



DISCIPLE MAKER

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INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus' last words on this earth were instructions to go make disciples of all nations; teaching the truths of the Gospel, baptizing those disciples intentionally into the body of Christ, and teaching them to do the same for other people.

The main purpose of Christian discipleship is to be like Christ. Christian discipleship might best be described as a training designed to develop individuals to become more like their Savior. When Christ became man and lived on earth, he endured all of the same trials, pains, and persecutions that man suffers in order to prove himself as a perfect example for us. Therefore, one of the primary purposes of Christian discipleship is to emulate the character of Christ.¹ Peter 2:21 says, "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."

Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus says, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." We are commanded to take the light we are given and spread it around the world to others so that they may see Christ and receive Him for themselves.

It says in John 15:8, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

It is not enough to simply "believe" - we have to "follow" in the footsteps of Jesus' example so that, by the Holy Spirit of God, we bear fruit that looks like God. When that happens, people will come to know God the Father more and more because they see Jesus in your living example as a follower.

DISCIPLESHIP ANALOGY

Elementary School

- Going to Church •
- Hearing Sermons / Messages •
- Worshipping in Large Group Setting •

High School

- Small Group Fellowship / Bible Studies •
- Developing a Personal Prayer Life / Personal Worship Time •
- Developing Gifts / Serving •
- Applying Sermons / Messages •

College

- Making Disciples •
- Becoming the Church •

COMMISSIONED TO GO

If you are reading this, it means you have decided to take a huge step in your faith and begin the process of making Disciples. For you to be successful in this process, you must begin to see with Kingdom vision. You have to grasp that you have been called and sent by God to carry out the mission that Jesus started and that mission begins and ends with faithful next steps of faith throughout your life.

This is a tool to help guide you through the “beginning stages” of Discipleship. When you identify someone who has a desire to grow deeper in their faith, this is a great next step. This guide encompasses 18 of the most essential topics of the Christian faith that will help you develop and equip disciples. After you walk through this with someone, our hope is that they will have a solid foundation and be equipped to do the same with someone else. Remember that this is a basic and simple Discipleship curriculum and can be added to by reading a book of the Bible together during this process or after you have finished, going through scripture and teaching your Disciple how to obey and follow the truths of scripture.

Making Disciples who are making Disciples will always be our goal and mission as a church. It has to be! As you lead your disciple through this process, consistently remind them that the goal for every Christ follower is to be consistently and effectively making disciples. Encourage them from day one to be actively thinking and looking for the person God is leading them to lead and raise up as they are being disciplined by you.

When it comes to discipleship, it is important to know that there is no $A + B = C$ to it. Every relationship is different. Discipleship at its core is about meeting people exactly where they are and helping them get to where God wants them to be. Meeting people where they are is all about asking good questions and being transparent. Helping people get to where God wants them to be is all about knowing that God desires for all believers to be disciples that make other disciples. Keep this on the forefront of your heart and mind as you use this guide.

Every conversation will not look the same and that is okay. Approach each session prayerfully and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. If He leads in a different direction during a meeting, follow His lead, He is our greatest helper.

FIRST MEETING CONVERSATION (FOR THE LEADER)

Get Acquainted: This is the time to really break the ice and be transparent. Share your story of how you came to faith in Christ, who was influential in that process, and where you currently are in your relationship with God. Remember: It's important to lead by example. Be transparent, but not long winded. Give the other person ample time to share their story and where they currently are in their relationship with God. Listen with intention.

Next, ask the person what their expectations are for the meetings. Setting expectations is a huge part of the process. If neither person is committed, most likely the meetings won't bear a lot of fruit and won't be very successful and will ultimately be a waste of time for both people. Confidently and boldly share what you expect from the person and what you hope to get out of your time together. Be sure to share meeting times, location, frequency, etc.

EXAMPLE FLOW OF EACH MEETING:

- **Check In** - Discipleship is gospel-centered friendship, nothing more, nothing less. The first part of your meeting should be about growing your friendship. What's going on in their life? What's God teaching them? How's their marriage? How's their kids? How can I pray for you?
- **Check Up** - Find out how God has been speaking to them through their prayer life, bible study and through the worship experience the week prior to your meeting. This helps create an accountability between the two of you and for their personal devotion life. Connect them to resources through our website like "RightNow Media".
- **Equip Conversation** - Use this time to really dive into Sessions 1-15.
- **Pray** - Lead the person in prayer and commission them to the task of making disciples of Jesus!

SESSION 1

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOSPEL

STARTER QUESTIONS:

1. If someone asked you, “What is the Gospel?”, what would be your response?
2. How would you share the Gospel if you only had 60 seconds?

(Helpful Hint: Do NOT affirm a half or misunderstood explanation of the Gospel. If they struggle, it's ok, that's why you are meeting with them. Teach them the clear and simple Gospel. Affirming an incorrect understanding of the Gospel will only hinder them.)

SIMPLE GOSPEL:

- God created us to be His image bearers and to be in perfect fellowship with Him. **(Genesis 1-2)**
- Sin separated us from God. **(Genesis 3)**
- Jesus paid the price for our sin by dying in our place and rising again to defeat sin and death once and for all. **(Matthew - Luke)**
- Everyone who trusts in Him alone for salvation will be restored into fellowship with Him and have eternal life based on Jesus' work on the cross. **(John)**
- We are not saved by works (church, study, good deeds, prayer), our salvation produces good works in us as the Gospel works its way deeper into our heart making us more like Christ. **(Galatians-Ephesians)**

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:38, Romans 5:6-11, Romans 3:23-24, Hebrews 10:14, Romans 10:9-10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:8-9

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 10:9-10

TEACHING TIME

Romans 1:16 literally tells us that the Gospel is the power of God for Salvation so it is imperative that we know what it is. The word Gospel literally means “good news”. For any news to be good, we have to know the situation in which the good news stepped into, which is usually a bad situation. It is essential for all believers to know why Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection was so important to them and to all people.

The easiest way to remember the Gospel is by remembering its four key elements:

- 1. The Character of God**
- 2. The Sinfulness of Man**
- 3. The Sufficiency of Christ**
- 4. Our Response: Repentance and Faith**

Take a few minutes to walk through each of the 4 points below.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD (1 PETER 1:16)

1. What does Holy mean?

- Perfection, Sacred, Set Apart, Cut-Off from sin

2. What does it mean to “be holy, as I am holy”

- God is Holy (perfect) in everything. That’s who He is. He is infinitely good.
- We were created in His image, to be in perfect relationship with Him forever. God designed us to bear His image and be “like Him.”
- He’s perfectly just and perfectly righteous. This means that there is no error in Him. He judges things with perfect justice and is perfectly right in doing so.

3. What is Justice?

- Simple definition: to be fair and reasonable
- In a murder case, would a judge be fair or just if he were to allow a murderer to go free? No.

THE SINFULNESS OF MAN (ROMANS 3:12 & 23, ROMANS 5:12-21, ROMANS 6:23)

1. What is sin?

- Sin is any lack of conformity to the moral character of God or the law of God. We sin by thinking evil, speaking evil, acting evil or omitting good.

2. Read Romans 5:12. What comes to mind when you read this verse?

- Sin is more than “bad things we do.”
 - We aren’t a sinner because of the sins we commit”; we commit sin because we are sinners.
 - It’s a spiritual condition and the only cure is Christ.
- Sin came into the world through Adam and Eve, it’s something every man inherits.
- Sin is a condition that separates us from God. It’s what broke a perfect relationship between man and God.
- Sin creates a chasm (or gap) between us and God. He is perfect and we are not because of sin living in us.
- If we live life without anything changing our spiritual condition as sinners, we will die apart from Christ and will be judged by our sin.
 - Remember, God is perfect and we are not.
 - If our condition does not change, we will be punished for our sin and forever separated from God our Creator.
 - That’s the bad news. But remember, there’s GOOD NEWS!

THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST (COLOSSIANS 1:15-23, HEBREWS 10:14, ROMANS 5:8)

1. Read Colossians 1:15-23. What does “sufficient” mean?

- Sufficient means: “enough or adequate”
- This is what makes the life, death and resurrection of Jesus so incredibly good. Christ died and paid the entire penalty for our sins. Therefore sin has no hold on us if we are followers of Christ. It has lost its power over us!
- His life, death, and resurrection is sufficient to save anyone who repents of their sin and puts their faith in Christ.
 - He died in our place. We like to say, “Jesus in my place.”

2. Read Hebrews 10:14. How does this verse make you feel knowing that there’s hope?

3. Read Romans 5:8. Have you ever truly felt the weight of how much God loves YOU?

- The “type” of love this verse is referring to is “Agape” love. God was literally saying, “I Agape you!”. He is saying, “I love you even if you don’t love me back!”
 - This is a love without condition!
 - We must choose to receive it or reject it.
 - While it’s free, it still must be received.

4. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. (read vs 1-10 for context if necessary)

- It is a free gift, it is NOTHING we can do on our own, but depends totally on God.
- You did NOTHING to earn salvation.
 - In the salvation process, all we did was provide the sin that Jesus died for.

OUR RESPONSE: REPENTANCE AND FAITH (ROMANS 10:9-10, ACTS 2:38)

1. What does repentance mean?

- To feel or express sincere regret or remorse
 - In this case, becoming aware of our sinful condition and responding.
- To agree with God about your sin and actively turn away from sin and towards God.

2. Based on Romans 10:9-10 and Acts 2:38, what should our response be to the good news of the Gospel?

- Repentance, faith and obedience.

THE GOSPEL IS SIMPLE

- We admit and turn from our sin and place our faith in Christ.
- We receive the free gift, and God changes our heart. (Ezekiel 36:26)
- We are made perfectly right with God because of what Christ has done for us and not because of anything we have done. We depend on Him completely.
- We begin living life filled with the Holy Spirit, growing more and more into the image of Christ.
- All this is done BY grace, THROUGH faith.

Final Thought: Living by faith is a daily journey of walking with God through time spent with Him, praying and listening and actively cultivating a real relationship with Him.

SESSION 2

PART ONE: WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT A DISCIPLE IS.

STARTER QUESTION:

What does it mean to be a disciple?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:19; John 8:31-32; Matthew 16:24-25; John 13:35, Luke 14:25-35

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 16:24-25

TEACHING TIME

A disciple can be defined as a follower or a student of a teacher or leader. The word disciple, like discipline, comes from the Latin word *discipulus*, meaning “pupil” or “learner.” Applied to Jesus, a disciple is someone who learns from Him to live like Him — someone who, because of God’s awakening grace, conforms his or her words and ways to the words and ways of Jesus. Or, you might say, as others have put it in the past, disciples of Jesus are themselves “little Christs” (Acts 11:26).

To be a disciple is to be in a relationship. It is having an intimate, and instructive relationship with a teacher. Consequently, being a disciple of Jesus Christ is being in relationship with Jesus—it is seeking to be like Jesus. A disciple follows Jesus in all things. A disciple has counted the cost of following Jesus and has decided that nothing else in this world is as attractive as life with the Lord Jesus. As a church, we say a disciple has 3 identities: a worshipper of Jesus Christ, a servant of Jesus Christ and a missionary for Jesus Christ. We will dive a little deeper into this definition in depth in the coming weeks.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a difference between being a Christian and being a disciple? Explain.

- A Disciple is someone who follows Jesus, who is being transformed by Jesus and who has joined Jesus on His mission.
- There is no such thing as a Christian who isn't sent to make Disciples. According to scripture, those two things go hand in hand. A true Christian is a Disciple.

2. Read the following texts and talk about what it teaches us about being a disciple:

- Matthew 4:19. What exactly did Jesus say when he first called His disciples?

- What does it mean to “*follow*” someone?

§ During this time, when Rabbis would call young disciples to follow them, their disciples would follow them at a distance wherever they went, they would watch how they interacted with people, how they taught the masses, how they spoke to people, and they would even try to mimic in how they walked.

- John 8:31-32. How do true disciples respond to Jesus' teaching?
- Matthew 16:24-25. What ultimately happened to the disciples? How serious is discipleship? (research the life of the disciples after Jesus ascended)
- John 13:35. How do we recognize disciples of Jesus?

3. Based on what we've talked about today, what does it look like to be a true disciple of Jesus?

- Following Jesus, being transformed by Jesus, being on mission with Jesus.
 - What areas do you need to be more faithful?
 - What does it look like to be “on mission” with Jesus?
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SESSION 2

PART TWO: A DISCIPLE IS A SERVANT

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SERVING.

STARTER QUESTION:

What is the purpose of serving?

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:1-11, Matthew 23:11-12, Luke 22:26-27; Mark 10:45

MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 2:3-4

TEACHING TIME

Jesus' example when it comes to serving is simply amazing. He was fully God, in the flesh. He could have appeared to our world any way He wanted. He could have set himself up and exalted himself while He was here. Yet, He chose to become a servant, to give His life completely as a ransom for many. What Jesus was doing was setting an example for us. Like it says in Philippians 2, He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant in his last act with His disciples before being betrayed he washed their feet. We believe that this lifestyle is one that disciples of Christ are to abide in. We live to serve others, to be an example of Christ's love to the world. A true disciple will worship God for who he is and we also believe that a disciple will be a servant. This is a key component of what we believe here at Relentless Church.

SESSION 2

PART THREE: A DISCIPLE IS A WORSHIPPER

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WORSHIP.

STARTER QUESTION:

What is worship?

SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 16:23-31; Romans 12:1-2; John 4:23-24; Exodus 20:2-6

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 12:1-2

TEACHING TIME

Worship often times can be difficult to really understand. Here we want to break it down for you. Authentic worship of God is a function of our affirmation that Jesus is here and our understanding of who he is. Our ability to worship is directly related to our view of God. The depth and authenticity of our worship of God flows automatically from our concept of God, from who we think He is. A true worshipper is someone who seeks to put God first in every area of their lives.

True worship is an overflow of a right view of God. Worshipping Jesus at its core is an identity issue. Jesus once said that no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again (John 3:3). What that means is that we are transformed into a new creation once Christ has our life. (2 Cor 5:17) Our lives become marked by Jesus Christ. Worship isn't raising our hands and singing on Sunday, it's a life lived to see Jesus receiving our FIRST and our BEST in everything we do; our time, our treasures and our talents.

SESSION 2

PART FOUR: A DISCIPLE IS A MISSIONARY

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF BECOMING A MISSIONARY.

STARTER QUESTION:

What is a missionary?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 13:47; Romans 10:13-15;
Matthew 24:14

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 10:14-15

TEACHING TIME

The “Great Commission” is one of the most misinterpreted passages in the Bible. Many people believe missionaries are only people who move to a foreign country to spread the Gospel. The tense of “go and make disciples” can be translated to “as you are going”. What that means is that being a missionary is a lifestyle. As we are doing life, we live “on mission” for God. We fully believe that God has sent you to share Christ in your sphere of influence. That means your family, your work and your friends. A disciple of Christ is a missionary. You are sent.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Matthew 28:18-20

- What does it mean to “go and make disciples”?
- What does it mean to “baptize”?
- What does it mean to “teach to obey”?
- Why is it important to go in that order?
 - The goal in evangelism and discipleship should always be the same. To convert, to equip and to send.
 - Equipping disciples to make other disciples is the most important job of the church after preaching the Gospel.

2. Read Acts 1:8

- Who gives us power to be witnesses?
- According to this passage, where are we called to “go”?
 - Talk about the importance of the word “and” in this passage.
- Remember that all people aren’t called to go Africa or Asia, but all people are called to “go”, whether that’s across the street or across the world.
- Help the Disciple discern where they may be called to “go” as they share the Gospel with others. (Ex. Local, abroad, home, occupation etc.)

