



Discipleship Bands Training

Getting the Band Together

by Eric Chiam

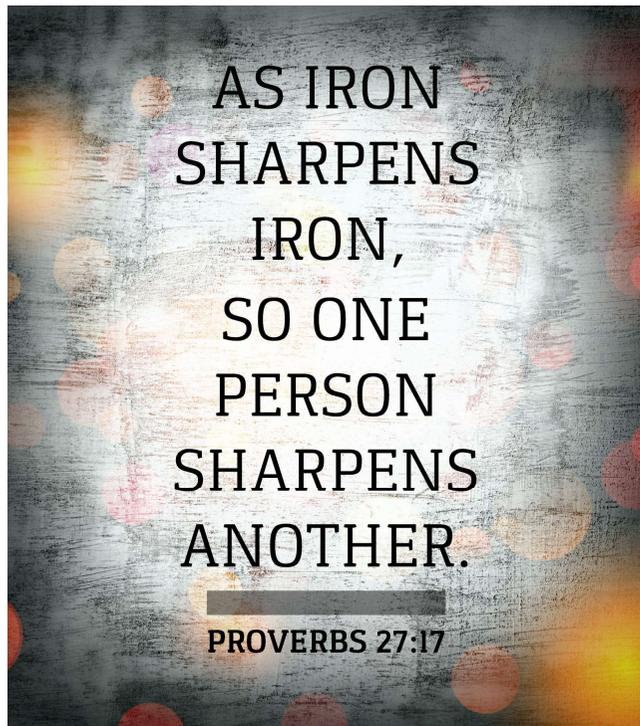
Friday, 12 August 2022, Plaza Hall

Wesley Methodist Church

A large, vibrant yellow sunflower with a dark brown center, positioned on the left side of the slide.

Growing Groups that Bear Lasting Fruit

What is a DISCIPLESHIP BAND?



A “Discipleship Band” is a group of three or four people, who meet over a meal, to share and pray together to become the love of God for one another and the world.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

“...wanted some means of closer union; they wanted to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still ‘easily beset’ them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them...

In compliance with their desire, I divided them into smaller companies; putting the married or single men, and married or single women together.”

(John Wesley, Works, 9:266-67)

- John Wesley formed the ***Band Meeting***.
- Each band was a **homogenous** grouping by gender, and marital status.
- Members would **share deeply** and **confess** to one another.
- Bands included **ruthless honesty** and **frank openness**.
- Members sought to improve their attitudes, emotions, feelings, intentions, and affections.

SIMPLE FRAMEWORK

means
“makan” and
in person... 😊

...openly about life,
challenges, pains, joys,
etc.. to encourage and
be accountable to one
another in our walk
with God

...and commit
to watch over
one another
in love

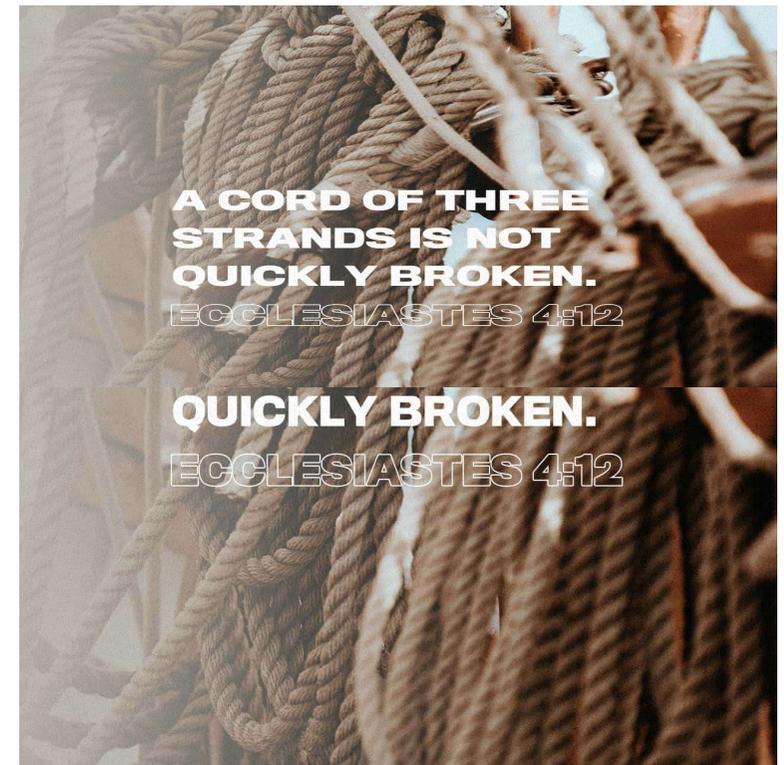
EAT . SHARE . PRAY



ACCOUNTABILITY

...is a critical component to the Discipleship Band:

