

The background is a dark, monochromatic image of coffee cups. In the foreground, two white coffee cups are visible, one slightly behind the other. The cups have some faint, illegible markings or logos on them. A white octagonal frame is centered on the page, containing the text 'DNA COFFEES' in a white, serif font. The text is arranged in two lines: 'DNA' on the top line and 'COFFEES' on the bottom line.

DNA
COFFEES

SUMMARY

There's a lot to cover in this time – here's what you're aiming for:

- **Get to know them.** This is their chance to speak! Listen! Ask about life journey. Ask about faith journey. Ask about church journey. Our aim is to make people feel cared for and valued.
- **Complete their commitment.** The content of DNA is calling people to something. Affirm the commitments they have made on paper. Answer the questions/ issues they indicated. Is there anything else you'd like us to know? You'd like to know?
- **Create a next step (these are commonly: connecting them to a small group, encouraging them to get baptised, encouraging them to serve in some way)** If not baptised - follow this up. Ask them to invite you to their baptism. Connecting people to a small group is an essential next step. We keep a record of people not yet connected to a small group and follow up. Make contact with the small group leader and give some relevant feedback so you are in a sense passing on the shepherding intentionally. Encourage people to contribute and serve.
- **Welcome them to the family.** "In so many ways you are already part of the family but just in case there is any doubt I want to welcome you now." Pray for them.

The 4 purposes of the DNA COFFEE moment

1. GET TO KNOW THEM – THEY'RE CONNECTING WITH THEIR SHEPHERDS

- a) Contact them ASAP. To wait more than 2 weeks for a call is too long. This time with you matters deeply to them. Notice we don't use the word 'DNA interview' – it's way too intimidating. We just call it 'coffee time or meal time'. Be sure to be Spirit-filled (so you can ooze both love and discernment as you meet with them).
- b) Show genuine interest in them - this may be their only one on one time with a pastor in the next months, even years! Besides, people find it hard to entrust their life to leaders who have made no effort to know them.
- c) Find out about...
 1. **Their journey in life.** 'Where do you come from? What do you do? Where do you live? Who do you live with? Any interests?' (It's also important that you tell them a bit about your life so they can connect with you too.)

2. **Their journey to faith.** How did you become a Christ-follower? Tell me about your journey toward faith in Christ? What difference has he made in your life? Have you been baptized as a believer yet? Are you willing – and if not, what stops you?
3. **Their journey into this church (and any other churches).** Of all the churches you could have joined, why this one? Can you embrace this church's teachings, leadership and way of doing things?

2. COMPLETE THEIR COMMITMENT

- **Read** the DNA form they filled in beforehand – this form is not a data list – it's a commitment form.
- **Affirm their decisions** to follow Christ practically in this church – the form reveals the way this will happen.
- **Deal with their issues and sticking points** – the form will reveal many of these. The “hot topics” that commonly emerge: baptism, not leaving a previous church well, money, as well as leadership structures (particularly women in leadership). Ask if they have any questions on those issues?
- **Answer their questions** – *‘Is there any question you'd like to ask me? Or any concern you'd like to share? Anything you'd like to ask about the church, or the leadership team?’*
- *Please refer to section below specifically on baptism*
- If they haven't yet been baptised, you may need to press a bit deeper to determine the sincerity of their faith. Consider things like, do I trust this person's character? Does s/he have a high view of Scripture? Do they support our vision and back us as leaders? Has s/he outwardly expressed their yes to Jesus?
- **Ask tough questions around discipleship.** “Do you feel there is any unrepentant sin or things that we should know about as you step into our leadership sphere?”
- **End with a great open-ended question** *“As we as the leadership team step into the role of being pastors and leaders in your life, do you feel there are any things that would be good for us to know about your life, struggles, skills, or situation that would help us to better pastor and lead you?”* (at this point it might be helpful to give some examples so people get an understanding of the types of things that we are looking to understand about them e.g. someone who previously served in a specific way at their past church, someone who struggles with clinical depression.)

