
ONEIGHTY

2026-27 LIFE GROUP TRAINING
FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

PARTICIPANT NAME: _____

ONEIGHTY

2026 LG Leader Training Introduction

Why does the church exists? (Matt 28:18-20; Matt 22:37-38)

_____ FULFILL GREAT COMMISSION- MAKE DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES _____

What is Oneighty's mission statement?

__to invite students into meaningful relationship with God and each other_____

Vision of Life Groups in the Process

***4 Components of Disciple-Making Church

2. _____ BIBLICAL FOUNDATION _____
3. _____ SAFE ENVIRONMENT _____
1. _____ INTENTIONAL LEADER _____
4. _____ REPRODUCIBLE MODEL _____

Life Group Leaders are __SHEPHERDS__ to our students.

Shepherds have 4 roles with the sheep.

1. _____ KNOW_(intentional leader) _____
2. _____ FEED (biblical foundation) _____
3. _____ PROTECT (safe environment) _____
4. _____ LEAD (reproducible model) _____

1. KNOW THE SHEEP

OUR MISSION

“inviting students into meaningful relationships with God and each other.”

**It's our strategy, NOT our mission that determines our success

WHAT IS A LIFE GROUP LEADER?

Life Group Leader- “anyone who chooses to invest in the lives of a few to encourage authentic faith.”

Kids don't LEARN from people they don't LIKE.

Kids don't LEARN from people that don't LIKE them.

**The same may go that they won't learn from someone they think doesn't like them.*

The #1 goal of a Life Group leader of a student is that

MS: Get To Know Them

HS: Prove You Care About Them

HOW CAN YOU GET TO KNOW THEM?

HOW CAN YOU PROVE YOU CARE?

The 5 WINS of A Life Group Leader:

- A. **Be Present-** consistency matters in relationships (take group outside of SUNDAYs)
- B. **Create Trust-** a safe space- uphold ground rules and protect environment
- C. **Make it Personal-** lead by your example. authenticity
- D. **Be Intentional-** what does he or she need? give it away and coach. (reproducible model)
- E. **Partner with Parents-** who will always have more influence than you and i?

**“Before you can lead someone where they need to go,
you need to know where they are now.”**

Asking Good Questions

How can asking questions about the story help us accomplish that goal?

The key to an effective discussion is asking questions rather than telling what the story means or how it applies. In the book *Truth that Sticks*, Avery Willis and Mark Snowden remind us “You are not the message; the story is the message. You are to ask questions so that they can discover the truth in the story rather than you pushing your ideas on them.” As a bonus, they will remember the message better when they discover it for themselves.

“God’s truth is in the story, but you have to gently open it up with questions to make it come alive for the group.” – *Truth that Sticks*

What questions should you ask?

We provide a set of questions with the curriculum each week, but you can and should be able to develop questions for any story in the Bible.

Start with **HEAD** questions

These are the “what” questions. What happened first? What came next? These questions are often covered in the process of rebuilding the story. It helps get the story into their heads and clarifies the details so that everyone can participate in the discussion.

Use **HEART** questions next

These are questions that get the group thinking about what the story means and gets the story into their heart. Let group members struggle with the meaning of the story without your interpretation. Ask open-ended questions. Examples of questions that get inside the story and help uncover its meaning are:

- **What does this story tell us about God?**
- **What does this story tell us about people?**
- **Was there anything in this story that was new to you?**

- **What do you like about this story? What don't you like about this story?**

Resist the urge to teach or explain! Keep asking questions! If someone has a question about the story ask what they think the answer is, or pose the question to the group. Ask if there is another story in the Bible that could help answer the question.

Why do you think leaders feel they need to give answers?

Follow with ___HAND___ questions

These are the “how” questions that help group members apply the story to their lives. Jesus was always seeking deeper things and we should also. He told stories meant to transform people's lives. These questions should get the group thinking about what they need to do differently in their lives because of their experience with this story.

Tips for Asking Great Questions:

1. Don't ask yes or no questions

Asking open-ended questions keeps the discussion going. They usually begin with what, why or how. Open questions help you discover someone's knowledge, opinion or feelings. You can also begin with the phrase, “tell me about” or “describe” to prompt discussion. Be careful when asking “why” questions. Asking too many “why” questions may come across as confrontational.

