

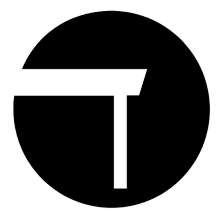
**the  
Table**

# **Discipleship Resource**

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**to make life-long and life-wide  
disciples of Jesus Christ.**

Fall 2022



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# Getting Started

## Session 1

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### Overview & Purpose

This series is not designed as a curriculum for classroom lectures. It is designed as a resource that fosters relational discipleship. While we believe there is valuable information here for students, the goal of all this is not just to convey information. The goal is discipleship.

This means applying the things we are learning. It means being honest about our failures and our need for grace. It means following the example of godly Christians. And all of those things require a relationship. So the goal of this session is to get to know one another, while setting some expectations for this mentoring relationship.

### Story Time

Before you go any further, take some time to share your stories with each other. Take turns answering the following questions (which we stole from the book Growing Together by Melissa B. Kruger).

1. How did you become a Christian? If you're not sure if you're a Christian, what keeps you from believing in Jesus?
2. What ministry, person, or book has God used to deepen your faith?
3. Is there a particular verse, passage, or book of Scripture that you would consider significant in your life? Why?



4. What was your family like? How does your relationship with your family members impact or influence your relationship with God and others?

## Expectations

Our hope and prayer is that this series serves as a jumping-off point for your relationship to bear fruit of discipleship. But, even the best resources are of little help if those participating aren't on the same page. We want to have clear expectations of where we are going and how we want to get there. Here are some questions we want to encourage you to confirm as you meet this week to help set those expectations.

- **What day will we meet each week?** \_\_\_\_\_
- **What timeframe will we meet each week?** \_\_\_\_\_

(If one hour each week is all you have available, communicate that upfront. This simple detail will help you prioritize what you talk about in that hour.)

- **Where will we meet each week?** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Duration?** \_\_\_\_\_

This type of mentor relationship is not designed to be for a lifetime, rather it is seasonal in nature. Because this was designed with college students in mind, it would be helpful to think in school semesters.

- **What do we want to go over when we meet?**  
\_\_\_\_\_

(As you begin to wrap this series up, take time to pray and consider what might be next. If you need suggestions, we have included a few ideas at the back of this book. You can also grab any of the Table team to help you.)



Each of these questions can be reevaluated at any point, particularly as semesters change, but don't be quick to make changes. The habit of consistently meeting and guarding that time is an important part of your relationship growing.

## To our mentors...

It can be easy for some to think of themselves as unqualified to mentor. We can read Titus 2 and quickly question our ability to "proclaim things consistent with sound teaching" as thoughts of perfection and seminary degrees jump to mind. Let us assure you, that is not what Paul is asking as he writes those words in Titus. A humble posture of faithfully trusting and walking with the Lord as he refines you by His Word, His Church and His Spirit is the very thing younger disciples need to witness. May it never be by your own strength and power that you mentor, but by the Lord's.

- Pray for your student on a regular basis
- Pray for wisdom and discernment as you meet (James 1.5)
- Pray for "Christ to dwell in our hearts", that we might "comprehend the depth of God's love" and "be filled with the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3.16-19)
- Pray for God to carry to completion what he began in their life (Phil 1.6)
- Be faithful to this relationship
  - Check on them during hard seasons of school
  - Follow up with them when they ask for accountability or if deep things have been shared in your time together
  - Send versus, articles or books that you are being encouraged or shaped by
  - Invite them to dinner with your family or friends
  - Consider serving together at church or places in our community like Our Daily Bread



# To our mentees...

Whether you have been the one pursuing an older disciple or have been pursued by an older disciple who wants to pour into you, recognize that this discipleship relationship is a gift to your walk with the Lord, but it will only grow through putting in the work. A mature faith is not something we stumble into rather something we cultivate intentionally over time through the power of the Spirit.

- Pray for your mentor
  - For their lives to be marked by rejoicing in the Lord (Phil 2)
  - To be strengthened by the Gospel, to the praise of Christ Jesus (Rom 16.25-27)
  - For God to carry to completion what he began in their life (Phil 1.6)
- Be faithful to this relationship
  - Honor the time you have set by being on time
  - Come with assignments complete and ready to discuss
  - Take time to think through a question or two for your mentor ahead of time
  - Be honest about how you are doing and where you are struggling
  - Consider ways to encourage your mentor

**“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord’s work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Cor 15.58**

## This week...

Before you get together again, take some time to look over four more life questions. Come to the next meeting ready to answer the following questions. Feel free to jot down some notes in preparation.



- How has knowing Jesus made a difference in your life? How would you describe your affection for him at this point in your life – vibrant, warm, lukewarm, cold, indifferent, angry, or fearful?

- Do you live alone or have a roommate? Who are the people you primarily live life with? Are you dating anyone?





- What truth about God supports you in times of struggle or trial? What trials have affected your life, and how have you received comfort from the Lord in them?

- How would you like to grow in your faith in the coming year? In what particular area would you like to see progress?

**Pray together before you leave.**



# Defining Discipleship

## Session 2

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### Overview & Purpose

Discipleship is the goal of this mentoring relationship, so it's important for us to know what we mean when we use that word. For answers, we'll look at what the Bible says, and we'll also explore a diagram that we use at the Table to discuss this process.

### Before we begin...

Take some time to discuss the four life questions from last week.

### Discipleship in the Bible

Take a minute to discuss the term "discipleship." How would you describe it? What does being a disciple entail?

Read these scriptures together, then discuss the following questions:

**Matthew 4.18-22**

**Matthew 28.18-20**

**Colossians 1.28-29**



1. Only one of these texts even uses the word, “disciple” in it, but all three of them deal with this topic. So what does each of them teach about discipleship?

