DEFINE:

WHO
Groups of 3 men or 3 women who gather together and help each other grow. Typically, there is a leader, a “first among equals” of a Gospel DNA Group who is intentionally gathering the group and pouring into others but there is always mutual submission and every Christian has the authority to speak truth in love to another Christian. Each member of the Gospel DNA Group is responsible for the group to meet and to walk life with those in the group. It works best if a Gospel DNA group consists of people from the same Life Community.

WHAT
A group formed around the Gospel to Disciple (help each other learn) each other and train each other in how to follow Jesus and be formed in the Gospel. This group will also Nurture, care, and encourage each other to offer strength for the trials and deep issues of life. Accountability is essential to growth as well as living an intentional life. We all need to be encouraged and coached in what next steps to take and how to take those steps.

- Gospel = The saving power of God. This is the foundation.
- Discipleship = submitting one’s whole life to Jesus and following him.
- Nurturing = caring for one another and walking out the journey in community
- Accountability = asking certain questions to go deep and help each other grow as disciples and be shaped by the Gospel.

This group will go deep and will involve being challenged. If weeks pass and we have not been challenged, openly expressed our sin, or been drawn out of our comfort zone then we are not digging deep enough.

A Gospel DNA Group is not: a passive hangout, a gossip or complaining session, a time for one to lecture others, or a self-focused opportunity to share about how hard life is,

WHERE
A group can meet wherever they like. It may be a good idea to change locations and sometimes find a quiet private place and other times go out and be in the midst of those who are not followers of Jesus. At times groups may need to meet early in the morning or late at night and skype could be helpful.

WHEN
A group should meet regularly so as to know each other and walk with each other. Each group’s schedule is different and how often a group meets could depend on seasons of life and how often they see each other outside of a Gospel DNA mtg.

We encourage intentionally meeting weekly or bi-weekly.

WHY
Discipleship is intentional and takes place within community. We all need to grow as disciples and be shaped by the Gospel as we identify unbelief and repent of sin which then leads to behavioural change. We don’t always realize our sin on our own and we are far too individalistic. Gospel DNA Groups will
help us grow in the Gospel and in community which will help us grow in mission. We need Gospel DNA Groups because we are sinners.

IMPORTANT FOUNDATIONAL THOUGHTS:

CONFIDENTIALITY:
As you grow together, confidentiality will be a key component of the relationship. You are encouraged to take whatever you learn about yourself through this process and share it with as many people as possible. What you learn about others, however, is private information. While anyone can give permission for their info to be shared at any time, the general rule of thumb is to honor the confidentiality of the group as you learn more about each other. The exception to this is if an issue arises that requires a more trained perspective (serious sin, addiction issues, abuse, etc.). In that case, please consult your Life Community leader or local elder for more assistance.

THE MISSION: MAKE DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES
Among the last things Jesus said to his followers were these words:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

Those who follow Jesus as his disciples don’t live merely for their own comfort. Jesus’ disciples seek to make disciples who make disciples. There is an expectation of multiplication in Jesus’ parting instruction. Therefore, the hope for every DNA group is that each participant would one day lead another group. The timeline will vary from group to group, but Gospel DNA was developed with this goal clearly in mind.

GETTING STARTED:
HOW TO START?
Gospel DNA Groups are formed in conjunction with a Life Community Leader or Church Elder. Often a group will start with a Life Community leader meeting with two others but can also start with a different leader who desires to grow in community and to disciple others taking initiative. Typically, one will serve by leading a Gospel DNA Group after participating in a Gospel DNA Group first.

If you would like to be a part of a Gospel DNA Group please express that desire to a Life Community Leader.

INITIAL MEETINGS:
• First Phase (1-3 mtg.’s): Discuss the 4 G’s and share each other’s stories. Share current struggles, background, and where you need to believe the Gospel. Identify in each other where the saving power of God needs to work. The first few initial meetings should be longer (2hrs) so you can dive in and get acquainted.
• Second Phase (5-7 mtg.’s): Discuss through 4TB topics. Walk through one “T” and a time and help each other grow and create next steps. This will involve: creating schedules, syncing calendars, making to-do lists and budgets, as well as sharing specific accountability questions.
• Third Phase (18 mtg.’s): Work through the Gospel DNA workbook.
• Fourth Phase: multiply out and disciple others.

