

[CITY GROUPS X]

GUIDE TO C-GROUPS

What is a C-Group?

A C-Group (College Group) is a group of 2-6 same-gendered individuals who spend regular time together to grow closer to Jesus and help others do the same.

Like City Groups, C-Groups engage in both DNA and Intentional Space as ways to focus inward on its members and outward on the college community around them.

Why do C-Groups exist?

We aren't designed to follow Jesus alone. Before God created woman, he said, "It is not good that man should be alone." (Gen 2:18) It was true then, and it is true today; we are designed to live in community with our Creator God and other members of his creation.

In his last words to his followers, Jesus said, "*Go and make disciples of all people groups, teaching them to obey everything I have taught you.*" (Matt 28:19)

Paul, writing to the young Timothy, said, "The things you've heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Tim 2:2)

In Revelation 7:9 John is given a vision of eternity with God. He says, "*I looked and before me was a great multitude that no one could count: people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, gathered around the throne worshipping Jesus.*"

The bible is clear, from Genesis to Revelation, that we are designed to reflect the character and truth of God to the entire world. We are to teach what Jesus taught. We are to grow close to Jesus and we are supposed to help others do the same. But we can't teach what we aren't learning ourselves, and we can lead people to follow Jesus if we're not following him ourselves.

What do C-Groups do?

In authentic, transparent, gospel-driven community, we can learn to be and do what our Creator designed us for!

C-Groups exist to help college students:

1. BE who they are called and designed to be as followers of Jesus, and to...
2. DO what they are called and designed to do as followers of Jesus.

Groups meet together weekly to grow closer to Jesus through prayer, studying the bible, and pointing each other back to Jesus when needed. Additionally, C-Groups team up with other groups on their campus to engage with students outside of their group.

In John 13:34-35 Jesus says to his followers, "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*"

The command Jesus gives is to make disciples of all people. And we can do that on our campuses through C-Groups by loving and serving one another and the campus around us.

DNA in a C-Group

When a C-Group meets together, they go through a process called DNA, which stands for Discover, Nurture, Act. This DNA time is a special time dedicated to studying scripture, seeing where our lives and beliefs don't line up with what Jesus calls us to be and do, and in turn helping each other to be and do what we are designed for.

The first time your group meets, you should read through *The Story of God* together and discuss the questions at the end. This is foundational for everything that your group will do together. Even if you're all familiar with it, going through it and hearing it again is always a good reminder! If you want to save time, you can each read it individually before you meet and come ready to discuss the questions.

Then, each member should take 10-15 minutes to share their personal story (use *Telling Your Story With Jesus As The Hero*) so that the rest of the group knows it. This is critically important because it will give vital context for the things you each struggle with, as well as helping identify the specific giftings and wirings you each have.

After your C-Group has gone through *The Story Of God* and each told your own personal stories, you can begin to look at scripture together. It may take you 2-3 meeting times to get to this point. That's fine. Once you're here, start by picking a book of the bible to read together. For your first one, we recommend John or Mark. These are the two shortest biographies of Jesus in the bible. Once you've read through one of these books, then you can pick any book you like! For a detailed guide to how to do DNA, read through the DNA Basic Training guide.

The real key to long-term spiritual growth in a C-Group is creating and maintaining a culture of transparency and grace. The leader(s) of the group should always set the tone by going first when telling their stories and mistakes, and they should be honest and vulnerable to their group. This is one of the prime responsibilities and expectations of leadership. By doing this, the leader(s) will create an atmosphere where it's okay to not be okay. That's when Jesus really draws us to himself.

As a C-Group gets to know one another's stories and hearts, and as they process through scripture and life together, you will continually have opportunities to encourage each other to be and do what Jesus has designed and called you for. This process of Gospel Shepherding is all-encompassing. Each member should be responsible to shepherding the others towards Jesus, and each member (leaders included) should be open to correction and encouragement towards a gospel-driven lifestyle.

**The Story Of God* and *Telling Your Story With Jesus As The Hero* can both be found in the DNA Basic Training Guide.

Intentional Space in a C-Group

In order to fulfill Jesus' command to make disciples of all people, we must actively engage with the world around us. If we are going to be followers of Jesus, we should probably start by following his example.

John 1:14 says, "Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus left the eternal comfort and glories of heaven in order to come to earth as a human, and to suffer and give up his own life for the sake of people that didn't know him. As followers of Jesus, we too should be getting out of our comfort zones and going out, intentionally engaging and serving the world around us. But we don't do it just so they can know us. We do it so that they can know Jesus.

Wherever God has put you, he has a job for you to do. As college students, living on or near your campus, God has given you an incredible opportunity to help others on your campus get to know him.

As a C-Group, you should partner with another C-Group (if available) on your campus and pick a specific dorm or group of people to focus on. Together you can meet needs, throw parties, host events, and just get to know people. Through these relationship, Jesus will give you opportunities to follow Jesus in a way that draws people to him!

