

GR^mUPS

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

PARTICIPANT NAME

TRAINING DATE

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FEEL FREE TO USE ALL BLANK PAGES AND
SPACES TO TAKE NOTES DURING THE SESSIONS

OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS

Midtown Fellowship Mission: creating a movement of gospel transformation through multiple congregations.

The Midtown Fellowship Discipleship Group Model is based on the following four pillars:

BIBLICAL

Group leaders affirm that their identity comes from the authority of scripture and commits to facilitating group discussions around God's word.

INTENTIONAL

Group leaders encourage, equip, and develop group members towards maturity in the Gospel and future leadership.

RELATIONAL

As disciples and disciple-makers, group leaders model relationship with God, scripture, the church and others.

REPRODUCIBLE

Group leaders partner with the Holy Spirit to identify and develop others to lead.

SESSION 1 - BIBLICAL // RELATIONAL

PURPOSE: The primary way discipleship happens is through relationships. We seek to cultivate an environment in our discipleship groups that is fertile ground for Gospel transformation. We believe this environment is cultivated through building a foundation of genuine relationships.

PATH: In this session, we will discuss avenues inside and outside of a group that can help build relationships within a group. We will also complete the My Part, Their Part, God's Part exercise together to identify a healthy framework for walking in deep relationships with others.

SESSION 2 - INTENTIONAL // REPRODUCIBLE

PURPOSE: As group leaders, we have the opportunity to pursue fellow disciples, as Jesus did, with intention. Through relationships, we seek to know group members and walk alongside them deliberately with the goal of seeing them mature in the Lord. We follow Jesus' discipleship process with His own disciples, and we do this for the same reason He did: to see the world reconciled to Himself.

PATH: In this session, we will explore a life of maturing in Christ. We will discuss each of the 4 invitations modeled by Jesus as he leads the disciples into deeper relationships with God (Himself) and one another. In addition, We will dive into how apprenticeship, in our Group Model, aligns with the disciples' apprenticeship to Jesus. Finally, we will talk about the practicalities of leading a group and cover frequently asked questions.

SESSION 1: BIBLICAL/RELATIONAL

PRE-WORK

- > [READ](#): Overview
- > [READ](#): Real Life Discipleship - Ch 1,2,4, and 6
- > [RESOURCE](#): Alignment
- > [RESOURCE](#): Key Terms
- > [RESOURCE](#): 3 Steps To Storying

OPTIONAL

- > [LISTEN](#): Discipleship Sermon: "The Great Commission"

TAKEAWAYS

ALIGNMENT

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS: WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE AT MIDTOWN?

A relational gathering of 4-16 people that are committed to maturing in Christ together.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

- > Based on Jesus' model of ministry, we invite smaller groups of people to connect in relationship around God's Word. Groups curriculum is created to help members and leaders understand the essential aspects of our identity as disciples.
- > Groups use Storying and the Head, Heart, Hands format to discuss a scripture passage as reproducible tools to observe, personalize and apply Scripture.
- > Groups are open and invitational to continually welcome others into the journey of being and making disciples.

RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- > Intentional relationships form from connections made in groups and lead to discipleship, growth, and maturity.
- > Groups meet weekly to provide opportunities in our busy lives for consistent and committed time to invest in relationships.
- > 1:1 discipleship relationships happen outside of the group
- > Leaders intentionally identify the vision and goal of the group, use Guidelines to create a safe environment, and utilize storying and rebuilding to introduce a passage of Scripture.

INTENTIONAL LEADER

- > Each group leader is trained in the relational discipleship groups model.
- > A group leader understands self as a disciple-maker and the group as a vehicle for relational discipleship.
- > As a group member reveals what they believe about God, what they believe about themselves, and how this affects their thoughts, feelings, and actions, the group leader is able to see where they are on the spectrum of spiritual maturity and how to disciple them toward maturing in Christ.

REPRODUCIBLE PROCESS

- > Just as we are called to be imitators of God (Eph 5:1), a group leader models relationship, 1:1 discipleship and the elements of group time in a way that is able to be imitated by others.
- > A group leader develops an apprentice to grow and bear fruit, with the goal of eventual group leadership. A leader continually welcomes others into the journey of being and making disciples, and equips the saints for the ministry of the church (Eph 4:12).
- > A group leader prepares the group to branch through prayer, listening to the Holy Spirit, providing opportunities for others to lead, new members to join and experience the power and presence of Jesus in their lives.

KEY TERMS

DISCIPLE: A follower of Christ. As defined by Matthew 4:19, a disciple is someone who knows and follows Christ, is changed by Christ, and is on mission with Christ.

DISCIPLESHIP: The path of ongoing transformation of a disciple into the image of Christ

1:1 DISCIPLESHIP: The process of one follower of Christ helping another person become a lifelong, obedient, reproducing disciple.

LEADER-APPRENTICE: System of training leaders in the group model. We want to help each other be disciples and make disciples. We want to identify potential leaders and equip people to use their gifts within the group.

LEADER: A disciple-maker who facilitates group discussion, notices where the Lord is at work in each person in his or her group in order to join the Lord in discipleship, and develops Apprentices to disciple group members outside of the group meeting time.

APPRENTICE: An Apprentice is being developed and trained for the purpose of stepping into group leadership in the future. An Apprentice will be given opportunities to facilitate small group meetings, meet with people for discipleship, and strategize about branching.

LEADER CARE: We believe in walking alongside leaders, caring for them as they pour into others, being a resource and source of encouragement. This kind of care looks different at every congregation, but we are committed to going on the journey together.

CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE A GROUP A PART OF THE MIDTOWN DISCIPLESHIP GROUP MODEL:

- > Around 4 to 20 people
- > Invitational culture
- > Organized by congregation
- > Discussions around a passage of scripture
- > Weekly, various nights of the week
- > Usually meet in/at people's homes
- > January-May and September-December (summers off)
- > Trained leaders

SEASONS OF A GROUP

INVITATIONAL GROUPS: All groups have an invitational culture. Even when groups are at capacity we encourage them to practice hospitality by inviting others to visit the group.

BRANCHING: Branching is the fruit of seeing believers grow and mature. We want to see believers trained and excited to lead groups. Branching may occur through an intentional plan, or it may begin to occur and evolve naturally as groups grow.

CREATING A COMMITTED CORE

CONSISTENCY

Create a sense of belonging and ownership.

- > Group members know what to expect each week.
- > Create a comfortable rhythm by facilitating through each element of the participant guide, allowing Group members to grow in trust and vulnerability.
- > Encourage Group ownership through storying and additional responsibilities.
- > Meet regularly and set Group as a weekly priority no matter how many members come; make Group meeting time valuable where discussions center around Jesus.