3. Read Acts 13:47

- Where is salvation supposed to go?
- What does this passage mean by “the ends of the earth”?

4. Read Romans 10:13-14

- Who will be saved?
- How will people of the world hear the good news?
- Talk about the Gospel being a “spoken message” and needs to be verbally shared with people. The Gospel literally means “Good News”, why would we NOT share it?

5. Read Matthew 24:14

- Where will the Gospel ultimately go?
- Talk about our role as Disciples in this movement of the Gospel.



SESSION 3

THE BIBLE - WHAT IS IT?

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

When it comes to studying the Bible, what is the most helpful thing you have learned?

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Look at the Bible's table of contents

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

TEACHING TIME

As it says in Hebrews 4:12, the Word of God is living and active. It means exactly what it says which separates it from any other book. Not only do we read it, but it reads us. All Scripture is God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16). What that means is God wrote it. The best way to look at it is that God is the author and men were the pen that put it in ink what God wanted to say to us. The Bible is the way we can begin to know God, to learn what He's like and see how He loves His people. It's also important to learn how the Bible is broken up. Context is absolutely essential when it comes to studying to Bible. Let's take a few minutes to break down the layout of the Bible.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Open up to the table of contents and talk through how the Bible is broken down:

- What is the difference in the Old Testament and New Testament?
 - The Old and New Testaments complement one another. The Old Testament is much bigger than the New Testament. There are 39 books in the Old Testament, containing 929 chapters. The New Testament tells the story of how God fulfilled the promises of the Old Testament, by coming into the world in the person of Jesus, his Son.
 - Every story of the Old Testament pointed to Jesus. (Ex. Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the Israelites, Joseph and his brothers.)
- How does knowing the breakdown of the Bible help us read it?
 - Genesis - Esther = Historical Books of Old Testament
 - Job - Song of Solomon = Writings of God's People
 - Isaiah - Malachi = Writings of the Prophets
 - Matthew - Acts = Historical Books of New Testament
 - Romans - Jude = Letters (from specific people to specific people)
 - Revelation = Vision from God to John
- Explain that we read each genre differently. For example, the way that you read history varies from the way you read poetry. In other words, how we read Genesis with differ from how we read Song of Solomon.

2. How does understanding the context of Scripture help us study the Bible?

- Ex: History and poetry are read and processed completely different.
- Point them to the book summary videos on the youversion bible app for help.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RoqnGcEjcs>

3. What do the following Scriptures teach us about the Bible?

- Read Hebrews 4:12
 - What does it mean that the Word of God is living and active?
 - The Bible is a book that can never be mastered. It speaks to us on many different levels at many different stages of our lives.
 - The Bible is God's main tool in the process of sanctifying us. (John 17:17)
 - Why is it so important for a believer to be grounded in scripture?

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SESSION 4

GOD - THE FATHER

THE SOURCE OF LIFE

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD: HIS CHARACTER & ATTRIBUTES.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

How does truly knowing someone and their character help you trust them more? When you think of who God is, what come to mind?

SCRIPTURE: All Scriptures listed on next page(s)

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 139:1-2

TEACHING TIME

The Bible is the revelation of God. From Genesis to Revelation, He is revealing Himself to us. It is important for us to know who He is because this is a crucial part of learning to trust him despite our ever changing circumstances and emotions. It's his unchanging character that helps us trust Him even in the toughest of times. This week, take time to walk through each of the following attributes of God. Read each Scripture. Discuss what each attribute means. Then, talk about how that specific attribute helps you trust God more. This is not an exhaustive list of attributes. They are endless.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. God is Holy (Psalm 99:9)

- What does it mean that God is Holy?
 - The Hebrew word for holy is “qodesh” (ko’-desh) and means “apartness, set-apartness, separateness, sacredness”.
 - In the New Testament, the word for holy is “hagios” (hag’-ee-os) and means set apart, reverent, and sacred”
- How does this attribute help you trust God?
 - He is infinitely good.

2. God is Righteous and Just (Psalm 89:14)

- What does it mean that God is righteous and just?
 - The meaning of “Just” is based on or behaving according to what is morally right and fair.
 - What does that mean for our sin?
 - How grateful does this make you or Jesus? This is why we cling to the statement, “Jesus in my place”
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

3. God is Sovereign (Isaiah 46:9-10)

- What does it mean that God is sovereign?
- God’s sovereignty essentially means that He has the power, wisdom, and authority to do anything He chooses within His creation.
- How does this attribute help you trust God?
 - Nothing is outside of God’s control.

4. God is Eternal (Isaiah 43:13)

- What does it mean that God is eternal?
 - Think about God being outside of time. Can your mind comprehend this fact. God is the same at our birth as He is at our death. His existence is not hindered by time. He never sleeps and never ages.
 - Think about this. In 1 million years, eternity is just beginning and even describing it like this, lessens the immensity of the concept of eternity.
- How does this attribute help you trust God?
 - He’s never NOT going to be there as you seek Him throughout your life and throughout eternity.

5. God is Immutable (Does not Change) (Malachi 3:6)

- What does it mean that God is immutable?
 - Immutable – “Unchanging over time or unable to be changed.”
 - God is not changed by emotion or circumstances
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

6. God is Omniscient (All Knowing) (Psalm 139:1-6)

- What does it mean that God is omniscient?
 - Knowing everything
 - How humbling is it to know we serve a God who is all knowing?
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

7. God is Omnipresent (He’s everywhere) (Psalm 139:7-12)

- What does it mean that God is omnipresent?
 - Present everywhere at the same time.
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

8. God is Love (Romans 5:8)

- What does it mean that God is love?
 - Why does the Bible describe Jesus as Love instead of saying He is loving?
 - Why is it important to understand this wording and this concept?
 - God’s primary nature is to love as shown by His rescue plan for us through His Son Jesus Christ. The cross of Jesus is the greatest demonstration of God’s love for us.
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

9. God is Truth (John 14:6)

- What does it mean that God is truth?
 - We can see right at the outset that the Bible identifies truth not simply as the absence of lies but as a quality intrinsic to the very nature of God, as was fully manifested in His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus not only spoke true words—He was, and is, the ultimate expression of truth
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

9. God is Merciful (Psalm 145:8-9)

- What does it mean that God is merciful?
 - Mercy literally means, compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm.
- How does this attribute help you trust God?

SESSION 5

GOD - THE SON

GOD FOR US

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

If someone asked you, “Who is Jesus?” What would your response be?

SCRIPTURE: John 6:35; John 8:12; John 10:7; John 10:11-15; John 11:25; John 14:6-7; John 15:1

MEMORY VERSE: John 14:6-7

TEACHING TIME

Remember all of the characteristics of God the Father from last week’s session? Remember that Jesus encompasses all of these characteristics Himself. Jesus is both fully God, yet came and lived fully human. He felt everything that we feel and yet lived a life without sin. That’s why we can trust Him as a perfect high priest (Hebrews 4:14-10:18). What that means is that when we trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He advocates on our behalf to the Father. He defends us, He knows us, He knows our struggles and our fears because He lived them too. We don’t have a Savior that can’t empathize with us. Also, it’s important to know and understand Jesus as our substitute. His death on the Cross was the substitute for our sin. We say it like this, “Jesus in my place.” Our sin put Him on the Cross but His victory and resurrection sets His people free from the penalty of sin and death.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 6:35 - What does it mean that Jesus is the “Bread of Life?”

- Bread is considered a staple food—a basic dietary item. A person can survive a long time on only bread and water.
 - “the bread of life” is a spiritual reference that Jesus is our basic need for spiritual life and that we are to feed on Him daily to obtain spiritual nourishment and sustenance.
 - Jesus is saying that He is essential for life!

2. Read John 8:12 - What does it mean that Jesus is the “Light of the World?”

- The allegory used by the Lord in this verse speaks of the light of His Truth, the light of His Word, the light of eternal Life. Those who perceive the true Light will never walk in spiritual darkness.
- Physical light is necessary for physical life. The earth would certainly change very rapidly if there were no longer any sunlight.
 - In much the same way, the spiritual light of Christ is necessary to shine on the darkness of our sin to reveal our need for Him. Spiritual light provides spiritual life.