2. Ask follow-up questions

Asking a follow-up question such as, “What makes you say that?” or “Why do you think that?” can give you greater insight. Asking someone else in the group “What do you think about that?” can open a discussion between more group members.

3. Allow plenty of time for a response

Often people need time to think before answering a deeper question. Give them time to think and respond. Sometimes they need to work up their courage to share a more personal response.

4. Don't interrupt

Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits the full understanding of the message.

- Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions.
- Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

5. Respond Appropriately

Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.

- Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Treat the other person in a way that you think he or she would want to be treated.

Which of these techniques do you need to incorporate as you lead your group?

How do you think your group will respond?



TIPS TO BEING A GOOD FACILITATOR

- **Prepare well-** Pray and know your material and where you want to land the discussion.
- **Facilitate, don't teach-** Facilitation cultivates discussion; teaching disperses information.
- **Don't be afraid of silence-** Let the people sit for a moment and think. If there is silence, it may mean the questions wasn't heard or was unclear; however, God may be working in someone's heart preparing him or her to share.
- **Do value input-** Do whatever it takes to affirm people's comments, but do not be artificial with your praise. Be delicate with answers that are clearly wrong because discussion times aren't just about getting the answers right. Do not feel like you have to finish, complete or correct a person's answer, ***unless the comments could be destructive to the faith.*** Feel free to circle back around with a student after group to help correct and point them to truth.
- **Don't feel like you have to know all the answers-** We are human, and it's okay for your group to see that you are limited.
- **Don't talk more than the rest of the group-** Ask questions to generate discussion, ask students to explain their answers and go more into depth. Use "tell me more about that." Allow multiple students to respond, even if the first person gets the "right" answer. Do your best not to interrupt.
- **Do ask people if they have questions-** Encourage them to deal with the material on their own terms. Create a climate where students feel the freedom to ask any question they may have.
- **Do clarify some responses to your questions-** If a student's answer or comment is long-winded or unclear, repeat it back (summarize it) for clarity. This proves you are listening, and it keeps the attention of the rest of the group.
- **Do keep the group focused and on purpose-** Don't go down a rabbit trail and leave the topic and scripture passage unless something "big" comes up (e.g., a personal or family crisis). You need to be sensitive to the Spirit, but that's not an excuse to let the group wander to other subjects.
- **Do require and maintain confidentiality-** Hold to the ground rules. This creates a safe environment and allows students to open up and share.
*However, do not keep potentially dangerous information to yourself (e.g., HARM, abuse, suicide, etc.). Groups must be a safe place for people to work out their faith.
- **Don't be discouraged-** When (not IF) you have a "bad morning"; don't let it get you down. There is not a group leader alive that has not had a bad session.
- **Be Sensitive to a person's comfort level-** Be wise in calling on students to answer a question or calling on students to pray.

SESSION 2. LEAD & FEED THE SHEEP

OUR MISSION

“inviting students into meaningful relationships with God and each other.”

****It's our strategy, NOT our mission that determines our success**

FEED

What is the Great Commission?

How do we teach our students to observe all that Jesus has commanded in 40 weeks?

****INTENTIONALITY**

You roughly have an average of 40 hours this year to be with your students

What will you teach them in this VERY limited time? If you think that is a lot of time, understand they will spend on average:

- ☐ 200 hours studying math
- ☐ 300 hours watching movies/tv
- ☐ 600 hours on their phone
- ☐ 1 hour in Life Group

What is one thing you want a kid to grow up and NEVER forget?

If only Jesus was asked a similar question?

READ MATTHEW 22:37-40

We don't have time to teach everything- so teach them what is most important at THIS PHASE.

***Make sure every story, principle, and truth reinforces for everyone what it means to love God and love others.**

****LOVE is the motive of God, message of the gospel, and mark of the Church.**

***The foundation of their faith is RELATIONSHIP, not information.**

LEAD

An intentional leader asks this simple question:

What does (student) need in their journey to mature to look more like Jesus??

