

## Life Group's Methodology

Most churches have some form of mid-week group meeting, aimed broadly at equipping believers to follow Jesus in one way or another. Some approach these meetings in quite a structured and formal way (e.g. Bible studies that follow the current sermon series or formal courses that run each term), while some groups are more relational and fluid in their approach. At Citygate Church, we feel that God wants us to combine these two approaches.

On the one hand, our desire is to allow the Holy Spirit (not our programme) to direct each meeting. We want to learn to be sensitive to his leading and respond to his prompting. But on the other hand, we are also deeply aware that a disciple of Jesus is a disciplined learner from Jesus in all aspects of life. Our life groups therefore, have to include a wide range of applications and cover certain basic elements of Christian spirituality to be true to its goal!

Dallas Willard, in "The Spirit of the Disciplines" helpfully argues that our discipleship to Jesus is a matter of training, not just trying hard; that we need to train our spiritual muscles to "put off our old self with its practices" and "put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Colossians 3:9-10, ESV). Life Groups, therefore, have to include not only training in spiritual formation and wholeness, but also equipping and activation for ordinary believers to share and demonstrate the gospel of Jesus!

Therefore, we want to encourage Life Groups to

1. Draw on the following courses (and the accompanying classical spiritual disciplines) as a resource to disciple one another. Each topic could be covered in about 8-10 weeks (or one school term), however the structure is fluid and can be extended as needed. There is no particular order to the courses, though certain courses will be easier for new groups or for those with several non-Christian members.
2. Plan two or three meetings or activities per term that can help your group reach unsaved people, serve your community or volunteer in some form of social justice initiative. We suggest that you include these in your regular meeting planning, rather than schedule these as optional and additional meetings.
3. Involve all its members to help prepare the material, host the group, facilitate prayer and worship times or help with the general administration of your group. This way, we will create a culture of participation and leadership and prepare groups to multiply!