3. Read John 10:7 - What does it mean that Jesus is the “Gate for the Sheep?”

- In this culture there was a very specific type of sheep pen (among many) where the shepherds would keep their flocks in the good grazing areas. This particular type of sheep pen was nothing more than a rough circle of rocks piled into a wall with a small open space to enter. Through this gate, the shepherd would drive the sheep into the pen to be kept safe at night. Since there was no gate to close—just an opening—the shepherd would keep the sheep in and wild animals out by lying across the small opening. He would sleep there and in this case literally become the gate for the sheep.
- How does hearing this explained help you understand what Jesus has done for you?

4. Read John 10:11-15 - What does it mean that Jesus is the “Good Shepherd?”

- Talk about the importance of the word “the” in this passage. It should be understood that Jesus is “the” good shepherd, not simply “a” good shepherd, as others may be, but He is unique in His character.
- A shepherd in this culture was sometimes not the owner of the sheep but was given the task of overseeing the flock for the owner. A Good Shepherd risks his life to save the sheep. Someone the bible refers to as a “hiring” works for only a wage and is only concerned about himself.
 - Jesus gave His life on the cross as “the Good Shepherd” for his sheep. He, who would save others, though He had the power, did not choose to save Himself.
- How does understanding the context of this passage help you see what Jesus has done more clearly?

5. Read John 11:25 - What does it mean that Jesus is the “Resurrection and the Life?”

- Jesus was claiming to be the source of Resurrection AND Life.
 - There is no resurrection apart from Christ, and there is no eternal life apart from Christ.
- Jesus was also making a statement concerning His divine nature.
 - He does more than give life; He is life, and therefore death has no power over Him.
- Jesus confers this spiritual life on those who believe in and have faith in Him, so that they share His triumph over death (1 John 5:11-12).
- How does knowing this help you follow Jesus more passionately?

6. Read John 14:6 - What does it mean that Jesus is “The Way, The Truth, and The Life?”

- The Way- Jesus was telling them (and us) “follow me.” There is no other path to heaven, no other way to the Father. Peter reiterated this same truth years later to the rulers in Jerusalem, saying about Jesus, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The exclusive nature of the only path to salvation is expressed in the words “I am the way.”
- The Truth- Jesus said that He came to fulfill the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). Jesus, as the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1) is the source of all truth.
- The Life- In John 10:17-18, Jesus declared that He was going to lay down His life for His sheep, and then take it back again. He spoke of His authority over life and death as being granted to Him by the Father. In John 14:19, He gave the promise that “because I live, you also will live.” The deliverance He was about to provide was not a political or social deliverance (which most of the Jews were seeking), but a true deliverance from a life of bondage to sin and death to a life of freedom in eternity.

7. Read John 15:1 - What does it mean that Jesus is “The Vine?”

- Jesus wanted His disciples (then and now), to know that He was not going to desert them. His living energy—His spiritual reality—would continue to nourish and sustain them just as the roots and trunk of a grape vine produce the energy that nourishes and sustains its branches while they develop their fruit. Jesus wanted us to know that, even though we cannot see Him, we are as closely connected to Him as the branches of a vine are connected to its stem. Our desire to know and love Him and the energy to serve Him will keep flowing into and through us as long as we “abide” in Him.
- What does it mean to “abide” in Christ?
 - Use the illustration of abiding in a home. When you live in a home, you rest there, you are safe there, you are sheltered there. A home is a place that you exist in. Same with abiding in Christ.

8. Does understanding the claims that Jesus made about Himself change your view of Him?

Lined writing area consisting of multiple horizontal lines.

SESSION 6

GOD - THE SPIRIT

GOD IN US

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

How would you explain your prior experience with the Holy Spirit?

SCRIPTURE: John 16:7; Titus 3:3-7; John 15:1-17; Romans 8:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; Galatians 5:16-24

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 8:5-6

TEACHING TIME

The Holy Spirit is often times a topic of mystery. Some people are afraid to talk about the Holy Spirit with the idea that things might get weird or someone might start babbling in some unknown spiritual language. Then there are other Christians that can't quit talking about the Spirit of God. That's why it's so important to discuss the Holy Spirit and to know what He is here for. The Spirit is, first and foremost, God's personal presence. The Spirit puts the desires of Christ in us. He is who moves in our heart to do the works of God. He convicts us of sin and He comforts in our sorrow.

In the Bible, any time we see a description of the spirit of God, such as what is depicted in the first few verses of the Bible, the Hebrew word "ruakh" is used. Ruakh can describe an invisible, powerful energy, and necessary for life, making it a fitting description for the spirit of God. Another word we find in the book of John is that the Holy Spirit is our "Advocate" which can mean comforter, helper and intercessor. It's also important to know that Holy Spirit gives us power. The same Spirit that gave Joseph power to interpret dreams is the same Spirit that gave Christ power to calm the seas and Paul the wisdom to write scripture. Acts 1:8 tells us that the Holy Spirit gives us power to be Christ's witnesses and build His Church. If we are followers of Christ, Ephesians 1 tells us that the same power that caused Christ to rise from the grave, lives in us. That changes things.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 16:7. Why did Christ say it was better that He send us the Holy Spirit?

- Jesus everywhere is better than Jesus in one place. Christ in us changes the game.
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ that dwells in every believer.
 - While in the flesh, Jesus could not dwell in His followers. It was only when He was free from His flesh that His Spirit was able to come and live in and work through every believer and follower of Christ

2. Read Titus 3:3-7. What role does the Holy Spirit play in salvation?

- The Holy Spirit uses the biblical message of the Cross to awaken in man a deep awareness of the guilt that sin brings.
 - He convinces man of sin, even where previously no consciousness of sin was apparently present.
- When the Holy Spirit convinces people of their sin and of Jesus' righteousness, and of certain judgment, He awakens the human heart to hear and see Truth in a new way.
 - Upon seeing and perceiving the Truth, the human heart either cries out for God, or rejects God.
- To put it simple, the Holy Spirit's role in Salvation is to "draw" us to Christ. Through love, kindness and conviction.

3. Read John 15:1-17. How do I know if I have been filled with the Spirit?

- The real evidence of being filled by the Spirit is not an experience. The real evidence is the spiritual fruit produced in our lives.
 - Romans 8 tells us that if we know and follow Christ, then the Holy Spirit dwells in us.
 - Never forget that the Holy Spirit isn't an impersonal force or power; He is God. Think of it: God Himself now dwells within you if you know Christ! He is not a "feeling" or a "goose bump" but the very presence of God living IN you by faith.
- Warning:** *There are some denominations that declare that if you don't speak in tongues then you are not truly filled with the Spirit. This goes against scripture and if brought up should be corrected.*

4. Read Romans 8:1-11. What is the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer?

- The Holy Spirit empowers us as we follow Christ, sanctifies us as we become more like Christ, encourages us when we go through trials, gives us gifts to build the Church and leads us to the heart of God.

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19. What does it mean to “quench the Spirit”?

- Quench literally means to extinguish.
 - o As the Spirit moves, because of free will, we are able to ignore or disobey the movement of the Holy Spirit
 - o Without obedience and submission, we will always quench the Holy Spirit; silencing His influence in our lives, our Churches and our homes.
- We quench the Holy Spirit when we rely decisively on any resource other than the Holy Spirit for anything we do in life and ministry.
 - o The greatest defense against quenching the Spirit is a daily surrender to His rule in your life and quick obedience as He leads.

6. Read Galatians 5:16-24. How do I know that I am walking by the Spirit?

- 4 Questions to help determining if you are walking by the Spirit:
 - o Am I pursuing Jesus? (John 15)
 - o Am I more focused on things of the flesh or of the Spirit? (Galatians 5)
 - o Am I producing good fruit? (examples?) (Galatians 5)
 - o Am I being discipled or making disciples? (Matthew 28)

SESSION 7

SIN SEPARATED FROM GOD

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SIN.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

What is sin? What have you learned about sin since becoming a believer?