ASPECTS OF A MTG.
• Prayer
• Checking in. How are we doing?
• Walking through material
• Asking specific questions
• Creating next steps (encouraged that each person makes notes on next steps so that there can be accountability OR maybe someone writes down next steps in their iphone and emails out the notes).

Note: it is important and respectful to turn off cell phones when meeting and also at the start of the meeting discuss a timeline. Based on the timeline it is important to ensure that each individual has time to share and this may involve someone who facilitates the meeting and kindly interrupts if discussion goes off track or someone starts to control the dialogue.

FURTHER IDEAS TO EXPLORE
IMPORTANCE OF ASKING QUESTIONS - DON’T BE THE TEACHER
Sometimes one will feel the desire to help someone and the only thing that comes to mind is to tell them advice or exhort them in what to do. Other times, we have an idea for someone or a way to help and we really want to be the one who speaks and acts as the teacher. Both are lacking humility and the wisdom and maturity of one who asks questions.

If someone is struggling with financial management we could say kindly, harshly, in a blunt way or in a long-winded way that they should make a budget. Or, we could ask “have you ever considered having a monthly budget?” “Do you think a monthly budget would assist you in handling finances?” Why or why not?” “What do you think would be a good next step?”

Asking questions allows the one who needs to grow to express their thoughts. This helps so one can see their unbelief or where there issue lies and it also leads to them making a decision. People are far more committed to their decisions when they have made them. It is easy to give advice and talk lots but that isn’t always the most helpful so in your Gospel DNA Groups be careful to not become the teacher and instead ask good questions.

CELEBRATE AND ENCOURAGE:
The members of ones DNA should be the greatest encouragers in ones life. They should also take initiative to get others in the community to celebrate. Graduation, birthdays, anniversaries, milestones - these are all opportunities for celebration and a DNA group should be are the center of making that happen.

CONFRONT AND EXHORT:
The DNA group is the place for concerns to be addressed and sin confronted. If there is something about someone else in the group that has bothered you or if you have seen what possibly is a wrong attitude then it is our responsibility to confront in a gracious and loving way. If we see a sinful attitude or we notice what could be unbelief then we need to ask the person about that. The Gospel may need to be spoken to them and if we don’t want to speak up because of fear then we need the Gospel spoken to us as well. Things should not be swept under the rug. Honesty, openness, exhortation, and repentance these are all elements that should regularly be a part of DNA meetings.

WORKING THROUGH THE FOUR T’S (T4B)
Time - Treasure - Talent - Temptations - Basic Sins

T4B offers a framework where discussion will occur and areas of one’s life will be seen where the Gospel (the saving power of Jesus) still needs to transform. Walking through the 4T’s is supposed to open up areas where we can speak the 4 G’s. We must be careful as we discuss to focus on the belief and the heart not the behavior and risk becoming pharisaic legalists. It is all about the gospel.

Time:
Big Idea = how does the Gospel impact your time and schedule.
**Concrete Expression** = creating schedules so there is organization, intentionality, and discipline. Then sync these calendars to be able to hold each other accountable and also to know when the others are open to share life.

**Treasure:**
**Big Idea** = Money and our stuff is a huge idol and obstacle for the gospel. About 25% of Jesus’ teaching was related to stewardship. We need to take this seriously. Culture has valued individualism and materialism (a deadly combo) but the gospel is about community and generous stewardship. DNA Groups talk about how the gospel impacts one’s treasures and decisions in regards to finances and help bring accountability and wisdom to decisions and goals.
**Concrete Expression** = Helping make budgets and financial goals. Sharing Financial statements and talking through generosity goals and large purchases and budgets.

**Talents:**
**Big Idea** = How does the gospel impact our goals, use of our gifts, and what we are working towards? Are the goals of our life shaped by the Gospel and God’s desires?
**Concrete Expression** = Create goal lists and to-do lists. Sync to-do lists and help each other reach goals. Discover if we are using our gifts and if we are using them for God’s glory.

