



Home Groups

What is the purpose of Home Groups?

The purpose of Home Groups is to Build Community, Pursue Sanctification, and Live on Mission.

The purpose of Home Groups is accomplished through long-term, mutual, whole-person discipleship in the context of a distinctively Christian community.

Discipleship: It is important to say explicitly that the goal is not merely “community” or “belonging.” Rather, the aim of Home Groups is to foster true and transformative discipleship where participants are increasingly maturing into the likeness of Christ (*sanctification*) and become true disciples who themselves produce more true disciples (*mission*).

Long-term discipleship: The real and lasting spiritual impact of Home Groups occurs over years rather than days, weeks, or even months. Patience, persistence, and devotion are required on the part of participants to taste the fruit of discipleship.

Mutual discipleship: Home Groups is an adult focused ministry where maturing Christians use their spiritual gifts for the building-up of other Christians. Discipleship in this context is not intended to be primarily top-down like in childrens or students ministry, but side-by-side as adult believers who are spiritually maturing together sharpen each other as iron sharpens iron.

Whole-person discipleship: Discipleship is sometimes broken down into the categories of “Head, Heart, Hands” or “Thinking, Loving, Doing.” Home Groups does not specialize or focus solely on any one of these areas, but generalizes across all three areas in order to produce disciples who truly think, love, and act like Jesus in all areas of their lives.

In the context of community: The end goal of Home Groups is not simply community itself, but what is true is that genuine loving community is the necessary soil in which Home Groups function. Discipleship within Home Groups can only truly occur where imperfect believers are welcomed, truly known, and truly loved. Each member must be allowed to be both needed and needy, to love and be loved, to serve and be served. The gospel’s transforming truth must not only be declared over people through word and worship, but demonstrated to them through loving community.

Distinctively Christian community: The desire for community is not in itself a distinctively Christian desire. All people made in God’s image desire community to provide identity, purpose, and belonging. However, only those elected by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit desire to be conformed to the image of Christ (*sanctification*) and to see Christ’s kingdom manifest on earth as it is in heaven (*mission*). To be distinctively Christian, Home Groups must be driven by a deep desire for all three pillars of sanctification, mission, and community, and not merely a desire for community alone like unbelievers.