****SPIRITUAL GROWTH** WAS THE PURPOSE OF PAUL'S WHOLE LIFE. **Col 1:28-29**

****SPIRITUAL GROWTH** SHOULD BE THE PRIORITY OF EVERYONE. **EPH 4:11-15**

1. Spiritual growth has nothing to do with your **STANDING** before God in Christ.
 - That's all settled. (Phil 3:9)
 - Wherever you are in spiritual growth doesn't change your standing before God.
 - He sees us in His Son as righteous. He sees us in His Son as perfect.
2. God doesn't love you more or like you better if you're **mature**.
 - "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:8 (NLT)
 - He loves us with a perfect love. We love because He FIRST loved us.
3. Spiritual growth may have nothing to do with **TIME**.
 - There are people who have been Christians for a very long time and are still very immature
 - Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3 and said, "I couldn't speak to you as to spiritual men. I couldn't speak to you as to mature people. I could only speak to you as babes in Christ."
4. Spiritual growth may not be related to **KNOWLEDGE**.
 - Where the Pharisee's spiritual mature?
 - It is not related to acquiring biblical information or biblical theology.
 - Unless that knowledge is applied so as to conform your life to Christ, it does nothing but fill your mind with facts. That's actually dangerous because the more biblical information you receive and don't apply, the more deceived you are about your true state of immaturity.
 - WE DO NOT DISCIPLE THROUGH **INFORMATION**. WE DISCIPLE THROUGH **RELATIONSHIP**.
5. Spiritual growth may not have anything to do with **ACTIVITY**
 - Even church activity or Christian ministry activity.

Scripture uses the metaphor of **PARENTING** for the Christian discipleship process.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF PARENTING? **Launch your children!**

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity.... -Hebrews 5:12-6:1 (NIV)

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. -James 1:4 (NIV)



THE INTENTIONAL LEADER

THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY.

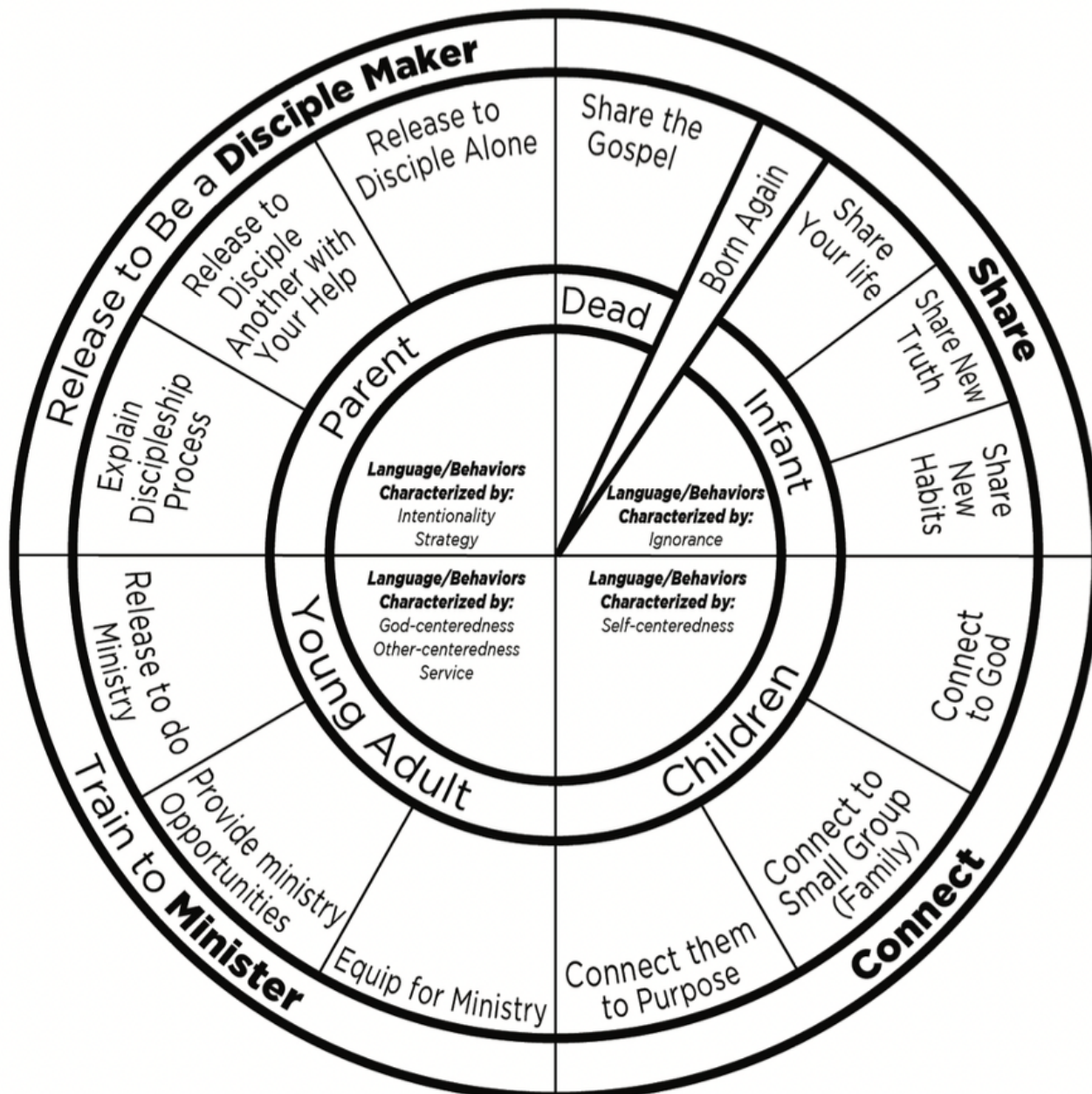
WHAT IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY? JOHN 13:35

