

# CORE Groups: A Primer

*Launching your CORE Group*

## Overview

### What is a CORE Group?

A CORE group is 3-4 people, gender-specific that will meet regularly for the purpose of accountability, discipleship, encouragement, and cultivation of a lifestyle of apprenticeship to Jesus.

### How should CORE groups meet?

Each CORE group will choose the method and frequency (somewhere between daily and weekly) for themselves. The key here is *commitment*. We believe each person has incredible strengths, gifts, and words to bring to the table. We are asking for each person to commit to using these for the sake of each other, to commit to each other's growth in Christ by showing up and allowing our spirit, strengthened and guided by The Holy Spirit, to love and strengthen our fellow brothers and sisters.

Find a common rhythm of life with what the people in your group are already doing (coffee, exercise, walking, hiking, etc.) Your priority is the most substantial rhythm, not the most convenient meeting time. Those with kids, be sure to make sure spouses are creating time for each other by covering kids.

### How should we use this primer?

This primer is designed to help new CORE groups get off the ground. Take each part, one by one, by having someone (1) read the included Scripture, (2) read the overview, (3) everyone asks and answers the attached questions. The following 5 parts can be done in as little as one session, or over the course of multiple sessions.

### Before you begin...

Read the primer overview aloud on your first session to layout the framework and expectations.

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## Part 1 → Sharing Stories

Have each person share their story (roughly 5-15min per person). If you are a Christian, Jesus is the hero, so that should be reflected in your story! This is a helpful outline for sharing your story, if you've never done this before:

**Before** → How your life looked before you became a Christian; include how you became aware of your need for Christ. Don't spend too much time here, the focus should be on who we are now, not who we

once were.

**How** → How you specifically became a Christian; communicate the gospel clearly and briefly. Include things like: the fact and penalty of sin, and Jesus' payment for sin; the requirement to repent and trust Jesus personally; the steps you took to invite Christ into your life (could have been a prayer of commitment, etc.).

**After** → How Jesus changed your life; relate back to the areas you struggled with before conversion.

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## Part 2 → Apprentices of Jesus

Our calling is not to simply become “Christians” but to become *apprentices of Jesus*

*Mark 8v34–35*

*[34] And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [35] For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. (ESV)*

To be an apprentice of Jesus, is to orient your life around three primary goals:

**#1 Be with Jesus** → First and most important goal, to spend all our time with him. That is the baseline for all who would follow Jesus. The best part of following Jesus, is Jesus.

**#2 Become like Jesus** → Out of that place of abiding in him, the goal is to become like Jesus. This might have been called sanctification, or spiritual formation, depending on your heritage, or Paul would say growing in Christ or growing in maturity.

**#3 Do what Jesus did** → The goal is NOT that you know a lot about Jesus or the bible, although that's great, the goal is that you yourself would become the kind of person that is with Jesus, becoming like and *actually doing the things he did*. Or, to reframe an old cliché, what would Jesus do if he were me (my person, personality, life, experiences, context, etc.)

Everything else should flow from that. Instead of placing our discipleship on a list waiting to be checked off, we apply our discipleship to all of life. It is how we do everything on the list and off, it's how we live.

### Discussion questions:

- How does this challenge your typical or inherited view of “Christianity?”
  - Of the three aspects of being an apprentice of Jesus, which one comes most easily? Which one comes hardest? Why do you think that is?
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*What follows are the three elements of every CORE Groups meeting:*

## **Part 3 → Confession**

**We are sharing our struggles and sin, victories and praise**

***Galatians 6v2***

***[2] Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (ESV)***

True heart change, trust, and knowing each other can not happen without vulnerability. We believe each soul was created with a need to be known and loved. Here we go beyond the behavior and confess and share the heart posture, false beliefs and sinful desires behind our behavior. We challenge the lie “if anyone really knew me no one would love me.”, and believe our brothers and sisters in Christ will embrace and rejoice with our confession. We bring dark things to light and in doing so, we rob them of their power over us. We, together, place them at the feet of Jesus.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Why is confession so awkward for us?
  - Why might it be important to share struggles *and* wins?
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## **Part 3 → Reading**

**We are listening together to the truth of Jesus from His word and trusting the Scriptures for transformation**

***2 Timothy 3v16–17***

***[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (ESV)***

We build each up with the truth of God’s word. God is so good to us, it’s hard to believe sometimes. Having those we know and trust speak the truth of God’s word into our hearts, souls and mind are like streams of living water pouring into us.

We build each other up in love with the Scriptures; we speak life, faith, love, identity, and truth over each other. We remind each other the amazing truths of God, us and His goodness. We fight for each other in the face of unbelief, doubt, and fear.

The primary, ongoing “curriculum” for CORE groups is simply what you’re reading together in Scripture.

### **Discussion questions:**

- Why is Scripture a crucial facet of intentional discipleship (dig beyond surface answers!)
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## **Part 4 → Encouragement**

**We are offering prayer, wisdom, and courage for the days ahead**

*Hebrews 10v24–25*

***[24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, [25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (ESV)***

We pray for courage and faith in each other's lives. We pray for a realization and reliance on the Spirit's leading. We pray against the voice of the enemy. We pray for those in our lives who do not know Him. We pray for strength to apply the heart posture and action needed to live out the love of Christ in our unique situations.

Prayer is our life source to Christ, in a community dedicated to each other and to Him, the power of prayer can not be overstated.

### **Discussion questions:**

- What does it mean to “speak courage” into one another?
  - Why is prayer an important part of discipleship?
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## **What’s next?**

After working through this primer, we recommend going through [Gospel Fluency by Jeff Vanderstelt](#), reading one chapter before each meetup. After working through Gospel Fluency, your life and personal Scripture reading become the “curriculum.”