

INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:6-7



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Thank you for your heart to invest in new and growing Christians through this discipleship course! This is one of the greatest investments you can make with your life. There is no greater joy than seeing someone you have trained going on to train someone else.

Our desire is that we would see people from our church and community trained in the life-changing principles of God's Word. We have taken the time and work to make this course practical and easy to use. Below you will find some help and answers to some of the questions you might have as you begin this process.

COMPONENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP

WEEKLY GATHERING

Each week will begin with every member of our discipleship program meeting together for a time of fellowship, prayer, and instructions for the week. We will use this time to make any announcements and prayer requests being mentioned in the Auditorium as well as take personal prayer requests within the discipleship group.

WEEKLY SESSION

Following the gathering time, the discipler will split up with his assigned individual or couple to begin the lesson. Each session is intended to last 45-60 minutes. Some sessions may take more or less time depending on the content you add and any questions the disciple might have. Before beginning the lesson and the review of last week's material, take time to catch up with each other and pray over the material. Remember, you are going through life together and helping each other become better followers of Christ!

REVIEW

Each time together should begin with a review of the previous week's lesson. The discipler should see if the individual or couple had any questions as a result of their daily Bible reading or devotionals. You can use the review questions to help guide your review over the content of the previous lesson.

LESSON

The lesson is the priority of each session. Each lesson will be packed with Scripture and Scripture references. Feel free to add personal illustrations and real life examples to the lessons, but keep in mind the focus should be kept on the Word of God.

SCRIPTURE AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

As you work through each lesson, you will find that some verses are printed out in their entirety and some are just a reference. The Scripture references are designed for the discipler and the disciple to look up in the Bible. We firmly believe that there

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is great benefit in opening the Word of God and learning the layout of the Bible. Notes can be taken in the pages of the lesson or in a copy of the Bible. Always be sensitive to someone who may need help finding a reference or help in reading the Bible. Work hard at keeping the Bible at the center of every time spent together.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Within each lesson, there will be certain times where a conversation starter is given. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the background of the disciple as well as share your background.

QUESTIONS

A key element to learning is the opportunity to ask questions and be challenged with questions. Allow the disciple time to ask questions and comprehend the content, but also challenge their minds and hearts with questions. Questions can be convicting. You may not be able to give a Bible answer to every question right away; that's okay. Write down the question and determine to bring back an answer the following week. If you have trouble with how to handle a question, you can bring it to your disciple leader.

APPLICATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Each lesson closes with some points of application and assignments to be done over the course of the next week before the next meeting. The application statements are intended to be commitments made to God. These applications will help place a punctuation point on the lesson. If time allows, it is encouraged for the discipler to go over the assignments to make sure they are clear.

DEVOTIONALS

One of the keys to developing a committed follower of Christ is found in their walk with God. For this reason, each lesson will close with a series of devotionals that can be worked through in between meetings. Each disciple should be encouraged to take the time do these devotionals and Bible reading.

RELATIONSHIPS

Biblical discipleship is not merely a once-per-week meeting; it is a way of life. As you work through the course together, take time to build spiritual, long-lasting relationships around the Word of God. Throughout the week, take the time to pray for each other, communicate with each other, and prepare for the next time you will meet.

QUESTIONS ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP

WHAT WILL I LEARN IN DISCIPLESHIP?

During the time of discipleship, you will learn some of the most basic but vital truths of God's Word. Some of the topics are as follows:

- *The Word of God*
- *Who God is*
- *Who Jesus is*
- *Christian Living*
- *The Local Church*
- *Christian Service*
- *How to share the Gospel*

These are just a few of the important topics we will examine from God's Word about



how we can become a committed follower of Jesus Christ.

WHY DISCIPLE?

When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He not only mentioned the spreading of the Gospel, but He also mentioned the training of those who had been reached with the Gospel (Matthew 28:19-20). Not only does Jesus command us to disciple, but discipleship is necessary for the spiritual growth of a Christian if we intend to blossom in today's culture (2 Peter 3:17-18, Colossians 2:6-8).

WHY DISCIPLE AT THE CHURCH?

We believe the church is the God-ordained avenue of truth in today's culture (1 Timothy 3:15). Also, Jesus died for the church and ordained the ministry of the church (Ephesians 5:25-27). We believe God blesses and uses discipleship in the context of the local church. We believe that, in discipling at the church as a part of our Wednesdays in the Word, the Lord will build a love and faithfulness to the church in the life of a new Christian.

WHY DISCIPLE THROUGH THE LIFESTAGE CLASSES?

Relationships are vital to growth in any aspect. By building healthy, spiritual relationships around God's Word, we believe this will benefit you, the disciple, and our church. These relationships provide an avenue to ask and answer questions in a private setting as well as provides a means of accountability for maximum growth.

WHY DISCIPLE ONE-ON-ONE INSTEAD OF IN A GROUP?

Because relationships are so vital to growth and keeping people in the church, a group setting often allows people to slip through the cracks easily. It also makes for an awkward environment to ask and answer questions.

WHAT DO I DO AFTER COMPLETING THE DISCIPLESHIP COURSE?

The Biblical model of discipleship is demonstrated as we take what we have learned and invest into someone else's life. We would encourage you to begin reaching souls through the outreach opportunities at our church and begin to cultivate relationships with guests and new members. This is the best way to find someone you can see grow into another committed follower of Jesus Christ.

WHAT DOES DISCIPLESHIP LOOK LIKE?

Discipleship works the same way in the church as it does in real life. Just as a parent would not leave a child to fend for himself, neither should a baby Christian be left to fend for himself. The early church demonstrated discipleship in the book of Acts and throughout the Epistles. Discipleship builds committed followers of Jesus Christ who are able to take the Gospel to someone else and disciple them as well. Discipleship changes the church from an organism built on addition to an organism built through multiplication (Acts 2: 41, 47, 5:14, 6:1, 6:7). As more disciples are being developed, the Lord will raise up leaders to see his work move forward (2 Timothy 2:2).



COMMITMENTS TO DISCIPLESHIP

A COMMITMENT TO MEET EVERY WEEK TO FINISH THE COURSE

This course is set up to take you between thirteen and fifteen weeks which is about four months. Make a commitment to be in your place ready to participate each week so that you can finish the course in a timely manner.

A COMMITMENT TO MY LOCAL CHURCH AND LIFESTAGE CLASS

As you commit to meeting each week, it will be easy to make excuses about missing church and class. One of the most significant ways that God strengthens and grows our faith is through the preaching of His Word and the fellowship of godly Christians. The Biblical preaching of our services and the relationships of your LifeStage Class will encourage you in your discipleship journey.

A COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE WITH AN OPEN MIND AND OPEN HEART

There will be some things in the course that could rub you the wrong way. Remember this is not man's opinion; rather, this is God's Word. Each week ask God to work in your life and allow you to complete the course and weekly assignments with a tender heart.

In many ways, discipleship is a lifetime process. There will be days where you feel as though you are making great strides in the right direction, and there will be days when you take several steps backward. The lessons in this course are intended to be the launching pad to a life of spiritual growth in this discipleship journey. It may seem daunting, but there is no greater journey than the one that leads you closer to your Lord and Saviour.

