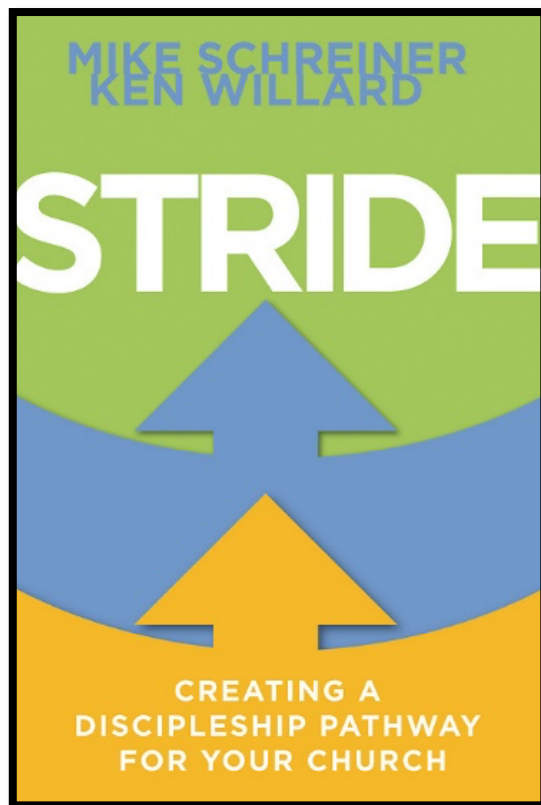




West Virginia Conference
The United Methodist Church



Our Mission

is to . . .

DISCOVER

DEVELOP

DEPLOY

passionate
spiritual leaders
who make
disciples of
Jesus Christ for
the
transformation
of the world

STRIDE: CREATING A DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY FOR YOUR CHURCH SEMINAR

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK



**OUR VISION IS TO BE A CHRIST-LED,
SPIRITUAL BREATH OF FRESH AIR
THAT CHANGES THE WORLD.**

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OPENING

“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“If you really want something you’ll find a way.
If not, you’ll find an excuse.” – Jim Rohn



Core Purpose

Equip us to go back to our churches and create a discipleship process of our own.

Objectives

- Discover exactly what we are trying to accomplish with our discipleship process
- Examine what a discipleship process is and what it is not
- Review key discipleship areas, elements and target groups
- Walk through the three stages of creating a pathway (Preparation, Implementation, and Sustaining)
- Have opportunities for your team to apply what you are learning by designing a plan to create and rollout a discipleship process for your church



DISCUSSION

How would you define “disciple?”

What would be on your list of Spiritual disciplines?



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

“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 people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.”

Paul, Ephesians 4:15

Do you want more of God’s kindness and peace?

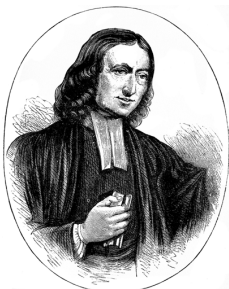
Then learn to know him better and better. For as you know him better, he will give you, through his great power, everything you need for living a truly good life: he even shares his own glory and his own goodness with us!

For then you must learn to know God better and discover what he wants you to do. Next, learn to put aside your own desires so that you will become patient and godly, gladly letting God have his way with you.

This will make possible the next step, which is for you to enjoy other people and to like them, and finally you will grow to love them deeply.

The more you go on in this way, the more you will grow strong spiritually and become fruitful and useful to our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:2-8



