20; Prov. 20:11; 23:22; 30:11,17; Mk. 7:10; Eph. 6:2),
- and
2. We are to live a whole-hearted commitment to Christ (Mt. 10:37-39; 16:24-28; Lk. 14:26-35)

Create Measurable Goals

In faith we will strive to:

1. Reestablish lines of communication within the next 10 days.
2. Seek to come to mutual understanding between you and your father on the level of your feelings concerning this issue.
3. Seek reconciliation.
4. Before Spring Break, attempt to clearly explain the decisions you are making in terms your father will understand.

Develop a Plan of Action

1. Write a letter asking for forgiveness for leaving the house in frustration and anger. Do it within the next 3 days. I will review it with you.
2. Call your father a day after he has received it. Ask for forgiveness again over the phone.
3. Ask for a time when you can go home to explain why you desire this major.
4. Illicit much prayer support from you Core Group.

Establish Proper Support I will pray with you, Tom, and will help you write the letter. If you desire, I will be with you throughout the entire process, whatever happens. I'll check with you next Tuesday to see how the phone call went.

The ABC's of Ministry

Name: _____
Date: _____

Assess The Need

Build a Biblical Foundation

Create Measurable Goals

Develop a Plan of Action

Establish Proper Support

Keeping Track of Your One-on-One's

Student Name _____

- Use this to keep track of weekly one-on-one conversations (Trust me, you won't remember!). Make one for each student you meet with.
- Record what you talked about, what Jesus did during the one-on-one, prayer requests, what core req you taught and any "assignment" given (i.e. scripture to meditate on, PROAPT to do, person to talk to)
- Use these weekly records to ask Jesus what his long-term vision for that person is, and how you can help them get there. Record that in the top vision box.
- Use wisdom in what you write down.

Long-term Vision: What is God trying to do in their life?

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today?

Prep for next week:

Date: _____

What we talked about today

Prep for next week:

The Engel Scale

The Complete Process

Often we assume that conversion, someone moving across the line of faith, is the goal of evangelism. But so many other steps had to happen to get someone to that point! There is a bigger, more holistic process within which evangelism is a part.

This tool is adapted from James Engel and Wilbert Norton's book, *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest?*

There is a great divide between evangelism and discipleship - we see them as completely separate and unrelated. In reality they are both part of the same process! The goal of this bigger process is complete transformation of a person into the Kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. Evangelism is a word to describe all the steps to get someone to the line of faith - but we don't stop there! Does the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:16-20) tell us to go into the world and make converts?... NO! We are to make disciples! And the discipleship process never really ends - we all have more to learn, areas to grow in, and character to shape. So you see, evangelism is just pre-conversion discipleship!

This scale is just a simplified representation of all the steps in the evangelism/discipleship process. The scale ranges from someone like Elijah (stage 8) who was whisked away into heaven, all the way to the church in Athens (stage 1) who didn't even know about Jesus. There are values assigned originally by Engel, which just shows that 0 (the line of faith) is not the beginning of the process! Of course, no one can judge where someone is on the scale; only God knows because only He can see a man's heart. However, this can be helpful in evangelism or discipleship when thinking about how to bring someone farther along on the process. The mission of God (and our commission with Him) is to make disciples, or simply move people toward the bottom of the scale (and even further!).

Original

Engel Scale

Stage 1 – IGNORANCE OF CHRIST
(may be exposed, but pays no attention)

Stage 2 – AWARENESS OF CHRIST
(sees Christ as an option)

Stage 3 – UNDERSTANDING OF CHRIST
(what knowing Christ means)

Stage 4 – PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH CHRIST
(what Christ can do for me)

Stage 5 – DECISION FOR CHRIST
(I want or don't want Christ)

Stage 6 – REGENERATION
(Disciple-making – theological)

Stage 7 – INCORPORATION INTO BODY OF CHRIST
(Disciple counted – strategic)

Stage 8 – WITNESSING FOR CHRIST

Decision Making

6-8-10 Principles from 1 Corinthians

Whether big or small, making godly decisions is key to following Christ in your daily life. Taken from 1 Corinthians chapters 6, 8, and 10, this resource can help you think through many aspects of making a decision. You may use this as a worksheet to fill out as you answer the questions.

The first step to making a decision is to pray: "God lead me and guide me. Purify my motives - get rid of any selfishness or unrighteousness within me. I want to serve you in anything and everything, putting you first! Help me open my heart and mind to the best way to think about this situation, even if it's new to me." Try to wait and listen to God's voice throughout this process.

From 1 Corinthians, you can ask yourself these questions:

1. Is it good for me?

I Cor. 6:12a "Everything is permissible for me"-- but not everything is beneficial."

2. Can it control me?

I Cor. 6:12b "Everything is permissible for me-- but I will not be mastered by anything."