3. CREATE A NEXT STEP (USUALLY GETTING BAPTISED, CONNECTING THEM TO A SMALL GROUP, OR ENCOURAGING CONTRIBUTION)

- a) If they're not yet baptised, encourage them to take this step of obedience and ask them to invite you to their baptism, or at least tell you about it when it happens.
- b) Many people say they want to be in a small group, but don't actually get round to doing it. If they don't get involved in a group, very often they will stop coming in a year or so. So getting them in a group is the most strategic thing to do.
- c) Help them do that (e.g. suggest SGs to visit/ ask them to email the administrator specifically) *Are you part of a small group? Would you like to be? Do you have friends in a group, or must I recommend one for you?*
- d) If they are already in a small group, then as a follow up, phone their small group leader – and 'hand them over' to this leader, telling them anything useful as you commend them to their care.
- e) Encourage their contribution – ensure they're participators not spectators. Consider if there are other next steps for this person (e.g. a ministry team/ serving opportunity they could get involved in, a course they could do etc. *'Have you got involved in serving in any way? Do you have any ideas about what you would like to do? Anything I can do help connect you to a serving opportunity?' A great question to ask is: "So as you become an active participating member of this community, what are the spiritual gifts that you believe God has given you and where would you most like to use those gifts, or make a contribution and how can I help you get stuck in?"*

4. LASTLY, WELCOME THEM IN

- a) with **warmth** (the right hand of fellowship). Say, *'You're already so part of this family, but let this handshake / hug cast all doubt out about whether you belong here – you're in, a fully-fledged Common Grounder you are!'*
- b) and **pray a prophetic prayer over them** (e.g. *'I pray that in this church you find deep enduring relationships. I pray your life becomes a blessing to many. I pray you become all God wants you to become and do all God wants you to do. I pray that as you sow your time, your gifts and talents, and your treasures into the vision of this church that you experience deep growth and joy.'*)

It's helpful to keep a pending list with two sub-lists...

1. People who need to get baptized still. (Although it is not a pre-requisite for membership, baptism is usually one of the most significant “next step” moments for people so it is good to keep a record of people to follow up with.)

Ask these people to invite you to their baptism, or at least tell you about it when it happens. When you're having a baptism moment on a Sunday perhaps contact them to let them know it is happening and invite them to be part of it.

2. People who are not yet fully connected to a small group. Your job is not done till they are connected.

THE DELICATE BAPTISM CONVERSATION

What to say to a Christian who feels that their infant baptism was enough...

- 'Did you read the article on our website: 'What we believe about infant baptism'? What did you think of it?
- 'Okay, let's talk about your infant baptism.
 - 1) What happened there was very important to your parents no doubt, perhaps a real spiritual moment for them. I don't question that. But was it special for you? Can you even remember what happened there?
 - 2) In every single account in the Bible a person only gets baptized after they hear the gospel and respond with personal faith. Even those verses that say that a whole family got baptized together, in every situation we read that the whole family first heard and believed the gospel.
 - 3) We're not picking fights with other churches – but we're determined to build our beliefs and practices not upon tradition but upon the Bible's teachings. The practice of baptizing infants is a practice introduced over the centuries, but it was a drift from what we find in the Bible.
 - 4) That's why we don't think of it as a re-baptism but a totally different baptism. Infant baptism has no spiritual power because it is rooted in human tradition, but believer's baptism has power because it is rooted in divine instruction.

What to say to a Christian who is willing to get baptized but in their own time...

- 'I can understand that you wouldn't want to get baptized because of human pressure. You'd want to get baptized because of personal conviction that Christ wants you to. I get it. We're not encouraging you to get baptized for us – but for Christ.'

- 'The question I'd like to leave with you is, 'How will you know when Jesus wants you to get baptized?' Will you need to have speak to you in a dream, or audibly through a heavenly voice? No, the main way Christ speaks to us is through his Word. If I were you, I'd read the New Testament, especially the book of Acts, and ask myself, 'Does Jesus want me to get baptized?' And if he wants you to get baptized, and you know it, then it is up to you to make it happen.
- When you get baptized, please let me know, I'd love to be there if possible.