

A Note to Leaders:

This series is designed to help you *JumpStart* deeper connection and spiritual growth in your group! We know that groups are at a variety of phases in their journey, so use discernment in how to best implement this tool. Our desire is to equip and empower you to be the best gauge for what your group needs.

As you use *JumpStart*, be sure to watch the leader videos provided first, as they set up the themes (“Why Groups?,” “Be Known?,” “Get Real,” “Let’s Grow”) and give important information for you to carry into the discussion. Then, use the accompanying guide to help you reinforce these themes.

As always, be prepared! Preview the entire series prior to starting to best know where you’re going. The outline format is laid out with simple directives for you to follow including: **SAY** (things for you to communicate/or read out loud), **READ** (Scripture to read as a group), **ASK** (questions for the group), **DO** (activities or exercises to lead your group through). Feel free to follow exactly what is provided or expound at your comfort level. The more you own this content the better received it will be by your group!

If your group is newly launched, you want to be aware of the unique dynamics there and spend a little more time with some casual ice breaker questions to get people connected (i.e. *“How did you first get connected to Traders Point?” “As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up & why?” “If you won a million dollars what would you buy for yourself?” “What has been your favorite road trip or vacation?” “If you could do one thing for the rest of your life, without having to worry about money, what would it be & why?”*).

We recommend that you spend the majority of your group time with the provided outlines. Depending on time, you may wish to also highlight a question or two from the week’s sermon study guide.

We know how important it is to get a great start that can propel you throughout the year. Don’t hesitate to reach out to a Groups Team member with any questions. Have fun and grow deep!

JumpStart Session 1: “Why Groups” Leader Guide

***Group Leaders:** *New groups, be sure to spend ample time getting to know each other and build comfort. Use icebreakers in “A Note to Leaders.”*

SAY: We’re all here to grow to be more like Jesus. Even though we’re all from different backgrounds and have different stories, we’re all here for the same goal: to grow to be more like Jesus.

One of our values as a church is Intentional Discipleship: that we’ll grow deep wells through study, prayer, and relationships. The biggest way this is lived out as a church is through groups. No matter where you are in your faith, sharing life with other believers who can help us grow more and more like Jesus is what he calls all of us into.

Today will be all about setting the foundation for our time together. So, we’re going to dig into some Scripture, have some conversation, and talk through expectations of what we hope to get out of this group and from each other!

READ: As a group, read Acts 9:1-19 together. Break it up into sections and have a few people jump in to read it out loud.

ASK:

- What stands out to you about this encounter? What is significant about Paul immediately being placed in community as soon as he starts following Jesus?
- Has that been your faith journey—have you lived your life of faith alongside other believers, or have you tried to go at it alone?
- Discipleship is about spiritually reproducing yourself in the life of another. Tell us about someone who has served as a discipling influence in your life who has helped you become more like Jesus. What specifically did they do?
- What does it look like in your daily life to grow to be like Jesus?

DO: As a group, talk about and set 3-4 rules and guidelines for your group time so that you can all get after this disciple making goal together. (Leaders: refer to “Group Member Agreement” PDF found at www.tpcc.org/groupleaders).

JumpStart Session 2: “Be Known” Leader Guide

***Group Leaders:** Lead with vulnerability as you tell your story. Practice sharing in 5 min or less to set a good example for the group. Group members will look to you as an example of how to share well. Being known takes intentionality, consistency, and time. Encourage your group to be patient, yet persistent when it comes to getting to know one another.

SAY: This session is about being known. We see throughout the Gospels that Jesus not only knew His disciples (their backgrounds, strengths, weaknesses, and personalities), but allowed Himself to be known by them. We'll talk today about the importance of knowing one another and the role this plays in discipleship.

READ: Take a moment to read John 1:43-49. Discuss Nathanael's initial reaction to Jesus and how it changes. (*i.e. Nathanael is told about Jesus from a friend named Philip, Nathanael bypasses the important details and hones in on one thing - Nazareth. He clearly has preconceived notions based on where Jesus is from. This ultimately changes after meeting Jesus personally.*)

ASK:

- What is the difference between knowing *about* someone and knowing them?
- How does this allow us to help each other grow in our faith?
- What fears keep us from being known?

DO: Take a moment to share your stories in 5-7 minutes. Include places, people, and events that have shaped you into who you are:

- Where are you from/Where have you lived/Describe your family?
- What significant events took place that impacted who you are?

DO: Take time to pray about opening up and being known. Thank God for what was shared and the opportunity to continue investing in each other's story.

***Group Leaders:** You may not have had ample time to hear everyone's story; add another session for this if needed or continue into next session.

JumpStart Session 3: “Get Real” Leader Guide

SAY: True freedom is found when we find genuine relationships where we are fully known, fully loved, and accepted. Having relationships with people in which you can be fully known and accepted is getting harder and harder to come by in the busyness and pace at which most of us live our lives. Our goal as a group is that this would become a safe and trusting place where each of us can be fully known, fully loved, and accepted by each other.

ASK:

- What does it mean to you to “get real?”
- What is your role in helping this group get real?
- Has anyone here ever been in a relationship where you are fully known, fully loved, and accepted? If so, how did you get to that point with that person?
- When you hear the words “get real,” what does that do internally to you? How does that hit you? What is hard about getting real?

READ: Take a moment to read through John 4:1-38.

ASK:

- How does this interaction between Jesus and the woman show that His desire was to get real?
- What was the impact on the woman?

DO:

- Individually do a “get real goals” activity. Spend some time individually writing down the things in your life that you need to get real with (have paper handy and/or have them make a note on their phone). Don't share them with anyone in the group, but instead write them down and commit to praying about them moving forward.
- See if anyone is willing to share something in your past that at the time was really hard, something you never thought you would ever get through, but you were able to?
- Pray together for the boldness and courage to eventually get real with those in the group.

JumpStart Session 4: “Let’s Grow” Leader Guide

***Group Leaders:** For a refresher on how to further implement the following, review training video #3, “Leading the Discussion” at www.tpcc.org/groupleaders

SAY: Over these past few weeks we have spent time working to build deeper relationships with one another and clarify that we gather together to grow as disciples. Today we want to talk about “how” we do that. We use the sermon study and Daily Bible Reading (www.tpcc.org/daily-bible-reading/) as tools that help us process Scripture and our weekly teaching. Our goal is to create space here in group where we can really grow.

READ: Have the group read Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:24-29(NIV) that concludes His incredible Sermon on the Mount.

ASK:

- Verse 24 requires two things of us, what are they? (Hint: **Listen** to His words and **Respond** by putting them into practice)
- What happens when we listen to His words but fail to put them into practice? Can you give an example from Scripture or personally when that happened?
- In what ways do you hear from God? (i.e. reading Scripture, prayer, silence, nature, from other believers, not sure yet, etc...)
- If you had to place yourself somewhere between (lo)1-10(hi) on how well you hear God, what would you say? What reasons kept you from choosing number that was higher and one that was lower? (Leader, record number given for each member and make a note to ask again in January and celebrate progress!)

SAY: We all hear God in a variety of ways and varying levels. We want to work to improve that for each of us as we grow together. One way we will do that is by working to answer the questions, “What is God saying to me through His word?” and “How and when am I going to respond?”

DO: Give it a shot! Take a main text and a key question or two from this week’s sermon study and spend some time there as a group. Then, lead them in the pattern of how to engage those two questions and provide accountability (see link above for further help in this).