

Word Team Training



True discipleship is a genuine and enduring relationship in Christ.

Word Ministry – 2019

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DISCIPLESHIP

Week one – (Read before Team Meeting)

“The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as “Christians” will become disciples—students, apprentices, practitioners—of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence. Will they break out of the churches to be his Church—to be, without human force or violence, his mighty force for good on earth, drawing the churches after them toward the eternal purposes of God? And, on its own scale, there is no greater issue facing the individual human being, Christian or not.” (Willard, Dallas. The Great Omission)

The word “disciple” occurs 269 times in the New Testament. “Christian” is found three times and was first introduced to refer precisely to disciples of Jesus—in (Acts 11:26). The New Testament is a book about disciples, by disciples, and for disciples of Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament, there is only one kind of follower of Jesus Christ.

They are called his disciples. A disciple of Jesus is someone who:

- *Trusts Jesus, that he is who and what he says he is,*
- *Spend time with Jesus to learn how to live his or her own life like Jesus would live it.*
- *Rearranges his or her life to continue doing the above.*

Words have a range of meaning because the same word can be used in different ways. For instance, think of the English word run. When I say, “the world-class sprinter runs his race,” it suggests something slightly different than when I say, “I’ll run to the store,” or “my nose is running.” The point is the setting or context of a word determines how and what a word means.

As we explore the word “disciple” in the New Testament, we will also discover a wide range of meanings. We can’t squeeze it into one tight

definition that will fit in every biblical usage. Instead, we have to let the context guide our understanding in light of its context, but doing so will yield a fuller understanding of discipleship for today.

A Believer

Begin with the book of Acts, where the noun “disciples” is used thirty times, and we find believers, individually and collectively, referred to as disciples. When Luke writes of the growing number of disciples in Acts 6:1, 7, he is speaking of the same expanding community of believers in Jerusalem he had previously described as “those who accepted his message [and] were baptized” (Acts 2:41) and the “many who heard the message [and] believed” (Acts 4:4). It is evident in the early church (as seen throughout the book of Acts), that to be a believer in Jesus was to be known as a disciple.

One of the most instructive passages is Acts 11:26, where it is written, “for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” The church in Antioch was composed of disciples who were now being called Christians. This is the first of only three times the term “Christian” is used in the Bible. However, its occurrence here reflects the beginning of a transition—the believers who were previously called disciples were now beginning to be called Christians. In Acts, “believers” equals “disciples” equals “Christians.” (change)

(start with Not.)This shows that not everyone who was known as a disciple was one in truth. During Jesus’ day, some individuals didn’t genuinely believe in Jesus and yet they traveled among the community of followers for a season and were called disciples (John 6:60-66). What they had hoped to find in Jesus was not what they discovered with time. When his life and teaching failed to match their expectations, they turned away and ceased to follow. This came as no surprise to Jesus. John wrote, “Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him” (John 6:64). Their lack of true faith was exposed when they turned back from following Jesus. Judas (the one “who would betray him”) stands as the most obvious example for whom this was true. Having followed Jesus

throughout his ministry, even being numbered among the twelve, Judas never genuinely believed. Apparently, when Jesus failed to be whom Judas wanted him to be or to do what Judas hoped he would do, he turned against him. He betrayed Jesus.

These examples stand as a warning to us. Discipleship isn't a trial period, a test drive to see if we like this model of a Savior and Lord. No, true discipleship is a genuine and enduring trust in Christ. As Simon Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:68-69).

Discipleship is primarily a relationship with Jesus Christ. It isn't a static state but a dynamic, ongoing, faith-based relationship with Jesus. To the weary and heavy laden, Jesus said, "come to me ... and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). To the thirsty, he said, "Come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, "streams of living water will flow from within him" (John 7:37-38). To the fishermen, he said, "come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). The first step of discipleship is coming to Jesus in faith. The next steps involve following him. (Adapted from - CRU-Designed for Discipleship)(Add that everyone can become a disciple.)