**Temptation:**
**Big Idea** = Each of us has various areas of weakness and temptation. We all struggle to believe the gospel in different ways. Share those with the DNA Group and help each other mature. Customized accountability.
**Concrete Expression** = Give a few questions that the others should ask that are specific to you. i.e. I am currently struggling with greed or being judgmental. Ask me: Did you go shopping or look at onespot too often or did I think negatively about someone, hold bitterness, or make rude comments?

**Basic Sins:**
**Big Idea** = Humans all have basic sinful tendencies. The Bible reveals that each gender has tendencies that we need to guard against and allow the gospel to transform. To give general examples, men often struggle with lust, can be lazy and avoid responsibility, or can become workaholics. These are basic sinful issues, (laziness goes back to the curse). Women often struggle with modesty, control, and gossip. Control goes back to the curse. Throughout the Bible there are instructions that speak to these ongoing basic sinful tendencies. We can assume that these will be issues and need to help each other with them. Let’s assume we are sinners and dig into these issues rather then avoiding them.
**Concrete Expression** = Identify these ongoing basic tendencies and watch for them and create questions that relate to them. For example, all men could have online accountability simply because lust is a tendency and can discuss work ethic. All women could talk through their wardrobe and ask the others for input into if there are shirts that show cleavage and discuss the struggle with gossip.

**Discussion Surrounding the Four T’s**
**Get Specific:**
The whole purpose of the framework is to help us get specific so that we can see specific issues and help with specific growth. It is important for us to make budgets, calendars, and task lists or set goals and create specific accountability questions because this points the spotlight and then will help us address concerns and see heart issues and disbelief. If we don’t get specific then we are missing the point and it can get easy to let things slide and not take sin seriously.
Sample Questions to Ask:

Time:
• What are the ways that God is speaking to you about stewarding your time? (If nothing specific or they are unsure then we can ask about what God clearly instructs in Scripture).
• What are goals you have? How do you know you reach these goals and what accountability do you have?
• Do you practice Sabbath? When?
• Do you have intentional time for mission and building new relationships?
• Where do spiritual disciplines fit in and how have you scheduled these?
• Where does physical fitness come in and what are goals in this area?
• What are some personal areas where you would like to grow? (reading, study, seminars, further training, etc.) Where are these scheduled in?
• How can we know about your life and help you reach your goals and be faithful to what God has called you to? (this is where a schedule or list will be helpful).

Treasure:
• How are you stewarding God’s resources? Are there areas you would like to grow?
• Are you struggling with debt? With sin in terms of stewardship?
• Who do you talk to about large purchases? How do you go about making important financial decisions? What are ways you guard yourself against greed (Lk. 12:15) and who helps with this? How can we help?
• What are some biblically informed stewardship goals? Savings, generosity, setting up for the future and thinking long-term w/ God’s kingdom in mind...
• How do you know when you have met these goals? Could we help you be more intentional or provide accountability?
• Do your finances reveal that you have died to yourself and are a follower of Christ? How?
• Are you being intentional to make a kingdom impact with resources? (This is where a degree of budgeting is important).
• Do you have a budget? Do you need help creating one?
• What are areas of financial stewardship weakness or where there is a tendency to be selfish/sin? (i.e. overspending on holidays, toys, clothes, coffee, eating out? too stressed about money and not trusting? Not intentional and no planning? Debt? No future planning? Intentional for personal purposes but not for Jesus’ purposes?).

Talents:
• What are your talents and abilities?
• What are your spiritual gifts? Can we help you discover them?
• How are you stewarding these gifts/talents/abilities for the purposes of Jesus?
• What are some goals that you have? How would you like to grow?
• How can we help you be diligent to stay at your best for God’s glory? What would it like look for you to develop your abilities and be your absolute best to serve Jesus and others?

Tempations:
• What are 5 specific questions that you would like us to ask you regularly?
• Are there any specific areas of sin that are an ongoing struggle?
• What are some roots of sin in your life? What are the areas of unbelief or heart issues from which behaviour flows?