2. In Matt 28, Jesus says his followers are to make disciples and that they should do at least two things with them. What are they? Why do you think he mentions those things?

3. In Col 1, what does Paul say he labors and strives for? What’s his goal?



4. Do you see anything strange about the way Paul describes his striving in v.29? Who does “his” refer to?

## A Discipleship Definition

In his book, Real Life Discipleship, Jim Putnam looks to Matthew 4.19 for his definition of discipleship. According to this verse, he says, discipleship can be defined as...

**Following Jesus (“follow me”), being changed by Jesus (“I will make you”), and committing to the mission of Jesus (“fish for men”).**

How close is that definition to the one you gave earlier? Would you add anything to this definition?



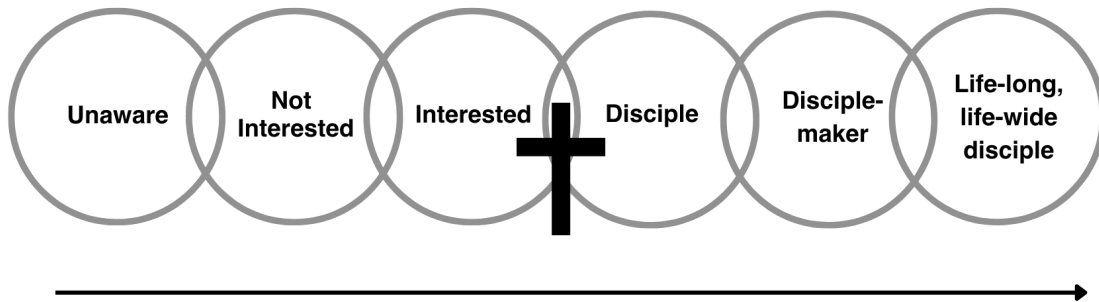
# The Circles

Paul says his goal is to present everyone mature in Christ. This is our goal at the Table. Take a look at the Table's mission statement:

**To reach students with the Gospel, making life-long and life-wide disciples of Jesus.**

One of the ways we illustrate this goal is with a series of overlapping circles.

## Chain of Discipleship



Every human being falls in one of these six circles

1. Unaware - This person has heard little, if anything about Jesus (primarily people in unreached countries).
2. Not Interested - This person has some concept of Jesus, but doesn't want anything to do with him. This can range from antagonism to apathy.
3. Interested - This person has heard about Jesus, and wants to know more. But, they have not yet chosen to follow him. This can range from simple curiosity, to a mental ascent that is not fully ready to commit.
4. Disciple - This person has heard the Gospel, and responded in faith. They have trusted Jesus to save them from their sins. And though there is still a lot of growing to do, they are committed to Jesus as Lord over their lives.



5. Disciple-Maker - This person is not only following Jesus, but they are actively using their gifts, time, and resources to help others know and follow Jesus.

6. Life-Long, Life-Wide Disciple - This person is a mature (though not perfect) follower of Jesus. Their commitment to Jesus affects every aspect of their lives, and they are marked by consistent growth.

## **A False Category**

We didn't invent the circles diagram above. There are several versions of this, used by different ministries and churches. And some of those versions use another circle between "Interested," and "Disciple." That circle is labeled, "Believer." The idea is that there are some people who believe in Jesus but are not disciples of Jesus. This, however, is not a real category. In the Bible, to be a believer in Jesus is to be a disciple of Jesus. A "Believer" who has no desire to follow and obey Jesus is not actually a believer.

**Where would you place yourself on this chart? What would you say is your greatest hindrance to moving into the next circle?**



# Our Four Things

At the Table, we have four major values we seek to instill in students.

- 1. A Gospel-Centered Life**
- 2. Formational Rhythms**
- 3. Commitment to the Church**
- 4. Missional Living**

Over the next 8 weeks, you will be studying these four things together, discussing what they mean, and how you can live them out, as you pursue life-long, life-wide discipleship.

## This Week

If discipleship is going to take place in our lives, we need to be honest with ourselves and others about where we need to grow. Before your next meeting, fill out the attached Discipleship Check-In Sheet, and come back ready to discuss that with your mentor. This is something you will come back to multiple times this year.



# Discipleship Check-in

## Session 3

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Before you begin, pray and ask the Lord to help you answer the following questions with grace and humility.

### How are you doing in these areas? (1=weak, 5= strong)

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Time in God's Word  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Ability to handle God's Word  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Ability to share the overarching story of scripture                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Time in prayer  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Time in other spiritual rhythms (solitude, fasting, memorization, etc.) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Ability to share the gospel with others                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Your loving obedience to Jesus  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Your love for the Church (as measured by involvement)                   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Living in joyfulness  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Putting sin to death   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Your anxiety   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Your contentment   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Your sleeping habits   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. Your time management   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. Your effort in school and work   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. Your relationship(s) with roommates                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. Your relationship(s) with close friends                                | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 18. Your relationship(s) with unbelievers                                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |





19. Do you consistently honor the Sabbath? Y N
20. Have you been involved in the body of Christ this week? Y N
21. Have you viewed sexually provocative material this week/recently? Y N
22. Have you maintained pure relationship(s) with the opposite sex? Y N
23. Have you maintained pure relationship(s) with the same sex? Y N
24. What comes to mind when you think about God?