- Is it habit-forming?

What could the ripple effect of this choice be in my own life? What are the consequences of this choice? Is it beneficial?

3. Does it encourage someone to do something he thinks is wrong? Is it a stumbling block?

I Cor. 8:12 "When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ."

Will my actions cause someone else to stumble? What would be the ripple effect of this decision on those around me?

4. Does it glorify God?

I Cor. 10:31 "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

What is my motive for what I do?

Mentoring – Asking Good Questions

Before you meet, choose a few questions to purposefully ask.

General “Checking In” Questions

- What has God been saying to you lately?
- How is your schedule and how are you using your time?
- How is it between you and your significant others?
- How do you feel about yourself?
- How can I support you in prayer?

Difficult, but Important, Questions to Ask

- Have your words and actions given glory to God this week?
- Have you been exposed to sexually alluring material or allowed your mind to entertain inappropriate thoughts this week?
- Have you coveted something that does not belong to you?
- Have you been honoring, understanding, and charitable in your important relationships this week?
- Have you damaged another person by your words, either behind their back or face-to-face?
- Have you given in to any addictive behavior this past week?
- Have you continued to harbor anger or bitterness toward another?
- Have you secretly wished for another’s misfortune so that you might excel?
- How are you doing with time management?
- How are your finances?
- How are you doing with classes?
 - o Are you going to all of them all the time?
 - o Are you struggling in any particular class?
 - o Are you seeking help from classmates or instructors?
- How would you describe your relationship with God?
 - o Have you been consistent in prayer and Bible reading?
 - o What have you been reading about?
 - o What are you learning about God? about yourself?
 - o What are you trying to apply?
 - o What have you been praying about?
 - o What did you learn from a recent sermon/teaching that you are applying?
- How can I keep you accountable?
- Have you been completely honest with me?

Sometimes these questions lead perfectly into a core req!

You may want to take notes after the meeting to help you remember the questions asked and their responses.

Common Topics and Helpful Scriptures to Use

Depending on what your student is dealing with, it can be helpful to have an entire meeting on one of these topics. Look at the Scripture and do a PROAPT study. This is also a helpful way to confront issues in someone's life by looking at Scriptures about the subject.

Worry

Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Matthew 6:25-34 (see also Luke 12:22-34)

"If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you."

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

God's Will/Future & Decision-Making Concerns

Jeremiah 29:11-12

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you."

Isaiah 30:21

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'"

Philippians 4: 12-13

"I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through him who gives me strength."

Resources: "The Purpose Driven Life"

Weariness

Isaiah 40:27-31

"Even youths grown tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength."

Psalm 62:5-6

“Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.”

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Sex & Dating/Lust

Philippians 4:8

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

Matthew 5:28-29

“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out.”

2 Corinthians 6:14

“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

Resources: “Every Man’s Battle”, “Every Woman’s Battle”

Self-Esteem/Body Image/Knowing who you are in God

Luke 3:22

“You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

John 15:15-16

“I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.”

Resources: “Do You Think I’m Beautiful”, “Captivating”, “Wild at Heart”, “Lady-in-Waiting”

School/Exams

James 1:5

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

Temptation/Sin

Hebrews 4:14-16

“Therefore, since we have such a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest unable to sympathize with our weakness, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

2 Corinthians 10:5

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

God’s forgiveness/God’s nearness

Joshua 1:9

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Psalms 103: 8-12

“The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”

Romans 8:38-39

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Holy Spirit and Gifts of the Spirit

Acts 2: 38-39

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Romans 8:26-27

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”

1 Corinthians 12-14

Lists of the gifts, explanation of tongues and prophecy.

Discipling Objectives

Have you ever sat across a coffee shop table from a Core Group member and felt that rush of panic as you realize that you have no idea what to talk to them about? As you scramble to think of something meaningful to fill the next hour you wonder to yourself—“isn’t there a better way to do this thing called *discipling*?” The answer is YES!

The following are a set of *discipling objectives* designed to help you lead a Core Group member systematically through the basics of our faith and help them learn to “obey everything we have been commanded” (Matt. 28:19). There are 21 objectives here—**more than enough** to bring meaningful content and direction to your one-on-ones this year. We certainly don’t expect that you would use all of them with every Core Group member. Instead, tailor these ideas to your specific ministry and trust God to lead you in anointed times of discipling this year!

For each discipling objective there are several scripture passages given as a basis for study, discussion, and meditation. Use these (or others) to base all that you do and to stay fresh on the authority of God’s Word. Next, you will find some activities to guide your time with your Core Group member and, finally, some extra resources (book titles) to guide you into further study of this topic.