COMMUNICATION

Offer direct clarity about expectations and commitment.

- > Verbally lay the groundwork for how your Group is going to function.
- > Discuss how hard it is to meet weekly, but also that Group is worth it.
- > Cast vision—We are a Discipleship Group—we may not all be best friends, but we will prioritize supporting one another to grow in our faith.
- > Create a text/email thread for all group members, both male and female.
- > Group is for everyone! If one spouse cannot come to a Group meeting, the other spouse will make it a priority to attend.
- > Send follow up emails after group with questions from the Discussion guide
- > Send a reminder for the group's next weekly meeting.

COMMUNAL LIVING

Come as you are, and we will too.

- > Model vulnerability: don't be tempted to hide your weakness or strengths.
- > The host home can be messy, the children loud, the schedule thrown off a bit.
- > Offer simple snacks or drinks that may help people to feel more comfortable,
- > Do something different every 4-6 meetings: break up into men's and women's groups, share a meal, or have a night out.
- > Do something social outside of the weekly Group meeting to create personal connections.
- > Text or call to stay in touch, remember prayer requests and ask about them inside and outside the group to promote real relationships.

As Paul lays out in 1 Corinthians all of these actions are “a clanging cymbal” without love. These are all helpful ways for leaders to care for their members, but it is God's love that speaks to the head, moves through the heart, and works in our hands to build relationships and mature us into His likeness.

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-3

MATTHEW: GOOD NEWS - GREAT KING
EXPECTATIONS OF THE KING:
PETER'S CONFESSION
Matthew 16:13-28 (ESV)



big idea of the week:

Leaders, if your discussion veers off the rails, you can try to steer the conversation back to this theme. A true mark of following Jesus is submitting to his will and dying to our own.



OPEN **welcome:** Connect and check in with everyone briefly before the study starts. Use an icebreaker if needed.
opening prayer: Feel free to ask someone to open with prayer, asking God to speak to through his word.
vision: To be changed by Jesus; submitting to the Holy Spirit, scripture, and each other for transformation.
guidelines: Please read, review, or discuss weekly. The group guidelines are listed on the last page.

STORY **setting the scene:** A brief context for the passage. See last page.
tell the story: Encourage people to engage with the storyteller rather than look at the handout.
rebuild the story: Try different ways of doing this.
read the passage: Always close by reading the passage out loud.

SHARE Start by sharing how God met you in your reflection and meditation last week.

HEAD to help us examine what the word shows

Leaders, edit/omit questions as needed for your group. If your group gets stuck in this section, move on to the Heart section. (spend about 10 minutes here)

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do you find interesting about the many answers people had to who Jesus was?
- How do you imagine the disciples felt as they listened to everything Jesus said to them in this passage?

HEART to help us wrestle with what we believe

It's important to use "I" statements here. (spend about 30 minutes here)

- Where do you sense Jesus asking you to "deny yourself and follow him?"
- When have you experienced freedom and fruit from submitting to God's will instead of your own?
- How does Jesus's example of submitting his will to the Father and dying to himself give you courage to do the same?

HANDS to help bring the truth into our everyday realities through prayer

Use the prompt to spend time in prayer together. Let the Holy Spirit guide you. (spend about 15 minutes here)

- Read Philippians 2:1-11. Spend time confessing where you need help dying to yourself and praise Jesus for his example of humility and obedience. Pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with faith to follow Jesus this week, no matter the cost.

next week's passage: Ask for a volunteer to story the passage for next week: Matthew 19:16-30

WEEKLY RESOURCES

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Use this question as a way to encourage your group towards meditation, reflection, and prayer with Jesus throughout the week. Check in with each other next week to see how the Lord moved!

Meditate on Philippians 2:1–11 this week and ask the Lord to reveal himself to you in his example of humility and obedience.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Watch the supplemental video of our 12 South Assistant Pastor Darrell Jones for this week's discussion: <https://youtu.be/8o3qGZnYnPg>

Resources for the book of Matthew:

- BOOK: Sermon on the Mount by Sinclair B. Ferguson

- VIDEO: The Advance of the Kingdom of God - <https://rts.edu/resources/the-advance-of-the-kingdom-of-god/>
This video explains why the Gospel writers included the parables, what Jesus meant by them, and then unpacks the Parable of the Sower. NOTE: this video is about an hour long

- VIDEO: The Ancient of Days and the Great Commission - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vN6w1z9eiNM>
This video ties the Great Commission to the Old Testament, explaining why Matthew would have written it all down.

- ARTICLE: The Resurrection and Christian Mission by Tim Keller - <https://timothykeller.com/blog/2009/4/1/the-resurrection-and-christian-mission> This article ties the Great Commission to the Resurrection and walks through why that connection matters.

MATTHEW: GOOD NEWS - GREAT KING

EXPECTATIONS OF THE KING:

PETER'S CONFESSION

Matthew 16:13-28 (ESV)

Discipleship Group Guidelines:

- **Safe Group:** We strive for an environment where everyone can be open, and honest about his or her struggles and victories.
- **Confidentiality:** What is said in the group stays in the group.
- **Listen:** We want to value one another by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond while someone is sharing.
- **Pause:** Allowing a pause in the conversation after one person shares and before the next person shares gives the person sharing a chance to finish. A Pause also gives the group an opportunity to consider before responding.
- **Silence:** It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for people to think deeply, to gather their thoughts in order to share, and to genuinely consider what others have shared.
- **One Conversation at a Time:** Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.
- **No Fixing:** We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Give encouragement and ask questions, but try not to solve or fix one another.
- **No Rescuing:** When people are sharing something deeply personal, please resist the tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or their situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause people to stop sharing.
- **Be Curious:** By asking the next question, we communicate genuine interest. We keep the conversation moving forward while building relationships and intimacy.
- **Be Self-Aware:** Be mindful of how you are personally affecting the small group environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. Be sensitive about the amount of time you share, whether too much (dominating) or not enough (hiding).
- **Use "I" Statements:** It is very easy to talk about other people's issues, but, for our purposes, we want to put ourselves on the table. Use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "people", "you", "us", "we", etc.
- **Resolve Conflict Biblically:** As a group we commit to extend grace to one another. Conflict is not bad, it's an opportunity for growth. We are all being transformed to be more like Jesus. Conflict and change are a part of that journey. (Matthew 18)
- **Manage Technology:** Let's respect one another by silencing alerts on our devices.