25. What books of the Bible do you spend the most time in?  
What books have you/do you avoid?



26. In what ways are you serving the church, and others around you?

27. Where do you currently see or experience the Lord working in your life?



# Gospel-Centered Life: Pt.1

## Session 4

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### Overview & Purpose

The gospel is central to everything we do and everything we are as followers of Jesus. If we don't continually preach the gospel to ourselves, discipleship will become legalistic, or a mere self-improvement project. So it's essential that we 1) know the gospel 2) know how to apply its truths to our lives.

### Before we begin...

Take some time to discuss the personal accountability sheet that you filled out this week.

### What is the gospel?

If we're going to live a Gospel-Centered Life, we have to be sure we understand the gospel. So what does that word mean? How would you define it?



What would you say are the key elements of the Gospel? In other words, if you were explaining the Gospel to someone what truths would they need to know in order to become a Christian?

There's no single passage in Scripture that lists every element of the Gospel, but there are a few places that give some really good summaries. Read through the following texts, and take note of what truths are mentioned in each.

**1 Corinthians 15.1-5**

**Ephesians 2.1-10**

**Acts 2.22-39**

1. What are common themes that pop up in all three of these?



2. Are there key elements in these that didn't make it into your Gospel summary? Are there any elements from your summary that you didn't see in any of these?

3. Can you think of any other texts that have good Gospel summaries in them?

## The Metanarrative

One of the ways we like to summarize the gospel at the Table is through a template called the metanarrative. The metanarrative (which means “overarching story”) is a brief outline of the story of Scripture and it goes like this:

Creation - In the beginning, God created all things, including human beings who are made in his image (Genesis 1-2)

Fall - Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, bringing brokenness, and separating humanity from the God they were made for (Genesis 3)



Redemption - God enacted a plan to redeem humanity through the life, sacrificial death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus (Genesis 3-Revelation)

Restoration - God will one day make all things new and right again, and he has already begun this process in his people, the Church. (Isaiah-Revelation)

Take a moment to talk through this together. Does it make sense to you? Is there anything that you find confusing, or need explained further?

## **This Week**

Do these two things before you meet next week:

1. Memorize Ephesians 2.8-9
2. Read through each of the three summary texts again, then write your own brief summary of the Gospel (like “bullet-point, no more than half a page” brief). Bring that summary to next week’s meeting.



# Gospel-Centered Life: Pt. 2

## Session 5

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### Overview & Purpose

Now that we've explored the truths of the Gospel, we want to explore how those truths affect our day-to-day living. In this session we want to define "Gospel-Centered Life" and discuss how to live this out.

### Before we begin...

Go over the Ephesians 2.8-9 memory work from last week.

**Go over the Gospel summary you wrote this last week. Mentors:  
Is there anything you would add to that summary?**

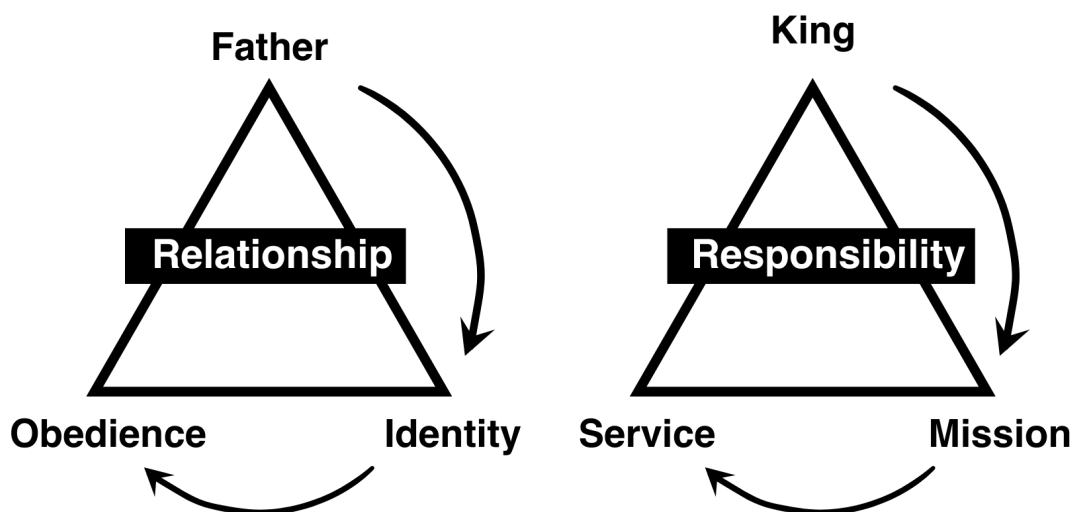
### Defining Gospel-Centered Life

We define Gospel-Centered Life as "Letting Jesus' work and identity affect every area of your life." That means Jesus is not just an add-on to everything you already have going. He's the thing that everything else fits into. And your relationship with him affects how you live in all those other areas.



To be able to live like this, we have to do more than just understand the gospel. We have to understand how the gospel affects us personally. At Sunnybrook & the Table, we use two triangles to help demonstrate this.

These triangles illustrate two key ways that our lives are changed by the Gospel. Through Jesus, God has given us a new relationship, and a new responsibility (or purpose). We'll tackle the responsibility triangle at a later time. For now, we want to focus on our new relationship.



## Relationship

In this triangle, we see that we are given a relationship with the Father who then freely gives us a new identity in Christ. The Scriptures list a number of different aspects to this new identity. Take a look at the following texts.

What do each of these say about our new identity in Christ?





**1 John 3.1-3**

**2 Cor 5.17-21**

**1 Peter 2.4-10**

**Gal 3.27-29**

**Col 1.21-23**

Can you think of any other descriptions that the Bible gives about our new identity in Christ?

The relationship triangle also demonstrates this key biblical truth to us: our obedience flows from our identity. The more we understand who we are in Christ, the better we'll understand how we should live. We actually see this play out in some of the texts listed above. Not only do they describe our identity, they describe the obedience that flows from that identity.