Healthy groups will (3)

Grow in love towards one another (John 13:35)

Bear fruit (Gal 5:22)

Multiply (Luke 13:7)



SHARE : *TIME, HABITS, TRUTH,*

CONNECT: *TO GOD, COMMUNITY, PURPOSE*

TRAIN: *EQUIP , MODEL, DEBRIEF*

RELEASE: *COACH, DEBRIEF*

(TRAIN) 4 PHASES of DISCIPLESHIP

1. I DO YOU WATCH

EXAMPLE: Jesus proclaiming the Kingdom teaching truth and healing others. LUKE 8:1

2. WE DO TOGETHER

EXAMPLE: Jesus getting the disciples "help" with the 5,000. MATT 14:13

3. YOU DO I WATCH

EXAMPLE: Jesus sends out the 72 and then debriefs them after. LUKE 10

4. YOU DO ANOTHER WATCHES

EXAMPLE: Jesus calling to Peter. JOHN 21:15-19

Leading A Student To Christ

Our Problem:

Our sin (breaking God's commandments), separates us from Him. Our sin causes a gap far too deep and wide for us to cross ourselves. Our personal efforts to fix this problem will not make us right with God. Because God is good and holy, He must judge sin. Hell was created to justly punish sin wherever it is found.

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom 3:23

"all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags." Isaiah 64:6

***"the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Rom 6:23***

Our HOPE:

Jesus is the ultimate show of God's love for us. Jesus is God. He came to the world to connect you with God and deal with your sin.

"By grace you are saved through faith and this is not of yourselves but is the gift of God. Not by works so no man can boast." Eph 2:8-9

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, that in Jesus we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Cor 5:21

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

Jesus' death on the cross is essential for our forgiveness. We deserve punishment, but Jesus took our punishment instead. He sacrificed His perfect life in the place of our sinful life. Our sin takes us away from God, but Jesus' choice to die in our place gave us the opportunity to be forgiven of our sin and to live forever with God.

eternally with Him in heaven. If we decide not to trust in Jesus, we will justly pay for our own

Our Decision:

We must decide to put our trust in Jesus (believe) by relying on Jesus' finished work of living a perfect life and dying on a cross for our sins so we can be restored to God now and live sins by living eternally separated from God (hell). Hell is God's absence.

The bible gives a clear invitation to know Jesus and allow Him to take complete control of every part of your life.

"if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." Rom 10:9-10

“for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
Rom 10:13

The REAL decision is twofold: JESUS IS __SAVIOR__ and __LORD__

1. **Confession of Sin:** is there real sorrow for sin?
2. Choosing to **FOLLOW** Jesus. (born again. New way to live) JESUS IS LORD.
Is there a desire to make a change? Turn from lifestyle and desire to please God?
*By trusting in Jesus I am saying, he is now LORD of my life. I'm not just trusting him for my future but I'm trusting him with my life now.

Ask Questions to determine what they are thinking.

- Why do you think you need Jesus in your life?
- Would you consider yourself a sinful person?
- Is there anything holding you back from trusting in Jesus right now?

The way we put our trust in Jesus is by calling on Him through prayer:

Are you ready to trust Jesus and begin your new life with God by asking him to forgive your sin and give you a new way of life?