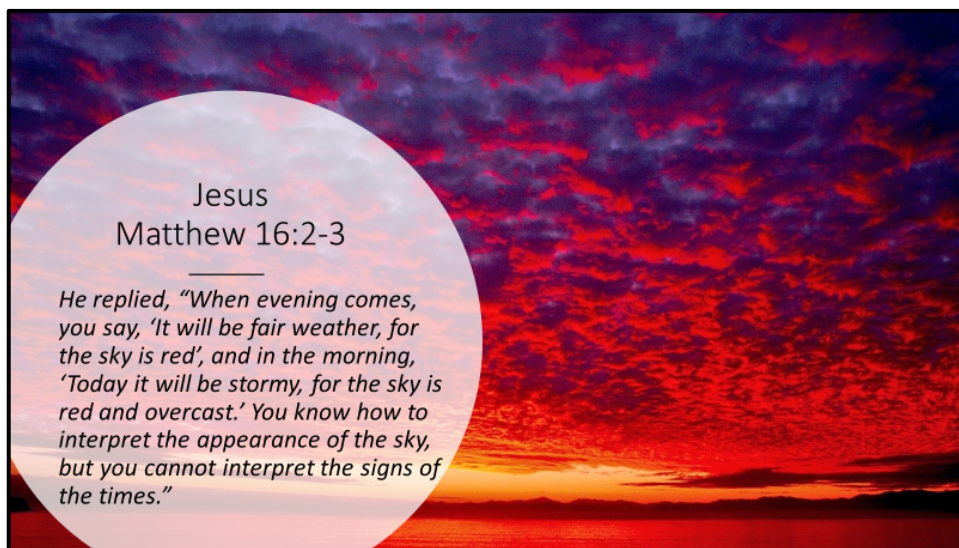
John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, once said, “The way to keep a Methodist alive is to keep him moving.” It is time to recapture this simple yet profound truth and get back to the basics of making fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

READ THE SIGNS



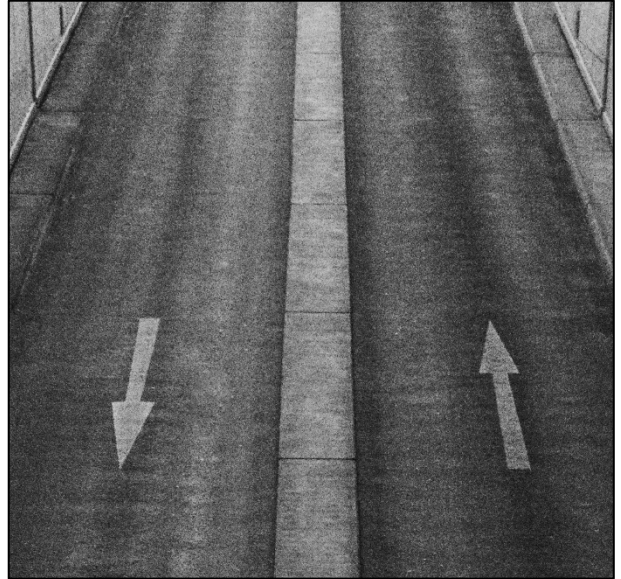
Where are we now?

- What is working well in the area of discipleship now in your church?
- What signs have you seen in your church indicating a need to focus on discipleship?



Turnover

- New guests not returning – first- and second-time guests, not part of a special event, do not seem to return. (The back door of the church is as large as the front door.)
- Losing people after a major event. Sometimes people come to a baptism, wedding, confirmation, VBS, mission trip, or new facility opening never to return once that event is over. (Not talking about friends or family specially invited to an event.)
- New members who are excited to join. They initially get involved in various ministries, and then suddenly stop coming.
- Long-term members who leave over some minor issue. “How dare they change the color of the carpet without consulting me!”



Serving



- Inability to fill volunteer positions. The church finds itself resorting to begging people to serve and in some cases even threatening, “If no one steps up to serve, then we will stop this ministry!”
- New members and attenders coming to worship, but not serving anywhere.
- Established members reporting ministry “burn-out.”

Evangelism

- Members and attendees not inviting family or friends to worship or other church events.
- Church events that are only fellowship gatherings instead of “bridge-events.” Bridge events allow new people to experience the church in a safe, nonthreatening way and receive an invitation to attend a worship service.
- Ministries not producing new fruit. Instead, they just move people from group to group or study to study.