SCRIPTURE: Romans 3:23-24; John 8:34, Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-6

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 3:23-24

TEACHING TIME

During this teaching time, it's extremely important to dive into the depth of sin. Sin is more than bad things that we do. Sin is much deeper than that. Sin is a condition, a problem that we inherit. Apart from Christ, sin is who we are. There are no amount of good works, no amount of sacrifice in our life that could cover up our sin. Sin is what points us to the fact that we need something outside of ourselves to save us. Until we understand the depth our sin, we can't fully understand how much we need Christ. We have to see that our sin hurts the heart of God. When we have a lustful thought, when we lie, cheat, get angry, etc. we are acting in disobedience to God. Without Christ we will be judged for those sins. Praise God for the saving work of Christ in defeating sin.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Romans 3:23 - What does it mean that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God?

- No one has ever met the standard to enter the presence of God except Christ.
- God's standard is perfection.
- Sin is an archery term that means, "to miss the mark"

2. Read John 8:34 - What does it mean that we are slaves to sin?

- The Bible uses the analogy of a slave and masters to make the point that a slave obeys his master because he belongs to him. Slaves have no will of their own.
 - When sin is our master, we are unable to resist it. But, by the power of Christ to overcome the power of sin, "You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness" (Romans 6:18)
 - Once we are saved it becomes a choice to walk back into sin.

3. Read Galatians 5:16-26.

- When we become a Christian, how does our relationship with sin change?
- Spend some time discussing the flesh vs Spirit battle.
 - Have you experienced this in your life?
 - Give some examples of times you have dealt with this battle. (encourage transparency)

4. Read Colossians 3:5-10.

- Why does God want us to put sin to death?
- How do we do this?
- What specific sins are we to put to death?

5. Read Titus 2:11-14; Read Colossians 3:1-2.

- What is the best way to fight sin in our lives?

SESSION 8

SALVATION

SAVED FROM SIN; SAVED FOR A PURPOSE

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SALVATION.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

What does it mean to be saved?

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 2:1-10; Acts 2:37-38; Romans 10:9; James 2:14-26; Romans 6:17-18; Galatians 5:22-23

MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 2:8-10

TEACHING TIME

Salvation is such an important part of the Christian faith. We'll break up our teaching time a little differently this week and talk more into the three points below. To break salvation down into practical terms, it's the moment when a person comes to know Christ personally and trusts Him and realizes He has done everything necessary for a person to be saved. It is also discussed in the Bible in three separate tenses. There is a moment when we are or we were saved, as we grow in our faith in this life we are being saved, when this life is over and will meet Jesus and ultimately be saved. This plays itself out in the form of justification, sanctification and glorification.

When we come to Christ and trust Him as our Lord and our Savior, we are justified completely and our identity is immediately transferred into the Kingdom because of what Jesus did on the cross. At no point in your life will you be "more saved" than at the moment of salvation. Then, through sanctification, we are daily being made into Christ's image as we trust Him deeper with our whole life. Finally glorification happens as we move from this life, into eternity. 1 John tells us, we will be "like Him". Salvation is a vital topic to know, study and understand. Without an understanding of this, we will not be able to understand many other topics of our faith.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. God's Sovereignty in Salvation

- Read Ephesians 2:1-10.
- What is man's spiritual condition before salvation?
 - "...you were dead in your transgressions." This means there was no life. Talk about what death means. In death there is no energy, no movement, no signs of life. This verse doesn't say you were dying or you were messed up in your sin... it plainly says that you were dead.
- Does this condition require help outside of ourselves? Why?
 - There's a fun illustration people like to use to describe God saving you that likens salvation to God throwing you a flotation device as you were lost at sea and thus saving you. One thing this illustration misses is our "deadness" in our sin. The better illustration would be, you were dead at sea, floating face down in the water. Then God, through Jesus, breathed new life into your lifeless body and saved you from the eternal death that results from sin.
- Why is it important to understand that salvation is a work of God and not our own?
 - If we don't understand that it's God that works Salvation in us, we will think that there is a way that we can make it back to Him by our own efforts.

2. Evidence of Conversion

- Read Acts 2:37-38; Romans 10:9-10. What is man's responsibility in salvation?
 - Conversion equals repentance and faith lived out in a life of obedience.
 - § Our only responsibility is to respond to what God's already done.
 - What is repentance?
 - § Repentance in it's simplest form is agreeing with God about your sin and turning away from sin.
 - What is faith?
 - § Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."
 - § Simply put, the biblical definition of faith is "trusting in something you cannot explicitly prove."
 - § How does faith work in conversion?
- Read James 2:14-26; Romans 6:17-18; Galatians 5:22-23. What are the evidences of true conversion?

SESSION 9

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

STAND FIRM IN BATTLE

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENEMY AND HIS SCHEMES TO DESTROY FAITH.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

When you think about spiritual warfare, what comes to mind?

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 6:10-20; Matthew 4:1-11; Genesis 3:1-7; Daniel 10 (all)

MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 6:10-12

TEACHING TIME

When we become a follower of Christ, we enter into an unseen spiritual war that lasts the rest of our lives. At the very beginning of scripture in Genesis 3, we are introduced to our opponent. In John 10:10 Jesus tells us that He (Jesus) came to give abundant life but that Satan (our enemy) came to steal, kill, and destroy us. Satan is real and he wants to destroy those who are a part of the kingdom of God. He wants to steal your joy, kill your influence and destroy your life. In Ephesians 6:10-20, we are taught that our war is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Also, we are taught how to fight against them. We are instructed to put on the “Full Armor of God” so that we can stand our ground when the day of evil comes. We must remember this verse says, “When” the day of evil comes and not “if” the day of evil comes.

Many people are deceived into thinking that as we follow Christ that all troubles will subside but the Word never says that. However, it does say that Jesus would be with us in the trials. Notice in Ephesians 5 there are 5 components to the armor of God: The Belt of Truth, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Gospel of Peace, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit. It is important to understand each piece of armor because they directly defend and wage war against all of Satan’s specific schemes. It is vitally important for every Christ follower to understand each piece of armor, it’s use and be able to wield them properly.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How does Satan attack specifically in this passage?

2. Read Daniel 10 (whole chapter).

- Note: The “Prince of Persia” and the “Prince of Greece” are not human rulers but rather, demons placed over spiritual “areas of occupations”.

- o Read Ephesians 6:12 in the KJV version and you will notice the wording “principalities” or in other words...”a state ruled by a prince” being used as to what our battle is fought against.

- o This shows us the importance of prayer as we enter communities to plant churches or go to foreign nations to minister to unreached peoples.

- o We must first pray and fast and bring down the principalities that the Holy Spirit reveals to us as occupying the area. THEN productive ministry can proceed.

- What is Satan most concerned about in Spiritual Warfare?

- o Short Answer: Territory

- § Old Testament example: **Promised Land**- God told the Israelites to conquer, occupy and transform the land and culture.

- § New Testament example: **The World** - Jesus told the disciples to make disciples of “ALL Nations” baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything that Christ taught. (i.e-transforming).

- What role does prayer and fasting play in Spiritual Warfare?

3. Read Genesis 3:1-7. How does Satan attack specifically in this passage?

4. Read Ephesians 6:10-20.

- On a scale of 1-10, how aware are you of spiritual warfare in your life? Explain.

- How does each piece of armor help us fight the attacks of the enemy? Talk about each piece.

- How does spiritual warfare drive us to pray?

SESSION 10

PRAYER

POWER THROUGH PRAYER

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF PRAYER.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your prayer life? Explain.

SCRIPTURE: John 14:13-14, Philippians 4:6-7, James 5:16-18, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17, Matthew 6:5-15.

MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 4:6-7

TEACHING TIME

“Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays.” -Soren Kierkegaard The most basic definition of prayer is “talking to God.” Prayer is not meditation or passive reflection; it is the direct addressing to God. It is the communication of the human soul with the Lord who created the soul. Prayer is the primary way for the believer in Jesus Christ to communicate his emotions and desires with God and to fellowship with God. Prayer is spiritual communication between man and God, a two-way relationship in which man should not only talk to God but also listen to Him. Praying to God is like a child’s conversation with his father. It is natural for a child to ask his father for the things he needs or wants. Think of a young child asking their father for something. There is no shame or worry about being looked down upon. There is safety and security in the relationship. It’s the same with God and His children.

When we come to faith in Christ, we have direct access to God. When you come to Christ, you become a child of God and have the privilege of talking to Him in prayer at any time about anything. The Christian life is a personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ. And best of all, it is a relationship that will last for all eternity. We can tell Him whatever we want and we know that He hears us! One thing that I’ve run into time and time again is that many people don’t know how to get started when it comes to prayer. To help get you started in a consistent prayer life use this acronym as a starting point for “how to pray”:

ACTS

- **Adoration:** appreciating God for who he is apart from what he has done for us.
- **Confession:** acknowledging to God our specific sin and seeking his pardon.
- **Thanksgiving:** appreciating God for his benefit to us.
- **Supplication:** interceding for ourselves or others according to God’s will. (basically asking Him for things)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 14:13-14. Do you believe God answers prayer?

- Give an example of why you believe this?
- What does it mean to “...ask in my name”?

2. Read Philippians 4:6-7. How should we handle worry and anxiousness?

- Why is this so hard sometimes?
- What kind of encouragement should we gain from a Father that stands ready to not only hear our cares, concerns and worries, but also stands ready to fight for us?

3. Read James 5:16-18.

- Why should we pray for one another?
- How did God answer Elijah’s prayer?

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17. When should we pray?

- What does it look like to “pray without ceasing”?

5. Read Matthew 6:5-15. How did Jesus teach us to pray?

- This prayer was meant to be a template for us to learn how to pray and what to pray for.
- It was not meant to be recited religiously.

6. What has the power to hinder our prayers?

- Read Psalm 66:8, James 4:3, James 1:5-8, John 15:7, Isaiah 59:1-2, Prov 21:13, 1 Peter 3:7
- As you read through these verses, were there areas in your life that could be hindering your prayers?
 - o How can I help you overcome these so your prayer life can flourish?

SESSION 11

FASTING

INTIMACY WITH GOD

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF FASTING

STARTER QUESTIONS:

What is the purpose of fasting in the life of a believer?

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 42:1-2, Matthew 6:16-18, Acts 13:2, Acts 14:23

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 42:1-2

TEACHING TIME

There is an important word that most people miss in Matthew 6. Jesus said “when you fast” not “if you fast”, so He seems to be saying that fasting should be done on a regular basis by people who follow Jesus. Fasting is a temporary renunciation of something that is in itself good, like food, in order to intensify our expression of need for something greater — namely, God and his work in our lives. While fasting is suggested throughout scripture to be a way to gain understanding, closeness with God or to create humility in our lives, nowhere in scripture do we see it commanded of us. However, throughout the book of Acts we see the early Church seeking God for answers through prayer AND fasting. While these two can function separately, there are instances in the life of a believer where they work best in tandem.

Jesus insisted that our fasting not be for the sake of impressing other people. In fact, we should go out of our way, he says, as much as possible — washing our face, combing our hair — to keep other people from knowing that we are fasting. And that gives fasting for Christians a radically Godward focus. In this sense, fasting is a great test and confirmation that God is real to us, since in many situations God is the only person who knows you’re fasting. At its core, fasting is a way of expressing our deep longing for intimacy with God and ultimately our desire for Jesus to return. It’s stretching our soul out before our Father asking Him to move on our behalf

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Psalm 42:1-2. Have you ever experienced a longing for God like David expresses in this passage?

- Why do you think fasting draws us closer to God?

2. Read Matthew 6:16-18. How does Jesus instruct people to fast?

- Why do you think that He suggests we fast?
- What are some situations in life where fasting is helpful?
- Here are a few examples, but there are many more:
 - Big decisions/ Needing an answer from God
 - Spiritual warfare
 - Intercession for a brother or sister in Christ
 - Times of testing
 - Distance from God

3. Read Acts 13:2 and Acts 14:23. Why does fasting in unison with prayer and worship seem to be such a common practice in the Church in Acts?

- Did prayer and fasting move the hand of God or did prayer and fasting align the people's heart with God?
 - It allowed the removal of worldly distractions to allow the early Christians to move closer to the heart of God, thus being able to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.

4. How can we help one another begin to make fasting a regular part of our relationship with Jesus?

SESSION 12

OBEDIENCE

TRUST AND OBEY

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF OBEDIENCE.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Why is obedience so important in the life of a believer?

SCRIPTURE: John 14:15-31; James 1:22-25; 1 John 2:3-6; 2 Corinthians 10:5

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 10:5

TEACHING TIME

Obedience can be defined as “submission to another’s authority”. This definition works perfectly as it applies to our faith. In fact, obedience is one of the most essential parts of the Christian faith. For Christians, the act of taking up our cross and following Christ (Matthew 16:24) means obedience. The Bible says that we show our love for Jesus by obeying Him in all things: “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15). Christ Himself is the greatest illustration of obedience for us in scripture. Scripture tells us that “He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:8).

Therefore, we can see that obedience does not come easy or natural all the time. In fact, more times than not, it is a vicious fight between our spirit and our flesh to obey God’s Word. The fight to obey is an everyday battle. For the Christian, obedience means complying with everything God has commanded. It is our duty to do so. Knowing this, it is important to remember that our obedience to God is not solely a matter of duty. We obey Him because we love Him (John 14:23). Also, we understand that the spirit of obedience is as important as the act of obedience. We serve the Lord in humility, and love. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we grow more and more in our obedience to God as we seek to live a life that glorifies Him.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 14:15-31

- How do we know if we love God?
 - We know that we love God by what we consistently (not perfectly) do and don't do. Obedience is the fruit of our love for God.
- Are we alone in trying to walk in obedience?
 - What do you remember learning about the Holy Spirit a few weeks ago that you now understand can help you as you seek obey God?
- Who did God send to help us?
 - How does the Holy Spirit assist as we strive to live a life of obedience?

2. Read James 1:22-25

- What do you think James means here by saying someone who only listens to the word and fails to do what it says only deceives themselves.
 - Why do you think he takes it a step further and relates lack of obedience to forgetting your own reflection?

3. Read 1 John 2:3-6

- What does this passage say about obedience?
 - Is it possible to “live as Jesus did?” Explain.
 - § Be careful here. Don't give your opinions. Share what the Word says. Use cross-references if needed.
- Is it possible to be a Christian and not walk in obedience?
(Hint: the answer is yes and no)

4. Read 2 Corinthians 10:5

- Where does the fight to be obedient begin?
 - In your mind.
- Why is it important to “take every thought captive”?
 - How is this done?
- How can we help each other do this?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

Obedience does not happen in the moment. The seeds of obedience are sown days, weeks or months before the decision to obey God is ever made.

SESSION 13

THE LOCAL CHURCH

THE BODY OF CHRIST

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word “church” what comes to mind?

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 12:3-8

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 12:4-5

TEACHING TIME

The Church is not a building and despite what we have grown up thinking, the Church is not confined to a Sunday morning service. The Local Church is a group of people who have repented and turned from their sins, who follow Jesus and who meet regularly to read God’s Word and celebrate baptism and communion together. The recognition and practice of Baptism and Communion are what separates the Church from any other body of people. The greatest moves of God haven’t happened in elaborate buildings, but among the people of God. This is a critical truth to walk through with your disciple. We say it like this: “A church isn’t a building to come to but rather a group of people to belong to.”

