



# DGroups

## Overview

Shades exists to send transformed people to influence their world for Christ. We believe small groups offer a vital place where transformation happens. DGroups exist to provide intentional structure for transformational discipleship where we engage in gospel dialogue, transparent friendships, and seeking the lost.

## Why DGroups

John Newton: “A Christian is not of hasty growth, like a mushroom, but rather like the oak, the progress of which is hardly perceptible but in time becomes a deep-rooted tree.”

Robby Gallaty: “Until disciple-making becomes the ministry of the church and not a ministry in the church, we will never see our discipleship efforts impact the world the way Jesus envisioned. When God measures the maturity of a church, he doesn’t count Christians, he weighs them, and the weight is measured by how deeply his teaching has penetrated into a person’s life. Depth is more important than width.”

Eric Geiger: “Transformation only comes through discipleship that is centered on Jesus...The reason Jesus left his disciples on the planet was to make other disciples. The fundamental reason your church exists is to make disciples of Jesus [through the power of the Holy Spirit].”

## Basic Details

- New DGroups launch in September and February.
- Groups consist of a facilitator plus 3-4 people, max.
- Groups are comprised of all men or all women, groups are not mixed gender.
- Groups meet once a week, for an hour and a half.
- Groups meet (1) in a home, (2) off church-campus in non-public place with little distraction, or (3) on church-campus for childcare needs.
- Group participants commit to a year’s worth of content, which can be covered over 52 weeks or three “4-month terms” which allows flexibility in the summer.
- Groups follow the academic year calendar – September to December, February to May.
- Group facilitators meet at the beginning of each term for debriefing and training.

## DGroup Goals

- **Gospel Dialogue** - *Each person has a voice, each person contributes, each experience in life is connected to our belief in the Gospel.*

We are accomplishing this goal when group members are:

- *Applying the gospel to life / recognizing heart-level sins*
- *Self-feeding*

- **Transparent Friendship** - *Each person is known, and makes effort to know others in the group.*

We are accomplishing this goal when group members are:

- *Self-reporting / free from shame in confession*
- *Listening compassionately and correcting graciously*

- **Seeking the Lost** - *Each person takes initiative to build intentional relationships with people in their workplaces or neighborhoods who are far from God so that they may share the Gospel with them before their DGroup finishes.*

We are accomplishing this goal when group members are:

- *Able to share their testimony with many bridges to the gospel in plain language*
- *Have befriended someone far from God and shared the gospel with them at some point (or several points) throughout the year*

## New Believers & DGroups

When someone for whom you've been praying comes to know Jesus for the first time, you should:

1. Continue in your DGroup.
2. Walk alongside your friend using "Seven Commands of Christ" worksheet until they are able to join their own DGroup. You can get this document from Bradley.

## DGroup Trainings

These meetings occur in August and January. Training will cover the nuts-and-bolts of expectations and include discussion about the DGroup covenant. This is also a time to troubleshoot problems, encourage one another, and keep expectations in front of everyone.

## How to Join a DGroup

1. Visit [shades.org/dgroups](http://shades.org/dgroups) and email Bradley Patton.
2. Get to know someone who is in a current DGroup and ask to join their DGroup when it starts.