



*2023*

*Charter*

# Brief History

In the spring of 2018, a small group of curious friends began to study the Bible and Christian faith through a larger, more expansive lens of history and culture. Many of these members were wrestling with their deeply held faith in Jesus and the dissonance they felt with the teachings and behaviors of the larger Christian Church. Q Group, as it came to be known, was a community whose purpose was to provide a safe and welcoming space so that its members could experience new and renewed understandings of their faith in Jesus. We openly welcomed and embraced all sincere questions, nuances, and unorthodox understandings.

The name “Q” at that time stood for “questions” as the most central value of pursuing understanding through sincere and respectful interrogation. Both the question and the inquisitor are respected in a nonjudgmental culture where robust, academically honest and thoughtful understandings are pursued.

Over time, Q Group has taken on many different forms, locations, topics, and members. We continue to evolve in our wholistic approach, integrating spiritual practices with our intellectual discussions. We continue to be a safe, nonjudgmental, and inquiring community in the pursuit of understanding what following Jesus looks like in this ever evolving world.

## Our Logo

The black and white colors live in the “negative” space of the letter. **The “Q” is gray.** This represents a persistent epistemological characteristic of our group. “Black and white” thinking avoids nuance, disdains the pursuit of deeper understanding, lacks empathy, and is detrimental to our capacity to better thinking. Gray is a combination of “both sides,” and a recognition that “capital-T Truth” is a gradient, a mysterious conglomeration of “truths.”

While our posture and attitude is one of “epistemic humility,” there is such a thing as “knowledge,” and good understanding affirms facts, testimonies, experiences, and the disciplines of history, science, and philosophy.

Q Group strives to be a trusted place where knowledge and mystery are collaborators in our understanding and pursuit of truth.

# *The Ocean and The Fog*

The image of the **ocean and the fog** is a metaphor for our journey together. **The ocean** illustrates the vastness of the world we are navigating. The exploration of our faith is immense and seemingly boundless. **The fog** obscures our knowledge of the future, and reminds us of our ignorance and the possibilities that lie beyond our vision.

This way of being is one of humility and inspiration, an embrace of the joy of discovery.

# *Why Q Exists*

There are four **problems** that are persistently plague the human condition for which Q Group is striving to be a **solution**.

loneliness | **community & belonging**  
ignorance | **education & study**  
disintegration | **holistic synthesis**  
dogmatism | **curiosity & discovery**

# *Guiding Principles*

**We are decidedly followers of Jesus.** All members recognize and respect the core driving identity, that Q Group is fundamentally pursuing what it means to be a disciple (follower) of Jesus. However, everyone, regardless of one's religious or spiritual identity, is welcome to be a full participant without judgment.

**We are people for whom faith flourishes when in conversation with the world.** We actively pursue the most important and relevant questions of our time, and do not shy away from complicated or controversial topics.

**We are radically curious.** Curiosity is a core value of our community, a fundamental "way" of living life, resolving conflict, growing in maturity, and navigating discomfort. We converse, argue, and debate the best ideas as a means to wondrous discovery, better thinking, and deeper understanding.

**We pursue truth wherever it takes us.** We embrace tensions, complexities, and nuances along the way.

**We believe there is nothing to fear in changing our minds or our hearts.** Humility and maturity are necessary partners.

**We respect the humanity of our individual and collective journeys.** We believe all people are made in the image and likeness of God and therefore deserve the common grace of mutual regard and love.

**We will love one another in word and in deed all along the way.** Followers of Jesus live by the creed to love God and love their neighbor as themselves. Nothing in the wrestling negates this commitment.

## *Leadership*

Simply put, leaders of Q Group are committed to and responsible for the caretaking of our culture, our guiding principles, and our members.

## *How to Q (How to Participate)*

**We welcome and embrace the contribution of Q Group members.** The following list is a brief description of how to engage.

- **Listen.** Take care and pay attention. Seek to understand the dynamic of the group, the conversation, and the emotional state of the community.
- **Ask a question.** We do not want our time to be dominated by uninformed opinions, assertions, or arguments. Honest inquiry propels our conversations forward. Submit a provocation, a “giving voice to” an issue, topic, or concern in the form of a question. (Note, we do not mean “provocation” in the sense of “antagonism” or a “riling up.”)
- **Give space.** Take space, then step back. Be mindful of who is sharing, and invite all to join the conversation. Include virtual attendees, and follow through with questions to help participants feel heard.

We hope Q Group members will contribute sincere questions and provocations, presence, experience, and food. Together, we will share life, and invite others to join the ethic, space, community, and aim of Q Group.



**Welcome to Q Group, a community, a space, a posture, and a goal.**