- Accountability provides so much spiritual growth because it allows for a **safe place** for us to be honest, confess our sins, celebrate our victories, pray for one another, and share what we are learning.
- Together we process what God is doing in our lives. We wrestle with the Scripture and how to apply it to our lives. We are not alone on the journey.
- Discipleship Band relationships are developed over time. As **trust grows**, the **connection deepens**, and it provides a tool for spiritual growth.
- Take it slow and keep the focus on inspiring one another towards being more like Jesus.



BAND MEETING DETAILS

1.	Size:	3 or 4* persons
2.	Format:	In person over a meal.
3.	Makeup:	Same gender.
4.	Duration:	2 hours approx.
5.	Frequency:	Once a month (at least)
6.	Time frame:	6 months followed by review.

Note:

- This is not cast in stone; the goal is to ensure consistency in meetings.
- Meetings can be conducted anywhere *conducive* to the purpose: a home, coffee shop, cafe or restaurant.
- Preference is for a quiet place, bearing in mind that you will be praying together too.

** Groups over 4 persons are not encouraged as the dynamics are inconducive for heartfelt personal discussions.*



DISCIPLESHIP BAND FORMATION PROCESS

(Part 1)



- This is purely voluntary, but all are **encouraged** to *Band*.
- Bands are **open to all** who are interested to participate.

2 Ways to do this:

1. Do It Yourself (DIY) (Outside a Small Group)

- Prayerfully consider who you could band with.
- Important to find someone who has a shared desire of wanting to “sharpen” others and be “sharpened” in their pursuit of Christ-likeness.

2. A/SGL Assistance (Within a Small Group)

- Members can consult with the A/SGL on persons they could band with. The A/SGLs will advise accordingly, but it is up to the member to initiate the contact.

DISCIPLESHIP BAND FORMATION PROCESS

(Part 2)



**1. Discipleship Band is formed
(3 to 4 pax)**

Remembering the
*Qualities of a
Coordinator* mentioned
in "Biblical Basis"

2. Appoint a Coordinator

- Help coordinate the life of the DB.
- Attend Coordinator review sessions.

3. Register the Discipleship Band
<https://wesley.sg/dbandregister>

Ideal Qualities of a Coordinator

- **R**eceives with Attentive Listening
- **E**mulates Christ
- **S**hapes Community with Trust and Acceptance
- **T**houghtful and Respectful
- **O**penly Shares Struggles and Successes
- **R**edemptive Towards People
- **E**mpathetic



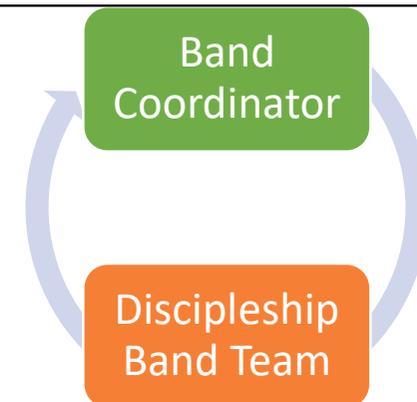
DISCIPLESHIP BAND REVIEW PROCESS

There are **2 reviews** that will be conducted:

1. Discipleship Band **Coordinator** Review

The Discipleship Band Team (DBT) will conduct review sessions with Band Coordinators.

Purpose: To support and assist the Coordinators. And for the DBT to understand what is working well or not.



2. Discipleship **Band** Review

Band Coordinators will hold a review with their members every 6 months to understand how everyone is feeling about the group. Members may decide to leave or remain for the next 6 months.

Purpose: To openly discuss if things are working out within their DB.



KEY PRACTICES OF BAND MEETINGS

1. Listen (James 1:19)

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry”



KEY PRACTICES OF BAND MEETINGS

2. Share (1 Corinthians 1:8-11)

“He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought...”



KEY PRACTICES OF BAND MEETINGS

3. Confidentiality (Proverbs 11:13)

“A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.”

CONFIDENTIAL



THE SEVEN COMMITMENTS – PART 1

ADAPTED FROM “DISCIPLESHIP BANDS – A PRACTICAL FIELD GUIDE” (PP.24)



The Seven Commitments are the **foundational rules of engagement** for how band members should respect and honor each other.