Be strategic with what group or dorm you pick. Pray about it with your C-Group. Ask for input from people on campus or City Church leaders. Try to avoid areas like a chapel or religious group. It's not that these are bad; it's just that we want to take the good news of Jesus to the darkest places. The sports teams need Jesus. The fraternities and sororities need Jesus. The dorms full of freshmen trying to decide who they are going to be in life need Jesus.

In his book, *The Abrahamic Revolution*, Todd Ahrend tells a story of five simultaneously sinking cruise ships. Each one is five miles further from the shore than the last. The rescuers from the Coast Guard have to make a choice: either send all their people to the first, easiest ship, or send people to every ship, which would mean bypassing people who needed to be saved along the way. (See the full story at the end of this document.)

Again, review two important verses...

Matthew 28:19

Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations (people groups)."

Revelation 7:9

John says, "*I looked and before me was a great multitude that no one could count: people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, gathered around the throne worshipping Jesus.*"

Jesus' command isn't just to bring the gospel to as many people as possible. Rather, it is to bring it to every people group! And John, in his vision of eternity, saw just that! So, in this scenario, we are the rescuers going out to the sinking ships. Our job isn't just to save as many as possible, but to bring rescue to every ship!

This is why we shouldn't choose Intentional Spaces that aren't already being engaged by the gospel. If your C-Group, and others on your campus, will be intentional about reaching out to those far from Jesus, you will

soon see a small picture of the vision that John saw: people from every club, race, dorm, and major, gathered together worshipping Jesus.

Leaving a Legacy at Your Campus

The model of students investing in students isn't new. It's been happening for a long, long time, and students around the world have not only learned to follow Jesus together, they've learned how to launch out into life and help others to follow Jesus too.

It's all rooted in how Jesus trained his followers. He invested in his 12 disciples, who then in turn invested in others, and so on and so forth, leading to us today. The only reason we know anything about Jesus today is because he trained men to follow him and to teach others to do the same.

The apostle Paul summarized it well when he said to Timothy, "The things you've heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Tim 2:2)

Think about the kid in high school right now who will one day be a freshmen on your campus. Currently they struggle with their identity, with finding their joy and fulfillment in the approval of others, in their grades, or in what they own. You may know the feeling of lostness that often accompanies freshmen college students. For most, it is a whole new world of new experiences, and often, new ways of viewing that world, including their personal faith and beliefs. The choices students make in college, and the person they choose to become during their time there will set them on a trajectory for the rest of their lives. What if you could affect that? What if, over your time in college, however much you have left, you could use the giftings that God has wired into you to point students to him? What if, together, we learned to follow Jesus in college, and to help others do the same?

*See the short article *This Is Personal For Me* at the end of this document for more.

THE PRACTICAL: HOW TO...

How to Start a C-Group

If you don't have to, you don't want to do this alone. The first step to starting a C-Group is to find someone to partner with. It is important that you and the person you partner with both share and understand the vision of C-Groups.

After you've found a partner to help you lead the group, you'll want to begin meeting together for DNA and investigating Intentional Space.

How to Grow a C-Group

Once you've established a regular weekly time together, start thinking about recruiting. You don't want to ask just anyone to join your group. The truth is that a C-Group isn't for every college student, even ones that are involved in other things with your college ministry or local group of believers.

As you build relationship on your campus, begin to try and feel out students who are hungry for real, intentional spiritual growth and maturity. Begin by inviting one person to join you and your other leader for one of your regular meeting times. Show them how you read and study scripture together in DNA time. Invite them to come with you as you engage in an Intentional Space. If they enjoy it, then invite them to join you regularly. Tell them what is expected, and if they are excited about it...congrats! You've added another person to your C-Group!

Keep the same process going and add more people. For practical reasons, six people is the maximum recommended size for a C-Group. It is difficult to have enough time to interact during DNA for more than 5 or 6 people.

Once your group reaches 4 people, you should start thinking about group multiplication. See the document titled *Healthy Group Multiplication* for help multiplying your group.

How to Lead a C-Group

Besides starting a group and guiding it as it finds an Intentional Space and does the DNA process together, leading a group requires a few other things:

1. Vulnerability and transparency. Leaders have to set the tone in this area. If you can't go first and be honest about your faults and difficult experiences, no one else in your group will either.
2. Brokenness. Leaders have to be okay with showing that they don't have it all together or all figured out. A spirit of humility will allow the others in your group to admit the same about themselves.
3. Responsibility. If you can't schedule meeting times and show up when you're supposed to, you can't lead a group.
4. Vision. Leaders need to own and push for the vision of following Jesus and helping others to do the same. If you don't, the people in your group won't either.
5. Rooted in Jesus. Leaders need to be regularly studying the bible on their own, actively engaged in prayer and repentance. Leaders need to show others how to follow Jesus, and you can't show someone how to do something if you don't know how to do it yourself.

How to Finish a C-Group

College doesn't last forever, and neither do C-Groups. As new semesters begin, schedules change. People move, or graduate, or decide that a group like this isn't for them. Groups also grow, and multiply! If we understand from the beginning that C-Groups will end, we can be planning ahead and ending our groups in a healthy way that launches people into their next steps.