The Practice of Daily Solitude and Devotion

Scripture – *Mark 1:35* The example of Jesus; *Exodus 33:7-11* Moses and the Tent of Meeting; *Psalms 5:3* The example of David; *Daniel 6:10* The example of Daniel

Suggested Activities – Do a Bible study on the communion between Jesus and His Father; Have a quiet time together; Pray through a Psalm together; Agree to hold each other accountable to daily quiet times.

Other Resources – *Out of Solitude*, Nouwen; *Beyond the Quiet Time*, Alister McGrath; *Streams in the Desert*, Cowman; *The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer

A Worshipful and Thankful Heart

Scripture – *Hebrews 13:15*; *John 4:21-24*; *1 Thessalonians 5:18*; *Psalms 1-150*

Suggested Activities – Read a psalm together and use it as a guide to a time of praise and thanksgiving; Share an extended time of worship in song (with or without instruments); Encourage each other to share at least one thanksgiving a day with someone.

Other Resources – *Celebration of Discipline* (Ch. 11), Richard Foster; *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence

Christian Fellowship

Scripture – *Acts 2:42-47* Example of the early church; *1 John 1:3*; *Hebrews 10:24-25*; *Psalms 122:1*

Suggested Activities – Invite him/her to Chi Alpha service and Church; Share a meal together; Spend a Saturday doing something fun together!

Other Resources – *We Really Do Need Each Other*, Reuben Welch; *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Separation from Sin/Confession

Scripture – *2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 1:5-2:2; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Romans 6:12-14; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16*

Suggested Activities – Read, study, and pray over *2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1* together; Share an instance when you overcame a particular temptation; Pray with her/him about this struggle; Confess your sins to one another and pray for each other.

Other Resources – *Lifestyle Discipleship* (Ch. 7,8), Jim Petersen; *Men Made New*, John Stott; *Celebration of Discipline* (Ch. 10), Richard Foster

The Necessity of Forgiveness

Scripture – *1 John 1:9* Assurance of forgiveness; *Psalms 32:1; Matthew 18:21-25* Forgiving others; *Matthew 5:23-26*

Suggested Activities – Share your own testimony of sin forgiven; Encourage him/her to seek reconciliation in a broken relationship.

Other Resources – *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Reading and Hearing the Word

Scripture – *1 Timothy 4:13; Deuteronomy 17:19; Nehemiah 8:1-3*

Suggested Activities – Introduce her/him to a Bible reading plan; Regularly read portions of Scripture when you meet together; Read an entire book of the Bible together; Model the importance of attentively listening to and taking notes of sermons.

Other Resources – *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, Fee & Stuart

Inductive Bible Study

Scripture – *Ezra 7:10* The example of Ezra; *Acts 17:11* Example of the Bereans; *2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17*

Suggested Activities – Teach the PROAPT method of Bible study; Study a passage of Scripture together; Discuss how to use a concordance, cross references, study notes and other helps in the Bible.

Other Resources – *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, Fee & Stuart

Scripture Memory

Scripture – *Colossians 3:16; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 7:1-3*

Suggested Activities – Find Scriptures with meaningful application to your lives and agree to commit them to memory.

Meditation on the Word

Scripture – *Psalms 1; Joshua 1:8; Philippians 4:8*

Suggested Activities – Study the topic of meditation, using one of the resources below; Find and use a devotional book as a guide to reflection (i.e., *My Utmost For His Highest*, *Streams in the Desert*, etc.).

Other Resources – *Celebration of Discipline* (Ch. 2), Richard Foster; *Meditation: A Practical Guide to a Spiritual Discipline*, McCormick & Fish; *Contemplative Prayer*, Thomas Merton

The Power of Prayer

Scripture – *1 Thessalonians 5:17; Matthew 6:6-13; Luke 18:1-8; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 21:22; James 5:17*

Suggested Activities – Study the Lord's Prayer together and use it as a guide to prayer; Regularly share prayer requests and pray for one another; Start a prayer group in your dorm or living area; Pray the prayers of Paul (Ephesians 1:17-23; Philippians 1:9-11).

Other Resources – *Prayer*, Richard Foster; *Power Through Prayer*, E.M. Bounds; *Prayer*, Hallesby; *Touch The World Through Prayer*, Wesley Duewel; *The Transforming Friendship*, James Houston

Servanthood – The Attitude of Christ

Scripture – *John 13:1-17* Christ washing the Disciples' feet; *1 Corinthians 13:1-7; 1 John 3:17-18*

Suggested Activities – Participate in ministries that serve the elderly or community; Discover ways to serve the students in your dorm/living area.

Other Resources – *Celebration of Discipline* (Ch. 9), Richard Foster; *The Mark of the Christian*, Francis Schaeffer

Submission to Godly Authority

Scripture – *Hebrews 13:17*

Suggested Activities – Discuss their previous relationships to people in authority and whether these were positive or negative experiences; Discuss why God would command submission to authority.