A Follower

The first disciples we meet in the Bible weren't Jesus' disciples at all—or at least not yet. They were disciples of John the Baptist, a colorful character dressed in camel hair, eating locusts and honey, and speaking as a prophet (John 1:35; see also Mark 2:18 and John 3:25-26). Elsewhere in the gospels, we encounter disciples of Moses. This great leader had been dead a long time, so being a disciple in this case involved following his teaching, not his footsteps (John 9:28). We also find disciples of the Pharisees, a religious party (Matthew 22:16; Mark 2:18.) These few examples illustrate that having disciples wasn't unique to Jesus. Instead, "disciple" was a common term in the ancient culture for those who followed a master—a teacher, a leader, or a group.

However, Jesus redefined discipleship for his followers. He delineated what it would mean to be his disciple and often challenged prospective followers to count the cost. For instance, one time he called a crowd to him and said, "if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:34-37).

It shouldn't be surprising that following Jesus involves denying oneself and giving up one's own life. Try following someone and at the same time go your own way. It can't be done! The very nature of following requires yielding to the one who leads; otherwise, you are not following at all.

Consider what Luke records: Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. Also, anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

"Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:25-33)

Jesus made it clear that following him involves surrender— the surrender of all one is, has, and loves. However, in that surrender

there is even more significant gain, for the follower will receive far more than was ever given up. This was the issue Peter and Jesus got into one day. Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (Mark 10:28-31)
(Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

Read a short article (one page) about "Lifestyle Discipleship" at <https://myronvierra.info/the-easy-yoke/f/lifestyle-discipleship>.

WEEK ONE - Small Group Breakout (30 minutes)

Discover - Read this passage Matthew 11:28

- a. *What does the passage say? Repeat it in your own words.*
- b. *What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God?*
- c. *God is speaking to you, what will you do about it?*

PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER

The Prayer of Blessing

Our words have great influence in the lives of those around us, and spoken blessings can bring hope, encouragement, and direction to our families, friends, and others.

*A spoken blessing is **a positive, Biblical statement that invokes the blessing of God in the life of another.** The power of spoken*

blessings comes from God, Who Himself " Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ." (Ephesians 1:3).

You can use scripture to offer a blessing to a person. Here are a few examples.

Numbers 6:24-26

"The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you ²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

_____, in Jesus name may ... (and use the verse above.)

Ephesians 1:17-21

I Kings 8:57-58

II Cor. 13-14

Ephesians 3:16-19

Have each person ask God to given them a blessing for one person in the group today.

Week Two – (Read before Team Meeting)

Becoming Like Jesus

A Learner

The root of the Greek word commonly translated “disciple” in the new Testament (mathetes) is related to the verb “to learn.” Moreover, there is undoubtedly an element of learning involved in following Jesus. When we think of a student or pupil today, we think of schools and classrooms, where we acquire (it is hoped) knowledge of various subjects. Some of that knowledge can be practical. Other parts are purely theoretical.

But in Jesus’ day, learners (that is, pupils and students) didn’t generally attend a school or sit in a classroom. Rather, they found a teacher (for Jews, a rabbi) to whom they would attach themselves to learn, obey, and thus become like their master.

The disciple (learner, pupil, or student) would both learn from and obey the teacher. In the same way, being a disciple of Jesus involves learning. However, it isn’t learning merely to know; **it is learning to do**. Jesus continually emphasized this to his followers:

- “Blessed rather are those who Hear the word of God and obey it.” (Luke 11:28)
- Why do you call me, “Lord, Lord,” and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice.” (Luke 6:46- 47)
- “My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.” (Luke 8:21)

Even in the great commission, he made clear that disciple making involves “Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20) So a disciple is a learner-doer and not simply a student acquiring knowledge. A disciple learns to obey all of Jesus’ commands, and this obedience isn’t merely conforming to externals. It isn’t primarily about behavior; it is about life change. His teaching doesn’t impose a cold legalism. Jesus made it abundantly clear, over and over again, that he was transforming life from the inside out and that the change had to be more than the external forms that characterized the religious leaders of his day. (consider the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7.) The obedience of discipleship is a matter of the heart, and so Jesus said, “if you love me, you will obey what I command” (John 14:15; see also John 14:21, 23- 24; 15:9-10). It is this obedience of love that brings the disciple real freedom. As Jesus said, “if you hold to my teaching, you are my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32).

