

DISCOVERY GROUPS: ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

In addition to the 7 core questions, there is one more key piece of “genetic code” that needs to be instilled in every Discovery Group: Accountability.

Remember, in response to Questions 6 & 7, each group member writes an “I will...” statement based on what God is saying to him/her about what they need to do/change in order to obey the Scripture passage, and also commits to sharing with at least one other person in the coming week. **From a group’s second meeting onward, these accountability questions should be added at the very beginning of the gathering (or after Question 3): How did you do with your “I will...” and “I will tell...” statements?**

This will give you a space to celebrate victories as well as encourage each other to obey Jesus. It is not about making someone feel guilty but giving them more opportunities to grow. If someone didn’t take the action they said they would, you can gently ask, “How can we help you to obey what God is telling you?” Perhaps they need to revise their commitment to be more specific or practical. People often tend to make their commitments overly ambitious and overly spiritual: “I will pray on my knees for an hour every day.”

If, however, the majority of the group did not follow through on their commitments from the past week, don’t automatically move on to a new Scripture passage. In obedience-based Discovery Groups, evidence of small behavioral changes (not perfection!) should determine the pace that a group moves through a Scripture set. This is a major paradigm shift from many Bible studies or small groups using a book, video series or other curriculum, which often don’t focus on application and accountability but forge relentlessly ahead to the next lesson or chapter.

Many churches/Christians have made the mistake of judging spiritual maturity by what someone knows (information) rather than if they obey what they know (transformation). If we want to grow spiritually, we need to adopt a system that encourages behaviors that lead to spiritual growth. Discovery Groups are one process that encourages those behaviors and provides the accountability that people need.

Sources: “Spent Matches” by Roy Moran, “Contagious Disciple Making” by David L. Watson & Paul D. Watson, “How to Launch a Discovery Bible Study” by novo.org.