Setting the Scene

Jesus asks Peter one of the most important questions any of us can be asked: "Who do you say that I am?" To truly say that Jesus is Lord alters how we live our lives and changes all of our allegiances. Jesus explains that following him will feel like dying to ourselves, but it is the only way true life and true joy is found.



Scripture

Matthew 16:13-28

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

If you need childcare reimbursement
please scan the QR code
and follow the prompts.



ICE BREAKERS // INTRO QUESTIONS

- > What is your most used emoji?
- > You have your own late night talk show, who do you invite as your first guest?
- > If you had to eat one meal everyday for the rest of your life what would it be?
- > If you were left on a deserted island with either your least favorite person or no one, which would you choose? Why?
- > What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?
- > If you had to delete all but 3 apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?
- > What fictional family would you be a member of?
- > If you could eliminate one thing from your daily routine, what would it be and why?
- > What sport would you compete in if you were in the Olympics?
- > What would your superpower be and why?
- > If you could instantly become an expert in something, what would it be?
- > What fictional world or place would you like to visit?
- > What book, movie read/seen recently would you recommend and why?
- > If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?
- > What is your favorite meal to cook and why?
- > What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?
- > You can have an unlimited supply of one thing for the rest of your life, what is it? Sushi? Scotch Tape?
- > What's your best scar story?
- > Are you sunrise, daylight, twilight, or nighttime? Why?

ADD YOUR OWN

CASTING A VISION FOR EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

THE VISION-CASTING MOMENT IN A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP IS SIMILAR TO THE CALL TO WORSHIP—A WAY TO REMIND ONE ANOTHER OF OUR PURPOSE OF THE MEETING, OF THE BROADER CALL OF EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, TRANSFORMATION, AND MATURITY GOD HAS PLACED ON OUR LIVES. A STATED VISION AND PURPOSE GIVE US AS LEADERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND OUR GROUP AND OURSELVES WHY GROUPS EXIST AT MIDTOWN.

Ask the group, “Why are we here?”

- > Give the group time to respond and process in their own words.
- > Follow up with a statement about evangelism and discipleship, using the words ‘disciple’ or ‘discipleship’ to help people create working definitions of each.

A FEW EXAMPLES

- > We gather for discipleship – being changed by Jesus – transforming our thoughts and actions to align with who God is and who He says we are.
- > We are here to build safety and trust by the common exploration of Scripture and life experience, to create space for the Holy Spirit to transform us through discipleship.
- > We’re here because we want to be changed by Jesus, and being here is our confession of that reality.
- > Our group is open and inviting to new people - we welcome people who are exploring their faith or who are already on the journey of discipleship with Jesus.
- > As Jesus’ disciples, we know that God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit and others. We gather to create space and opportunity for transformation.
- > God intends for us to grow more and more like Jesus through discipleship and He uses Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and others in this group to challenge and pursue us.
- > This is a safe place to bring and examine your full self, to ask questions, to be transformed by discipleship into the likeness of Christ.
- > As disciples, we encounter God’s word in the community, and through the work and power of the Holy Spirit, we are changed. We also want to share what the Lord reveals here with our friends and neighbors.
- > Our God is a God who reveals himself to us, his disciples, here in the community.
- > Our God is a speaking God – He speaks through Scripture, and through the Holy Spirit at work in each of us to disciple our hearts to be more like Jesus.

GUIDELINE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

We value intentionally incorporating the Guidelines into each small group meeting, however it can be a challenge to keep the discussion from becoming stale.

Here are a few questions to help spark your imagination as you lead your small group to reflect on the Guidelines in a fresh way.

- > Why are these guidelines important for us as a group?
- > When we invite new people to our group, how are the guidelines helpful?
- > Which guidelines have you incorporated into your everyday life?
- > How does an extended pause/silence affect you?
- > What are your tendencies when conflict occurs?
- > Where can we grow as a group in the way we listen and respond to one another during the discussion?
- > How do these guidelines create space for the work of the Holy Spirit?
- > Which of these guidelines is difficult for you? Why?
- > Which of these guidelines are you thankful for because of its impact on our group?
- > Do you view the guidelines as a constraint or freedom? Why?

3 STEPS TO STORYING

- 1 Have someone tell the story of the passage.
- 2 Rebuild the passage together.
- 3 Read the passage out loud.

SOMEONE TELLS THE STORY

- > Telling the story isn't the same as reading it.
- > Telling the story is not about memorizing the passage.
- > Because we want people to use their own voice and personality in telling these stories, each story will be told differently.
- > Storying does not include commentary, opinions, meanings, interpretations, explanations, or questions... we will get to all of that later in the Head-Heart-Hands discussion.
- > Everyone look at the storyteller (not at the passage) while he or she is storying the passage.
- > Encourage the storyteller to look at everyone else (not at the passage) and make eye-contact while he or she is storying the passage.

REBUILD THE PASSAGE TOGETHER

Have a printout of the Scripture for every person in the group, so that everyone is using the same translation. Rebuilding the passage can be done a number of different ways.

- > Have someone else retell the story.
- > Keep asking, "What happened next? Then what happened? Then what?" If something is skipped, then ask, "What came before that?"
- > Once everyone is looking at the passage, ask about any details they notice that may have been left out when the person told the passage as a story. (Be sure not to embarrass or shame the person who told the story when you do this. You simply want to help rebuild the details of the story together.)
- > Ask simple questions that deal with the facts of the passage. Questions like: What do you notice? What stood out to you? If you have heard this story before, what was new to you this time?

READ THE PASSAGE

- > Read the passage out loud in its entirety at least once.
- > Asking someone to read the passage out loud can be a great way to get someone whose voice has not been heard in the group to begin to talk more.
- > Direct everyone's eyes to the piece of paper, as opposed to looking at the person reading the passage, while the passage of Scripture is being read.

Once the story has been told, rebuilt, and read out loud the leader will ask questions that draw out the important truths in the story and engage the group in discussing the passage.

- > What new things in the story did you discover that you did not know before?
- > What did you learn about God?
- > What did you learn about people?
- > Which person do you most identify with in the story?
- > What will you take away from this discussion?
- > What will you do with what you have learned?

Notice: The above questions address the HEAD, the HEART, and the HANDS

FACILITATING vs TEACHING

The Discipleship Group discussion guide is provided each week with questions from the Pastoral team to the congregation to supplement a group discussion of Scripture. Guides will prompt leaders to pray, cast vision for meeting together, set up the group guidelines, and provide structure for Scripture discussion.