One Who is Becoming Like Jesus

This faith-filled following, this love-induced obedience, this inside-out transformation has an end in view, the desired outcome. Through the process of believing, following, and learning to obey, the disciple increasingly becomes like the Master. Notice Jesus’ words in Matthew 10:25: “It is enough for the student [or disciple] to be like his teacher.” or, again, in Luke 6:40: “A student [or disciple] is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.”

Jesus gave his disciples a living model of what they were to become. Imagine the scene on the last evening together before his crucifixion. Fully conscious of what was about to happen to him, Jesus turned his love and attention toward his followers (John 13:1). While they were busy jostling for places at the table and claiming their share of dinner, Jesus arose, girded himself as a servant, and washed their feet. Then to ensure they had learned their lesson, he spoke these words:

“Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” (John 13:12-17)

Later in the same evening, during the after-dinner conversation, Jesus cemented in their minds forever the first mark of his disciples: “A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one Another. By this, all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another” (John 13:34-35). To make sure they didn’t miss the point, he repeated the command at least two more times. “My command is this: love each other as I have loved you” (John 15:12). “This is my command: love each other” (John 15:17).

Whether in loving one another, serving each other, humbling ourselves, forgiving others, praying, giving, doing good works, or bearing up under suffering, our ultimate example is always Jesus. We are to become like him in all things. This the end goal of discipleship.

One Who is Empowered by the Spirit

In my early days of following Jesus, I would sometimes dream about what it would have been like to follow Jesus—to have seen him in action, to have heard him teach, to have enjoyed conversation together over meals, to have walked together on dusty roads, to have boated with one another on the sea of galilee, even to have done a little fishing together. What a privilege it would have been and what a difference it would have made in the kind of follower I am.

But then I was shown a startling statement by Jesus, and with it I was introduced to a new reality for Christ followers—discipleship in the post-resurrection period. On the last night with his followers, Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth: it is for your good that I am going

away. Unless I go away, the counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you" (John 16:7). (Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

There was something better for Christ followers than to be following Christ physically. At first, I didn't know who this counselor was and how it could be better to have him present than to have Jesus present. But then I began to discover the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Five times during that last night with his followers, Jesus promised that he would send the holy spirit as our counselor-helper:

- *To be in us (John 14:17) and with us forever (John 14:16)*
- *To teach us and remind us of everything Jesus had taught (John 14:26)*
- *To continue, along with us, in testifying to the truth about Jesus (John 15:26-27)*
- *To bring the world to understand the truth about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-11)*
- *To guide us into truth, bringing glory to Jesus (John 16:12-15)*

This is a mere sampling of the soul-satisfying work the Spirit began to do in people's lives (John 7:37-39) as he came bestowing power upon Christ's disciples (Acts 1:8). Apart from the Spirit's work in our lives, discipleship (that is, following Christ) would be a hopeless, helpless, frustrating, failing proposition. But through the ongoing directing and empowering work of the Spirit in our lives, we increasingly experience the transforming life of Christ from the inside out (Romans 8:1-17; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 3:16-17). The ministry of disciple-making Jesus started and gave to his follower continues through the Holy Spirit.

To help us understand what this new post-resurrection relationship with him would be like, Jesus chose the word picture of a branch abiding, or remaining, in its vine (John 15:1- 8). Through staying in an ongoing dependent and obedient relationship to Christ we will start growing. Jesus provided the basics of the disciple-making process. So, what is a disciple?

