

Lifestyle of Discipleship

Definition

Discipleship is the lifelong adventure of growing up into maturity in Christ by intentionally enjoying time in His presence, learning to trust in His character, and responding to His leadership. It requires submission to the discipline of Christ.

Beliefs

I. We believe discipleship is the foundational mission of the church and involves inviting people to respond to the Gospel, teaching them to obey the Word and Spirit of Christ, and learning to love both God and neighbor well.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [Matthew 28:18-20](#)

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. [Ephesians 4:11-13](#)

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. [Colossians 1:28](#)

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [Matthew 28:19-20](#)

He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself." [Luke 10:27](#)

II. We believe that discipleship should be a foundational priority for every Christian, and that an intentional commitment to pursue it is required.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. [Philippians 2:12-13](#)

"If you love me, you will obey what I command." [John 14:15](#)

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [Matthew 16:24](#)

III. We believe that it is essential that each believer pursue an intimate relationship with the Lord through personal spiritual disciplines and practices.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. [Philippians 2:12-13](#)

IV. We believe that disciples grow best through the application of Biblical truth to daily life.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. [Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#)

V. We believe that investment in authentic community is essential for discipleship.

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. [Acts 8:26-31](#)

What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. [1 Corinthians 14:26](#)

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. [Acts 2:42-47](#)

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

VI. We believe Scripture is absolutely true and powerful to stimulate life change.

And the words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times. [Psalm 12:6](#)

Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. [Psalm 119:89](#)

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. [John 17:17](#)

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. [Hebrews 4:12](#)

VII. We believe that the Holy Spirit lives in believers and gives them capacity to know God, communicate with Him, and respond in obedience to His leadership.

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. [John 16:13](#)

...but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from

God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. [1 Corinthians 2:10-14](#)

VIII. We believe that the process of discipleship is unique to the individual (i.e. honors their God-given design), beginning as they are and progressing toward Christ-likeness.

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. [Romans 14:1-4](#)

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. [Ephesians 2:10](#)

Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. [Ephesians 4:13-16](#)

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. [2 Corinthians 3:18](#)

IX. We believe that the eternal rewards and benefits of discipleship outweigh the temporal costs.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. [James 1:2-4](#)

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. [Philippians 3:7-11](#)

X. We believe that progress in discipleship is expressed in Christ-like character and Kingdom impact.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

XI. We believe that God has shaped each person for ministry and providentially orchestrates opportunities to do good works. This includes both ministry inside and outside the church.

For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. [Ephesians 2:10](#)

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." [Ephesians 4:11-12](#)

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-when you see the naked, to clothe him...” [Isaiah 58:6-7](#)

XII. We believe baptism is a celebration of an individual’s decision to receive Christ as Lord and Savior.

Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. [Romans 6:3-4](#)

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. [Matthew 28:19](#)

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [Acts 2:38](#)

Values

- I. We value the uniqueness of the individual
- II. We value accepting and welcoming people as they are
- III. We value many venues for discipleship
- IV. We value learning from one another
- V. We value flexibility in our approach to discipleship
- VI. We value perseverance
- VII. We value growth in the context of a caring community
- VIII. We value the application of Biblical truth
- IX. We value personal testimony
- X. We value baptism through immersion

Practices

- Sermon/topically based small groups
- Individualized assessment and tools
- New believer discipleship
- Counseling
- Foundation training (Bible 101, Quiet Time 101, etc.)
- Intentional leader development
- New believers materials and follow-up (written and website materials)
- Public Baptism by immersion
- Spiritual Gift assessment and training