Consider the following aspects of creating a relational and reproducible Discipleship Group discussion - what do we model and encourage during the facilitation of a discussion to demonstrate our participation with the work of the Lord? How do we demonstrate God's primacy and power during group discussion?

WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING FOR?

FACILITATING A BIBLE DISCUSSION	TEACHING A BIBLE STUDY
"The Word does the work"	"I do the work"
Shared experience	One-sided
Dialogue	Dominating
Peer to Peer	Hierarchy
Learning	Knowing
Discovery	Transfer information
Wisdom	Knowledge
Questions	Statements
Guidance	Instruction
Engages Head, Heart, Hands	Engages Head only
Journey	Destination
Ongoing	Implied end point
Not controlled	Controlled
Prepared and present	Planned
Agenda	Fluid and flexible
Intentional with building relationships	Intentional content
Inviting conversation	Inviting "right answers"
Lead	Tell

As a group member is talking, they will reveal what they believe about God, what they believe about themselves, and how this affects their thoughts, feelings, and actions. You will be able to see where they are on the spectrum of spiritual maturity and how you can step into and disciple them toward a growing understanding of God and themselves. Refer back to your training manual and listen for particular keywords and phrases related to the spiritual life stages. Ask your coach for help in applying this tool in disciple-making.

ASKING FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

THE IDEA BEHIND A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION IS THAT THE ANSWER IS NEVER YES OR NO. IT IS AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION THAT GIVES THE ANSWERER THE FREEDOM TO USE WORDS.

A follow-up question communicates a desire to know and hear. It is an attempt to clarify and get more understanding and keeps the conversation moving forward.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES

- > What did you mean...?
- > Will you help me understand...?
- > Can you tell me more...?
- > Can you give me an example?
- > How does faith, God, ...fit into what you just said?

Try to use questions that start with who, what, how, why, where, and when. Asking follow-up questions requires that we are listening carefully for the Holy Spirit and to what the person is saying. Genuine interest and compassion encourages someone to continue speaking.

RELATIONSHIPS GROW WHEN WE CONNECT AUTHENTICALLY, SO WE CAN BE LESS CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING THE QUESTION RIGHT AND MORE ABOUT LOVING THE PERSON IN FRONT OF US.

OUTSIDE GROUPS

Because they are so often talked about, sometimes people mistakenly get the impression that groups are the goal. However, we are not aiming just for great, relational groups. A relational environment is a vehicle for maturing disciples into disciple-makers. The purpose of the church has been, and should always be to make disciples of Jesus. As we follow Jesus and be His people, we get to do life together. This takes investing time with each other both inside the group and outside of the group. (For example, 1:1 Discipleship, serving together, social gatherings, etc)

1:1 DISCIPLESHIP

The goal of one on one discipleship is Gospel transformation and maturing in Christ. When we enter into 1:1 discipleship, we don't simply seek friendship with someone, but rather we seek to see both ourselves and the other person mature spiritually, emotionally, relationally and socially in the context of a relationship with the Godhead, His Word and each other.

1:1 DISCIPLESHIP: the process of one person helping another person become lifelong, obedient, reproducing disciples of Jesus

“Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.”

What does 1:1 discipleship look like?

- > Meeting outside of Group time to build intentional relationship
- > Opening up the Bible together, whether for study, answering questions or for encouragement and care
- > Praying together

*Note: what makes 1:1 discipleship different from simply building relationship/friendship with someone is an intentional focus on spending time with God and His Word together

Who is 1:1 discipleship for?

The short answer here is everyone! 1:1 discipleship is for people in every spiritual life stage...non Christians, new Christians and Christians training for ministry.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7-8; 11-12

HOW DO I START 1:1 DISCIPLESHIP WITH SOMEONE?

- > Pray and ask the Lord to show you someone to invite into 1:1 discipleship. The enemy wants to paralyze you with your limits here; simply start with 1 person!
- > Pray about what length of time the Lord wants you to commit to with this person (see below)
- > Take initiative and intentionally ask the person to meet with you in 1:1 discipleship for a specific amount of time

HOW OFTEN DO WE MEET?

- > **1 TIME** You may notice someone needs immediate care because of the raw nature of what they share during group.
- > **2-3 TIMES** Someone may be in a hard season of life and need some encouragement and extra care. You are there to help with basic maintenance of their faith journey.
- > **4+ TIMES** You are discipling someone and equipping them with specific practices to ensure their spiritual health and growth.

WHAT COULD OUR TIME TOGETHER LOOK LIKE?

- > Head, heart, hands questions for any passage of Scripture (see below);
The Gospel of John is great to read with a new believer, and Philippians is great to read with a growing and maturing believer.
- > Discipleship app, New City Catechism app or BibleApp
- > Bible studies with intentional questions. Some Bible study authors to look for are: Jen Wilkin, Jackie Hill Perry, N.T. Wright, Nancy Guthrie, John Stott
- > Reading through a book about Scripture. Some examples are:
 - The Walk by Stephen Smallman
 - A Long Obedience in the Same Direction by Eugene Peterson
 - Idols of the Heart by Elyse Fitzpatrick
 - The Gospel Centered Life by Robert Thune and Will Walker
 - Get Real by John Leonard
 - The Prodigal God by Tim Keller
 - From Fear to Freedom by Rose Marie Miller
 - When People are Big and God is Small by Ed Welch
 - Concise Theology (as a reference) by J.I. Packer
- > If you need help brainstorming, contact the groups representative at your congregation.

EXAMPLE OF 1:1 DISCIPLESHIP

Below you will find two sets of “Head, Heart, Hands” questions. These questions can be used in a 1:1 discipleship meeting. Consider these questions as you, the disciple-maker, along with the disciple read through ANY passage of scripture. This model of 1:1 discipleship does not require any advanced preparation by either party, but focuses the conversation around scripture.

HEAD What did the passage say?

HEART What does that mean to you? OR What do you believe about this passage?

HANDS What will you do with what you’ve learned?

SCRIPTURE EXAMPLE:

7 So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

JOHN 10:7-18

HEAD Who is God in this passage?

HEART Who is man (or who am I) in this passage?

HANDS What is God showing me about how to live my life because of these truths?

3 THINGS MUST BE PRESENT FOR HEALTHY AND EFFECTIVE 1:1 DISCIPLESHIP:

- 1 Bible
- 2 Prayer
- 3 Relationship

We are going to spend time looking at God’s Part, My Part, Their Part which will help us recognize and participate in only our part of the discipleship process.

MY PART. THEIR PART. GOD'S PART.

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

The story of Philip and the Eunuch helps us see that when it comes to disciple-making, three different parties each play a role (Philip, the eunuch, the Spirit).

