



HOLY TRINITY

small groups

Transformation of lives and communities
through the mobilisation and multiplication of
disciples

Welcome to HT small groups.

We are so glad that you have decided to be a part of a small group. We believe that small groups are the engine room of a church, and were modelled by Jesus and the early church as powerful movements of God's kingdom.

We take the biblical mandate from Matthew 28:19 when Jesus said, ***"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."***

What a privilege we have!

If we are to see the vision of HT come to fruition, ***"Transformation of lives and communities through the mobilisation and multiplication of disciples,"*** then small groups are of utmost importance to the life and future of HT and beyond.

As a small group member, your role is to be committed, open, honest and accountable as you seek to grow in faith, encourage others and be intentional in becoming a disciple.

One key to small groups thriving is not just to gain information but being open to receive revelation! One thing to remember is that small groups are not designed to be 'leader led', but that audience participation is a vital component when you meet. Sometimes we feel that we have nothing to add, or may think that what we have to say isn't worth anything. Not true! This is where 'iron sharpens iron' and starts to give confidence within a 'safe' environment together.

As we look at a number of areas over the next few pages of small group importance, we begin to get a better picture and understanding of why we mirror what Jesus did while He walked the earth over 2000 years ago, and why His example is still the best way to make disciples.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Neil".



Why small groups are important.

Small groups are the primary pathway of discipleship within HT. They are the front lines for pastoral care, encouragement, maturity, and crucially where people will encounter God and move ever closer to full devotion to Jesus.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another

JOHN 13:35

Small groups core values

Transformation of lives and communities in Weston-super-Mare and beyond through the mobilisation and multiplication of disciples.

The goal of the small groups here at HT are simple and straightforward - we make, mobilise, and multiply disciples, and through that conduit we should see transformation in lives and communities.

In the book of Acts 2:42-47, we read of a new way of living among the new community of Christians. they did the following three things:

- *They were devoted to God's Word*
- *They were devoted to the fellowship with other believers*
- *they were devoted to living out missional focused lives*

If we are able to focus on these three areas within small groups, we can be assured that they will be healthy, prosperous and productive in God's Kingdom.

Here at HT we want the small groups to follow the pattern that Jesus started. The one presented in scripture looks like this:

- *A place to directly disciple individuals for future mission and discipleship*
- *A place to give and receive encouragement*
- *Not necessarily measured by growth in numbers but by the growth in maturity and fruitfulness of its members*
- *Regular and consistent in the groups rhythm of meeting*

One particularly important and key aspect within the small groups is to help those attending to explore and answer two pivotal questions

- 1. What is God saying to me?**
- 2. What am I going to do about it?**

These two questions help us to 'hear' the voice of God as well as to respond accordingly.

We see the concept of small groups is nothing new. Jesus was the first to initiate the small group context by inviting men to follow Him

When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles

LUKE 6:13

In the time that these guys spent with Jesus (3 years), they were able to be taught to **DO** and **BE** like Him in such a way that when they were unleashed they would go on to change the course of history for ever!

What we learn from Jesus is that He had a clear pattern and rhythm when it came to His small group. Take a moment to read the following

- Luke 11:1 - He demonstrated and showed them how to do things
- Luke 9:1-10 - He trained and equipped them for ministry
- Luke 9:10 - He held them accountable
- John 17:6-26 - He prayed for them
- Matthew 10:1 - He gave them authority
- Matthew 28:16-20 - He tasked them with making disciples

Within this first small group, Jesus created a **learning culture** where the disciples were shaped and formed by the words and practises He modelled. However, the key here is that they did not remain in their small group - when they were 'ready', they went out and made disciples of their own!



What is a disciple?

Remember that one of the key areas for discipleship isn't just information but **revelation**. A small group is a place where discipleship, growth and mission can happen. None of it will matter though until we figure out why discipleship is the important factor in this.

The word disciple refers to an apprentice, or literally a learner. Discipleship is a lifelong activity - continual learning. The process of discipleship does not happen overnight, rather it is a conyinual growth of an individual becoming more like Jesus in character and deed.

Discipleship is more often than not simply about **small degree changes** that, over the long term, will have more of an influence and an impact on a person's life. This is where the word **intentional** comes into play - this is the only way we will learn and develop as disciples.

"What do you want to learn/change in the coming 12 months?"

This process cannot simply be head knowledge only - learning has to involve both experience and practice. Take for example learning to drive. This involves various intentional factors -

- An instructor (discipler?)
- A desire to learn
- The gaining of knowledge
- Practising knowledge through experience of doing
- Accountability to ensure we are doing it correctly
- Time to develop confidence and competence
- Then, at a certain point, it will all be tested!

All of these aspects are required before both the freedom and liberty of being able to drive and experience new things.

