

Q&As About Women's Ministry D-Groups

What's the purpose of a D-Group?

The goals of D-Groups are (1) to grow women spiritually and (2) to replicate disciples and disciple-makers. We are offering an opportunity to intentionally equip believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Christ.

Why are we doing D-Groups instead of a traditional Bible study?

First, we want to be obedient to God's commands to be disciples and to make disciples. D-Groups provide a structure that encourages and enables us to do this. In-D-Groups, the focus is on developing spiritual disciplines such as spending time alone with God; study; prayer; fellowship; confession; and submission. As disciples—or apprentices—we are learning to be like the master, Jesus. As disciple-makers, we are taking what we have learned, then teaching and leading others to do the same. D-Groups emphasize not only our own spiritual growth but also the growth of others.

Because D-Groups use a Bible-reading plan as its only curriculum and require women to actively participate in studying and applying it, we believe that D-Groups will also increase competence and confidence in reading and understanding the Bible. Bible studies written by others who have already read, researched, and interpreted Scripture can be useful resources for growing in the Christian faith; however, we cannot and should not depend on them alone to feed us spiritually. Learning how to ask and answer questions about Scripture will help us get the "spiritual food" we need directly from the Word, and we will gain insights directly from Scripture in more personal way.

I'm in a Sunday School class, Bible study, and/or small group. What's the difference between a D-Group and any of those?

From Disciple Her by Kandi Gallaty: "What you get in a D-Group can't be found in a Life Group, Sunday School class, Bible study class, or any large group gathering. It's more personal and intimate than that. Those other groups are good and helpful and necessary as part of your growth, but a D-Group will take you deeper, not only in your knowledge of God, but in your living and sharing your life with others as God teaches you and works in you. You take ownership of your faith. You don't sit and listen to someone else leading and teaching in a D-Group all the time like you might in those other settings; here, you are an active participant.... Another major difference is the level of accountability you receive in a D-Group that you don't receive in another setting."

What are the expectations of a D-Group participant?

To be effective, D-Groups require commitment and accountability. Each D-group will develop a covenant of values, expectations, and behaviors by which all participants must mutually agree to abide. As a D-Group member, you will commit, for example, to certain attendance, participation in the development of spiritual disciplines, and confidentiality terms.

How will D-Groups be formed?

The Women's Ministry team and D-Group leaders have been praying for God to lead them to women of FAITH (Faithful, Available, Intentional, Teachable, and Hungry) to join D-Groups. We will be prayerfully assigning women to groups with the desire of connecting women of various ages, seasons of life, and spiritual maturity that best produce disciples and disciple-makers.

What if I don't like or aren't comfortable with small groups?

We understand that some women aren't used to small groups, have had difficult experiences, or are not comfortable in small groups. We believe that the size and structure of D-Groups creates a safe, welcoming, and encouraging environment for growing in the Lord and in the relationships in which God calls us to be part. As we step out in obedience and faith to be part of D-Groups, we are confident that God will bless participants with strong and deep relationships with one another.

What will a D-Group meeting look like?

D-Groups will meet weekly from September to May. Each meeting will last between 1-1.5 hours depending on the group. Groups will open up in prayer, then spend a few minutes reciting memory verses to each other. The majority of the time will be spent sharing and discussing journal entries based on the week's assigned Scripture readings. The last few minutes of the group will be used to pray for pressing prayer requests for group members and a closing prayer.

How we will know what to read and study?

Your group leader will provide a Bible reading plan at the beginning of the year with each week's reading and memory verse(s).

How do we journal about what we've read?

Your leader will provide and teach a journal format for everyone to use. For example, the HEAR format includes the following: **Highlighting** verses or passages that stand out to you; **Explaining** the context and passage meaning; **Applying** the verses or passage to you personally; and **Responding** to God in some way because of it. Your D-Group will decide how many journal entries you should complete each week, but you can journal about any verse(s) that stand out to you.

What if I can't memorize Scripture?

One reason we are starting D-Groups is to build women's confidence in equipping themselves with God's Word. We are providing leaders with resources to help group members be successful in practicing spiritual disciplines, including Scripture memorization. Memory verses will not be long or complicated. Think of all that you have put to memory in your life already. The Holy Spirit will help you! **Remember: God wouldn't have asked us to do this in His Word if it wasn't possible!**

Are D-Groups for young believers only?

No. Discipleship is a lifelong process, and D-Groups are a wonderful opportunity to bring together new and mature believers to grow alongside one another. Regardless of where you are in your relationship with Jesus Christ, you will be welcomed and your experiences valued in a D-Group.

What if I can't commit for the entire year?

The Women's Ministry team is discussing other Bible-based activities to supplement D-Groups. We may also offer D-Groups that meet for a shorter time period or start at a later in the year.

Are D-Groups open to women from other churches?

Yes. We welcome women from other churches to join D-Groups to become disciple-makers within their own spheres of influence, including women at their home churches.

Will there be an alternative to D-Groups?

At this time, we will not be offering other Bible studies. However, if you are not able to join a D-Group, we encourage you to form or a join a Bible study group to be in the Word together.