Other Resources – *A Tale of Three Kings*, Gene Edwards; *Celebration of Discipline* (Ch. 8), Richard Foster

Faith

Scripture – *Hebrews 11; Romans 4:18-25; Ephesians 6:16*

Suggested Activities – Read and study Hebrews 11 together; Discuss what it means to trust God and share areas of your life where you want to grow in faith.

The Tongue

Scripture – *Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 18:6-7; 26:20; Colossians 4:6; James 1:26; 3:1-12*

Suggested Activities – Study James 3:1-12 together; Agree to hold each other accountable in the use of your words.

The Use of Time

Scripture – *Ephesians 5:15-17; Proverbs 6:6-11; Psalms 90:10,12; Colossians 4:5*

Suggested Activities – Introduce them to the use of a time management system or schedule sheets (can be found under Resources page of www.OleMissXA.org); Encourage them to “make the most of every opportunity” by piggy-backing tasks and relational time; teach the priorities core req.

Other Resources – *The Tyranny of the Urgent*, Charles Hummel (InterVarsity Booklet)

The Use of Money and Giving

Scripture – *Proverbs 3:9,10,27; 11:24-25; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Luke 6:38; Galatians 6:6; Malachi 3:10*

Suggested Activities – Make a list of Scriptural principles on giving; Help her/him to develop their budget and giving goals.

Other Resources – *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, Ronald Sider; *Freedom of Simplicity*, Richard Foster; *Daring to Live on the Edge*, Loren Cunningham

Seeking the Will of God

Scripture – *Psalms 119:105* Direction through God’s Word; *Proverbs 15:22* Obtaining godly council; *John 16:13* The Holy Spirit’s ministry in our lives

Suggested Activities – Share a personal experience of determining God’s will for your life; Help him/her seek out Biblical guidance regarding the decision; Seek out several people who can offer godly council.

Other Resources – *Finding God’s Will*, Paul Little

The Ministry and Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Scripture – *John 14:16,17; 16:5-16; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 5:18; Romans 6:5,6; Zechariah 4:6; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12 & 14* The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Suggested Activities – Do a study together on the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit; Discuss the various gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they might be expressed in the Body of Christ; Pray and be open to God giving these gifts to you.

Other Resources – *I Believe In the Holy Spirit*, Michael Green

Personal Testimony

Scripture – *Acts 26:1-12* Paul’s testimony; *John 9:25* A former blind man’s testimony; *1 John 1:3* Declare what you have experienced

Suggested Activities – Prepare a three-minutes written testimony, including a few Scriptures; Share your testimonies with each other; Share it with someone who doesn't know Christ in the next week; Study Acts 26 together, noting Paul's approach.

Witnessing

Scripture – *Mark 16:15; Matthew 29:18-20; John 4:1-42* The example of Jesus and the Woman at the Well; *Colossians 1:28-29; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5* Proclaiming Christ in the power of the Spirit

Suggested Activities – Discuss the essential elements of the Gospel and organize your thoughts into a systematic and brief presentation; Go witnessing together; Pray for pre-Christian friends together, Start an investigative Bible study for seekers.

Other Resources – *Living Proof*, Jim Peterson; *How to Give Your Faith Away*, Paul Little; *Out of the Salt-Shaker*, Rebecca Pippert; *Truth to Tell*, Lesslie Newbigin

Being a "World Christian"

Scripture – *Acts 1:8; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Matthew 9:35-38*

Suggested Activities – Introduce him/her to cross-cultural missions projects and missionaries; Pray together for the advancing of the Gospel around the world; Use a map and missionary letters to guide your prayers; Start a missions prayer group; Encourage giving to missionary needs; Read and discuss missionary biographies and books on missions.

Other Resources – *Touch the World Through Prayer*, Wesley Duewel; *Operation World*, Patrick Johnstone

Affirmation Ideas

- Symbolic gifts: have members draw names. Assign members to bring a symbolic gift for that person the next meeting. Each person presents the gift and explains its significance. These gifts are symbolic – at the end of the meeting everyone gives back their gift to its original owner.
 - o Ex) bring a rock: “Dave, you have such a strong, steady, rock solidness about you. You are a man of integrity and of your word, you are faithful and your assurance of your faith really encourages me.”
 - o Ex) perfume: “Susan, you have a beautiful joy about you that is a wonderful fragrance. When you enter a room, your joy spreads for all of us to enjoy and your fragrance is a witness to those who don’t know Christ.”

- Hot-seat night: prayer and exhortation. Pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to move. Each person to pray, share Scripture, exhorting word, etc. for person in the hot seat.