We suggest reading the Seven Commitments at the **start** of each meeting for the first sessions, and then revisiting them at least monthly from then on.

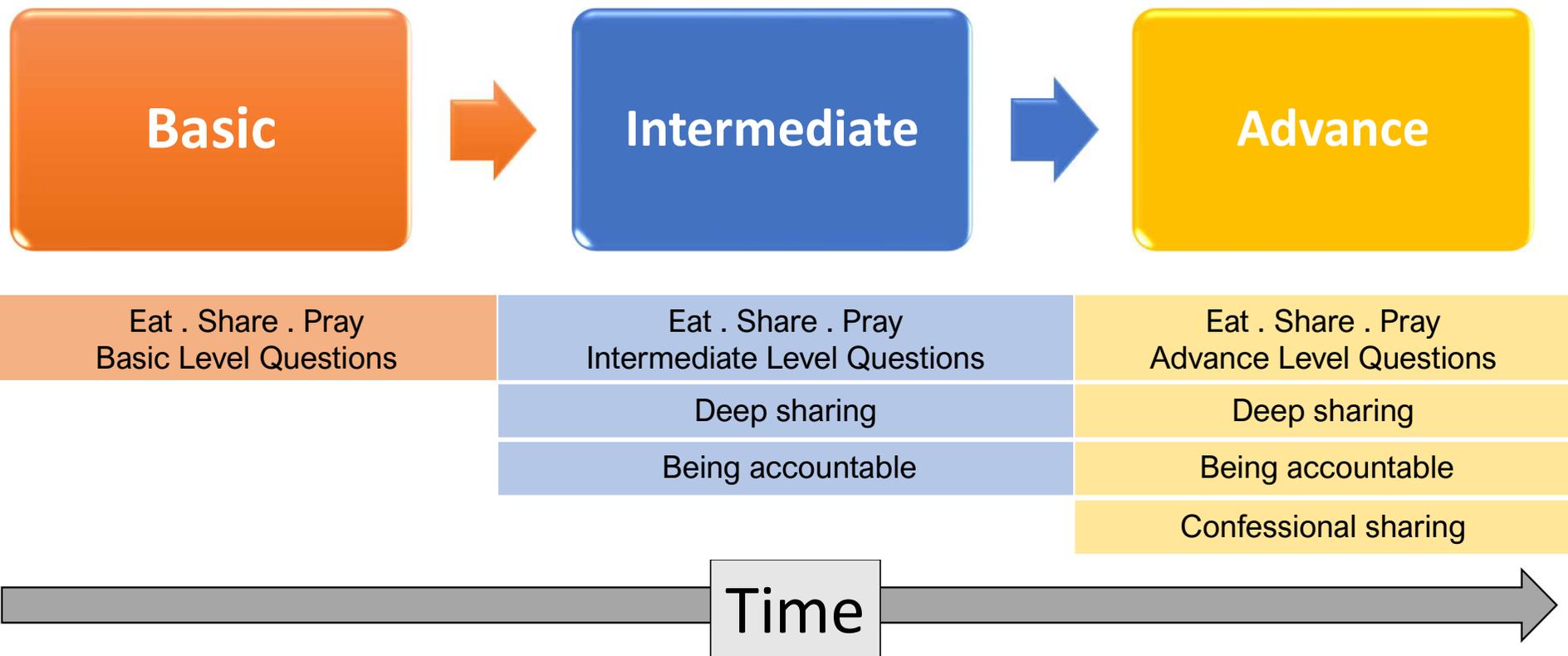
THE SEVEN COMMITMENTS – PART 2

ADAPTED FROM “DISCIPLESHIP BANDS” (PP.24)

- 1. Respect the clock.** You have 15–20 minutes to share. Please do your best to stick to that time frame.
- 2. Challenge by choice.** You have permission to skip a question at any time. For example, you can say, “I don’t have anything on question 4 this week.”
- 3. No cross-talk.** When someone is sharing, don’t give advice or interrupt.
- 4. One Counselor (come Holy Spirit)** When someone is sharing, listen deeply and pay attention to how the Holy Spirit might prompt you to pray.
- 5. Comfort with Empathy.** Hold space for others with open hearts. Rather than offering pity or sympathy, show up and tune in—bless, encourage, and build up.
- 6. Community of grace.** When someone confesses sin, pardon by saying, “In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.” If someone shares a secret, thank them for their courage and never judge. No condemnation.
- 7. Strictly confidential.** Never share another person’s story, struggles, successes, sins, or secrets outside the group.