**Look over those first three Scriptures again. In what ways do they connect our identity to specific actions?**

It's critical when we look at the relationship triangle to get the direction of the arrows right. The natural human inclination is to move backwards through the triangle, which sounds something like this:



“If I can do enough good things (obedience) that will make me a good person (identity), which means I will be accepted by God (the Father).”

**This is the opposite of the Gospel which tells me that God, through Jesus, has already accepted me and given me my identity. Remember: your identity is given, not earned.**

Obedience is not the only way to try to earn an identity. We face a constant temptation to create identity through other things (money, success, relationship, human approval, etc). We need the Gospel to remind ourselves of what is true.

<b>Man-made Identity says...</b>	<b>Gospel Identity says...</b>
If I can be successful, I am IMPORTANT	My importance comes from being a Son/Daughter of the King (1 John 3.1-2)
If people approve of me (or if I have a significant other) I am LOVED	I am already loved, so much so that Jesus was willing to die for me (Rom 5.8)
If I am always busy, I am NEEDED/VALUABLE	My value comes from being God's own workmanship (Eph 2.10)



Can you think of some other ways people seek to create an identity for themselves?

**Mentors: In what ways have you tried to create identity for yourself and how has that affected you? How does the gospel speak to those man-made identities?**

## **This Week**

1. Continue memorizing Eph 2.8-9, but add verse 10 this week.
2. Set aside 30 minutes to think through different ways you are tempted to create an identity for yourself, and then reflect on how the Gospel speaks to those things.



# Formational Rhythms

## Session 6

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### Overview & Purpose

In our last session, we saw how the Gospel gives us new identity and purpose. In light of this, we want to live a different kind of life, one that is built around Jesus and his mission. But this is not always easy, and it certainly doesn't happen by accident. It requires intentionality. It requires maturity. This week we're talking about engaging in formational rhythms that enable us to serve God and the world around us.

### Before we begin...

1. Go over the Ephesians 2.8-10 memory work from last week.
2. This last week, you were asked to spend some time reflecting on the different ways you're tempted to create identity, and how the Gospel speaks to those things. Take some time to discuss that together.

### Defining Formational Rhythms

We define Formational Rhythms as “Self-discipline for the sake of God and others.” We use the term “formational” because we're talking about activities that form and shape us into the people God made us to be.



We use the term “rhythms” because the things that most shape us are rarely the big, one-time events but the small day-to-day habits that we regularly practice. So we want to engage in the kinds of habits that help us live out God’s purpose for us. That purpose is touched on in the memory work we’ve been going over these last couple weeks:

**"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do."**

**Ephesians 2.10**

Notice once again, that all of this flows from the Gospel truths described in Eph 2.1-9. God saves us, and then gives us a new identity and purpose/mission (that will be important!). So how do we live this out?

## **The Pyramid**

A while back, we came across this diagram that was developed by a campus ministry in Arkansas. It’s been really helpful in explaining how formational rhythms work.



# Three Levels of Formation



TimCasteel.com

Personal Rhythms are those rhythms/disciplines/habits that align us with God's design for human living. These include getting proper rest, eating well, delayed gratification, time management, freedom from phone/screen addiction, healthy relationships, etc.

Spiritual Rhythms are those rhythms/disciplines/habits that align us with God's heart. These include consistent Bible reading and prayer, solitude, Scripture memory, meditation, fasting, involvement in church, accountability, etc.

Missional Rhythms are those rhythms/disciplines/habits that align us with God's mission. These include serving in church, sharing the Gospel, volunteering at nonprofits, regular prayer for the lost and for missionaries, serving roommates, etc.

**If you had to pick, which of these three layers comes easiest to you? Which is most difficult for you?**



# Building from the Ground Up

All three layers are important and should be practiced, but the arrangement of the pyramid matters. A person who is seeking to live on mission without engaging in spiritual disciplines, like church involvement or Bible reading will eventually run dry, making their ministry less effective. And a person who is attempting to engage in spiritual disciplines without proper sleep or time management will feel like they are spinning their wheels.

In our experience, many students want to engage in the second and third layer, but they struggle to do these things because their bottom layer is crumbling. They're not getting proper rest. They're spending 5-10 hours a day on screens. They're constantly stressed because of overpacked schedules (or they don't manage their time well).

All of this is a recipe for exhaustion and poor mental/emotional health. And in times of stress and exhaustion, the tendency is to lean harder into the very habits that caused these problems (isolating from community, mindlessly scrolling through TikTok, not eating well). This is why it's critical to create healthy, intentional habits that form our hearts and minds in the right ways.

## The Gospel as Foundation

We know we sound like a broken record, but it's important to remember that the Gospel is the foundation for all of this. The Gospel reminds us that our value and identity are given, not earned. This means we are free to rest sometimes because we don't have to prove our worth through constant busyness. It means we don't need social media to create identity.



It also means we can work on formational rhythms without turning them into a checklist to show how spiritual, important, or mature we are. And we don't have to feel overwhelmed with guilt when we fail to be as disciplined as we had hoped.

**Read Titus 2.11-14 and Romans 12.1-2, and discuss the following:**

Both of these texts tie our self-discipline to Gospel truths. List the Gospel truths that you see in each text. List the descriptions of discipline and good works. In what ways does Paul connect the two in each text?

Unhealthy rhythms in the personal layer undermine our ability to live out the top two layers. How have you seen this to be true in your own life?





On a scale of 1-10, how healthy would you say your phone use is? If you were to open up your screen time report, how much time would it say you spend each day on your phone?