As you read the story, notice who does what. Under the respective headings below, note what roles each party plays. (As you read, mark God “G”, Philip “P”, and the Eunuch “E”.)

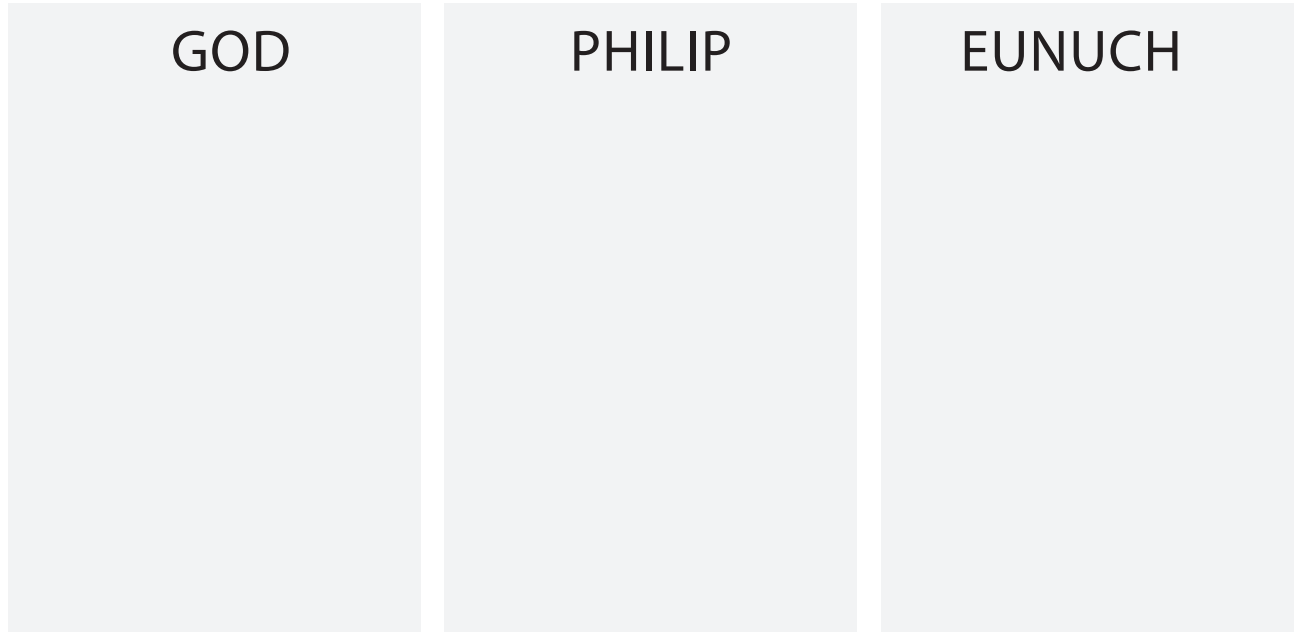
“Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation
justice was denied him. Who can describe his
generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”

And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.”

ACTS 8:26-40



AS WE SEEK TO BE INTENTIONAL IN DISCIPLESHIP RELATIONSHIPS...

- > What is “my” part?
- > What is “their” part?
- > What is God’s part?

What are some pitfalls of getting these confused?

SESSION 2: INTENTIONAL/REPRODUCIBLE

PRE-WORK

- > [READ](#): Jesus' Model For Developing Followers
- > [RESOURCE](#): Developing An Apprentice
- > [RESOURCE](#): What Is An Apprentice
- > [RESOURCE](#): Vision for Branching
- > [RESOURCE](#): Discipleship Training FAQs

OPTIONAL

- > [LISTEN](#): Discipleship Sermon: "Life Through the Word"
- > [LISTEN](#): Discipleship Sermon: "Fellowship"

TAKEAWAYS

BEING AN INTENTIONAL LEADER

We spent the first session talking about what it means to be a biblical and relational leader. We will now spend the second session talking about what it means to be an intentional and reproducible leader as we follow Jesus' discipleship process. Let's begin with intentional leadership.

A LOVE ONLY LEADER *wants so much to please and be accepted by group members that they will do or allow almost anything to establish an easy rapport.*

- > avoids using guidelines
- > desires for everything to feel very "organic" and resists structure
- > finds it easier to keep things light rather than pursuing meaningful conversations
- > avoids situations where they might have to speak difficult truth or give guidance to other group members
- > Is fearful of hard questions/answers that might cause tension

A TRUTH ONLY LEADER *leads by being critical and authoritarian in words and lifestyle and may often display a judgmental attitude.*

- > has a hard time trusting Group members to be on their own journey with Jesus
- > "talks at" Group members rather than listening to them and facilitating conversation
- > operates out of "shoulds" and "ought to's" rather than practicing affirmation and vulnerability with Group members and creating safe spaces for accountability
- > tends to have high standards and expectations for self and others with little to no grace

A TRUTH AND LOVE LEADER *is authentic, kind, and responsible.*

- > enjoys participating alongside Group members as a fellow traveler with Christ
- > knows when and how to set appropriate boundaries for themselves and for Group members using Guidelines and structure
- > displays a positive, supportive attitude and encourages involvement from others
- > speaks to Group members with both authority and empathy (speaking truth in love)
- > affirms Group members being "in-process," not disdainful that Group members don't have all the answers or always participate in the ways that we want them to
- > shares feelings with Group members in a direct yet appropriate way (finds the balance of not over-sharing or under-sharing, regularly acknowledges their personal need for Jesus and His work in their life)
- > understands that discipleship is a "marathon," not a "sprint"
- > loves Group members out of the love they have received through Christ

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision [legalism] nor uncircumcision [license] has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."

GALATIANS 5:6

REFLECTION: Do you lean toward one or the other style of leadership? Where might you need help to balance truth and love?

AFRAID OF DISCIPLESHIP?

What scenarios (real or imagined) cause you concern or fear as you move toward leading or apprenticing?

- > Group members will reject me
- > I won't know how to relate to them or what to talk about
- > They'll think I'm boring
- > I won't be able to move conversations beyond the surface level
- > I won't be able to be myself around them
- > I'll make a fool of myself because I'm outgoing
- > I'll forget their names (once, twice, past the point of no return...)
- > They'll wonder why I'm there or what agenda I have in spending time with them and getting to know their stories
- > I'm too old to really have a place with Group members
- > I'm too young to really have a place with Group members
- > I am not a good speaker, leader, facilitator, etc.
- > I don't have all the answers (or many answers at all) when it comes to discussing the Bible.