Here is the summary: To be a disciple is to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. A disciple is one who has come to Christ in faith and continues to follow him, learning to obey him and thus becoming like him in character, lifestyle, and service. Discipleship today is possible only through the presence, power, and work of the holy spirit in our lives. (Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

Read a short article entitled, "As You Go" by Dallas Willard. What does it mean to become like Jesus? Go to <https://myronvierra.info/the-easy-yoke/f/as-you-go> to read this important article.

WEEK Two - Small Group Breakout (30 minutes)

Discover - Read this passage (John 15:1- 8) and answer each of the questions below.

CONNECT

- a. What are you thankful for this week?*
- b. What has bothered you or stressed you out this week? What do you need for things to be better?*
- c. What did we talk about last week? How did you apply those things in your life? Did you get a chance to share last week's story with anyone?*

DISCOVER

- a. *What does the passage say? Repeat it in your own words.*
- b. *What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God?*
- c. *God is speaking to you, what will you do about it?*

PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER

This week have each person share one thing they learned from the Discover passage and have a person pray for them in the group to grow deeper in this area of their life.

Assign each person in the group to pray throughout the week for one person and offering daily prayer support asking God to reveal more of his will and guidance in their life.

Week Three – (Read before Team Meeting)

Make Disciples – *Be one, make one.*

To make disciples is to help others become true followers of Jesus. For those who don't know him, disciple-making is helping them come to Christ in faith. For those who believe in Jesus, disciple making involves establishing them in their faith, connecting them with other believers, and encouraging their growth through the transforming power of his Spirit. It isn't primarily about a specific method, activity, or approach. Instead, disciple-making is the work of enabling a relationship—the faith-filled following of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

In the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20), Jesus provided the basics of the disciple-making process. With three broad strokes, he painted a picture of what is involved, as we will see. Before examining that process, though, it is important to remember the context that Jesus placed it within.

As he issued the directive, Jesus declared his authority: "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me" (Matthew 18). There is no

higher authority than Jesus. It was this reality that made his first followers unstoppable in their obedience to make disciples (Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29). The same has been true for countless others in the centuries since. Then, in his conclusion, Jesus promised his presence: "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (verse 20). Throughout the Bible, when God gave an assignment, he promised his presence to ensure the success of his obedient servants. Consider the examples of Moses (Exodus 3:4-22), Joshua (Joshua 1:1-9), Gideon (Judges 6:1-16), and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-8). The implications of Jesus' authority and promise are profound as we engage in disciple-making. Because of his power, nothing should stop us from doing our part. Because of his presence, we should have complete confidence in the outcome. Christ can and will work through our humble efforts to accomplish his great purposes. Disciples will be made.

So, what is the process? The main instruction is found in the clause "Go and make disciples." It is a compound clause with two imperatives, or commands: "go" and "make disciples." The two go hand in hand. We are under the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his supreme command to go and make disciples. "Go" means (well, this seems obvious) to move from one place to another with the intent to engage in some specific activity. ("Let's go and have coffee." "Go and buy some milk.") The activity won't happen if you stay in the same place. There is an essential implication to this—we, as believers, are people who are always moving into the spaces (whether geographic or relational) where we can engage in the activity of making disciples. We show up with a mission to accomplish, a purpose to fulfill, a kind of people to make—true followers of Jesus. Whatever else we do in life (whether we are a doctor, teacher, parent, student, missionary, or whatever), this is our assignment.

However, the act of going and making disciples involves two related activities—found in the two subordinate phrases "baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" and "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Both are important.

Baptism is the visible mark of a Christ follower. It is the means by which the new disciple expresses his or

her faith in Christ openly. Of course, there is a wide range of views regarding baptism among believers today. (At what age can one be baptized? In what manner should one be baptized?) Whatever theological meaning is associated

with this act, whatever method of application is used, it is clear that Christ expected that all disciples would be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is part of discipleship. This does not, however, mean that all involved in disciple-making must do the baptizing. The Apostle Paul himself chose to limit his practice of baptizing new believers, presumably entrusting that task to other leaders (see 1 Corinthians 1:14-17). Paul's example suggests that it can be appropriate to focus on some aspects of the disciple-making process (in Paul's case, communicating the gospel) without being the one person (or ministry) trying to do it all. This also highlights the importance of involving disciples in the Christian community (that is, local churches), where the life and practice can be fully experienced through the ministry of the greater body of believers.