Do you have any questions about how to engage in specific spiritual disciplines (how to read the Bible, how to pray, how to have a quiet time, etc.)?

**Mentors: What rhythms/disciplines have you found to be helpful in your own life? What advice would you give about developing these disciplines?**



# This Week

Do these three things before next week:

1. Memorize Romans 12.1-2
2. Take a look at the following list of formational rhythms. Choose one habit from each category that you want to put into practice this semester.
3. Next week, we have another discipleship check-in. Look ahead to that session, and fill out the answers to those questions before the next meeting.

## Personal

- Get 7+ hours of sleep each night
- Turn your phone off for an hour each day
- Curate media to 4-6 hours a week
- 1 hour of real face-to-face conversation a week
- Share a meal with someone each day
- Be active 2-3 times a week (even a short walk each day)
- Give up one thing for 24 hours, once a week

## Spiritual (Hint: if you're not yet regularly reading the Word, do the first or second one)

- Have a morning quiet time (time spent in Scripture and prayer) 5 days a week
- Commit to reading Scripture before checking your phone each morning
- Pray on your knees three times a day (after waking, mid-day, just before bed)
- Fast from one meal each week, and spend that time in prayer
- Sabbath from all work for 24 hours each week
- Memorize one 2-3 verse Bible text every week
- Every day, take one section of Scripture (like your memory verse), set a 5 minute timer on your phone, then try to do nothing but think about that Scripture and its implications



## **Missional**

- Set a daily reminder on your phone to pray for a lost friend
- Volunteer in your church
- Start a weekly gathering (basketball, game night) with some Christian friends, and then invite non-Christian friends to join you each week
- Try to bring up your faith in one conversation every day
- Become a weekly volunteer at Our Daily Bread or another charity in town
- Find one creative way to serve your roommates every week
- Introduce yourself to a non-Christian classmate, co-worker, or neighbor. Make it your goal to have a conversation with them every week, and pray for an opportunity to talk about Jesus with them.



# Discipleship Check-in

## Session 7

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### Look Back

Flip back in your booklet to the first Discipleship Check-in from Session 3. Are there any updates that can be given since the last time you talked about these specific things?

### Lies and Truths

Take some time to pray and reflect on what lies that you are prone to believe about yourself, about God, and/or about how life works best on the left side of the "T". Then, on the right side of the "T" spend time finding the truth that the Lord gives us in His Word.

Lies	Truth



# Shapes

Over the last 6 weeks, you've looked at three different diagrams using shapes to demonstrate different principles of discipleship. Mentees, look back over those shapes, and be ready to draw them out, giving a brief explanation of each to your mentor.

## **Circles (the Discipleship Process)**

## **Triangles (Gospel Relationship and Responsibility)**



# Pyramid (Formational Rhythms)



# Commitment to the Church

## Session 8

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### Overview and Purpose

The Christian life is not an individual faith journey. It is meant to be lived out in community. So if we are serious about becoming life-long, life-wide disciples of Jesus, we will be serious about our commitment to his people—the Church. This week, we'll talk about why the Church matters, and how to integrate ourselves into a local church.

### Before We Begin...

Go over the Romans 12.1-2 memory work from Session 6.

In Session 6, you were asked to pick one habit from each of the three formational levels. What did you choose? How has that gone so far? Has it been easy? Not easy? Have you noticed any big or small changes in your life as a result of these new rhythms?



# And One More Thing

Not everyone has had a healthy relationship with church. For some people, the word “church” is associated with deep pain and hurt. So before we jump in, let’s talk about your own experience with church.

**How would you describe your relationship with church growing up? Life-giving? Painful? Complicated? Apathetic? Something else? Is that still how you would describe your relationship today or has it changed?**

**The Church is made up of flawed people, so all of us will be hurt by our church brothers and sisters at some point. But some of us have received some deep wounds from the church family. Has that been your story? How have you worked through those wounds? Is that still something you’re working through today?**

## Defining Commitment to the Church

We define commitment to the Church as, “Making life in the body of Christ a priority.” This means that we invest our time, gifts, and resources in a local church as we invest relationally in our brothers and sisters in Christ.





# The Importance of the Church

In the book of Ephesians, Paul talks about the church a lot. Take a look at the following texts.

Ephesians 2.19-22 (if you need more context, back up to v.11)

Ephesians 4.11-16

Ephesians 5.25-29

**Each of these texts uses different metaphors for the Church. What are they?**

**What aspect of the Church is being highlighted in each of the texts? What do they tell us about the Church's importance?**

Each metaphor stresses a different aspect of the Church, but all of them highlight God's connection to her. She is God's family (Household), Christ's Body, and his Bride. The Church is far from perfect, and she has often been misrepresented by sinful people. But for all her flaws, Jesus loves his Church, and he has called us to love her as well (John 13:34-35).



# What Makes a Church a Church?

Thought experiment: A group of students get together every week for a Bible study. At this Bible study, not only do they open up the Scriptures together, but they also spend some time in prayer, and fellowship. Someone even brings a guitar, and they sing worship songs together.

**Question: Is that church? If you asked one of those students where they went to church, and he replied, “Actually, I go to this weekly gathering at my friend’s apartment, and that’s my church,” would he be right? Is anything missing there?**

We would argue that, while that kind of gathering has some important church elements (fellowship, Scripture reading, prayer), it still lacks some of the key biblical criteria that makes a church a church. Things like:

Qualified Leadership - In the Bible, whenever a church is planted, one of the first tasks for the planting team is to appoint godly men to serve as elders for that church (Acts 14.23). The elders’ task is to shepherd God’s people, protect sound doctrine, and engage in church discipline when necessary.