- Biblical character study: leader picks out Biblical characters and assigns one to each member of Core Group. Each member picks out four positive traits to bring back to the group and share. Have sheet of paper for each person with all the Biblical names and spaces to write the four positive traits. Have each member write what one Biblical character reminds them most of each person in group and why. Then go around group and share.

- Group member appreciation night: each member of the group has a piece of paper with their name at the top of it. Lines are drawn on the paper to create enough boxes for all of the people the letter aloud for each person. Allow time for the group to comment.

Brother Sister Ideas

Compiled From Previous Brother Sister Groups

Food

- Hang out at Cups
- Go out to dinner
- Thanksgiving Feast at a house
- Dinner where the guys make the meats and the girls make the sides
- Ice Cream is always a winner
- Cook Out runs
- South Depot (or other lunchtime food places on the square)
- Meet for dinner before Core Group
- Taco Bell after everyone's Core Group

Adventure

- Scavenger Hunt
- Apple picking at Carter's Mountain
- Picture Scavenger Hunt
- Sunrise Hikes
- Hikes in general
- Sardines
- Pranks at Fall Retreat
- Door Knob
- Premier

Sports

- Sand Volleyball Courts at intramural fields
- Attend Ole Miss sports games together
- Frisbee
- Wallyball
- Racquetball

Movies

- Grove Movies
- Movie Night at a House
- Malco

Random

- Swing Dancing
- Joint Brother Sister Core Group
- Sitting together on Wednesday nights
- Game Night (Fish bowl, the couch game, cards, telephone...)
- Started a facebook group for the family in order to announce interesting things for us to do as a family

Facilitating Small Group Sharing

1. Model what you want the other members to do.

You, more than anyone else, will determine the character of your group. If the tone you set is defensive, suspicious, and shallow, you will have a defensive, suspicious, and shallow group. Modeling ideally means being vulnerable, taking the steps (at the proper moment) to show what you want to happen. (This does not, of course, mean shocking your group by some sort of “true confession”. It means modeling an attitude of openness in which they are free to share as deeply as they want.) You cannot teach this from a book. The members of your group will have it modeled for them firsthand.

2. Deal with experience, not ideas.

To discuss on a theoretical level is a sure way to kill in depth sharing. This includes doctrinal discussions. It is possible to play intellectual ping-pong, bouncing ideas off each other without ever going any deeper than the conceptual level. But when we share what we have discovered to be true through what we have experienced, we share ourselves, and in so doing we share all that Christ is to us and has done for us. We show others not what we think, but what we feel, what we are, and what we know to be true from experience.

3. Deal with the here and now.

The past is interesting, and at times it is valuable to share it, but the focus of a small group meeting should be kept on what is happening *now*. What has happened to others is interesting, but the focus is not on others and how God dealt with them, but on how God is dealing with *us*. Speaking of the past or of other people’s experiences is very often superficial chit-chat. (There are exceptions, of course such as when a person opens up and shares something that they have experienced that made a significant impact upon their life and helped make them the way they are today. This is valuable sharing of the past.)

4. Don’t interrupt.

The key here is listening to the person who is speaking and letting him or her have a chance to really share what he or she would like. If the individual is sharing something that really means a lot to them, it might mean that the agenda for the evening must be canceled in order to let them share what is on their heart. This would not apply, of course, to a person who is simply dominating a discussion on a much more shallow level.

5. Don’t probe.

Encourage each person to share what they want to, but don’t make them share what they do not want to. If someone in the group starts to probe, say something like, “Let’s let Jill tell it the way she sees it.” or “Why don’t we give Jill a chance to finish what she has to say?”

6. Don’t give advice.

Advice is cheap and sometimes disastrous. If someone in the group has had an experience that is applicable to the person’s situation, allow them to share the experience, but do not go on to draw the conclusion for the person. If the person specifically asks for advice, tell what you *might* do if you were in their place.

7. Don't judge.

When someone shares a sin or a divergent outlook, the reaction of the group will significantly effect the groups trajectory. The person should not be put down. If he or she is, they will possibly never open up like that again. The group should accept them as they are. Only to the extent that the group accepts the person for themselves will they be able to make a really lasting change in their life.