Generosity

- State of the church finances. The church lives from offering to offering and always talks about how to raise money and cut expenses.
- Members and attendees’ finances. People do not grow in their financial giving from year to year.
- Too much dedicated giving. The church finds itself emphasizing funding specific ministries instead of focusing on the general ministry fund.
- Church ministries being funded by selling items or holding special fund-raising events. For example, the youth ministry is totally dependent on selling cookies. The annual white elephant sale is the only funding for the women’s ministry.
- Leaders are not setting the example by tithing.
- The congregation’s discomfort with money. Members do not want the pastor to talk about money or know about how much each person or family gives.



DEFINE DISCIPLESHIP

“Discipleship is the process of establishing the character of Christ in the person. That’s all it is. You are taking on the character of Christ in a process of discipleship to him under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

Discipleship is not about being like Jesus, but about being who Jesus would be if Jesus were you.”

– Dallas Willard

Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Intentional Faith Development. From the first generations of Christians to the earliest Methodists to the youngest generations of faithful members today, the followers of Jesus mature in faith by learning together in community. Churches that practice Intentional Faith Development offer high quality learning experiences that help people understand Scripture, faith, and life in the supportive nurture of caring relationships.

Bishop Robert Schnase in the book,
Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

“Moving from _____ to _____ in every aspect of our lives.”

Caesar Kalinowski

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

- 1) _____ individuals to take next steps on their spiritual journey.
- 2) _____ more fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Equip | e•quip | /ə'kwip/ (verb)

1. Supply with the necessary tools and resources for a particular purpose.
2. Prepare, empower and mobilize for a situation or task.
3. To make ready.



Form | /form (verb)

1. Make or fashion in a specific shape or way.
2. Construct or frame.
3. Arrange, organize or order.



A DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS IS **NOT** (LIMITED TO...)

- A Program or Curriculum
- Just Based on Bible Knowledge
- Fellowship in a Class or Small Group
- A spectator sport



A DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS IS



- An intentional process that provides the resources and direction for each individual to grow closer to Christ in all areas of spiritual disciplines.
- A means for people to connect on-going to the Great Commission with their personal, daily lives
- A process that provides next steps for a person's journey to grow spiritually

“The ministry is to be carried out by people, not programs. It is to be carried out by someone and not something. Disciples cannot be mass produced. We cannot drop people into a ‘program’ and see disciples emerge at the end of a production line. It takes time to make disciples. It takes individual, personal attention.

It takes hours of prayer for them. It takes patience and understanding to teach them how to get into the Word of God themselves, how to feed and nourish their souls, and by the power of the Holy Spirit how to apply the Word to their lives. And it takes being an example to them of all of the above.” – Leroy Eims, [The Lost Art of Disciplemaking](#)

CREATING YOUR PATHWAY

Three Stages

1. **Preparation:** Getting the soil read

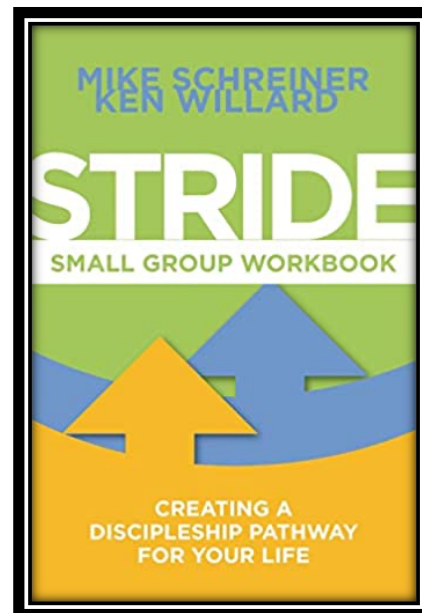
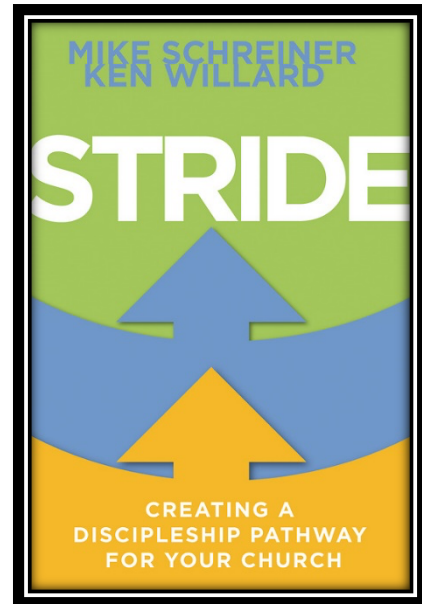
- 1) Great Things Begin with Prayer!
- 2) Recommitting to Our Mission
- 3) Evaluating Our Current State
- 4) Establishing a Discipleship Process Team
- 5) Understanding Our Objective

