

# GROW spiritually

## Discipleship – Practical Suggestions

from *Leading Small Groups with Purpose* by Steve Gladen

### Where to Start?

- Does everyone have a Bible in your group? You won't know until you ask. Make sure to get them one if they don't.
- Reflect the Jesus-follower you want to see your group members become. They will follow your lead. The goal is progress, not perfection.
- Share how and when you use your quiet time to reconnect with God. Encourage your group members to set time aside too.
- Keep encouraging! Look for the positive things that are happening and how God is working in your group. Be specific when you encourage others.

### Keep It Going...

- Give them a challenge. Ask your members to study the Bible for a specified amount of time each week. You can even give individual goals if each person is at a different spot. The goal is growth.
- Spend this week's group time talking about the spiritual practices each member finds helpful to grow towards and connect with God.
- Make sure each member gets an opportunity to lead the group once.
- Devote a week to studying prayer and how each person can spend more time in this space.
- Have a discussion on and encourage margin and balance in your group members' lives.
- Rotate your studies. Focus on a book of the Bible during one season, a video-based teaching study the next, a life-stage study the next, etc.
- Have your next group meeting outdoors. A change of pace and venue could allow opportunities for God to show up in your group time in different ways.

- Send notes or texts of encouragement to your group members.
- My story. Share your story of making a decision for Christ. Ask one person to share their story each week.
- Important influences - Ask your members to share who has been instrumental in their faith walk.
- Spend this week asking your group members to write on blank scraps of paper what characteristics they believe should be present in a Christ-follower. Which ones were common among everyone?
- Do some work. Ask each person in the group to identify an area they'd like to see improved in their life. Ask them to hold each other accountable as they ask God to help them move forward.
- Read a book of the Bible together, aloud. Each member take a passage.
- Fruits of the Spirit. Have your group memorize Galatians 5:22-23. Which fruit do they find in abundance? Which one is lacking?

## Now You're Running...

- Find a study on financial stewardship. Challenge your group members to be intentional with the resources God has given them.
- Encourage your group members to spend one retreat day a year in thoughtful study, reflection, and prayer.
- Serve in a ministry or missions project together and make the connection between what you did/are doing and what the Bible says about serving.
- Encourage your members to memorize scripture each week and to meditate on God's word.
- Integrity. Ask your group members this question, "Does your life reflect your values?" Have them identify gaps and some plans of actions to help shrink the gap.
- Work with your group to choose a time and type of fast. Food? Social Media? Netflix? Make sure to reflect on what God showed your group during this time.
- Mentorship. Ask your group members to identify people who could mentor them. Who could they help mentor? Challenge them to start making the connection(s) this week.

*\*No matter what you do, keep focusing on growth. Evaluate what you think might help your group grow, but ask your members to come up with some ideas too! You might be surprised what they come up with.*