

DISCIPLESHIP 101

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER TRAINING

TRAINING

[This portion of the Community Group Leader training will be roughly 30 minutes. The content below is to help you teach this topic to your people. Feel free to tweak or reorder the content as needed for your context and teaching style. There will be times throughout the teaching where a story or personal example would be helpful, and we highly encourage you to use your personal experience in those moments.]

RECAP

GOSPEL FLUENCY

Last time we got together, we talked about Gospel Fluency, which means that we begin thinking and dreaming and speaking in gospel language. We start seeing things through gospel lenses. We start hearing things through gospel ears. We start speaking things with gospel language.

There is greater impact and effectiveness when together, we are speaking the same language.

To help us be gospel fluent, we learned about the 4 G's.

[At this point, it may be good to ask if anyone remembers what these are.]

God is Great, so I don't have to be in control - *Control Idol*

God is Glorious, so I don't need others' approval - *Power Idol*

God is Gracious, so I don't need to prove myself - *Approval Idol*

God is Good, so I don't have to look elsewhere - *Comfort Idol*

We also thought through four questions to help us get to the roots and apply these gospel truths to our hearts:

Who Is God? — What Has He Done? — Who Am I? — What Do I Do?

DISCIPLESHIP

Today, we want to build on what we have already learned and ask "How does this grid of gospel fluency inform our understanding of discipleship"?

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is God's design. Jesus calls us to be His disciples, but He also commands us to make disciples. Jesus doesn't just work in us, but He means to accomplish His work *through us*.

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

But have you ever thought about the motivation of the mission? Look at the subject of the beginning of Matthew 28.

“Don’t be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen as he said. Come see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell the disciples that he is risen from the dead... So the departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy...” - 28:5-6

The Gospel Motivates the Mission. The Good News of the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus is the Power for Discipleship.

Even in discipleship, everything that we do must come back to the gospel, the person and work of Jesus. We want to help others understand that the gospel is the very essence of the Christian life. We don’t move on from the gospel. It is by believing the gospel that we grow up in Christ and fight sin. Every sin flows from the root of unbelief in the gospel. As we disciple others in a gospel-centered way, we remember that the gospel doesn’t just look at external behavior and try to fix these external problems. It cuts us to the heart and root of these issues.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLESHIP

When we think of discipling others, many of us have a rigid, mystical picture of discipleship.

[At this point, it may be good to tie in a personal story of someone with a misunderstanding of true discipleship.]

Many times in our church, we have people who come up to one of the pastors explaining how we are doing a poor job at discipleship. So we will ask, “What do you mean? Why do you think that?” And many times, it is one of the following reasons. *See if any of these have ever pertained to you.*

- Mistaking Friendship and Fellowship as Discipleship
- Mistaking information and/or conversation for Transformation
- Thinking I need someone older in age
- Thinking I need someone who is just like me
- Thinking it needs to be a pastor or “professional”
- Believing someone needs to seek out and disciple me
- Believing it terminates with me not passes through me
- Thinking it’s only my churches job, through more classes, programs, events etc.
- Thinking it’s solely formal training
- Thinking it’s only organic
- Believing I’m not capable to make disciples
- Asking others to Follow Us instead of Following Him

Now all of these things are really good things that truly can help us grow, and we shouldn’t neglect these things. But is this really the essence of discipleship?

DEFINING DISCIPLESHIP

I. It’s Who We Are

Every Christian is called to be a disciple of Jesus. When we trust in Jesus, we are called into a life of discipleship. As the disciples in the New Testament, we today follow the Risen Lord Jesus, who teaches us and guides us and shows us how to follow him. We live life with him and learn from him in the everyday moments of life. Through the gospel, we enter into a relationship with Jesus, where we continually strive to know him and follow him.

Before we even talk about discipling other people, we have to remember that we are followers of Jesus in need of grace. Jesus is calling us to rest more in our gospel identity. Any discipleship of others flows from our walk and relationship with Jesus.

II. It’s What We Do

Every Christian is called to be discipled and to disciple others.

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God... Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. — Ephesians 4:11-16

We are to “*grow up in every way... into Christ.*” We all have areas where we need to grow up into Christ. Discipleship isn’t primarily mature believers investing in immature believers. It is all the saints doing “the work of ministry.” It is the whole body building itself up in love. Mature believers, aged believers, leaders, and pastors all need discipleship from the body.