2. **Implementation:** Planting the seeds

- 6) Key Elements of a Discipleship Pathway
- 7) Communication
- 8) Launch!
- 9) Coaching

3. **Sustaining:** Caring for growth

- 10) Leadership
- 11) Measure and Celebrate!
- 12) Review, Revise, Renew, and Refresh
- 13) Next Steps



STAGE ONE: PREPARATION

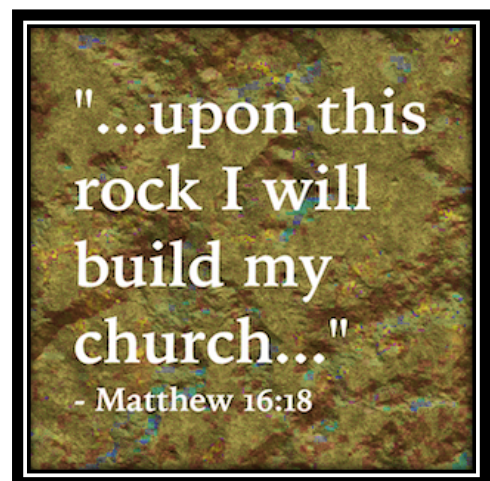
1) – Great Things Begin with Prayer!

2) – Recommitting to Our Mission

Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. 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, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."

Matthew 28:18-20, CEB

- Great Commission = Mission
- Intent of the passage is to make (evangelize) **AND** mature (edify) disciples
- Involves the process of moving people from wherever you find them (lost or saved) along a continuum toward maturity