Biblical Teaching (by someone with knowledge/authority) - A Bible study with friends is a great thing! But it shouldn’t be our only source for Biblical instruction. It’s important to have teachers with knowledge of God’s Word who can help us rightly understand it and apply it to our lives (2 Tim 2.2).



Ordinances - This is just a fancy word for regular church rituals, specifically baptism and communion. Both of these were significant in the life of the Early Church (Acts 2.41; 1 Cor 11), and they are an important part of church life today.

We're not against student-led Bible studies. We think they're great! We just don't believe they (or campus ministries like the Table) should be substituted for involvement in a local, multi-generational church.

## **Older Disciples**

Though the Bible never says that a church must be multi-generational, it is assumed throughout the New Testament that this will be the case. It was expected that those who were further along in their faith would invest in those who came behind them (Titus 2.2-4). This is one of the most valuable resources that the church can offer to young disciples. But most students miss out on this resource because college life surrounds us with peers while separating us from other age groups.

So how do we fix this?

Be involved at your church - Don't just go to services. Go to women's gatherings, and men's breakfasts. Show up to church fellowship events. Introduce yourself to people in the church lobby.

Serve - One of the best ways to be around adults in your church is to serve alongside them. When you're volunteering in kids' church, youth group, or on a greeting team, you'll be doing those things with adults which create natural spaces to form friendships (we'll talk more about serving later).



Ask questions - Very few adults are going to give unsolicited wisdom to a student, especially if they haven't known you that long. But if you ask them questions, many are happy to share. Basic, get-to-know-you questions like, "How did you meet your spouse?," or, "How did you choose your major?," can lead to bigger questions like, "What kinds of things did you look for in a spouse?," and "If you were giving advice to yourself at my age, what would it be?"

## Where to Start

If you're not yet plugged into a specific church, here's how to start:

1. Be as consistent as possible on Sunday mornings, plus 1 other thing (the plus 1 could be Sunday School, small group, serving, etc).
2. Ask how to become a member, and then begin that process.
3. Start volunteering in one of the church's ministries.

## Further Discussion on Community

Are you more introverted or extroverted? What would you say are the strengths and weaknesses of your personality type when it comes to engaging in community?

Do you tend to withdraw from community or lean into it in times of stress or hardship?



How many truly close friends would you say you have? How many of those are Christian?

Are you a member of your church here in Stillwater? How often are you at church on Sundays? How many weekends a month are you out of town?

## **This Week**

Do these two things before next week:

1. Add verses 3-5 to your Romans 12 memory work.
2. If you've not yet done one of the three things from the "Where to Start List," choose one, then start that process this week.



# Missional Living Pt.1

## Session 9

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### Overview and Purpose

God did not save us so we could then sit on the sideline and wait for heaven. Everyone who is saved by Jesus has been recreated “in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared ahead of time for us to do” (Eph 2.10). As one Bible college professor used to say, “You stepped into the ministry, the moment you stepped out of the baptistry.” This week we’re going to take a look at something we’ve been touching on throughout this series: Missional Living.

### Before we begin...

Go over the Romans 12.1-5 memory work.

In our last session, you were asked to take steps toward plugging into your local church (if you haven’t already), how did that go?

How have your formational rhythms been going?

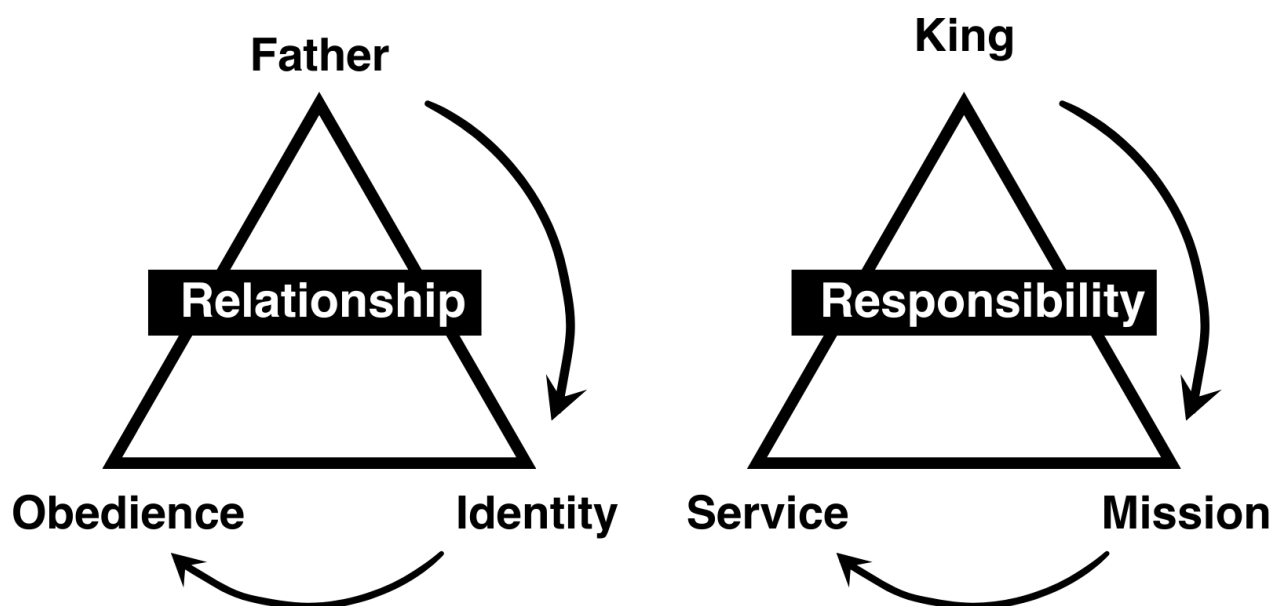


# Defining Missional Living

We define Missional Living as, “Living intentionally for Christ’s mission and his Church”. This means we view our everyday life—work, school, relationships, living situation—as a means that can be used to serve Jesus.