The second activity Jesus highlighted was "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." This is the great commission curriculum. As the Master teacher, Jesus instructed his followers in his way of life—the kingdom lifestyle. The content of discipleship is always rooted in and centered upon Jesus' teaching. Within that teaching is a goldmine of riches that can be explored, applied, and shared with others. All that the apostles preached in the book of acts, and all they taught through their letters, are faithful expositions and extensions of Jesus' teaching. But remember, Jesus isn't interested in the mere transfer of knowledge. Rather, making disciples is about learning to apply his teaching, to live his way of living, to obey his instructions. (Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

So let's get practical and talk about where to start?

a. Living with Jesus:

The more time spent with Jesus, the more we become like Him.

This is true of any relationship. As you spend time with a person, you start to pick up their mannerisms and be influenced by them—for good

or for bad. 1 Corinthians 15:33 says, "Bad company corrupts good character." Our thoughts and feelings control us much more than we realize. To live a victorious life in Christ we must learn to get control of our thoughts and feelings. "For as he thinks within himself, so he is" (Proverbs 23:7). We are transformed by looking at Jesus. The more we look to the person of Jesus, the more we are transformed to be like Him.

John 8:31-32 - "Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Romans 12:2 - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

According to these verses, how are we to become like Him? See also 2 Cor. 3:18 and 1 John 3:2.

a. Living in God's Word

The primary way we look to Jesus and learn from Him is through quality time in God's word. Hebrews 4:12-13 says, "The word of God is living and active and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of both soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." When you approach God through His word with a humble and surrendered heart, willing to obey whatever He might ask of you, then God will faithfully reveal areas of unbelief and wrong thinking in your life. We get to know Jesus more as we spend time with Him, which makes it

easier and more natural to trust Him. We will dive deeper into this vital principle below. (Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

a. Living in Prayer

The most adequate description of prayer is simply, "Talking to God about what we are doing together." That immediately focuses the activity where we are but at the same time drives the egotism out of it. Requests will naturally be made in the course of this conversational walk. Prayer is a matter of explicitly sharing with God my concerns about what he too is concerned about in my life. And of course he is concerned about my concerns and, in particular, that my concerns should coincide with his. This is our walk together.

So how do you develop a life of living in prayer? Practice! Below are a few ways you can start practicing living in prayer with Christ. Remember, prayer doesn't save you, it just keeps you closer to Christ. So experiment with different ways of praying below. You can't fail.

1. Journal your prayers.

But don't just journal requests. Write out questions, heartaches and struggles. Don't forget to journal praises, too. Be creative. Put your prayers into poems. Write a letter to God. Then go back and read your journal entries in a week or a month. There's a good chance you'll be reminded of how God has answered your prayers. And when you're feeling down, your past praises remind you of God's goodness and love for you.

2. Take a prayer walk.

Hike in a forest preserve and praise God for his beautiful creation. Walk around your neighborhood and pray for the family in each home you pass. Or take a "prayer walk" on the sidewalk around your school.

3. Pray over your calendar and schedule.

Got a challenge coming up? Pray for peace of mind. Got an important date or appointment next week? Ask God to give you the right words and wisdom.

4. Pray Scripture.

Let's say that during your Bible reading time you come across [1 Peter 5:7](#): "God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him" (CEV). Turn that verse into a prayer: "Lord, I'm going to trust you and give you all my worries. I know you will take care of me." Do this with Scriptures that express needs and also with those that praise or thank God. Hey, why not personalize the Lord's Prayer? Take each sentence or phrase from this well-known prayer ([Matthew 6:9-13](#)) and write it in a way that applies directly to your life.

5. Pray about the news.

When you read or hear about a troubling issue, pray for the people involved. Pray for politicians and other national and community leaders who make the news.