ADD YOUR OWN...

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE...

...available to you as a leader when you are tempted to believe the lies of the enemy?

- > My part, God's part, Their part [1 CORINTHIANS 3:6-9](#)
- > You can rest confidently in the One who has called you to these Group members [PHILIPPIANS 2:13](#)
- > Even in your human flaws, you can live and speak with authority because of Jesus' finished work on your behalf and the behalf of these Group members
[2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-20](#)
- > Listening is more important than talking or knowing the right answer—listen to their hearts and stories with curiosity and intentionality [PROVERBS 10:14](#)
- > Cling to Jesus in your own neediness and struggles and then encourage them to do the same (i.e. in case of emergency, put your own O2 on first) [1 TIMOTHY 1:15-16](#)
- > Care for your own soul on a DAILY basis—prayer, Scripture, community
[MATTHEW 22:37-40](#)
- > **YOUR COACH!** Your coach is available for feedback, brainstorming, critique, encouragement, and prayer. Coaches are also available to meet 1:1 for discipleship. Elders and pastors are accessible to help you navigate difficult personal and group-related circumstances through your coach.

*“We loved you so much that we were
delighted to share with you not only the
Gospel of God, but our lives as well, because
you had become so dear to us.”*

1 THESSALONIANS 2:8

JESUS' DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS

We're going to look at the four invitations of Jesus that you read about in your pre-work. We will discuss Your Part / Their Part / God's Part in each stage of invitation. The four stages are: Come and See, Follow Me, Be with Me, and Abide in Me.

COME AND SEE.

As Jesus introduces himself to the world, he invites the disciples into close proximity to get to know him (John 1:37-39). Jesus shared who He was through both His words and His deeds. As we walk alongside people who don't yet know Jesus as Savior, we create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with us and others in our faith communities.

THEIR PART

How would you describe someone with little to no knowledge of or experience with Jesus? What might they say or do? What would they need?

GOD'S PART

Read Ephesians 2:8-9; What is God's part of salvation?

MY PART

In what ways can you invite people to 'come and see' as Jesus did?

- > Create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with you and others in your faith community.

How does Jesus reveal himself to others in the 'come and see' stage of his ministry?

- > John the Baptist [LUKE 3:3](#)
- > Jesus is baptized [LUKE 3:21-22](#)
- > Jesus teaches in the synagogues [LUKE 4:14-15, 18-21, 43](#)
- > Jesus calls the disciples to himself [LUKE 5:10-11, 27](#)
- > Jesus eats with the disciples [LUKE 5:27-32](#)
- > Jesus teaches new habits [LUKE 5:33-35, LUKE 6:20-49](#)
- > Jesus' disciples are with him [LUKE 6: 1-2, 12-16](#)

FOLLOW ME.

Jesus' next invitation is not just about observation and proximity, but imitation and submission (Matthew 4:19). When people become his followers, Jesus invited them to connect with Him in relationship. As they shared life together, Jesus taught them the truth about God. We allow the person of Christ to be formed within us, as we follow Jesus together, building gospel-centered relationships.

THEIR PART

How would you describe someone who newly believes in Jesus as Savior?
What might they say or do?
What would they need?

GOD'S PART

Re-read Matthew 4:19. What is God's part of maturing in Christ?

MY PART

In what ways can you connect people with purpose and vision as Jesus did?

- > Continue to create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with you and others in your faith community.
- > Allow the person of Christ to be formed within you, as you follow Jesus together, building a gospel-centered relationship.

What invitation and opportunities does Jesus provide for community and connection?

- > Jesus calls 12 specific people, creating the first small group [LUKE 6:12-16](#)
- > Jesus continues to keep the disciples with him, connecting them to God through demonstration of God's power and teaching about God [LUKE 7, 8](#)
- > Jesus gives the way to connect to his family [LUKE 8:19-21](#)
- > Jesus gives the disciples opportunity to exercise faith [LUKE 8:22-25](#)
- > Jesus gives people purpose [LUKE 8:39, 48, 50, LUKE 9:23-27, 57-32](#)

BE WITH ME.

Jesus transitions his disciples into more intimate settings and gives opportunities for them to minister to others (Mark 3:13-15). As the disciples grew, Jesus gave them opportunities to practice what they were learning from Him. (Remember Apprenticeship!? This is it!) We give prayerful opportunities to serve - we nurture and challenge fellow believers to grow in depth and knowledge of God's love for themselves and others.

THEIR PART

How would you describe someone who walks with deepening faith in Jesus?
Someone who has time and experience with Jesus?
What might they say or do?
What would they need?

GOD'S PART

Read Ephesians 2:12 -13

MY PART

How can you empower and support growing disciples as Jesus did?

- > Continue to create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with you and others in your faith community.
- > Allow the person of Christ to be formed within you, as you follow Jesus together, building a gospel-centered relationship.
- > Give prayerful opportunities to serve - nurture and challenge fellow believers to grow in depth and knowledge of God's love.

How does Jesus empower and support growing disciples in participating with his work?

- > Jesus sends out the 12 [LUKE 9:1-6](#)
- > Jesus equips the disciples for ministry [LUKE 9:10-17, 40-43](#)
- > Jesus sends 72 [LUKE 10: 1-9, 17-23](#)
- > Jesus continues to equip for ministry and connect disciples to God [LUKE 11:2-4; LUKE 12, 13, 14, 15, 16](#)
- > Jesus gives opportunities to minister [LUKE 18: 15-17, 22-30](#)

ABIDE IN ME.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He sent His followers to disciple others and build His church (Matthew 28:18-20). With the gift of the Holy Spirit, Jesus provides his followers with a guide, counselor, friend, teacher, parent and reminder of all he has taught them and commissions them to make disciples of all nations. When we abide in Jesus, we step into mutually maturing in Christ together, spurring one another on to love and good deeds (John 15:5, Hebrews 10:24).

THEIR PART

How would you describe someone who is producing the fruit of abiding in Jesus?

What might they say or do?
What would they need?

GOD'S PART

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

MY PART

How can you release others to fulfill their identity as disciple-makers?