A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

LUKE 6:40

Those are the words of Jesus. That is the whole point of being a disciple of Jesus; we imitate Him, carry on His ministry, and become like Him in every sense

To be like Christ is our ultimate aim.

What now?

Our hope would be that having read this, you will understand the importance of small groups. They are not designed to be religious, box ticking affairs. They are designed to do one thing - to make disciples.

This is our engine room. This is where the meaty stuff occurs. This is where people find their purpose as disciples of Jesus, becoming more like Him, living as Jesus did.

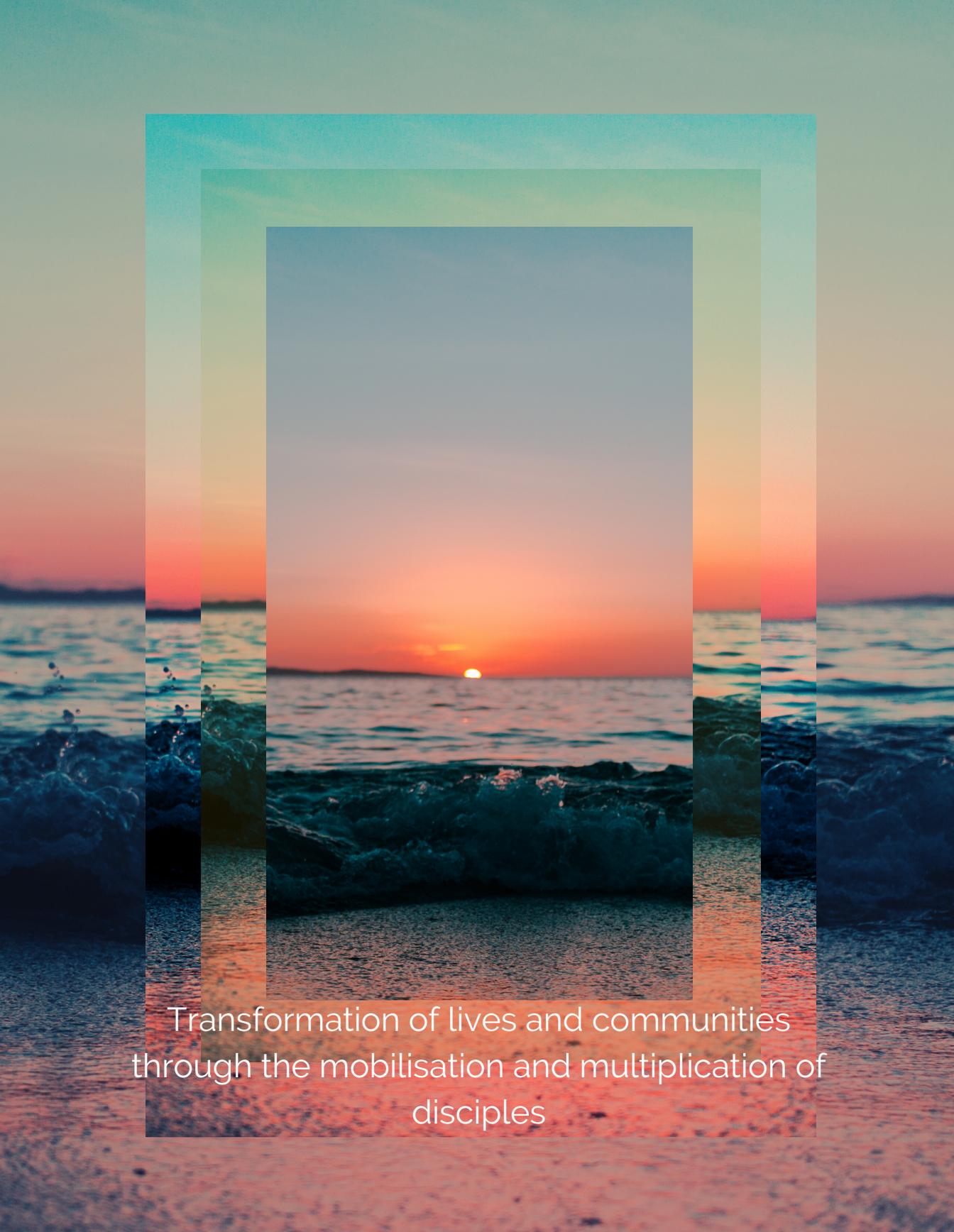
We stand with you in prayer as we journey through the unfolding and excitement of small groups. We seize this moment with both hands, fully understanding the times we live in as we look to bring the kingdom of God to any and every place we have influence - starting with small groups.

You are an encouragement and a blessing to HT - YOU are the church.

Be blessed.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "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

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright orange orb on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky. The water is a deep blue, with white foam from waves in the foreground. The entire image is framed by a teal border.

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