6. Partner up.

Find someone to pray with regularly. Plan to meet at a coffee shop once or twice a week, or get together before work. Praying with a friend is great for personal accountability.

7. Be quiet.

If prayer is a conversation, then you also need to listen *in silence*. And silence means getting away from distractions like music and TV. As you listen, don't expect to hear a voice. But do expect God to tug at your heart, move your conscience, or help you realize something you need to do or change.

8. Keep a prayer on your lips.

Dozens of thoughts pass through your mind daily. You daydream. You may think bad or gossipy thoughts. Turn those daydreams and not-so-great thoughts into prayers. Ask God to help a person hurt by gossip. Ask him to forgive you for thoughts that take your mind places it shouldn't go. Turn daydreams and other passing thoughts into moments to recognize God's presence in your life. As you learn to keep a prayer on your lips, you'll come a little closer to understanding what it means to "pray continually".

a. Live in Community

While Jesus is continually discipling us in the privacy of our hearts and minds, it is His desire and method for His people to disciple each other. Ephesians 4:15-16 says, "Speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love." We all have weaknesses. We are all believing something untrue about ourselves and about God. We all have blind spots in our life. The Lord knows this and calls us to speak the truth to each other in love. This leads to a culture in which we are all being discipled, and we are all being disciple-makers.

It is important to keep discipling relationships in perspective. There are many mature believers and Christian leaders who never experienced such a focused discipleship relationship, and there are many who have never discipled others in this way.

When the Apostle Paul detailed the growth process for believers in Ephesians 4:11-16, he indicated that gifted individuals would equip God's people for works of service. Then, as all do their part by speaking the truth in love, believers will grow together into maturity and attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. When healthy faith communities live out these principles, spiritual growth happens—disciples grow in the experience of the fullness of Christ. The bottom line is that all disciples need a healthy Christian community for growth and maturity. However, adding healthy discipling relationships within that community environment can significantly accelerate growth and maturity. (Adapted from - CRU- Designed for Discipleship)

Why should we accept the call of Jesus to become disciple makers? Read a one-page article called "The Great Omission" for the answer. Go to <https://myronvierra.info/the-easy-yoke/f/the-great-omission>.

WEEK THREE - Small Group Breakout (30 minutes)

Discover - Read this passage (John 15:1- 8) and answer each of the questions below.

CONNECT

- a. What are you thankful for this week?*
- b. What has bothered you or stressed you out this week? What do you need for things to be better?*
- c. What did we talk about last week? How did you apply those things in your life? Did you get a chance to share last week's story with anyone?*

DISCOVER

- a. What does the passage say? Repeat it in your own words.*
- b. What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God?*

- c. God is speaking to you, what will you do about it?*

PRAYER EXERCISE

Reading the Word to hear God and letting his Word guide us in prayer. Do this exercise at home and share it with the group next weeks.

Listening to the Word

Read over the passage, slowly, several times and see if any word or phrase stands out for you, and stay with that phrase for as long as you like before turning your attention to any other.

Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and

show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

The process is a bit like sucking hard candy. Do not try to analyze the phrase, just as you would not normally break up hard candy and subject it to chemical analysis before tasting it.

Often a phrase will catch the attention of our subconscious mind's needs long before our conscious mind is aware of the reason for the attraction. That is why it is good to remain with the phrase for as long as possible without trying to analyze it.

I may find all sorts of distractions running through my mind, but some thoughts, far from being distractions, can become the substance of my prayer. It is as though the phrase of Scripture is a searchlight which plays upon my stream of consciousness, thoughts, memories, reflections, daydreams, hopes, ambitions, fears, and I pray out of the mixture of God's word and my inner thoughts and feelings. Try it and you will discover God active God's Spirit is in His Word.