- > Continue to create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with you and others in your faith community.
- > Allow the person of Christ to be formed within you, as you follow Jesus together, building a gospel-centered relationship.
- > Give prayerful opportunities to serve, nurture and challenge fellow believers to grow in depth and knowledge of God's love
- > Step into mutually maturing in Christ together, spurring one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24)

DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS:



	COME AND SEE	FOLLOW ME	BE WITH ME	ABIDE IN ME
GOD'S PART	<p>"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions." <i>Ephesians 2:8</i></p>	<p>"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." <i>Matthew 4:19</i></p>	<p>"It is God who works in you, to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." <i>Ephesians 2:13</i></p>	<p>"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." <i>John 15:5</i></p>
THEIR PART	<p>People at this point in their spiritual journey have not yet received Christ. They may be seeking, or rejecting God at this point. They may be "spiritual" and may even claim to be a Christian, but they have little to no experience with or knowledge of Jesus. They do not believe that Jesus is God's Son, the Messiah who takes away the sin of the world.</p>	<p>People at this point in their spiritual journey are believers: however their knowledge of and experience with Jesus is limited. As believers follow Jesus and are changed by him, they grow in their relationship with God and also begin to grow in their relationships with other Christ-followers. They learn to apply God's Word in their lives and allow others to walk beside them in their journey.</p>	<p>People in this stage are making a big shift from being self-centered to more others-centered. They begin to understand their role as a giver and participant in Jesus' mission, rather than consumer. They see the needs of others and intentionally minister to them. Putting others first, they become doers of the Word.</p>	<p>People in this stage are far from perfect, but they do have a solid understanding of God's Word and a deep, abiding relationship with the Father. They are guided by the Holy Spirit in living out God's Word in their daily lives. They are quick to confess and repent. They are others-centered and God-dependent. They are able to reproduce mature disciples of Jesus by inviting others to follow them as they follow Christ.</p>
MY PART	<p>Create space and time to allow people to explore the person of Jesus with you and others in your faith community.</p>	<p>Allow the person of Christ to be formed within you, as you follow Jesus together, building a gospel-centered relationship.</p>	<p>Give prayerful opportunities to serve—nurture and challenge fellow believers to grow in depth and knowledge of God's love.</p>	<p>Step into mutually maturing in Christ together, spurring one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).</p>

WHAT IS MATURITY:



COME AND SEE

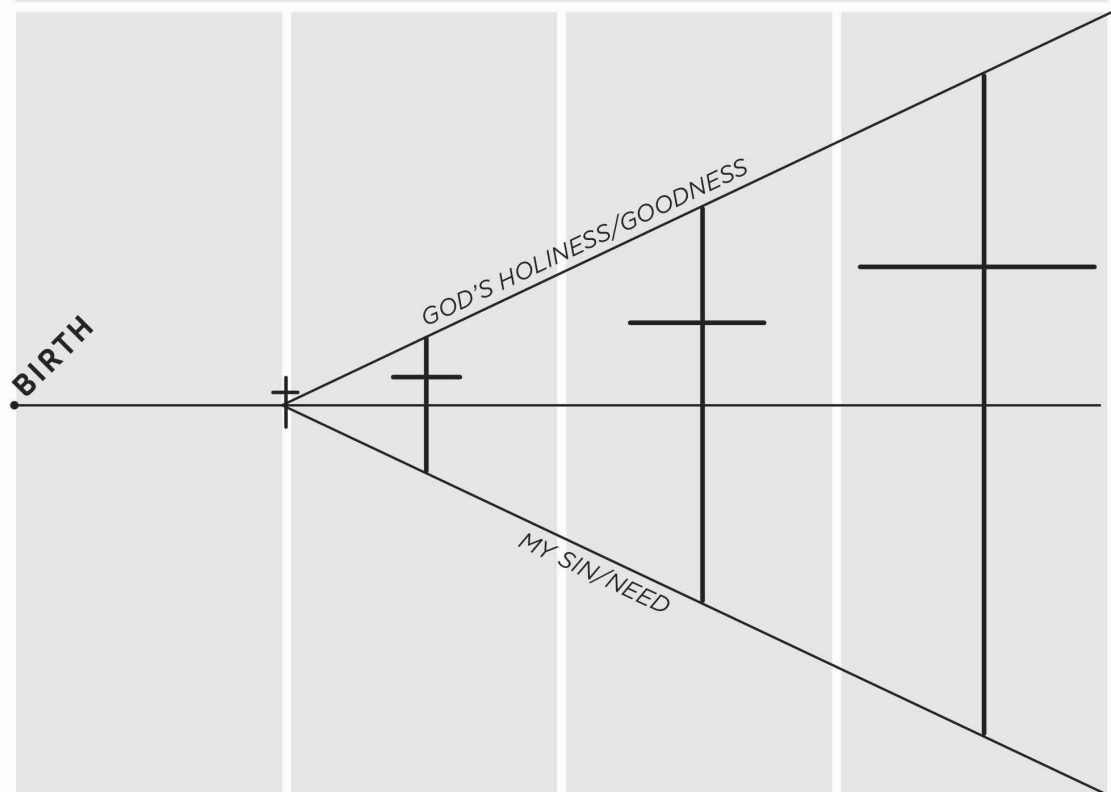
FOLLOW ME

BE WITH ME

ABIDE IN ME

WHAT IS MATURING IN CHRIST?

As I understand God's profound holiness compared to the depth of my sin, the cross of Christ, his life, death, and resurrection, become more meaningful and necessary to me. The more I understand the depth of need and God's goodness in providing salvation, the more beautiful the cross of Christ becomes.



WHAT DOES MY RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS LOOK LIKE?

Observation	Deeper Relationship		
Learning	Transformation		
Experience	On Mission		
	Sacrifice	Apprenticeship	Holy Spirit
	Trust	Intimacy	Dependence
	Faith	Challenge	Fruitfulness

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO JESUS' INVITATION?

INVITATION	RESPONSE
COME AND SEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe Learn Experience Be curious Ask questions
FOLLOW ME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship Transformation On mission Sacrifice of time, talents, relationships Trust in Jesus' love for me Faith
BE WITH ME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepening relationship Transformation On mission Apprenticeship Intimacy Be challenged
ABIDE IN ME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepening relationship Transformation On mission Life through the Holy Spirit Dependence on God Fruitfulness

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICE?

Once we become followers of Jesus, he begins to mature us into disciple-makers, as he did with his original twelve. He invites us along on the journey of maturing others into disciple-makers. In the context of groups, we refer to this as an apprenticeship.

An aspect of our role as leaders is to identify spiritual maturity in our people. Those who are ready or almost ready to begin making disciples are incredible candidates for the role of an apprentice. The goal of the apprenticeship is to train, equip, and release people in your group to begin making disciples themselves as leaders of a group.