Likewise, this means that new believers and non-leaders and average joe’s have something to offer to the body. They are called into this work of ministry called discipleship. And this happens as we speak the truth of the gospel to one another.

III. Discipleship is Transformation

It’s being personally transformed by the gospel to be more like Jesus in every area of our life. Additionally, discipleship is also helping others be transformed by the gospel to be more like Jesus in every area of their life.

2 Corinthians 3:18 – And we *all*, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is Spirit.

IV. Discipleship is God’s Intention

Romans 8:28-29 – And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his *purpose*. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son...

The greatest good God has for you, I, and others is that we would become more and more like Jesus.

CREATING A CULTURE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship requires relationship and responsibility

Acts 2:42-47 Picture of Church - Discipleship

We participate in discipleship as we live life together in community. We know one another, our struggles and victories, our fears and hopes. Discipleship cannot be disconnected from relationship. Discipleship happens in everyday life, as we live life together and do mission together.

When we look at how Jesus disciplined, we see that he had times where he sat and taught his disciples. But most of the time, he just asks them to come along with him, do life and ministry with him, and see how he follows God in everyday situations. They were called to follow him and imitate him.

Also, discipleship takes ownership and responsibility for another person’s growth and transformation. Discipleship is not just friendship. Rather, we are intentional about shaping each other with the gospel to be more like Jesus.

Now as a community group leader, this doesn’t mean that you have to mentor every person in your community group. Rather, discipleship is body work. But you have a responsibility to create a culture of discipleship in your community group where people are growing to be more like Jesus. In order to create this culture, you need to equip your people to:

I. Love One Another

This means we are in relationship with each other and committed to one another’s growth and health in Jesus. There is space and freedom to be open about our struggles and shortcomings, and grace to receive one another in love.

II. Know One Another

We need to ask questions and listen to one another. And as we listen, we need to listen with the gospel in mind. This also means we need to have the openness and honesty to talk and show who we really are. We are in each other's lives, and we walk with Jesus together.

III. Apply The Gospel

This is what we talked about last time with gospel fluency. We look at the 4 G's and the 4 questions, and try to help each other think through how the gospel applies to this area of life. The goal is to help us trust more deeply in our Savior and believe more deeply in the gospel.

- Repent Sin
- Speak Truth Fluency
- Believe Grace

IV. Act On the Gospel

The goal is to be transformed by the gospel and be more like Jesus. As we hear and believe the gospel, there will be action required of us. And this is something we walk out in relationship and community.

- Obey
- Do Good
- Endure

2 Tim 3:10-17

Fleshing out of Relational Responsibility and Deepening Discipleship

DISCUSSION

CHECKING IN

Is there anything pressing or weighing heavy on you that you need to talk about?

CARE REPORT

Are there any pressing needs in your group?

APPLICATION

Spend some time working out how to disciple and apply the gospel to one or two of the following scenarios. In applying the gospel, don't forget to ask these questions:

Who Is God? — What Has He Done? — Who Am I? — What Do I Do?

Especially look for unbelief in the 4 G's:

God is Great, so I don't have to be in control - *Control Idol*

God is Glorious, so I don't need others' approval - *Power Idol*

God is Gracious, so I don't need to prove myself - *Approval Idol*

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Scenario 1: A dating couple in your group informs you that they are going to be moving in together. As you talk further with them, you find out that they are having sex outside of marriage.

Scenario 2: Someone in your group has a hard time connecting with other people. He visible appears lonely and downcast at every family meal. During one family meal, you reach out and start engaging him. He subtly hints that he is contemplating suicide.

Scenario 3: A married woman in your group calls you late one night. She has had a late-term miscarriage, and she doesn't know what to do. She wonders if God cares, or if he even exists.

POST-TRAINING

LEAD YOUR GROUP INTO DISCIPLESHIP

Think through the following questions:

- *In terms of Loving One Another, Knowing One Another, Applying the Gospel and Acting on the Gospel, Where is your group strongest? Where could your group use growth?*
- *What steps could your community group take to foster a culture of greater discipleship?*
- *What steps do you personally need to take to help your group grow in gospel fluency and discipleship?*