Week Four (Read before Team Meeting)

DBS - Discovery Bible Study

There are many tools that we can use to help someone becoming a disciple of Jesus. We are suggesting using the tools called, DBS. A Discovery Bible Study is an opportunity for people to discover first-hand what the Bible says about God, about people, and what it means to follow Jesus. A DBS is based on the belief that God's word is powerful and that God's Spirit is faithful to lead us into all truth. When you facilitate a DBS, you are essentially co-leading with God's Spirit, who is the major player in guiding seekers toward Jesus.

The Discovery Bible Study (DBS) is a helpful method used to connect yourself and others to the truth of God's word. It uses key gospel questions to help us hear from the Lord and have heart transformation.

You don't need to be a Bible or theology expert to facilitate an effective Discovery Bible Study. A successful DBS occurs because God's word is powerful (Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16), and God's Spirit is faithful to lead us into all truth (John 16:13).

When you facilitate a DBS group remember not to take the role of a teacher or scholar and answer everybody's questions. Here are a few clues that I am dominating a DBS group:

Dominating DBS Group:

¥ I hear the sound of my voice more than the others.

- ¥ People do not interrupt me.
- ¥ After I have spoken, the group goes silent.
- ¥ I share prior knowledge rather than revelation from the Word in the moment.
- ¥ I am more concerned with correcting others than I am about hearing from God.
- ¥ The members of the group are receiving truth from me and not the Bible.

Each week in a DBS group there are questions that the facilitator asks.

CONNECT

- a. What are you thankful for this week?*
- b. What has bothered you or stressed you out this week? What do you need for things to be better?*
- c. What did we talk about last week? How did you apply those things in your life? Did you get a chance to share last week's story with anyone?*

DISCOVER – Read the passage for the week.

- a. What does the passage say? Repeat it in your own words.*
- b. What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God?*
- c. If this is God speaking to you, what will you do about it?*

MULTIPLY

- a. How can we help one another in our group to apply what we are learning?*
- b. Who can we tell what we are learning?*
- c. Is there anyone you know who would benefit from being a part of this group?*

Which passage should be used each week?

It's often helpful to select a passage that addresses the issues or areas of unbelief you have observed by those within the group. Pray and ask God to show you which passage would be helpful in dealing with the heart issues confronting your group. A helpful resource in selecting scriptures is the following topical guide (follow the link).

<http://www.thewordretreat.com/vision/>

Some of the topics include:

- *Masculinity, accountability, discipleship, attitude adjustment, performance orientation, issues men face, being a dad*
- *Singleness, love and loneliness, pressures, being a complete person, how to find a partner, sexuality, issues singles face*
- *Marriage, getting along at home, balancing work and home, communication conflict, intimacy, single, miscarriage*

- Parenting, how's it done, family time, strong-willed children, adolescents, challenging issues and special needs, parents in pain*
- Marketplace, relationships at work, too much stress, business ethics, finding the right job, bored and burnt out, entrepreneurs*
- Self-esteem, financial stress, living with pain, caregivers, empty nesters, growing older*

Recovery, healthy habits, healing broken relationships, picking up after divorce, grief and loss, abuse, pornography. (Adapted from -The Word Ministry in Kirkland team training material

Small Group Breakout (30 minutes)

Discover - Read this passage (Matthew 6:9-13) and answer each of the questions below.

- What does the passage say? Repeat it in your own words.*
- What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God?*
- If this is God speaking to you, what will you do about it?*

MULTIPLY

- How can we help one another in our group to apply what we are learning?*
- Who can we tell what we are learning?*
- Is there anyone you know who would benefit from being a part of this group?*

PRAYER FOR EACH OTHER

Week Five (Read before Team Meeting)

DBS - Discovery Bible Study

What is the reason or purpose behind using these set of questions in a DBS groups?

CONNECT

There are three key questions that make the connect time an intentional part of the discipling process. These questions not only help participants to connect on a personal level, but begin to instill the DNA of Christian fellowship into the group from the very beginning.

The first two questions lay the groundwork of worship (recognizing God's presence and giving thanks).

The third one steers participants toward intercession (expressing need) and creates opportunities to meet those needs (fellowship).

