
Go Deeper to Grow Together

Five practices that turn a small group into a spiritual community.

Overview.

It's easy to show up to a small group without really showing up. We attend, we nod, we go home. But something deeper is possible — and it starts with us, not just whoever's leading.

This discussion explores five practices that build genuine spiritual community: deep spirituality, deep character, deep conversations, deep relationships, and deep compassion. Together, we'll look at what each one actually requires and take an honest look at where we are.

Warm up.

Icebreaker: If you had to describe your ideal small group in three words — the kind that actually changed your life — what would those three words be?

Take a minute to share. Then consider: what would it take to become that kind of group?

Watch the video.

[How to Go Deeper in a Small Group](#) — a video by Bay Area Christian Church

Follow along with the guide, or use it independently as a recap. If you're in a group, press play.

Read and talk.

1. Are we actually experiencing God, or just talking about him?

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and become mature, attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

— Ephesians 4:11–13 NIV

- **Key point:** Deep spirituality isn't ritual — it's experience. The goal is peace (freedom from controlling anxiety), power (the ability to change), purpose (knowing why God kept us here), and presence (a lived sense of God with us daily). These aren't feelings to manufacture. They're the fruit of actually spending time with God.
- **Reflection:** When I'm honest, which of the four is most missing from my life right now?
 - (Examples: *Peace from anxiety, Power to change, Purpose — knowing why I'm here, Presence — sensing God in my daily life, etc.*)
- What's one habit or pattern that's keeping me from experiencing God more deeply?

2. What kind of character is our group building?

Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

— Mark 10:43–44 NIV

- **Key point:** House church leadership isn't about being the most together person in the room — it's about caring more about others' growth than your own comfort. The temptation is to settle, to let things be "good enough." Character is what gets built when we resist that temptation instead of giving in to it.
- **Reflection:** Where am I most tempted to settle right now?
 - *(Examples: Settle for easier conversations, Settle for being cared for without caring back, Settle for surviving instead of building, Settle for comfort over purpose, etc.)*

3. Do our conversations actually go anywhere?

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. [18] So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

— 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 NIV

- **Key point:** The spiritual health of a community shows up in its conversations. If every conversation is about sports, logistics, or venting — and God never enters the room — the group isn't going deep. Deep conversations happen when people bring their real lives: their marriages, their fears, their failures, their faith. That takes courage. It also takes a group that makes it safe.
- **Reflection:** What's one real thing going on in my life right now that I've never brought to my small group?
 - *(Example: A fear I haven't named, A struggle in a relationship, Something I'm confused about spiritually, A failure I'm ashamed of, etc.)*

Discuss

1. Think about the group project illustration from the episode: in some groups, one person does everything and everyone else watches. In my group, which role am I actually playing — and is that the role I want to play?
2. One of the participants described evangelism as something that just comes out naturally when you're really connected to something — like talking about your favorite team or someone you love. Does sharing my faith feel like that? If not, what does it feel like — and why?
3. Looking at the five "deep" categories — spirituality, character, conversations, relationships, compassion — which one would most change my group if we all started taking it more seriously?

Keep growing.

- This week, ask your house church leader — honestly — whether they feel like they're carrying the group alone or whether the load feels shared. Listen without defending yourself.
- Each day this week, when you read or pray, ask God for one of the four: peace, power, purpose, or presence. Write down what you notice.
- Think of one person outside your group whose life you could help build — not to convert them, but just to genuinely invest in them. Take one step toward that this week.

Dive deeper.

For more on this topic, check out: [Rebuilding Our Relationships After COVID](#).