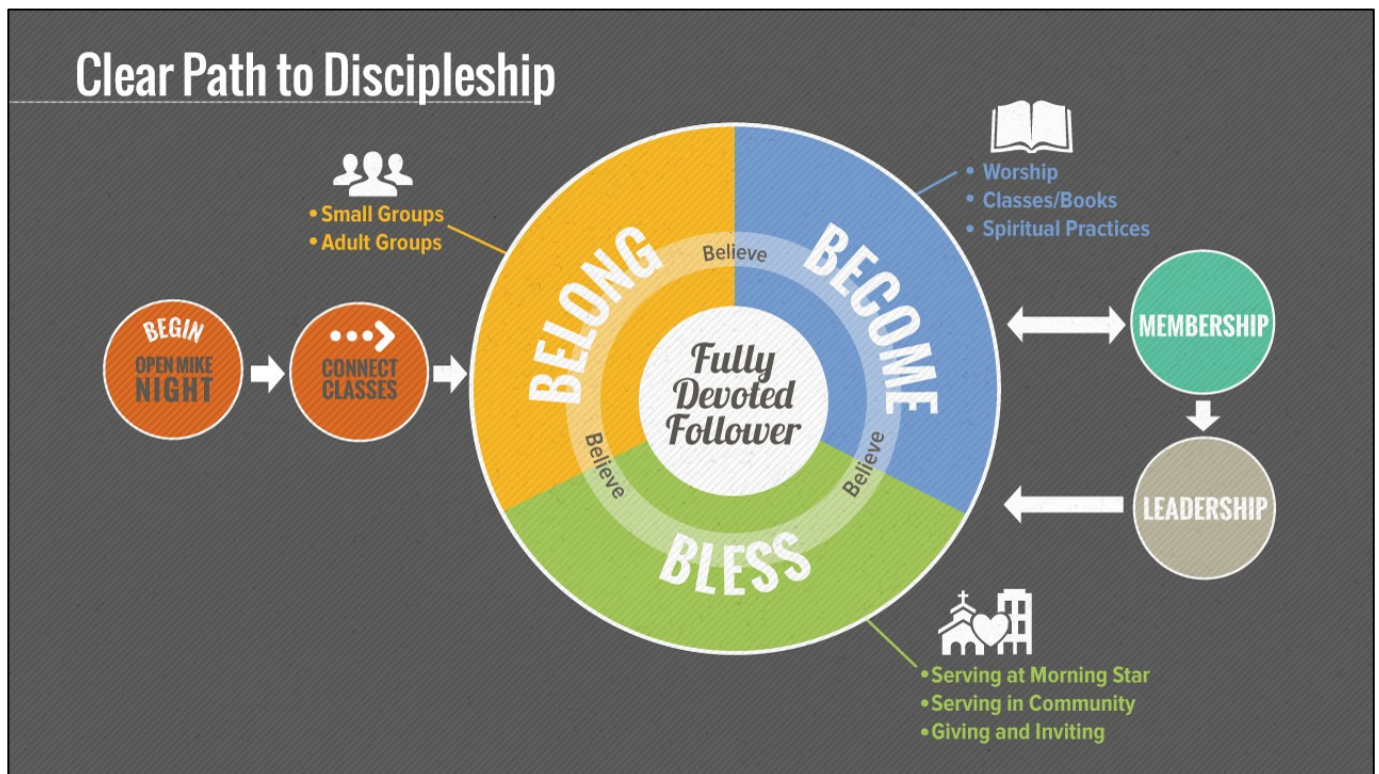
STAGE ONE: PREPARATION

3) – Evaluating Our Current State

4) – Establishing a Discipleship Process Team

Pray – Read – Research

Images, graphics, catchy names are nice . . . but they are NOT the process!