Those of us in the Church are familiar with small group dynamics that include open sharing, discussion of deep life topics, and requests for support. But for many outside the church this is a foreign space. The fellowship and connection within a discovery group are things many people long for and rarely experience. The connect time is a powerful space to open hearts wider to the word of God.

DISCOVER

We've made it to the heart of a DBS—discovering God through his word! It's time for you, the coach, to send your players (people of peace) onto the field, where they can explore what the Bible reveals about God and about them. Your main tools in this process are a carefully selected Bible passage and some key questions.

Here are the steps in the discovery process:

- Read the passage.
- Ask, “What does the passage say?” (Select someone from the group to repeat it in their own words.)
- Ask, “What does this passage mean?” (Or specifically, “What does this tell me about God?” and “What does this tell me about people?”)
- Ask, “(If this is God speaking...) What will you do about it?” (Another way to ask this with a non-believer is, “If I believed this was true, how would my life be different?”) At the end of this step, everyone should have a practical “I will” statement.

Alongside the word and the Holy Spirit, these questions start to reshape a person’s worldview—their beliefs about *God*, *about humanity*, and *about how we should live*. But a Discovery Bible Study is about more than head-knowledge or curiosity. It shifts immediately from knowledge to action, from awareness to real life. If you’ve been involved in many Bible studies before, this may feel very different or even uncomfortable to you. Many of us have not been expected or challenged to instantly put into practice what we read. This is one of the most powerful elements of a DBS. People’s lives actually start to look different as a result.

MULTIPLY

A Discovery Bible Study is the cornerstone of a strategy to bring entire networks, cities, and nations to Jesus. This strategy is gaining incredible momentum in many parts of the world, with thousands of new disciples now beginning to follow Jesus. The strategy is called Disciple Making Movements.

The multiply questions:

- How can we help one another in our group?
- Who else (outside of our group) can we show

kindness to?

- Who can we tell and how can we tell what we're learning?

These questions weave the DNA of love (for each other and for all people) into the group, and incorporate Jesus's command to his disciples to tell others the good news. We call them multiplication questions because showing the love of Jesus and sharing the truth God reveals to us are two of the most compelling actions we can take to draw people closer to God.

There's one extra tip for helping your group to multiply which is important on many levels. It's simple, but a little counterintuitive. We recommend that you don't keep an open door policy in discovery groups. Don't add new members after the first few weeks, once the group has started to gain momentum, then have the group start inviting the friends (Third week). As the group starts having a transformational impact on its members, it's natural to invite.

As the Coach, invite others in the group to facilitate asking the questions each week. Make sure to establish the right way of facilitating the group. Without your example, they will naturally revert to the more traditional model of teacher-student relationship. DBS groups by design aren't teaching times, but discovery times of letting God lead and teach us what his words say. Remember share the leadership but model the kind of coach you want them to be in the DNS group.

Small Group Breakout (30 minutes)

(Give more time in the small group this week so the team has time to do a complete DBS study.

Read this passage (Matthew 28:16-20) and answer each of the questions below.

Connect:

- *How did God show up in your life this week?*
- *What are you thankful for?*
- *What is causing stress in your life right now?*
- *Were there any lessons you applied or shared? Did you follow through on your “I will” and “I will tell” statements?*

Discover:

- *What does the passage say? (Repeat it in your own words.)*
- *What does the passage mean? (What does it tell us about God? About people?)*
- *Where did you see that in this passage? (Used if discussion strays from the passage.)*
- *(If this is God speaking...)What will you do about it?*

Multiply:

- *How can we help one another in our group?*
- *Who else (out side of our group)can we show kindness to?*
- *Who can we tell and how can we tell what we're learning?*

PRAYER FOR EACH OTHER

A helpful resource in selecting scriptures is the following topical guide (follow the link).

<http://www.thewordretreat.com/vision/>

The material above has been adapted from; Campus Ministry – CRU-
Designed for Discipleship; Dallas Willard- The Great Omission, and
Hearing God; The Word Ministry in Kirkland team training material;
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