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“Discipleship is not supposed to be complicated. Two thousand years ago, it was so simple that a carpenter explained it to uneducated fishermen in one sentence. The fishermen understood it, acted on it, and they changed the world.” **Steve Murrell, Making Disciples**

Jesus made discipleship a priority. Yes, Jesus fed the hungry and healed those who were sick, but He gave His best to the twelve disciples. Before He rose into heaven, His final words to them were a command to not only be disciples but also to make disciples. This means that we are expected to follow Jesus, and to help others follow Him.

While most Christians agree that discipleship matters, and is essential for Christian maturity in general, very few Christians have a clear strategy to discipleship. Fewer still have a clear definition of discipleship.

“Following Christ is not just adopting some beliefs. It's adopting actions. Not only a belief system, it's a "do system." Loving people is something we do. We don't just think it, talk it, or pray it. We do it.” **Phil Pringle, Disciple**

As we dive into the scripture, it is my goal, that together, we will be able to define and describe what a disciple is with the heart and desire to live life as disciples, making disciples, while following Jesus, one step at a time.

01 WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

When Jesus calls someone to be His disciple, He is calling them to three things...

1. Discipleship is a call to follow Jesus

Matthew 4.19 NLT Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”

1 Corinthians 11.1 NLT And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.

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2. Discipleship is a call to fish for people

Matthew 9.9-13 NLT As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

10 Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. **11** But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"

12 When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do." **13** Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

3. Discipleship is a call to fellowship with other believers.

Acts 2.42 NLT All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

1 John 1.7 NLT But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

DISCIPLESHIP IS RELATIONSHIP

WITH GOD

WITH LOST PEOPLE

WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

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FOUNDATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP PRINCIPLES

There are four foundational principles that help to create a strong framework upon which we can build.

1. Every person is valuable to God

John 3.16 NLT For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

“Value is determined by the price one is willing to pay. God paid the ultimate price to redeem the lost. Since God places such a high value on lost people, we must learn to see them the way He sees them.” **Steve Murrell, Making Disciples**

Matthew 9.36 NLT When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

2. Every church, ministry, and discipleship group can grow

1 Corinthians 3.6-8 NLT I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. **7** It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. **8** The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work.

The purpose of planting and watering is growth. We believe that every church, ministry, and discipleship group can grow in three ways. They can all grow:

Larger, Stronger & More Influential

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3. Every minister should prepare other to minister

Ephesians 4.11-12 NLT Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **12** Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

The Protestant reformation emphasized the priesthood of all believers, restoring the biblical pattern of relating to God. The modern church needs a "discipleship reformation" that will emphasize the ministry of all believers, restoring the biblical pattern of ministry. The job of the "minister" is to prepare others to minister, not to do all the ministry. The goal of this journey that we are on together is to get ministry out of the hands of the experts and into the hearts and hands of every believer.

4. Every disciple should make disciples

Matthew 28.18-19 NLT Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. **19** Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

To often, we act like only full-time ministers or people who have been Christians for a long time can make disciples. Jesus' command to make disciples in Matthew 28 was given to fishermen and tax collectors who questioned, doubted and even denied Jesus. Spiritual progress, not perfection, qualifies a person to make disciples

No matter where you work, how old you are, the stage of life you are in or when you started following Jesus... you are called to make disciples!

THE POWER OF PROCESS

- *Because lost people matter to God, we **engage** our culture and community*
- *Because every church and discipleship group will grow as it is built on Christ, we **establish** Biblical foundations*

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- *Because ministry is not only for full-time ministers, we **equip** believers to minister*
- *Because everyone is called to make disciples, we **empower** disciples to make disciple*

MESSAGE ROADMAP

January 29 - *What is Discipleship*

February 5 - Obedience

February 12 - Engage Culture

February 19 - Establish Biblical Foundations

February 26 - Equipping Believers

March 5 - The Power of His Presence

March 12 - Empowering Disciples to Make Disciples

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THE DISCIPLESHIP JOURNEY

ENGAGE

ESTABLISH

EQUIP

EMPOWER