(Numbers 4-7 are from Lyman Coleman, *Groups in Action*)

Fruit of the Spirit

1. Love
 - a. Agape: divine love which is unmerited and unconditional
 - b. The source/fountain from which all other fruit flow (1 Cor. 13)
 - c. Self-sacrificial giving of self to others – Jesus is the prime example
2. Joy
 - a. Someone who walks with a sense of understanding about what Jesus has done for them
 - b. Someone who isn't easily affected by circumstances
 - c. Paul wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" from prison (Philippians 4:4)
3. Peace
 - a. Hebrew concept referring to a condition of wholeness
 - i. Peace in circumstances: doesn't worry or fear much
 - ii. Peace with God
 - iii. Peace with fellow man
 - b. Someone who doesn't stir up trouble, but is a peace-maker (Matt. 5:9)
4. Patience
 - a. Ability to put up with others even when it is not easy
 - b. Slow to become angry
 - c. Not easily offended and takes everything in stride
 - d. Doesn't give up on people
 - e. Passive side of love
5. Kindness
 - a. Active side of love
 - b. Doing good deeds for others
 - c. Willing to serve others
 - d. Being able to bless those who persecute you
6. Goodness
 - a. Conveys the idea of benevolence and generosity towards someone else
 - b. Willing to go the second mile when it is not required (Matt. 5:41)
7. Faithfulness
 - a. One who lives out of his trust in God over the long-haul
 - b. Someone who is full of faith
 - c. A person of their word
 - d. Reliable and trustworthy
8. Gentleness
 - a. Word in Greek is difficult to translate: conveys the sense of humility toward oneself (proper estimation of oneself before God)
 - b. Considers others before themselves
 - c. Doesn't try to push others around or manipulate
 - d. Respectful and honoring
 - e. A submissive and teachable spirit towards God and others
9. Self-control
 - a. Mastery over one's desires and passions
 - b. The quality that allows one to walk in the world, and yet keep his garments unspotted from the world
 - c. Able to take a stance against excesses of various kinds

Directions for Fruit of the Spirit Affirmation

- Read through the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22-23)
 - o Choose two that you think God is establishing in you
 - o Choose one that you really need to grow in
 - o Choose one which is a strength for each person in the group and why
- Go in a circle three times telling each round

Rules

- When affirming, you can't say, "I haven't known you long yet, but..."
- You must look at the person being affirmed and they must look back at you
- You can only say in return, "Thank you, I appreciate that" or similar
- Do not talk in third person – talk to the person
 - o Ex) "Jason, I think..."

Get to Know You Ideas

These are some great ideas for icebreakers during your soft launch

- Tell three things about yourself, include one lie – others in the group need to guess the lie.
- Tell one thing about yourself that no one else in the group knows about, having each person write it down and giving them all to one person. That person reads them off and people vote who they think the person actually is.
- Draw a picture that represents you: interests, dreams, family, passions. Then have each person in the group explain their picture.
- Draw an impacting spiritual experience, then explain it to the group.
- Divide paper into four quadrants: draw four spiritually impacting moments through spiritual journey – good or bad, then explain each quadrant.
- Draw a timeline of your spiritual journey, explain the significant events: limit the number of events to three or four per person, depending on the number in your group.
- Take m&m's from a bowl, for each m&m tell something that you don't think anyone else has ever done.
- Draw an abstract picture of your face and explain it to the group.
- Magazine collage: either on a separate sheet of paper, or buy journals for everyone and decorate over, then laminate and explain to the group.
- Tell an embarrassing moment.
- Tell your first kiss story.
- Draw your kitchen table growing up.
- Tell about a time you got in trouble at school.
- Explain the story about a scar that you have.
- Tell a favorite high school memory.
- Tell a family trip story.
- Tell a story about a time that you were sick at school.
- Tell a strange habit about yourself.
- Icebreaker for history giving could be to get a fact about each person in the group before the group meets, then having the group guess which fact goes with which person.
- Another icebreaker: have people tell the group what 3 items they would take with them if their house was burning down. Then have them explain why. This will show you what each person really holds dear.

Key Ingredients for a Healthy Core Group

1. **Commitment**—The backbone to a healthy Core Group is commitment. Commitment to Jesus and commitment to one another, which results in a commitment to the Core Group.
2. **Openness and honesty**—For us to get the most out of Core Group we need to be real with one another. We need to be able to say when we are doing well and when we are not.
3. **Confidentiality**—In order for people to be real and open we need to be able to trust one another that what is shared in the Core Group is confidential to the group.
4. **Affirmation**—A healthy Core Group is a place where people feel valued and accepted. There is nothing you have done or can do that will make us not love and care for you.
5. **Accountability**— A healthy Core Group is a group in which people are accountable to each other.
6. **Prayer**—A healthy Core Group is a group that lifts each other up before the throne of grace and asks Him for the blessings they need.

Planning a Week in Prayer

Ever feel overwhelmed by all the things for which you want to pray? It can be frustrating, or even paralyzing, as your list of prayer requests grows and grows! This is a tool that will help you divide up your prayer requests so that you focus on only a few each day, but still cover them all throughout the week.