By simply breaking down the word “church” (Ekklesia) in the Bible we learn that the Church was an assembly of “called out” ones. Ekklesia means a gathering of people united by a common identity (Christ) and purpose (God’s mission). Something significant and heartbreaking happened in 313 A.D. when Constantine legalized Christianity in Rome. The Church ceased to be a movement and it became a location. Eventually a German word, Kirche, was substituted for Ekklesia. Kirche and Ekklesia refer to two very different ideas. A Kirche (church) is a location or a building while an Ekklesia (church) is a purposeful, often powerful gathering of people united by identity and purpose that cannot be bound by the walls of a building. You can lock the doors of a Kirche. Not so with the Ekklesia of Jesus Christ. The church (Ekklesia) was and still is a movement of God, empowered by God and protected by God. The Church is also described as the body of Christ. Since Christ fills His followers with His Spirit (The Holy Spirit), the Church, therefore goes and does the will of the Father not alone, but empowered and equipped.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the Local Church?

- What separates the local church from any other organization or group of people who meet in a community?
 - The Local Church is a group of people who have repented and turned from their sins, who follow Jesus and who meet regularly to read God's Word and celebrate baptism and communion together. The word "ekklesia" meaning "called out ones" was originally a governmental term. Therefore, the church, is the called out kingdom government of God. We, the church, are meant to walk in Kingdom authority throughout the earth, bringing Heaven's order in to the earth

2. Read Acts 2:42-47

- What was the early church devoted to?
 - There were devoted to 4 things
 - § *The apostles teaching* - The Word of God
 - § *Fellowship* - Doing Life Together
 - § *The breaking of bread* - Recognizing the Lord's Supper
 - § *Prayer* - They pray for and with each other.
- How did other people around them view the believers?
 - What do you think it means that the believers enjoyed the favor of all the people?
 - Why was this occurring?
- What did the early church do with their possessions?
 - How does this differ from the Church today?
 - How should the application of generosity work in the Church today?

3. Read 1 Peter 2:9-10

- How does God view His Church?
- What is a "royal priesthood"?
- What is a priest?

4. Read Matthew 28:18-20

- What is God's purpose and mission for the church?
 - Based off this passage, what is the mission of every follower of Christ?
 - Why do you think Discipleship is overlooked so often in churches?
 - What is your biggest draw back from entering in the mission God has for His Church?

5. Read Romans 12:3-8

- How did God design the church to function?
 - Unity
 - Faith
 - Obedience
 - Surrender

FINAL THOUGHTS:

When you know who you are in Christ, you aren't in competition with who other people are. Faithfully follow Jesus in becoming who you were meant to be in Christ.

SESSION 14

BECOMING FAMILY

BEING ACTIVE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF BECOMING A PART OF THE CHURCH FAMILY.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Is Church membership required?

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:21-31; Acts 20:28; Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 6:1-6; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:3-8

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Corinthians 12:18-20

TEACHING TIME

Church membership is a modern concept. The biblical concept comes down to one thing; becoming the family of God being connected in a house. Becoming the family of God points to the spiritual union between Christ and his church. The heart of becoming an active family member of the house of God isn't necessarily signing something, or having your name on a list. The point is a mutually recognized, formal relationship between a Christian and the Church in which both say, "I am committed to you. I will share your joy and your pain. I will take responsibility for you. I will love and care for you." That's the meaning of becoming active in the church family.

Each local church is the body of Christ, and we as individual Christians are part of the church to carry out the plans and purposes of our Lord Jesus. The most important thing to see is that the Bible consistently talks about the church having a boundary. There are people who are in and people who are out. It's very definitive. Just because a person attends a church, their presence alone does not make that person a part of the Church. What makes a person a part of the church is someone who is active in developing relationships and growing in their God given assignment/purpose. You can see in other places in scripture that Disciples are meant to use their gifts to build up and serve the Church in a number of ways.

We see in Acts 2:37-47 that there is a numerical record of those who had professed Christ and been filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 41) and an acknowledgement that the church was tracking the growth (v. 47).

In Acts 6:1-6; we see elections take place in order to address a specific problem and accusation.

In Romans 16:1-16, we see what appears to be an awareness of who is a “part” of the church.

In 1 Timothy 5:3-16, we see a clear teaching on how to handle widows in the church and in this text we see a criteria for who would or would not qualify for the Church’s widow care program. The local church in Ephesus is organized, and they were working out a ministry plan.

When you begin to look at these texts it becomes clear that God’s plan for his church is that we would belong to a local community of faith that is active in pursuing identity and relationship in Christ.

The bottom line is that becoming a part of the local church family is a question of biblical obedience, not personal preference!

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Romans 12:3-8. What do you notice about Paul’s instructions to the Church in Rome?

- What does this reveal about how God has set up the Church?
- What do you think he means by “don’t think of yourself more highly than you ought? What does this reveal about the heart of the church members?
- What giftings do you think you have and how can they be used to build up and encourage the Church?

2. Read Acts 2:37-47. What is required to be a part of the Church?

- What do you notice most about this passage?
- Pay attention to the organization and the unity found within the early church.

3. Read Matthew 18:15-17. What is church discipline and how does today’s church differ from the early church in this regard?

- Why is church discipline necessary and why does it rarely carried out in today’s churches?
 - Too many churches are more concerned with filling seats and collecting a tithe than they are ensuring their people are following Jesus and living in victory over sin
- What happens when church discipline is done incorrectly or not at all?

4. Why is belonging to a church family crucial to the growth and maturity of every disciple?

- What keeps people away from investing in their local church through membership?

REMEMBER:

Belonging to a local church family is a question of Biblical obedience; not personal preference!

SESSION 15

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

WHAT? WHY? HOW?

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

STARTER QUESTIONS:

What do you think of when you hear the term “spiritual gifts?”

SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, v28; Ephesians 4:11-12

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 12:4-5

TEACHING TIME

A spiritual gift is a God-given ability, distributed to individual Christians by the Holy Spirit that allows him/or her to help in the work of building up the Church. The word normally translated “gift” in the New Testament is the Greek word “charismata”. The word means “gifts of grace” and refers to the gifts or special abilities God has given believers through the power of the Holy Spirit. While there is no clear answer as to when a Disciple receives spiritual gifts, it seems that the gift comes with the Giver and is bestowed at conversion (2 Timothy 1:6). Spiritual gifts, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are not the same as the gift of the Holy Spirit. There are many gifts of the Spirit, but there is only one Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit is received at the moment a person trusts Christ as Lord (Acts 2:38). Spiritual gifts, however, are given to each member of the Church for the common good of the body (1 Corinthians 12:7), which means our gifts were given so that we could serve the body and see it built up into the complete image of Christ. God has given gifts to the Body to manifest His presence among us, to remind us of our dependence upon Him and one another, bringing unity to the Church, to edify the body and to reach the lost.

Help them to see that their gifts are important in building the church and that they should get involved in the Church by using their giftings regularly. Encourage and build them up.

SESSION 16

EVANGELISM

SAVED AND SENT

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF EVANGELISM

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Have you ever shared the Gospel with someone? Why or why not?

SCRIPTURE: Acts 1:8; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Corinthians 1:17; Romans 10:12-15; Matthew 9:36-38; Matthew 28:18-20

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 3:15

TEACHING TIME

Evangelism is the term the Church uses to refer to the preaching of the Gospel. It comes from the same Greek word for gospel (euangelion) and means, literally, “gospeling.” When we evangelize we are “gospeling” — we are spreading the Good News, the Gospel, of Jesus Christ. Evangelism is a way we can fulfill Christ’s call to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). The distinction between witnessing and evangelism is important because it is easy to think we are evangelizing when all we are doing is bearing witness to the Savior. Giving one’s testimony is a good thing, but it is not evangelism. Testifying to the work of God in our lives bears witness to what Christ has done for us; but it does not by itself give the content of the Gospel. Living a righteous life manifests the work of the Holy Spirit, but we have not evangelized our neighbor if we have never shared the Gospel with him or her. People are converted and are brought into the kingdom of heaven only through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 16:25-34) and that can only happen by hearing the Gospel and responding to it.