## Back to the Triangles

Back when discussing a Gospel-Centered Life, we introduced you to these triangles.



These triangles demonstrate two key ways that our lives are changed by the Gospel—a new relationship and a new responsibility (purpose). Missional Living flows from the truths presented in that second triangle: God is not just our Father. He’s also our king, and as our king he has given us a mission to live for him and his kingdom. We as followers of Jesus give ourselves to serving that mission.



# The Mission of the Church

Just as the Christian life is not meant to be an individual faith journey, the Christian's ministry is not meant to be an individual mission. As a follower of Jesus, the Church's mission is my mission. And what is that mission? For that, we turn once again to the Great Commission.

**Read Matthew 28.18-20. According to those verses, what is the mission our king has given us?**

Put simply, the Church's mission is to make disciples of Jesus by sharing the Gospel with them, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey their new king. Notice, Jesus doesn't say "make converts." The work is not done once we've baptized someone. We are called to introduce people to Jesus and to help them grow up in Jesus.

As individual disciples we have a role to play in this, and that role takes place in two major categories: (1) building up and (2) reaching out. In this session, we'll focus on building up.

## Building Up

The first category of missional living involves building up the Church. This idea of "building up" is a favorite for the Apostle Paul. Take a look at some of the following verses. According to these, what are some of the ways we build up the church?





**Romans 15.1-3**

**1 Corinthians 14.12-19**

**Ephesians 4.29-30**

Often, when people talk about building someone up, they mean something like “help them feel good about themselves.” And though the biblical idea can include encouragement, it’s bigger than that. It means “strengthening someone’s faith, joy, holiness, or wisdom.” Essentially, it means we are helping people grow in Christ.

This can be done through a lot of different means (teaching, giving, praying for missionaries, encouraging, serving, confronting, mentoring, pointing to Scripture, etc.). But, the New Testament most frequently uses the term “build up” in the context of spiritual gifts.



# Spiritual Gifts

A spiritual gift is any ability given by the Spirit that helps fulfill Christ's mission and/or strengthen His Church. These abilities seem to have an extra level of effectiveness in accomplishing their task, especially when used in a spirit of faith and prayer. A great summary of their purpose can be found in 1 Cor 12.4-11. Read that text together.

In those four verses, we see two key truths about spiritual gifts:

- 1. Every Christian has at least one.**
- 2. The gift is not primarily for our own benefit. It's for the benefit of others.**

If you're not sure what your gift is, there are various online assessments you can take to help (Sunnybrook has an assessment called PLACE). But one of the most helpful tools we've seen is the following Venn diagram put together by J.D. Greear.



Jesus Continued by J.D. Greear



**Abilities -- What do I seem to be good at?**

**Affinities -- What do I like doing? What things am I passionate about?**

**Affirmation -- What strengths have others pointed out? How have people mentioned being blessed by me?**

Usually the overlap of these things gives us a pretty good idea about what our gifts might be. But – and this is key – we can't know those things if we're not already serving. More important than knowing your gifts is using your gifts (and God can use your gifts, even if you don't know what they are yet). So we encourage students to find ways to serve the church, and then pray that God empowers their service for effectiveness.

**In what way do you enjoy serving in ministry? Do you have any ideas about what your spiritual gifts might be?**



# This Week

Do these two things before next week:

1. Review your memory work of Rom 12.1-5
2. Read the other two lists of spiritual gifts (Rom 12.3-8 and Eph 4.11-13). Then look over the Venn diagram and list some possible ideas for each category. See if you notice any overlap. FYI: The spiritual gift lists in the Bible are not exhaustive, so your spiritual gift(s) might not be mentioned in any of those lists.



# Missional Living Pt. 2

## Session 10

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### Overview and Purpose

In our last meeting, we talked about Missional Living, and specifically living in a way that builds up the Church. Today, we want to talk about reaching out to unbelievers with the Gospel. We'll discuss why it matters, and then talk practically about how we can do that.

### Before we begin...

Go over the Romans 12.1-5 one more time.

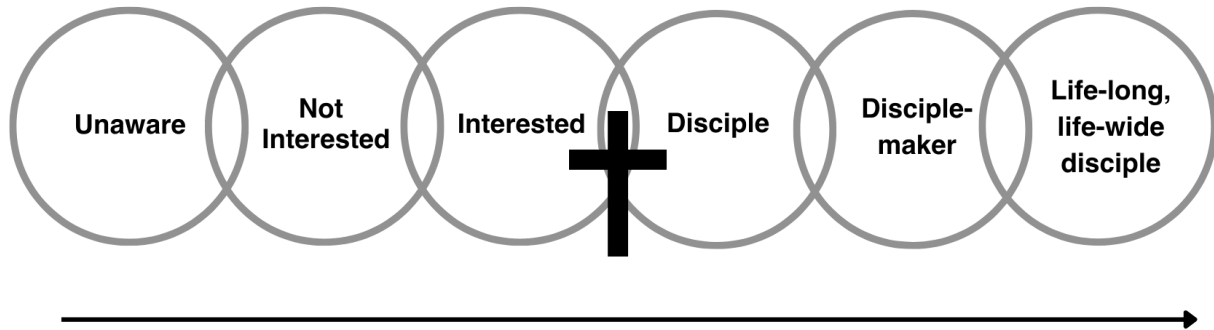
Last week, you were asked to look over the spiritual gifts diagram, and make some lists for each circle. What did you come up with for each of those? What hints does that give you about possible spiritual gifts? What are some ways you could serve that might match up with your gifts?

