

FIELD GUIDE

Relational Discipleship



CHRIST COVENANT

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Relational Discipleship

INTRODUCTION

After His resurrection and just before His ascension into heaven, Jesus gave His disciples the command to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). Discipleship is at the heart of everything Christ Covenant does. Colossians 1:28 describes well the aim of our church when Paul writes, “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.” We hope to see all Christ Covenant members grow in personal purity and holiness, learn to live by the Spirit, increase in knowledge of God’s Word and in prayer, carry out the one another commands in Scripture, and grow as gospel witnesses in evangelism. In a word, we hope to “present everyone mature in Christ.” This kind of maturity in Christlikeness happens when we are involved in relational discipleship with others who encourage, challenge, and exhort us.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

A simple reading through the narrative of Scripture shows that God has a heart for community. From the tribes of Israel to the seven churches in Revelation, the people of God are always being

called together into fellowship with one another. Further, the Bible says that when a person trusts Christ, they are saved into a family. Simply put, there is no biblical category for an isolated Christian. The pastors and elders of Christ Covenant care deeply about creating biblical community.

One of the ways that we facilitate biblical community is by organizing our members into smaller groups that focus on growing in Christ and disciple-making. All members are expected to regularly engage in one of our community groups. In a normal group gathering, you will find Bible study, prayer, the forging of friendship, and encouragement toward godly and missional living. Beyond the group gathering, members of groups often become true friends and serve as missional expressions of the local church. Joining a group is the absolute best way to build relationships and get plugged into the life of the church.

HOW TO FIND A GROUP

When thinking about visiting or joining a community group, we typically say, “Proximity is priority.” We have community groups all over Atlanta that meet on different days and times. We would encourage you to start looking for a group close to where you live. You can find a list of our community groups on our website, christcovenant.com. You can also request to join groups on the website. If you’d like a personal group recommendation, you can reach out to our Discipleship Director, Jackson Randall, at Jackson@ChristCovenant.com.

Types of Groups at Christ Covenant

- **Community Groups** – all different ages and life stages
- **Women’s Groups** – women only, all different ages and life stages
- **Men’s Groups** – men only, all different ages and life stages
- **Young Adult Groups** – men’s groups and women’s groups of young professionals
- **College Groups** – men’s groups and women’s groups of college students

What to Expect at a Group

When you visit a community group, you'll find a group of people who want to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God and in their love for one another. Some groups open their time with coffee or a meal (depending on when and where they meet). From there, groups sit down together and consider the Sunday sermon, work through a passage of Scripture, or talk about a book the group is reading. Different groups might have slightly different ways they spend their time, so it's always a good idea to ask the community group leader how their particular group is structured. Groups also spend time praying for one another, the church, and our world. There is also typically time for group members to provide life updates and be encouraged or challenged. Community group gatherings typically last about two hours and meet weekly or bi-weekly.

How to Participate in the Life of a Group

There are four key ways we like to encourage you to be a part of the group.

- **Show Up** – Commit to showing up. Your presence in a community group matters. If you're not present, you will miss out on what the Lord might have for you, but significantly, others will miss out on how you might meaningfully contribute to their walks with the Lord. Never underestimate the power of your presence.
- **Participate** – Our desire is not that you would merely show up to your community group but that you would be an active participant within the group. Part of what it means to be a community group member is that you will give yourself to the group in such a way that you know others and make yourself known. You can do this by participating in group discussions, actively listening to others, asking good questions, praying for your fellow group members, and initiating meeting times outside of your group.

- **Communicate** – Being in a community group means you will have a community group leader or leaders. These leaders will want to be in touch with you. Make sure you're being responsive and open to their communication. Also, commit to sharing openly about your life and your needs. Community groups are a key way we get connected to the body, grow in our faith, and have our physical and spiritual needs met. So invite your fellow group members into your life by being communicative.
- **Keep Confidentiality** – When you're part of a community group, you will walk through valleys and mountaintops with your fellow members. As part of this journey, you will be invited into people's lives in such a way that you will possess some privileged information. We ask that you resolve to honor your brothers and sisters by not sharing private group information outside of the group unless it's absolutely necessary.

OTHER FORMS OF RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Community groups are the primary context where relational discipleship takes place at Christ Covenant, but they are not the only place where this sort of discipleship occurs.

The Spotted Cow – The Spotted Cow is a twice-a-year gathering where the men of Christ Covenant get together to discuss culture and theology. These gatherings are extremely edifying, and they also provide an opportunity for men to grow in relationship with one another.

The Lydian and Women's Ministry Events – Similar to The Spotted Cow, The Lydian is a twice-a-year gathering for the women of Christ Covenant to discuss culture and theology. Our Women's Ministry also hosts a few other gatherings throughout the year. All of these events are excellent relational discipleship contexts.



Cohorts – Cohorts seek to answer a common problem that often exists within churches—people want to be discipled by an individual, but they don't know how to make that happen or who to approach. With cohorts, we place three or four men or women into a small group with a leader for the purpose of intentional relational discipleship. This group works through one of six tracks that leads participants to read books and craft a discipleship plan. Cohorts meet once a month to discuss readings, provide life updates, and encourage one another in their walks with the Lord.