It's good to acknowledge this to everyone in the group on the front end. "Hey guys, we won't be in this group together forever. Hopefully, next semester we will all be helping to lead in different groups so that more students can have an opportunity to do this too!"

As a semester ends, have a serious talk with the members of your group about what is next. If you plan on staying together into the next semester, make sure you continue to meet or talk over the semester break. If not, make plans for what you'll do next. Maybe your group will split into two groups of three, each with three open spots for incoming freshmen. Maybe two of you are going to move into the same dorm and start a group with four open spots! It's up to you; just make sure you take time to cast vision for the future and make plans.

Failing to plan is planning to fail.

The Final Frontier: The Forgotten Ships

By Todd Ahrend, *The Abrahamic Revolution*, p90

Imagine there are five cruise ships simultaneously sinking off the coast. They are spaced at five-mile increments and the ship closest to the shore floats five miles out. This means you have sinking cruise ships five, ten, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five miles away from the coast. The Coast Guard dispatches rescuers as hundreds aboard each cruise ship await relief. The rescuers must make a choice. Which cruise ship to they go to first? The one five miles out seems the most logical since valuable time and energy would seemingly be wasted in going to the ship twenty-five miles out. Rescuers would necessarily pass over perishing lives as they head to the farthest ship. Even after the first decision of who to help, every subsequent rescue would involve a difficult choice of who to help next. These would be tough choices if no definition had been given as to the end goal. If the desired end is to save as many people as possible -simply a numeric issue- then it makes sense to focus solely on the closest cruise ship. But if the definition was not numeric in nature, the rescue strategy would conform to another desired end. God has expressed his end goal of missions. John Piper explains how the mission of God is not numeric in nature:

“God may have in mind that the aim of the rescue operation should be to gather saved sinners from every people in the world, even if some of the successful rescuers must leave a fruitful reached people, in order to labor in a (possibly less fruitful) unread he'd people. The task of mission may not be merely to win as many individuals as possible from the most responsive people groups of the world, but rather to win individuals from all the people groups of the world.”

Piper utilizes a definition of the final goal of missions dictated by Revelation 5:9, which says, “And they sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.’” God desires to have a representation from every tribe, tongue, and nation, and therefore, we participate in the completion of this goal by engaging in missions. Our outreach effort, energy, money, and time need to be poured into seeing this become a reality. Given that God’s desire is to save some from every people, rescuers necessarily have to go to every cruise ship, not just the ones that yield the most fruit or are most convenient.

This Is Personal For Me

By Ryan Mayfield

College ministry...Discipleship...Small groups...

This is personal for me. Many years ago, a guy named Luay joined the Kappa Sigma Fraternity at the University of Tulsa. He would share the gospel with a guy named Rob. Rob would then invest in a guy named Tony. I joined Kappa Sig and met Tony and Rob my freshman year. Tony was the first guy to teach me to memorize scripture. Rob showed me how to both follow Jesus and hold respected leadership positions in the fraternity house. Tony and Rob both invested heavily into me, teaching me to follow Jesus and showing me how to engage the world around me and help others to follow Jesus too. Through their investment, as well as other guys like Jason, Rob H, Kevin, and Phil, I was able to be a part of many awesome things that God did in Kappa Sig over my time there.

Tate was a Kamp kid. He grew up in a religiously Christian home. As a freshman, he was self-confident, but knew little of what it meant to really follow Jesus or to show others to do the same. I got to see God do incredible things in him and today he is a godly man and husband.

TK was an atheist. But God grabbed his heart and changed him. Today he is a man of faith who leads his wife as they follow Jesus together and help others do the same.

Eric was a partier. Drunk most nights, sleeping around, looking for the next high. But God changed him. Today he is a fun-loving, Jesus-following business professional in Tulsa.

Cole was a drug dealer. He would come to the fraternity house with a backpack full of pot, and leave with a backpack full of cash. He was a jerk. Today he lives in South Asia, following Jesus and helping college students there to do the same.

I saw this same model repeated through multiple clubs, fraternities, sororities, teams, and dorms on my very liberal college campus. If it can happen there, it can happen on your campus too. Don't shy away from the brokenness you see in college students. Don't start your own club because the ones on your campus are full of people who don't know Jesus...instead, join them! Just like Jesus became a man and came to earth, we should come into areas of brokenness on our campuses and bring light and life and hope to them. If we're going to be followers of Jesus, we should probably follow Jesus.

The men God put in my path in college, and several others, also invested in dozens of men at the University of Tulsa during their time there. Today there are still people on that campus that can be traced back to a guy named Luay. Most of them don't even know he exists. He probably doesn't know they exist. I don't know who invested in Luay, and he doesn't know me.

But what I do know is this: Jesus calls us to follow him and to help others do the same. If he's put you on a college campus, you've got a limited amount of time to do what Jesus has called you to. You can leave a legacy at your campus, and you should.

It's personal for me. I hope it is personal for you too.