TELL GOD THIS IN PRAYER (understand this is not a “magic” formula but a prompt to help you express what’s in your heart to God.)

§ God, I believe Jesus is Lord and that He died on the cross and rose from the dead.

§ God, I am truly sorry for the sin in my life. I trust Jesus alone for forgiveness of my sins and I trust Jesus for eternal life.

§ God, change my life and guide me everyday.

Our Next Steps:

This decision is the 1st of many decisions to go God’s way.

Our first yes to the Lordship of Jesus is to be baptized.

Secondly, you need to join a small group community to learn how to begin following Jesus and grow in your relationship and understanding of God.

SESSION 3. PROTECT THE SHEEP

This session will cover 2 very important things related to protection. 1.) Child Safety 2.) Conflict Resolution

OUR MISSION

“inviting students into meaningful relationships with God and each other.”

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GROUP GUIDELINES

A *SAFE ENVIRONMENT* IS CRITICAL TO HAVING AUTHENTIC CONVERSATIONS.

GUIDELINES ARE BOUNDARIES FOR HAVING SAFE AND HEALTHY DISCUSSIONS.

- 1. CONFIDENTIALITY (EXCEPTION W/MINORS)**
- 2. NO RESCUING; NO FIXING**
- 3. NO CROSS TALK**
- 4. USE “I” STATEMENTS**
- 5. GIVE EVERYONE CHANCE TO SHARE**
- 6. USE HUMOR RESPONSIBLY**
- 7. NO PHONES DURING GROUP (BIBLES PROVIDED)**

CONFIDENTIALITY

As we lead student small groups we have to keep a couple things in mind, one being that they students are minors. This means that while the small group guidelines apply, one in particular looks very different for us.

Confidentiality is so important in life groups because we want life groups to be a safe environment for students to wrestle with what is happening in their lives. We want every student to feel comfortable to share with authenticity and vulnerability. So, when we say “confidentiality” we mean that the things shared in group aren't the next day's conversation at the lunch table or talked about with each other's families. BUT, because we are leading minors and are responsible for their well-being there are 3 circumstances that can't be kept confidential.

1. IF THE STUDENT IS BEING HARMED
2. IF THE STUDENT IS HARMING THEMSELVES
3. IF THE STUDENT IS HARMING SOMEONE ELSE

It's important to lay this information out and never tell a student “yes, whatever you tell me will be kept just between the two of us.” You can't make that promise because if they tell you one of those 3 things, you are legally obligated to break confidentiality which could then break their trust in you. We need the student to have a safe person to share information with... stay honest and eliminate the compromise of a trusted bond.

WHAT CONSTITUTES HARM?

Abuse- Rape, Assault, (some cases of bullying)- must be reported to authorities

Cutting or Burning or Talk about Suicide- **self harm** must be reported to **parents**.

Sex-**parent** or guardian must know if their student is putting themselves or others at risk for pregnancy or STDs

Drugs and Alcohol- not only is it illegal, it is damaging to their long-term future. **parents**.

IF A STUDENT IS BEING HARMED, HERE ARE THE NEXT STEPS

LISTEN - If a student tells you that they are being harmed, listen and believe. People often hesitate to come forward because they fear they won't be believed. They are taking a huge step by sharing. You are not a detective. So you don't have to pry for all of the details or try to prove he/she is telling the truth.

If the student shared information in a group setting, make sure you follow up one on one *immediately*. Don't consume group time with this. Thank them for sharing, acknowledge their vulnerability, and ask them if you can follow up after group time is over. In your one- on-one conversation, ask them to retell what they shared or repeat what they said and ask if you understood correctly. Ask them questions that will help you understand more: When did this incident take place? Have you been able to talk to your parents about it? If not, what's holding you back? Is the person who harmed you still an active part of your life? (These questions will help you in making the report with the Texas Abuse Prevention Hotline.)

LEAD - When you meet with the student one-on-one lead them through the next steps that need to be taken.

- 1) You must file a report with the Texas Abuse Prevention Hotline immediately. You can call 1-800-252-5400 or file the report online at
- 2) If the parents of the student are not aware of the harm, we have an obligation to inform them. You can give the student the option to tell their parents within 24 hours and then let the student know that once the time is up, you or a staff member will be calling the parents to let them know what was talked about. You can also offer to help the student navigate the conversation with the parents by being present or having a staff member present.
- 3) Inform a student ministry staff member immediately. If you need assistance filing the report, please reach out to a staff member to help with the process. Upon being informed, the staff member will file an incident report with the church to keep for our records.
- 4) Follow-up with the parents when the 24-hour time frame it up.