How have your formational rhythms been going?



# Back to the Circles

In our second session (Defining Discipleship) we introduced the following diagram.



In that session, we said that everyone falls somewhere in one of these six circles. And the mission of the Church is essentially to help people progress through these toward a deeper faith and commitment to Jesus.

Our focus last week was primarily on building up people in the last three circles (those who already follow Jesus). Today, we're focusing on reaching out to people in the first three circles.

A couple questions before we get started:

**On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you talking about Jesus with non-Christians?**



**What (if anything) is the greatest hindrance to you sharing the Gospel with others?**

## **Why This Matters**

We've already seen from Matthew 28.18-20 that Jesus commanded his followers to do this. But why? Why does this matter? Go to Romans 10.9-17 and read it together.

**According to v. 9, what must happen for a person to be saved from condemnation (eternal separation from God)?**

**In the rest of the passage, Paul describes a series of causes-and-effects that must happen before a person can call on Jesus. What are the steps in that series, starting from the end (they cannot call, unless they...)?**



This is why Jesus has given the Great Commission, because God is on a rescue mission to redeem humanity (and all creation) to himself. But people cannot be redeemed without hearing the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus. Loving neighbors, serving our family, and being a good example to our roommates are all good things, and we should do them! But, they can't be saved by our love or good example. They need to hear the Gospel, which means they need someone to tell them.

## **Be a Link in the Chain**

One of the reasons outreach can seem so overwhelming is that we often think of it as a solo mission. As though it's my responsibility to find some random person in circles 1 or 2, and then convince them to believe in Jesus, by perfectly presenting the Gospel and confidently answering all their objections. No wonder this sounds overwhelming!

Sometimes people come to Christ that way, but this is rare. More often, a person becomes a Christian through a number of conversations with more than one individual, over the course of several months or even years.

When we talk to students about reaching lost friends, we use the phrase, "be a link in the chain." That is, you don't need to feel the pressure of taking your lost friend from circle 1 to circle 6 all by yourself. But, be willing to be part of the process. Be willing to demonstrate Christ's love, to pray for them, and to talk about Jesus when the opportunity arises. Maybe God will use you to move them from circle 2 to circle 3. Maybe he'll use someone else to move them from circle 3 to circle 4. Our job is simply to be faithful in pointing people to Jesus, and then we trust him with the rest (check out how Paul describes making disciples in 1 Cor 3.5-9).





# Sharing your faith

Even though it's not our responsibility to convert everyone by ourselves, we still need to be ready to talk about Jesus and the Gospel when the opportunity arises (1 Peter 3.15). Here are some things that might help with this.

- Know Scripture. You don't have to be a Bible scholar to share the Gospel, but there is real power in the Word of God, so even knowing a few verses about the Gospel can be really important. Some great ones are Romans 6.23; 5.6-8; John 3.16-17; Titus 3.3-7.
- Be able to articulate a simple summary of the Gospel. Back in session 4, you were asked to write a bullet point summary of the Gospel (based on some of the Gospel summaries in the Bible). Be sure to know that well enough that if someone were to ask you what you believe, you could share that in 30-60 seconds
- Be ready to share your story. One of the most important resources you have is your own story of how Jesus has changed your life. A helpful outline for this is the metanarrative (also from session 4). Not only is the metanarrative a good summary of the Bible, it's also a good summary of every Christian's life:

Creation: My background, upbringing, family life

Fall: How sin and brokenness took hold in my life

Redemption: How Jesus saved me (how I heard and what I heard about Jesus)

Restoration: How Jesus has changed me; how he's still changing me today



Pray and pray and pray some more. After a few years of focusing on this, we have come to believe that prayer is the most powerful tool we have in making disciples. After all, the only person with the power to change human hearts is God. So pray regularly for your lost friends and family members. Pray that God would give them soft hearts toward the truth. Pray for him to give you more opportunities to talk about Jesus.

**Who is one lost person that you feel a burden for? Someone that you want to know Jesus?**

**Attached to this resource is a list of steps you could take toward sharing your faith with someone. How far along that list are you with the person you just mentioned? What would it look like to take the next step?**



# This Week

1. Memorize Romans 6.23 this week. Be ready to explain what it means to your mentor next week.
2. Take some time to write out a 4-minute version of your own testimony using the metanarrative as an outline. Be ready to share that with your mentor as well.
3. Commit to praying every day this week for your lost friend (set a daily reminder in your phone). Pray that God would open their heart to Jesus, and that he would give you opportunities to share with them.

## Steps toward sharing your faith with a friend...

1. Meet your lost neighbor, co-worker, classmate, etc.
2. Regularly pray for them
3. Have "small talk" conversation with them
4. Mention anything about your faith (church events, God, prayer)
5. Service, hospitality, or generosity
6. Have a personal conversation with them (family, hurts, hopes)
7. Ask them what they believe
8. Tell them what you believe (the gospel); share your story
9. Ask them to come to a church service, event, activity
10. Call them to follow Jesus



# Appendix

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## Additional Resources

- [Growing Together](#) by Melissa B. Kruger
- [Made for More](#) by Hannah Anderson
- [The Hole in Our Holiness](#) by Kevin DeYoung
- [The Knowledge of the Holy](#) by AW Tozer
- [Life Together](#) by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- [None Like Him](#) by Jen Wilkin
- [Women of the Word](#) by Jen Wilkin
- [You are What you Love](#) by James K.A. Smith