Planning a weekly schedule for prayer can help you better manage your prayer life. The idea is simple: make a list of the things you want to pray for consistently, and then break your prayers up throughout the week. So on Monday, maybe you pray for your family; Tuesday, you pray for your roommate; Wednesday you pray for your professors; and so on. Post the list somewhere you can find it or see it easily (i.e. front of Bible, journal, mirror). You should experience more peace and consistency in your prayer life!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Prayer Focus

Identify two or three whom you feel led to pray for their salvation. List the names of all those identified in the group on each card so that all of you pray for each one of the lost souls weekly. We recommend that you keep this card in your Bible as a bookmark for your daily reading so that each time you open your Bible you are reminded to pray for these people.

1. Lord, I pray that You draw _____ to Yourself (John 6:44).
2. I pray that _____ seek to know You (Acts 17:27).
3. I pray that _____ hear and believe the Word of God for what it really is. (1 Thess. 2:13).
4. I ask You, Lord, to prevent Satan from blinding _____ to the Truth (2 Cor. 4:4, 2 Tim. 2:25,26).
5. Holy Spirit, I ask You to convict _____ of his/her sin and need for Christ's redemption (John 16:8-11).
6. I ask that You send someone who will share the Gospel with _____ (Mt. 9:37-38).
7. I ask that you give me the opportunity, the courage, and the right words to share the Truth with _____ (Col. 4:3-6, Eph. 6:19-20).
8. Lord, I pray that _____ turn from his/her sin and follow Christ (Acts 17:30-31; 1 Thess. 1:9-10).
9. Lord, I pray that _____ would put all of his/her trust in Christ (John 1:12, 5:24).
10. Lord, I pray that _____ confess Christ as Lord, take root and grow in faith and bear much fruit for Your glory (Rom. 10:9-10; Col. 2:6-7; Luke 8:15).

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer for them is for their salvation.” Romans 10:1
Prayer Focus

PROAPT

This is a commonly used tool to help you study the Bible. Instead of just reading a passage, and fishing for something to speak to you, these steps will help you think about the passage more holistically and in context. Use this as a worksheet to fill out as you go. Eventually, you will no longer need to follow such a strict guide because the steps will come more naturally.

Date _____ Today's Passage _____

1. **Pray** (Pray...Preview the text “Here I am Lord; come by your Spirit and teach me; I trust that you will speak.”) - **Go through the first part of “How to Pray”**
2. **Read** (Read the text you will study 1-3 times... slowly)
3. **Observe** (What it says—copy down the verse(s) you feel God is speaking to you by either: affirming you, convicting you, and saying something you don't understand. Also ask— What is it saying about God? What is it saying about me? Who? How? Why?)

Interpret the above material by:

- a. What did it mean to the original recipients
- b. Paraphrasing it
- c. Listing comparisons and contrasts
- d. List all warnings, advice, and promises
- e. Note any “if, then” statements

Now stop and spend some time in quiet reflection

4. **Apply** (What does it mean to “us, now”)
 - a. What truth should I believe?
 - b. What am I to do... and how will it affect my actions, attitudes, relationship with God or others?
 - c. How can I do something about this in the next 48 hours?

5. **Pray do the last part of “How to Pray”**

6. **Tell**

What: _____
 To Whom: _____
 When: _____

Discovery Bible Study

You are about to embark on a great adventure! The Discovery Bible Study method is unique. There is no lesson to prepare, nor specific text questions. The outline given below is the only tool you need to facilitate a great discussion! Below is a detailed explanation of the outline, followed by a skeleton outline that you can print off and put in your Bible.

The Discovery Bible Study is best done in a group of three or more. The goal of the Discovery Bible Study is not to conduct a one-way Bible lesson, but instead to show students how they can learn from and make sense of Scripture and to introduce them to different Christian disciplines, such as worship, prayer, community, service, and accountability. This makes DBS great for seekers, international students, as well as mature believers. Because content is driven by questions and conversation, there is no limit to the depth of learning and application a group can experience.

Connect

The first portion of the DBS should be focused on your relationships with members of the group. First, ask everyone to share two things: **one thing they are thankful for this week, and one thing that has been difficult or stressful this week.** This creates a basis for worship and praise, and for leaning on one another as a community. Optionally, ask the group how they have applied last week's lesson and with whom they shared. This introduces **accountability** to the group.

Discover

Now turn to the passage for the week. The passage could be as short as a few verses, or as long as a story that covers several chapters. It is important to make sure everyone has a Bible, so bring a few extra in case. **First**, ask one student to read the passage aloud. **Next**, have another student read the passage aloud while the other students listen with Bibles closed. **Last**, have another student retell the story in their own words. **After the retelling**, ask the group if anyone has anything to add to the retelling, or if anyone saw something different in the passage.

Next, guide discussion with four basic questions:

1. What does this passage tell us about God?
2. What does this passage tell us about people?
3. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?
4. What other questions do you have about the passage?