STEP 1: HOW TO IDENTIFY AN APPRENTICE

Identify through prayer and observation someone who is faithful, available, intentional, teachable, and humble. An apprentice is a maturing believer with a growing interest in serving others, using their God-given skills, gifts, wisdom, and abilities. These might be people who are underdeveloped and overlooked, not necessarily the most enthusiastic or outgoing person in the room. Affirm their gifts and invite them to become an apprentice (someone who supports the group leader and is being developed to eventually lead a group). Give them time to think and pray about it.

STEP 2: HOW TO TRAIN AN APPRENTICE

Think of training as modeling + talking, the way a coach may demonstrate and explain a skill before asking a player to practice that skill. Follow this pattern:

I do. You watch. We talk.

I do. You help. We talk.

You do. I help. We talk.

You do. I watch. We talk.

You do. Someone else watches.

An apprentice is so much more than someone to cover your group when you are busy or out of town. Here are a few examples of opportunities to develop them as leaders:

- > Prepare and pray together before the group
- > Debrief with them after group to identify the immediate needs of group members
- > Ask them to print copies of the participant guide
- > Prepare for group with you and watch you lead
- > Prepare with you and lead portions of the group
- > Prepare and lead the group themselves
- > Join you in spending intentional time with another group member
- > Connect with another group member during the week for discipleship
- > Call to encourage and pray with a group member
- > Be on the lookout for connections to encourage between group members for discipleship
- > Create a meal schedule or prayer email, or delegate to a group member
- > Pray specifically for people
- > Schedule a social outing or delegate to a group member

STEP 3: NEXT STEPS

After a specific time of delegating tasks and debriefing with your apprentice to encourage them, set them free to minister within your group. Encourage them to meet with other members for discipleship. Invite them to attend discipleship training to learn more about Jesus' discipleship model, and ask them to prayerfully consider what their part might be in the mission of discipleship within your group.

DEVELOPING AN APPRENTICE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF GROUP



VISION FOR BRANCHING

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing...This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

JOHN 15:4-8

A HEALTHY GROUP IS GROWING TOWARD BRANCHING.

WHAT IS BRANCHING?

- > It is the fruit of seeing a group of believers mature.
- > It is a call to make disciples.
- > It provides a safe place to welcome believers into growth and transformation.

HOW DOES BRANCHING HAPPEN?

- > It begins with the leader joining in the Lord’s vision for discipleship and the faith and reliance on him to take the next step.
- > It occurs when group members say yes to Jesus’ mission and value making space for the people around them who need true community.
- > A leader helps the group see branching as a birth, rather than a death.
- > Branching doesn’t happen overnight. It takes time and maturing.
- > Branching may occur through a set plan or it may begin to occur and evolve naturally as the group changes (transitions, location, the available time to meet, etc).
- > A discipleship director or groups representative can help leaders determine the next steps for branching.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I HAVE JUST COMPLETED DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING. WHAT COMES NEXT?

Congratulations on completing the Midtown Discipleship Leader Training Course! First step is to pray and ask the Lord to show you where and how He is calling you to be involved in the Groups ministry. Secondly, a groups representative will follow up with you to answer any other questions you may have after training.

DO I HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH TO LEAD A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP?

Yes. Our hope would be that all of our leaders would be members or at least intend to join the church at their earliest convenience.

DO I HAVE TO BE AN APPRENTICE IN A GROUP BEFORE I BECOME A LEADER?

No. The path to group leadership takes many forms. Often time leaders are developed through the apprenticeship process within a group, but not always. We trust the Lord to call His people into leadership through the work of the Holy Spirit and as a church we partner with God in this process.

DO I NEED TO BE IN A GROUP AT MY HOME CONGREGATION, OR CAN I BE WITH MY FRIENDS AT ANOTHER MIDTOWN CONGREGATION?

Because the pastors and elders are called to shepherd a specific congregation, we ask that our regular attenders and members join groups within their own congregations. This process helps us care for our people.

DO MIDTOWN GROUPS MEET YEAR-ROUND?

No. Our Groups meet early September to mid-May with a break for the holidays and summer.

HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN BE IN A GROUP?

Our groups are typically 4-20 people. But we never consider our groups “closed” even if they are at a full capacity. Rather, we encourage that all of our groups

be “open and invitational.”

CAN MY GROUP STUDY WHATEVER WE WANT TO?

Midtown is very intentional with the material that is discussed each week in our Discipleship Groups. We work with our pastoral team to prepare the leader guide and participant guide so that leaders can facilitate discussion around God’s word. We streamline the process so that it can be reproduced across groups and congregations. We ask that the Group discussion is based on the guides provided.

IS IT OKAY TO HAVE A SOCIAL GATHERING INSTEAD OF AN OFFICIAL GROUP MEETING?

Part of being an intentional leader is creating a core of committed members. Building a culture of care and community within the group helps create this core. So YES, please build in times and opportunities to get to know each other. Find ways to gather socially as well as to serve together. These community building gatherings will enhance and enrich the group discussion around God’s word in a regular group meeting.

I DO NOT KNOW THE BIBLE VERY WELL, CAN I REALLY BE A LEADER?

You do not have to be a trained theologian to be a Discipleship Group Leader. Rather you need to be a follower of Jesus who is being sanctified by the Holy Spirit and is willing to go on mission with Jesus and his church to train up other disciples. If you are willing to facilitate a conversation around God’s word and grow in maturity with fellow believers in community then you really can be a leader.

IF I BECOME A LEADER, WHO DO I GO TO WHEN I HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED SUPPORT?

Every congregation cares for group leaders, though it may look different at each congregation. The discipleship director or groups representative is the leader’s first place for questions and support.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP LEADER OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Discipleship Groups at Midtown support Gospel-centered relationships where we are committed to maturing in Christ together. The group leader is a disciple-maker who encourages others in pursuing God and others, living into their own identity as a disciple and disciple-maker.

ROLE

Group leaders partner with church leadership to love, serve and equip God's people. A group leader's goal is to see their group mature and grow, forming new groups as new leaders emerge.

Leaders are called to align with these foundations of discipleship:

BIBLICAL Group leaders affirm that their identity comes from the authority of scripture and commits to facilitating group discussions around God's word.

RELATIONAL As disciples and disciple-makers, group leaders model relationship with God, scripture, the church and others.

INTENTIONAL Group leaders encourage, equip, and develop group members towards maturity in the Gospel and future leadership.

REPRODUCIBLE Group leaders partner with the Holy Spirit to identify and develop others to lead.

GROUP LEADER COMMITMENTS

- > Participate in Discipleship Training
- > Become a church member
- > Meet weekly with your group
- > Look for opportunities for discipleship within your group
- > Connect with your groups representative
- > Build community by attending leader events



www.midtownfellowship.org