

Discipleship

Definition: Mark Dever writes that “discipling is doing **spiritual good** to someone so that he or she will be more like Christ.”

Introduction: Our growth in grace and truth is not mechanical. It is pursued purposefully, through means proscribed by Scripture and in community with other believers. Jesus modeled this by discipling 12 men over the course of his ministry. A maturing disciple is one who...

- **Believes** and confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. (Matthew 16:16)
 - **Follows** after and rests in Jesus (Matthew 4:19, Matthew 11:29)
 - **Matures** though faith and knowledge, to the measure of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13)
 - **Aims** to do God’s work, His way, for His glory. (Acts 2:42).
 - **Makes** disciples of all nations by the authority Jesus (Matthew 28:118-19)
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Scripture:

2 Timothy 2:2 — and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

Matthew 28:18-20 — And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Ephesians 4:11-16 — And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Application:

- **Discipleship** is a Christ-centered, biblically devoted relationship with others. The application of discipleship is seen the “pillars” subsequently defined.

Scripture

Definition: The word of God is the foundation of our faith, for “faith comes by hearing, and hearing the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17).

Introduction: Mark Dever writes: “We want people to grow in the knowledge of God in Christ, and faith comes from hearing the word of Christ... Discipling is not merely about accountability and behavior modification. Jesus tells us to make disciples by teaching people to obey, but they cannot obey what they haven’t been taught. We desire to equip disciples who understand the Word’s...

- **Inerrancy.** That people know the bible is completely trustworthy. (Psalm 12:6)
 - **Sufficiency.** That people know the bible is all that is necessary for living life well. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - **Applicability.** That people are able to apply the bible to all aspects of their lives. (Hebrews 4:12)
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Scripture:

1 John 5:3 — For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

Psalms 119:11 — I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 — All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 4:12 — For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Equipping:

- Leader-guided discussion of books of the Bible.
- Study-guide assisted studies of books of the Bible. e.g., *N. T. Wright for Everyone*, *MacArthur Bible Studies*, *Knowing the Bible* series from Crossway, *For You* series from The Good Book Company.
- Book studies, e.g., *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer, *Multiply* by Francis Chan.
- Video Studies, e.g., *Secret Church* w/ David Platt, *Gospel in Life* w/ Timothy Keller
- Please let the elders know what your group is studying..

Prayer

Definition: Graeme Goldsworthy writes: "Christians at prayer have only one option: to pray towards the fulfillment of God's revealed purposes for the whole universe. Anything else would be an act of idolatry or of total rebellion."

Introduction: God speaks to us in his Word, we speak to him through our prayers. Prayer only takes place because of the unique work of the Resurrected Christ, interceding for us. In prayer, we give thanks to God, pray for his will to be done, and cast our worries upon him. We desire to equip disciples who will pray...

- **For the Kingdom:** That God's will be done in the manifestation of his Kingdom. (Matthew 6:9-10)
 - **For the church:** That the church, with thanksgiving, pursue Kingdom work. (1 Timothy 2:8)
 - **For one another:** That we confess our sins, God supplying what is lacking in our faith. (James 5:16)
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Scripture:

Matthew 6:9-10 — Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."

Hebrews 8:1-2 — Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

Romans 8:26-27 — Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

James 5:16 — Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Equipping:

- **Books on prayer:** *Prayer* by Timothy Keller, *Prayer and the Knowledge of God* by Graeme Goldsworthy, *Prayer* by John Bunyan, *Valley of Vision: A collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions* edited by Arthur Bennett.
- **Prayer guides:** The Mulford prayer list, the Joshua Project's "unreached people group of the day."
- **Praying Scripture:** Taking any passage of scripture and praying for God's revealed purposes within it.
- **Breaking** up into smaller groups for prayer (e.g., one-on-one, men and women, etc).

Fellowship

Definition: Fellowship is the supernatural and mutual bond between believers, established by our participation in the body and blood of Jesus.

Introduction: Fellowship goes beyond a mere social connection based on superficial affinities. Genuine biblical fellowship, expressed in the greek word *koinonia*, entails a mutuality. It is a sharing of our earthly goods with one another. It requires a mutuality of purpose, a unity in the love and cause of Christ. It flows from a commonality of identity, that we are all one in Christ. We desire to equip disciples who...

- **Share** every-day life with one another on a deep, biblical level (Romans 12:15-16)
 - **Identify** with one another in our common confession of Christ. (Ephesians 4:4-6)
 - **Encourage** one another to grow in holiness, love, and knowledge. (2 Peter 3:18)
 - **Display** the unique love of the Kingdom of Christ. (Matthew 5:14-16)
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Scripture:

Acts 2:42 — And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship (*koinonia*), to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

1 Corinthians 10:16 — The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation (*koinonia*) in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Philemon 6 — and I pray that the sharing (*koinonia*) of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

Hebrews 10:24-25 — And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 13:16 — Do not neglect to do good and to share (*koinonia*) what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

1 John 1:7 — But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship (*koinonia*) with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Equipping:

- **Fellowship** is, in some respects, an attitude rather than an activity. It is actively sharing our lives with one another—home, work, school, leisure—and displaying the mutual bond we have in Christ in those settings to each other and to the world.
- Community group, itself, as an expression of fellowship.
- Serving one another, and serving alongside one another.
- Social events, like going out to eat or attending an event.

Accountability

Definition: Accountability is the mutual commitment to encouragement, spiritual discipline, and sanctification.

Introduction: Accountability is rooted in the recognition that we, as individual believers, are prone to be lax in the practice of our faith and blind to areas where we need growth. By opening our lives, the Holy Spirit uses fellow believers to speak the truth to us when we may not be willing to speak it to ourselves. Accountability is the recognition that we are one in Christ, each individual members depending upon one another for spiritual vitality. We desire to equip believers who...

- **Share** one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).
 - **Sharpen** each other for spiritual discipline, growing in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7-8).
 - **Confess** our sins to one another, striving to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).
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Scripture:

Proverbs 27:17 — Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.

1 Timothy 4:7-8 — Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

1 John 1:8-9 — If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Ephesians 4:25 — Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Galatians 6:1-2 — Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

James 5:16 — Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Equipping:

- **Bearing one another's spiritual burdens**
 - Confessing sin (one-on-one, or men-with-men, women-with-women)
 - Sharing life burdens.
- **Bearing one another's physical burdens**
 - Helping each other practically, physically.

Missions and Evangelism

Definition: The aim of missions and evangelism is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, that God may be glorified among the nations.

Introduction: John Piper writes: "Missions exists because worship doesn't." The desire of believers is that those around us would see and savor the glory of God in the person and work of Jesus Christ. God has ordained the verbal proclamation of the Gospel as the means to accomplish this. We desire to equip believers who...

- **Know** the basic content of the gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
 - **Communicate** the gospel boldly, compassionately, and consistently in a variety of contexts. (1 Peter 3:15)
 - **Cultivate** genuine relationships in which sharing the gospel is an expression of love.
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Scripture:

Ezekiel 3:18 — If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.

John 4:35-36 — Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

Romans 10:14 — How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

Romans 10:17 — So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:15-17 — For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

1 Peter 3:15 — but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Equipping:

- **Recommended Books:** *Tell the Truth* by Will Metzger, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* by Mark Dever.
- Taking a Community Group mission trip, domestically or internationally.

- Coming alongside a para-church ministry like Pregnancy Resources or Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
- Actively engaging your friends, neighbors, or co-workers through Community Group hosted functions.