

How Grace Church Views Discipleship

A Few Key Ideas

- We want everything we do as a church to be aimed at equipping and motivating our members to get involved in another person's life and help them grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - » This is what we need to be "the best" at; everything else should be "good enough" so that it is not a distraction and serves the purpose of discipleship.
- If an event or activity doesn't directly encourage life-on-life discipleship, we want to avoid it if possible.
- We believe it is way more important to become compelling people than it is to create compelling experiences or events (1 Thessalonians 1:3).
 - » For example, the best way to relieve injustice and suffering is to get involved in a real person's life, meet their needs, and help them grow in Christ.
- Membership is about responsibility. You commit to take responsibility for the church and for your own soul. You agree to be in biblical community, to serve, and to give financially. You are also agreeing to submit to the care and discipline of the church.
- While we value worship and preaching, what happens during the week in and through the lives of our volunteers and leaders is more important than what happens during our worship services.
- Discipleship and shepherding is hand-to-hand combat. Our members carry real weight and get messy with people (Galatians 6: 1-2).
- Culture trumps strategy; if we create a culture with the expectation of life-change and transformation, everything else is easier.
- Model being emotionally available and personally vulnerable; then train others to do the same.
- The leadership of Grace will give an account to Jesus for how we shepherd those under our care (Hebrews 13:17). For us, it is our members.
- We require someone to be a member before joining a community group. Having group members who are on the same page creates a safer and more strategic place for effective discipleship.
- We expect every member to go through our primary gender studies within their first year.
- We intentionally don't solve all the problems in our church with staff leadership or money; we depend on volunteers and leaders to figure it out and make it happen. Ministry belongs to all of us, not just staff.
- We encourage people to act and solve problems; do something now and, if necessary, we'll fix it later.
- Honesty among leaders is the foundation for honesty in the church. Deal with sin, mistakes, tensions, or conflicts quickly and thoroughly; don't play politics, or just try to get along.
- We have a teaching team with multiple voices, a leadership team (with no Senior Pastor), and governing elders in order to tangibly demonstrate that our allegiance is to Christ alone.
- We launch multiple congregations to drive discipleship into local communities and smaller venues. This increases engagement, ownership, and discipleship. It is much easier to organize discipleship among 400 people than it is among 3,000.
 - » It is also less expensive to use smaller venues, especially to renovate and reuse existing facilities, than it is to build a single large facility.
- We use video to distribute our teaching so we can leverage the teaching gifts of our teaching team and enable pastors and staff to focus on equipping our leaders and volunteers to make disciples.