DISCIPLESHIP BAND LEVELS

...because not everyone is ready to dive right in...



Growing Groups that Bear Lasting Fruit

WHAT TO DO WHEN WE MEET?

- Simple structure and format
- Remember this is a relationship within the 3 or 4 members.
- It should not be scripted but include some basic components such as: a meal, spiritual conversations and prayer. Eat / Share / Pray.

Initial Meeting

1. Opening prayer
2. Read the 7 Commitments
3. Discuss and agree upon timeframe, ground rules, goals/hopes
 - If there are specific areas that each person is seeking accountability in (i.e.. spiritual disciplines, finances, relationships, etc.) take note and make sure to hit those areas when you meet.
4. *Write everything down and create a covenant agreement for each member to sign. (Optional)*
5. Pray together and commit yourselves to God and one another to growing in Christlikeness.

Subsequent Meetings

1. Opening prayer
2. Seek to answer the following questions: “How is your walk with God?”
 - a) for a list of more specific questions, you might ask at each meeting, see the next slide on suggested Meeting Questions.
 - b) After each person answers a question, be slow to correct or offer advice unless they immediately ask for it or you have preexisting relationship and comfortability, and it will be received well.
 - c) Acknowledge any areas of failure and seek to encourage one another.
3. Fix time for the next meeting.
4. Pray for each other
5. Continue to communicate (text, call etc.) and encourage one another in between meetings.

MEETING QUESTIONS (SUGGESTED)



(B)asic

1. Are you finding consistency in your daily quiet time with God? (B)
2. How did you do with your reading this week? (B)
3. What blessings are you grateful for today? (B)
4. How have you experienced God in your life this week? (B)
5. What is God teaching you? (B)
6. Where are you growing in the fruit of the Spirit? (B)
7. What worries or other issues are you currently facing? (B&I)
8. Have you been faithful in your church attendance and participation? (I)
9. What steps of faith are you taking in obedience to Christ? (I)
10. Did I express a forgiving attitude toward others? (I)
11. Do I grumble and complain constantly? (I)
12. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful? (I)
13. Have your words and attitude reflected Christ this week? (I)
14. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I going to do about it? (I)
15. How are you responding to His prompting? (I)
16. What temptations have you met with? (I)
17. Was I honorable in my financial dealings? (A)
18. What have you held back from God that you need to surrender? (A)
19. Are there areas of your life that are hindering spiritual growth? (A)
20. Is there anything you need to surrender to God? (A)
21. Do you have a need to confess any sin? (A)

Bands may flow with the questions as the Lord leads. Do remember that your meetings are dynamic, and the questions may **move either way**: advance to basic or vice versa.

(I)ntermediate

(A)dvance



Growing Groups that Bear Lasting Fruit

FAQS



1. Must a Discipleship Band meeting be face-to-face?

The key is not so much face-to-face as it is person-to-person. Face-to-face is, of course, the gold standard. However, Bands may meet by phone or over video conference also. That said, it is strongly recommended to meet in person over a meal. As we eat together, we slow down, we leave our schedules behind and welcome one another. Nothing can replace in person meetings – you get to listen and observe nonverbals of one another in the flesh. Communication is clearer, concise and there is undivided attention, which allows for trust to be better fostered.

2. What if I am not comfortable going this deep?

We recommend that you view the questions as an aid to your sharing time—it is not required that each person answer all the questions each time that you meet. We find it usually requires someone in the group being willing to go first to be vulnerable which will open up the permission in the others to go there as well.

3. Is it ok if I do not want to be part of the Discipleship Band?

Yes. This is purely voluntary, and no one should feel compelled. Again, one must bear in mind the main purpose of what the Discipleship Band serves to achieve – to provide a safe space for a group of believers to journey together in Christ by affirming, encouraging and guiding one another.

4. Must all members in a Band be from the same gender? Why can't we have mixed gender groups?

We recommend that the members of each Band be of the same gender. This allows for a safe space to be created whereby members can share deeply and authentically about gender-sensitive issues. (i.e. regarding relations, addictions, sex or other similarly sensitive issues).

5. Can we “Band” with members from other SGs and/or outside of Wesley MC?

Yes, they may. We understand that some members may have existing spiritual friendships (Christian friendships) externally outside of the church. The key importance is that they meet regularly and abide with the format and spirit of the Band meetings.