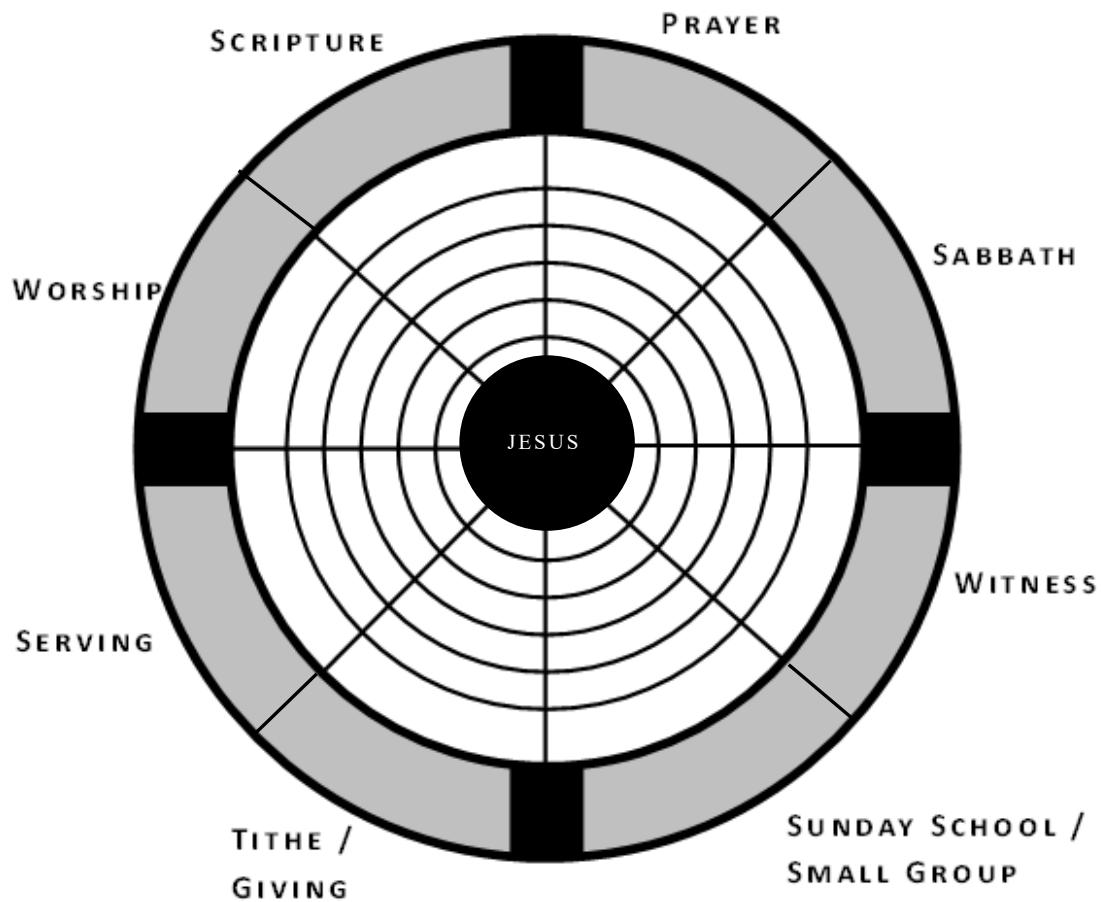


STAGE ONE: PREPARATION

5) – Understanding Our Objective

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES SELF-REFLECTION

Where are you now?



Keys to Spiritual Growth

1. **Know** where you are
2. **Plan** to intentionally take a step
3. **Meet** others where they are
4. **Help** them take a step



STAGE TWO: IMPLEMENTATION

6) – Key Elements of a Discipleship Pathway



KEY DISCIPLESHIP AREAS

1) **Invitation** – Begin – Start – Entrance

- How does the current congregation engage with the discipleship process?
- Where does someone new to your church start?

2) **Community** – Relationship – Connect – Belong – Formation

- Where can people in your church connect and grow with others in Christian community?

3) **Learn** – Education – Teach – Become – Grow

- Where can people learn to be more like Jesus?

4) **Serve** – Mission – Outreach – Bless – Give – Go

- Where can people in your church use their gifts and passion to benefit others?
- What levels of service do you offer? (i.e. in the church, in the local community, around the country, around the world)

DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS ELEMENTS

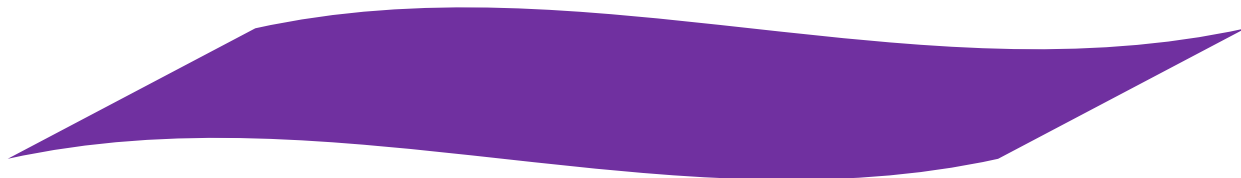
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|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday School Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Daily Bible Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Men's Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Giving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Bible School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Sabbath | <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Catalyst Disciplines