Evangelism is a key component of the Christian faith. We don’t receive the Gospel simply to enjoy it ourselves but rather we have a call to spread the Gospel to those who don’t know Christ. What this means is we begin to leverage our lives for the work of the Gospel. That means using our areas of influence to share and spread the Gospel with people who need to hear and receive it.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Mark 16:15-16. Where did Jesus tell us to go and preach the Gospel?

- What sticks out in this passage?
- What does “believe” mean in this passage?
 - Greek word used here means to “cling to”, to “rely on fully”, or to “rest the entire weight” of your life on the belief of something.

2. Read 1 Corinthians 1:17

- How did the writer preach the Gospel?
 - What does Paul mean by “not with eloquence”?
 - § Paul didn’t need to use big words because the Gospel speaks for itself.
 - § Paul was a testimony of the Gospel’s power to change someone and use someone who may not seem usable
 - § Don’t sell yourself short! God CAN use you!
- What hesitations do you have about sharing the Gospel with someone?
 - Start with what you know.
 - Read John 9:1-25 (Focus on Verse 25)

3. Read Matthew 9:36-38 and Romans 10:12-15.

- Why is it so important that we take evangelism seriously?
 - The Church is God’s plan A in bringing the world to Salvation
 - There is no plan B
- What happens if the Church doesn’t share the hope that is found in Christ? What happens if we fail to share?

4. Read Matthew 28:18-20.

- Who’s one person in your life that you could begin to evangelize and disciple?
- A good way to start asking that question in an accountability relationship is, “Who is your one?”. Start using this in the community that you are involved in.

SESSION 17

GENEROSITY

A LESSON IN STEWARDSHIP

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF GENEROSITY.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

What does it look like to honor God with your finances?

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 4:10; Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Colossians 3:23; John 3:27

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 9:6

TEACHING TIME

The Bible has a lot to say about generosity as a desirable character trait in the heart and life of every believer. 2 Corinthians 9:6 says, "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously." As we see in scripture, God is generous, and He expects us to follow His example. The greatest example of generosity in scripture is God giving His son as a sacrifice for our sins. Since our God is a God of great generosity, we ought to be a people of great generosity.

Honoring God with our finances is so much more than simply paying a tithe. In fact, we don't even see tithing appear in New Testament scripture. We do however see multiple scriptures encouraging us to honor God with our wealth and many lessons on being generous with our time, our treasure and our talents. What that means is that God wants us to live generous lives. We say it like this, "the tithe is the floor not the ceiling when it comes to our giving. We have to begin to understand that 100% of everything we have is already God's." He has given us what we have to be stewarded in a way that brings Him glory. We have to remember, as people, we are never "owners" but always "stewards". When it comes to giving, we are simply giving back what He has so graciously already entrusted to us. 10% is a starting point. Giving is a great way to increase our faith as we watch God bless our giving and continue to provide for us as we depend more on Him

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 Peter 4:10

- How should we use the gifts we receive?
- How does using our gifts (talents) pertain to our generosity?

2. Read Malachi 3:10

- Why is bringing our tithe or offering to the church important?
 - As we are obedient in giving, God uses the resources of the Church to carry out His plans through the Church. A healthy giving culture in a church creates an effective missions and outreach culture.
- What does God promise when it comes to giving?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

- What does God want us to do with our money and wealth?
- What does it mean to “give what you have decided in your heart to give”?
 - Allow the Holy Spirit to direct your giving, and then obey.
 - Let 10% be a starting point.

4. Read John 3:27

- Where do all the things we have ultimately come from?
- What does this mean for our time, treasure and talents?
 - Everything we have, we are stewards of and not owners of.
 - Talk about what steward means.

5. How does understanding the stewardship principle affect the way you think about giving?

Remember: *“A lack of generosity refuses to acknowledge that your assets are not really yours but Gods.” - Tim Keller*

SESSION 18

BECOMING A DISCIPLE MAKER

GOAL: THE PERSON WILL GROW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF BEING A DISCIPLE-MAKING DISCIPLE.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

When you think about making a Disciple what comes to your mind?

SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 2:2, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:12-16, Ephesians 4:15

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 2:2

TEACHING TIME

Discussed in session 2, a disciple is someone who follows Jesus, someone whose life is being transformed by Jesus and someone who has joined Jesus on His mission. We have also established that the mission of God is to spread His glory to the ends of the earth. We believe according to Matthew 28 that the main way this happens is when the Church is faithful to the Great Commission and begins to make disciple-making disciples. Jesus is our model. He did not just make disciples; He made disciple makers. There is something different about approaching discipleship with the intention of making a disciple maker. Your goal is not limited only to the person you are meeting with, but extends to the hundreds of people your disciple will influence over the course of their life. When Paul instructs Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2 to entrust the message of the Gospel to faithful men who will be able to teach it to others, he is referring to Timothy being intentional in discipleship. Don't just meet to be meeting with someone to check off your discipleship box for the week. Think through and pray through the people you are pursuing in discipleship relationships. Prayer is the most important ingredient when it comes to making disciples.

Even as Jesus chose the 12 apostles, He went away by Himself to pray and sought God in who He should choose to be His closest followers. There was intention. There was a strategy. Just like Jesus, we should be in constant prayer seeking the will of the Father as we live our lives committed to building the Kingdom. Being a disciple maker is about being on mission. Being a disciple maker puts you one step closer to seeing the Great Commission becoming an accomplished fact.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:2

- What sticks out to you most in Paul's instructions to Timothy here?
- How would you define a reliable man/or woman when it comes to teaching what's been taught.
 - Understand that Paul was giving instructions to Timothy who was a very important leader in the early Church. He was instructing Timothy on how to set up Church structure and advising him on how the Church would grow, effectively and healthily. Discipleship was the best model for Church growth then, and it's the best model now.

2. Read Ephesians 4:15

- We believe that a disciple is a person who in every way is becoming more like Jesus Christ. We have already defined a Disciple as someone who follows Jesus, someone who is being transformed by Jesus and someone who has joined Jesus on His mission.
- Why is making disciple making disciples the most important thing we can do as followers of Christ?
 - Why is it overlooked so often in the Church today?
 - How can you help change that?

3. Read Matthew 28:18-20

- Do you see this as a command or a suggestion?
- What do you think this looks like in application?
- What's the best way to make disciple making disciples?
 - In your life, who are the people you spend the most time with? Is the Holy Spirit working through you to influence those around you? Start there.

4. Can you imagine if we took this model of discipleship as seriously as Jesus did? How would the Church look different? How would the world look different?

5. Use this tool we have spent 18 sessions going through as a starting point.

Remember: You don't have to be an expert in scripture to be a successful disciple maker. Read scripture, do what it says, and bring someone along with you for the journey. You will be amazed at what God reveals to you.

6. Read Acts 1:8

- What does understanding that you are a part of these "witnesses" that Jesus is sending out change your mindset towards disciple making?

6. During this process, what are some topics that have stuck out to you most?

- What did these topics teach you that you didn't already understand?

LAST THOUGHTS

Jesus' last words on this earth were instructions to go make disciples of all nations; teaching the truths of the Gospel, baptizing those disciples intentionally into the body of Christ, and teaching them to do the same for other people.

The main purpose of Christian discipleship is to be like Christ. Christian discipleship might best be described as a training designed to develop individuals to become more like their Savior. When Christ became man and lived on earth, he endured all of the same trials, pains, and persecutions that man suffers in order to prove himself as a perfect example for us. Therefore, one of the primary purposes of Christian discipleship is to emulate the character of Christ.¹ Peter 2:21 says, "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."

Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus says, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." We are commanded to take the light we are given and spread it around the world to others so that they may see Christ and receive Him for themselves.

It says in John 15:8, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

It is not enough to simply "believe" - we have to "follow" in the footsteps of Jesus' example so that, by the Holy Spirit of God, we bear fruit that looks like God. When that happens, people will come to know God the Father more and more because they see Jesus in your living example as a follower.



RELENTLESS

CHURCH