



disciple makers

*pursuing a culture of
discipleship together*

Discipling at Home

Discipleship Foundations....

What is a disciple?

'disciple' = mathētēs (Greek NT) = 'learner' or 'student'

"someone who is apprenticed to a teacher to learn from him." (Vine Project)

a disciple of Jesus is a 'learner of Jesus'

learning both *content* (i.e. his teaching), but also *him* (his life, character, worldview...)

"The goal was for them not only to know what their teacher knew, but also to be like their teacher, to walk in his ways. They weren't learning a subject; they were learning a person, if we can put it like that—his knowledge, his wisdom, his whole way of life." (Vine Project)

A disciple of Jesus: learning Jesus & helping others learn him

- Decisive change of identity
 - denying yourself and entrusting yourself to Jesus as Lord and saviour
 - committing to learning Jesus and joining his mission
- Ongoing way of life
 - engaged in transformative learning of Jesus (becoming like him) through ongoing repentance and faith (putting off and putting on)
 - engaged in helping others learn Christ

So what does it mean to disciple someone in Christ?

Helping people repent and believe in Jesus: embrace identity and pursue the goal of maturity in Christ
→ Helping others take a step 'towards the right', i.e. towards faith and maturity in Christ



- Helping them take a step 'to the right'
- Helping them do it step by step
- Helping them do it in every area of life

How do we do it?

Big Idea: helping people respond in repentance and faith to the word of God, by connecting them with God's people, speaking God's word to them, and praying for God's Spirit to change them.

i.e. Col 1:28, Eph 4:15, Rom 12:2, Col 1:9-10, 1 Thes. 2:8, 1 Cor 11:1, Heb 10:24-25

God saves and brings his people to maturity in Christ by his **Word**, through his **Spirit**, amongst his **People**
God renews minds and transforms lives through the truth of his word, by the power of his spirit, who brings about response of repentance and faith to his word, as his people prayerfully speak the truth of his word and model and encourage the response of repentance and faith (and stick at it!)

Working with the 'agents of change'

- Expose people to the truth of God's word and help them understand and respond to it
- Connect them with God's people and establish them in Christian community who will model repentance and faith, encourage and challenge to respond in repentance and faith
- Pray for God's Spirit to work in their hearts

Working with the 'internal process'

The response of repentance and faith involves a process from hearing the word through to the lived response of actions that express repentance and faith in that word.

Hearing – Understanding – Accepting – Responding

Each 'step towards the right' involves this process, and discipling people in Christ involves all sorts of efforts to help people hear, understand, accept/trust and respond to God's Word. Some activities will be directing towards 'hearing', others towards 'responding'... etc.

- E.g. *One 'step' might be finally accepting what God says about living faithfully in one area of life after years of hearing it.*

Differentiated Learning

Same basic process and means for all of us, but different circumstances and stages for all of us.

Need to ask: *What does **this person**, given **their life context**, need at **this point in time**, to help them take a step towards maturity in Christ by responding in repentance and faith to God's word?*

Focusing on 'People'

How and why does God work through 'people' to save and grow others to maturity in Christ?

- We **prayerfully speak** God's word to each other
- We **model** repentance and faith to each other

We learn to trust and follow Christ in the context of a community of people who are learning to do it

- We teach, encourage and challenge by **speaking** the truth of God's word *to people* we are in relationship with, and we pray for God's Spirit to work, knowing what to ask for
- We **reinforce** the message and **demonstrate** the response of repentance and faith with our **lives** (or sadly undermine and confuse!)

"The ones who do the prayerful speaking are those whose lives have been set apart by God to be different (i.e. all Christian saints). And those distinctive lives are part of the teaching package. Our lives demonstrate to other learners what 'keeping the commandments of Jesus' looks like." (The Vine Project)

Imitation in the New Testament

Phil. 4:9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

1Cor. 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

2Tim. 3:10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance,¹¹ persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.

1Tim. 4:12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

Titus 2:7 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness⁸ and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

Phil. 3:17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

Titus 2:3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.⁴ Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children,⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

1Th. 1:6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

Key Idea

Learning Christ = learning his **way of life**. Discipleship of Christ means learning to DO something, not just understanding an idea. (like learning to play the piano!) Therefore, discipling others in Christ inherently involves our lives. It involves **living in relationship** with others and **teaching through our words and behaviour** in context of those relationships.

Learning Christ 'at home'

Given all the above... discuss:

What are the **distinctives** of household relationships?

What are the **challenges** to discipling at home...

and what are the **opportunities**?

"The household was the basic everyday sphere in which disciples learned to obey all the commandments of Christ, especially his new commandment to love one another." (Vine Project, 137)

Principles for Learning Christ at Home

1. Consciously adopt the goal of maturity in Christ for each other (i.e decide to disciple!)
2. Remember the goal is transformed hearts and lives, not just conforming behaviour
3. Encouraging repentance and faith in God's grace (not just urging each other to 'try harder')
4. Humility is Essential
5. Your example is more significant than what you say
6. Separate the goal from the tool
7. Dynamics of the relationship determine the shape & tone of discipleship
8. Both informal 'moments' and formal 'structures' are vital – can't choose one or the other.

Discuss and Apply

- Share what's your 'household' situation
- Share what you think is currently working well for discipling at home
- Discuss ideas together for what you could do differently to be more effectively discipling at home

Feedback & Sharing Ideas