

# CHURCH BASH

Fall Kick-Off for Group: August 11-17

**Introduce Guests/Share Life:** *How has this week been going? Good? Bad? Ugly? Things to celebrate?*

**Open in Prayer:** *Include any prayer needs that came up while you were sharing life together.*

**Recall the Guidelines:** *Ask: "What is the purpose of the guidelines?" Answer: To be relational!*

**Share the Vision:** *At group, not only will we engage one another in relational discipleship every week, but we will also practice a method for studying the Bible that you can reproduce and use to disciple others!*

**Hook Question:** How do you hope to grow as a participant in this small group this next semester?

**Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:**

Jesus loved John the Baptist. When speaking about John, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist." What a commendation!

Just before the story we are about to hear happened, Jesus learned that John the Baptist had been killed. He was beheaded by Herod. Try to imagine it. How would you feel if you received news like the news Jesus received about John?

Before we tell the story, here are a couple more things you should know. First, Jesus had twelve disciples. He actually had more than twelve, but there were twelve He chose to be His small group. The purpose of the small group was to equip these men to become disciple-makers who could disciple others also. That is the purpose of our small group, too.

Second, Jesus understood that in order for these guys to learn they would need to practice. Jesus was always looking for opportunities to help these guys get out of their seats and into the game. He wanted them to learn to minister and disciple others. That is the goal of our small group, too.

Finally, Jesus knew that they couldn't do it alone. He was okay with that. He just wanted them to be willing and to trust Him. We realize this is true in our small group, too. With this background, our story begins...

**Tell the story from Matthew 14:13-21:** *Use different storytellers often. Let others play in the game.*

**Rebuild the story:** *Group members retell the story based on what they remember.*

**Read Matthew 14:13-21:** *Ask the group to read these verses.*

## Discussion Questions:

Head  
Questions:  
Quicker  
tempo.

- What stood out to you in this story? Why?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God? (Remember, Jesus is God.)
- How do you relate to this story?

Heart Questions:  
Slow down & wait!

- What is God trying to change in you through this story?
- What do you need to do this week to get in the game and minister to or disciple someone else?

**Ask for a volunteer to tell the Bible story next week.**

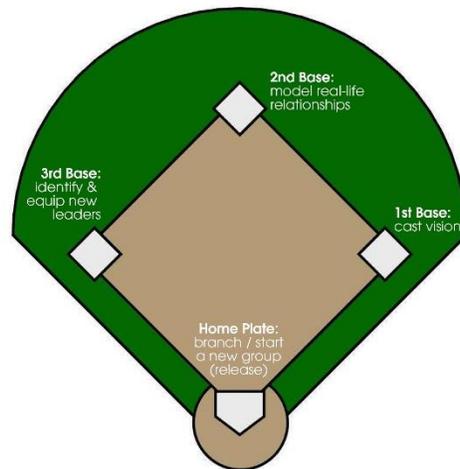
**Close in prayer.**

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## Review the Basics:

What is the mission of your small group? By now, there should be no confusion for you as a group leader. Our purpose for group is to make disciples of Jesus. Let's review what we learned at 301. We make disciples by rounding the bases and helping others round the bases...



### 1<sup>st</sup> Base: Cast Vision

Jesus began His discipleship relationships by casting the vision (see Matthew 4:19). Jesus understand that people don't just need to be invited into a community that will minister to them. They also need to be invited into a community where they have a part to play. The vision is that all of us would grow up in Jesus and learn to minister to others and make disciples of Jesus.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Base: Model Real-Life Relationships

Have you got it yet? Your group doesn't just need you. You need your group. God has given you this community for such a time as this. He wants to use you to change them and He wants to use them to change you. For that to happen, you have to believe it. You have to depend on Jesus and depend on these people. You must model a real-life relationship. A real-life relationship is where I give you the right to know everything about me and you give me the right to know everything about you. A real-life relationship is not falling into the trap of facilitating a group, but growing in faith and in love with those God has put in your life and in your small group.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Base: Identify & Equip Leaders

At first base you are speaking the vision and they are listening. At second base you are modeling the vision and they are watching. Third base is looking up to see who has been rounding the bases with you. Who is at first base speaking the vision, too? Who is at second base modeling real-life relationships, too? These are the people you need to identify and equip. Here's how you equip them:

1. Ask them to story.

2. Ask them to facilitate the group meeting.
3. Ask them to go with you to visit someone in the hospital or to serve someone else.
4. Invite them to go through the Real-Life Discipleship Training Manual with you.
5. Invite them to attend development courses with you.
6. Read the Bible together and share what you are learning.

You cannot do this with everyone in your group at the same time, but you can do this with 1-3 people from your group. Identify them by looking to see who has followed you around the bases. If they are faithful, available, and teachable, coach them and help them grow as a disciple maker.

### **Home Plate: Branch / Start a New Group**

Do you see it? Branching a group really isn't about completing a checklist and starting new groups. Branching a group is all about coming alongside someone else and helping them become an effective relational disciple-maker. Help them get healthy in their walk with Jesus and in their own relationships. Coach them to learn the Scriptures. Help them practice discipleship with you. As they grow, branching a group will become natural.

*That's the game plan!* Week one of your small group curriculum helps you cast the vision both in your background, in the story, and in the questions. Read up and pray well before week one. Be sure to follow through and invite others to connect to group on the first week of the Fall Season. Then get out there and play the game and invite others to join you! Discipleship is a team sport.