
NEW GATHERING DYNAMICS

When we dealt with the content of our gatherings, in the lesson called The Gatherings, on the page of Discipleship Groups (watch it again [here](#)), we presented an adapted model of meetings called the Three Thirds. If you haven't watched it yet, I encourage you to watch the short video and read the downloadable PDF under it.

As it was specified there, that model was not supposed to be a strict law, but rather a reference to start holding your gatherings. It provided means to measure the spiritual growth of the disciples in the group and to practice ministering to one another, and encouraged obedience and commitment. These are very important elements for the development of a disciple.

Nevertheless, as in natural families, the growth of the children demands changes in the dynamics of the family life. The teenage children can take on more responsibilities, make their own choices, and sometimes they even earn their own money. In a spiritual family, the maturing of the disciples requires that the challenges increase and that some of the roles change.

THE THREE THIRDS

By now, they are all familiar with the first pattern. That means not necessarily the method, but they actively shepherd and are shepherded, they know how to study Scripture and discern truths from lies, and they are committed to live a life in obedience to the Lord. The goal of the Three Thirds was to equip the disciples into these three areas.

So, what is next? Now we are trying to build the team up to the level of disciple makers, or maybe even an apostolic team. This implies serving others, ministering to other people, and discipling them. This should happen individually and as a group.

You might have already noticed that some of the dynamics of the meetings can be skipped. The relationships and practices among your group are so natural and spontaneous that you don't need to remind them to study, pray, and disciple. Now we are moving further from the organic and into the systematic. How can we protect the organic part, but at the same time potentiate the spiritual growth and fruitfulness of the group?

NEW DYNAMICS

Now we are trying to be goal-oriented. In the former lesson, we spoke of a commitment to our team building, besides prayer and disciple making. This is a suggestion on how you can organize your meetings from this point on.

BIBLE STUDY

Since now the disciples are acquainted and trained in studying the Scriptures, it would be advisable to let them study the Word at home. You can assign them topics or passages of Scripture. Then at the beginning of your gatherings, right after the Lord's Supper, you start asking them to share the new revelations they have received. The inductive approach used in the DBS model will not be necessary anymore.

WEEKLY FOCUS

Another thing you could put into practice, is to focus on a specific field of action for each gathering. Each gathering's focus may vary according to the needs, goals and circumstances of the group you are working with. Nevertheless, the following are suggested areas and dynamics you can focus on with your group when you come together.

FOCUS ON SPIRITUAL GROWTH

When we speak about spiritual growth, we are covering a quite wide field. We speak here of theoretical and practical growth on spiritual gifts, prayer times, skills, character, etc.

FOCUS ON STRATEGY

If your group has reached this point, they are very likely reaching out to new people and developing their disciple-making skills. Therefore, it is important to dedicate one meeting to specifically discuss what they are doing and how they could become more effective.

FOCUS ON ACCOUNTABILITY

Another area you could focus on is growing in holiness. You can facilitate this by creating opportunities for them to open up about their struggles and difficulties. With our current group, we try once a month to separate men from women to be able to talk about issues and disciple one another in specific gender-related roles.

FOCUS ON THE TEAM

A last suggestion is to spend one or two gatherings each month just on team building. This can mean just having fun, hanging out together, eating together, either with the whole group or with different families each time. It is important to develop and deepen the friendship through quantity of time, and not only quality.

FOCUS ON CONTACTS

As an extra possibility, you could as well organize a fun meeting where contacts of your group and of yourself can be invited. Non born-again contacts, seekers, can be easily encouraged by meeting other disciples beside the one they are having contact with.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

Never lose focus of the needs and the goals of your team. Those are priority, and you use methods and approaches of discipleship to help them grow. Never do the contrary: to use their skills and growth to serve your system or method.