LEVERAGE - Affirm that the student did the right thing by coming forward and acknowledge their bravery. **Leverage your relationship** with the student and let them know that you will continue to be there for them and follow up with them. Lean in and continue to be a person that they can trust!

REPORT - Follow steps 1-4 above to report what you have been told. The TAPH will ask for parental contact information which can be provided to you by the church or the student themselves.

****Bullying does not need to be reported to the TAPH, however, a conversation with parents is needed. Please follow the steps below for bullying.**

<https://www.txabusehotline.org> (1-800-252-5400). ***put in phone.**

Tell the student that you have to make the report immediately which will tighten up the timeline in which they have to tell their parents. Once the report is filed, depending on urgency of the situation, it will be sent to the proper county authorities to investigate.

HANDLING CONFLICT

Conflict is inevitable in small group life. We need to be prepared for it. Below are some good reminders of how conflict is handled in a healthy, godly manner. These guidelines come from the workbook, *Coaching Life-Changing Small Group Leaders*, pp. 110-111.

**First and foremost we follow the pattern laid out for us in Matthew 18.

1. LEADERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROCESS, NOT THE OUTCOME.

You give wise counsel, guide the process, and hold people accountable. In the end, whether or not they forgive and reconcile is entirely out of your hands.

2. THE CONFLICT NEED NOT BE RESOLVED IN ONE MEETING.

Life is not a TV show – not everything can be solved in thirty minutes. As you are dealing with conflict, give some space. Allow people time to process their thoughts and feelings. Allow time to work things out and heal.

3. CONFLICT MUST BE PROCESSED WITH TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY.

There is great potential for additional wounding if confidentiality is not held high. Don't discuss this matter with people outside the group, unless it is truly someone from whom you are seeking wisdom and insight.

4. PREPARE YOUR HEART.

Recommend a time of prayer and solitude, often a half or a whole day, for each person involved in the conflict to prepare their hearts for the process they are going to walk through.

5. START SOON.

Waiting will only deepen the wounds and prolong the pain.

6. MEET FACE-TO-FACE.

Email and telephones are great for some things, but not for conflict resolution. Letters and emails only document the offense and allow people to read into their words. So set the appointment by phone and meet face-to-face to talk. We call these 3D-communication whereas letters, text, and email are 2D.

7. KEEP IT SIMPLE.

If the conflict is between two group members, then according to Matthew 18, they should talk to each other first. You may need to encourage them or hold them accountable for doing this.

8. AFFIRM THE RELATIONSHIP.

This is always the starting point when you meet. The goal is to restore a broken relationship or to help a person grow.

9. GET THE FACTS.

2026 FBCWF policy regarding the safety and protection of children/ minors

The safety and care of the children entrusted to us are of the utmost importance to FBCWF

The following policies are our best practices for anyone who serves minors.

1. An adult is never to be “out of sight” with a student while outdoors or indoors.
2. If an adult is in an enclosed facility, there are always to be two adults present.
3. If an adult is outdoors alone with a student (i.e., decision counseling) he/ she is to remain still “in sight” of other adults, and this interaction is to occur with other adults being made aware of the interaction beforehand.
4. If there is any indication that a student has been psychically or verbally abused, the situation will be addressed immediately with lead church staff pastors.
5. If any allegation is made by a minor against you, authorities will be contacted immediately, and the adult receiving the report will be responsible to contact the authorities within 24 hours.
6. FBCWF will initially err on the side of the minor
7. A background check must be completed on all volunteers and paid adults who serve minors.
8. If you have ever had any sexual contact with a minor as an adult, you are to report the incident.
9. If at any time any volunteer has had any sexual contact with a student, they will be dismissed immediately, authorities contacted, and pastoral staff will make a decision about what is disclosed.
10. Key church leaders (Senior pastor, Pastor of Business Administration, etc.), church legal representation will immediately be contacted.

***Even if you are under 18 years of age (Legal adult) and you are attending an event or camp as an adult sponsor, all these policies apply to you as well.**

☐ **I have read and agreed to this policy**

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Pastoral Signature: _____