During discussion, keep the following ground rules in place:

1. **Keep discussion to the passage.** It is especially important to rein in students who have more Bible knowledge and may be prone to drawing connections with passages that are unfamiliar to others in the group.
2. **Don't teach, facilitate conversation through questions.** If a student makes a questionable comment, rather than correcting, ask, "Can you show me where in the passage you see that?" Or ask, "What does everyone else think about that idea?" Allow the group to self-edit.
3. **Keep to the time allotted and redirect tangents.**

Apply

It is important to always end discussion with an application question. Have each person in the

group answer the following question: "If this passage is true, how should it change how you live this week?" Students respond with: "I will...". This teaches the importance of obedience to God's word. By asking, "If this passage is true...", you empower the student to obey even if they aren't a Christian yet.

Finally, have students identify people they can share the passage with this next week. This teaches students the importance of sharing God's word with other people, and can give them practice doing evangelism before they even become Christians!

Serve

In closing, return to the needs shared at the beginning of the study and discuss how as a group you can help one another as a group this week.

Prayer

Close the study with prayer. This should not always be done by the facilitator.

Discovery Bible Study Outline

Connect

1. What is one thing they are thankful for this week?
2. What is one thing that has been difficult or stressful this week?

Discover

Read the Story

1. Ask one student to read the passage aloud.
2. Close Bibles for the rest of the study. Ask another student to read the passage aloud while the other students listen.
3. Have another student retell the story in their own words.
4. Ask the group if anyone has anything to add to the story, or if anyone saw something different in the passage.

Discuss

1. What does this passage tell us about God?
2. What does this passage tell us about people?
3. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?

Apply

- Have each student share an “I will...” statement.
- Have each student identify a friend they will share the passage this next week.

Serve

- Return to the needs shared at the beginning of the study and discuss how as a group you can help one another as a group this week.

Prayer

- Close the study with prayer.

3 Reasons to Plan

Creating a Space for Intentional Group Planning

What are the benefits of a weekly core group planning time?

1. Prayer

- Prayer is not just relational- it works! Pray specifically and boldly for your core group.
- Prayer helps us to be reminded of our position before God, and that all of our success comes from Him. Having consecrated time for core group, rather than conditional, reminds us to pursue Him in both the trial and the triumph of leading.
- Philippians 4:6-7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

2. Preparation

- Your study will be better when you have more minds working together catching flaws, doing idea exchange, and evaluating what each member needs.
- The core group night itself will flow better when all the leaders know what is going to happen, have already thought about their responses to study questions/how to guide conversation, and have prayed beforehand to catch a shared vision for the goal of the night.
- Proverbs 24:27 "Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house."

3. Partnership

- Planning time is also to bond you as a leader team; catch up on how you're doing, how each other's mentorship meetings are going, how you're feeling about core group. Ex. If someone is having a difficult semester in nursing/Comm/bio lab, vulnerability in planning will help you to know and jointly figure out how to bear the load.
- Also, remember that you are a model not just in leading core group, but interacting outside of it. Your relationship with your co-leader WILL be noticed by those in your group. Planning together will help that relationship outside to be more connected and effective.
- Planning time provides a space to healthily work out conflict or confusion rather than experience tension in core group or the rest of your week.
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

What should planning time look like?

As heard in the leadership interviews, core group planning is a commitment of an hour a week. A normal planning meeting outline might look like the following, but you can tailor it for your co-leading group.

8:00-8:05 Prayer

8:05-8:25 Catch up on life

8:25-8:35 Update on how mentorship meetings are doing

8:35-8:55 Plan breakdown of responsibilities, and of study questions

8:55-9:00 Prayer

FAQs

We are all super busy! What do we do?

Thankfully, it's a new semester so there is flexibility! Sit down with all of your co-leaders and find an hour when you are all free. It may be an inconvenient hour, but it is a fruitful commitment.

But, there is not a single free hour for us all to meet.

Check your schedules again. Try mornings, after servant leaders meetings, or Wednesday night before service. 8am breakfast is a great way to start the day!

If there is truly no time, first off, I am very sorry and you are probably WAY too busy. Are there any activities that you can drop, for your own health? Secondly, find a time to do 45 minutes, or even 30. Any commitment is better than none!

Can we plan over email?

This should only happen as the exception. It can work when a co-leader is out of town in the normal time slot, but you should attempt to find a regular time to meet in person.

But we are best friends/live together/see each other at Chi Alpha Service/etc... Do we really need to?

Yes. Having a consecrated block of time makes sure that planning is accomplished even on busy weeks, and that you are praying together faithfully in both the trial and triumph.

What if we normally just divide core group duties?

It is ok to have someone do snack, another worship, and another lead the bulk of the study. But you should still plan the content and questions together- each individual leader is the only voice for the girls/guys they meet up with, and what sort of questions they might need.

