

How Grace Church Views Discipleship

A Few Key Ideas

- Everything we do as a church is 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 the only thing we need to be “the best” at; everything else needs to be done “good enough” so that it is not a distraction and serves this purpose.
- If an event or activity doesn't directly encourage life-on-life discipleship, we want to avoid doing it if possible.
- In our context, discipleship is best kickstarted not by ever-increasing knowledge or spiritual experiences, but rather disruption.
 - » So we believe in disruptive discipleship, that people live out the gospel most when they take a disruptive step—like towards an honest and vulnerable relationship, to sacrifice and suffer for another, or to risk on behalf of Christ and his mission.
- We will actually give an account to Jesus for how we shepherded those under our care (Hebrews 13:17); for us, it is our members.
 - » Every member in our church has a responsible pastor who is ultimately accountable for them.
- We believe it is way more important to become compelling people than it is to create compelling experiences.
- Culture trumps strategy; create a culture of the expectation of life change and transformation, and all of our discipleship efforts become easier.
- We believe avoiding relying on one key leader or one teaching voice tangibly demonstrates that we are about allegiance to Christ and focusing on discipleship.
- What happens during the week in the lives of our members is way more important than what happens during our worship services.
- Model being emotionally available and personally vulnerable; then train others to do the same.
- Discipleship and shepherding is hand-to-hand combat. Expect leaders and volunteers to carry real weight and get messy with people.
- We require membership before joining a community group because we believe this results in deeper discipleship among our people by creating a safer and more strategic place for that to happen.
- We expect every member of our church to go through our primary gender studies within the first year. This helps get us all on the same page.
- Membership at Grace is about responsibility. You are committing to take responsibility for the church and responsibility for your own soul. You are also agreeing to submit to the care and discipline of the church.
- We intentionally don't solve all the problems in our church with staff leadership or money; we believe more discipleship takes place when volunteers and leaders figure it out and make it happen.
- 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.
 - » This is also good stewardship. It is 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 that we can leverage the teaching gifts of our teaching team and free up campus pastors and staff on the campuses to do the work of equipping our leaders and volunteers to make disciples.
- God uses conflict and tension as a tool for transformation. People will seek to relieve tension, discomfort, or suffering before God has done everything he wants to do. We want to shepherd tension wisely to allow people to stay in it until they deal with root issues. Relieving it prematurely only brings more pain later.