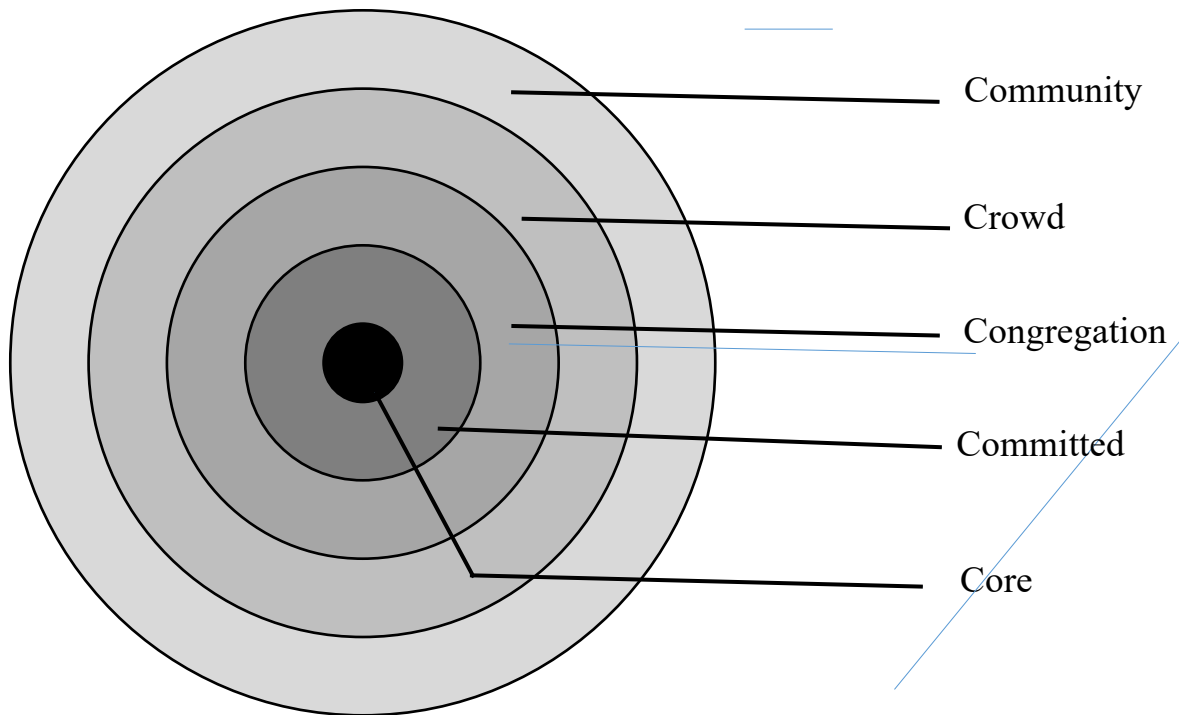
Reading & Reflecting on Scripture | Serving Others | Financial Giving

What Do You Want Everyone to Know About . . .

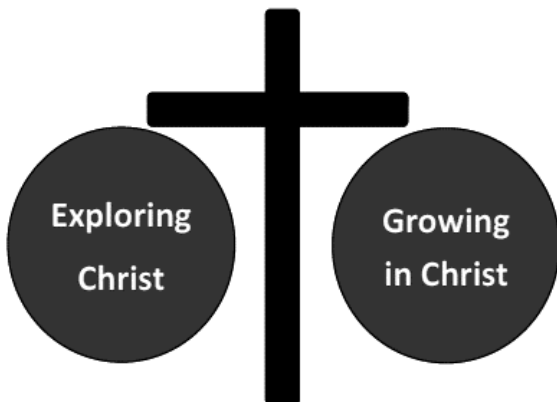
- 1) **Your Church** – History / Mission / Vision / Values / Structure
- 2) **Basic Christianity** – Alpha / Christianity 101 / Christian Beliefs
- 3) **Themselves** – Spiritual Gifts / Spiritual Practices / Discipleship



DISCIPLESHIP TARGETS



**BELIEF IN SALVATION
BY GRACE**

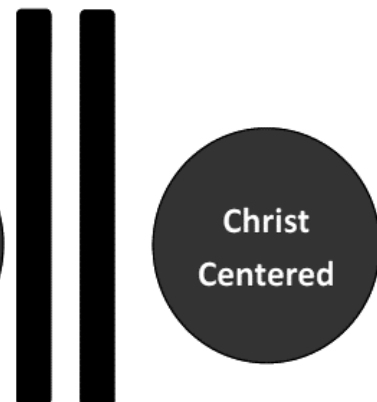


"I believe in God but I'm not sure about Christ. My faith is not a significant part of my life."

"I believe in Jesus and I am working on what it means to get to know Him."

"I feel really close to Christ and depend on Him for daily guidance."

**WILLING TO RISK
EVERYTHING FOR CHRIST**



"My relationship with Jesus is the most important relationship in my life. It guides everything I do."

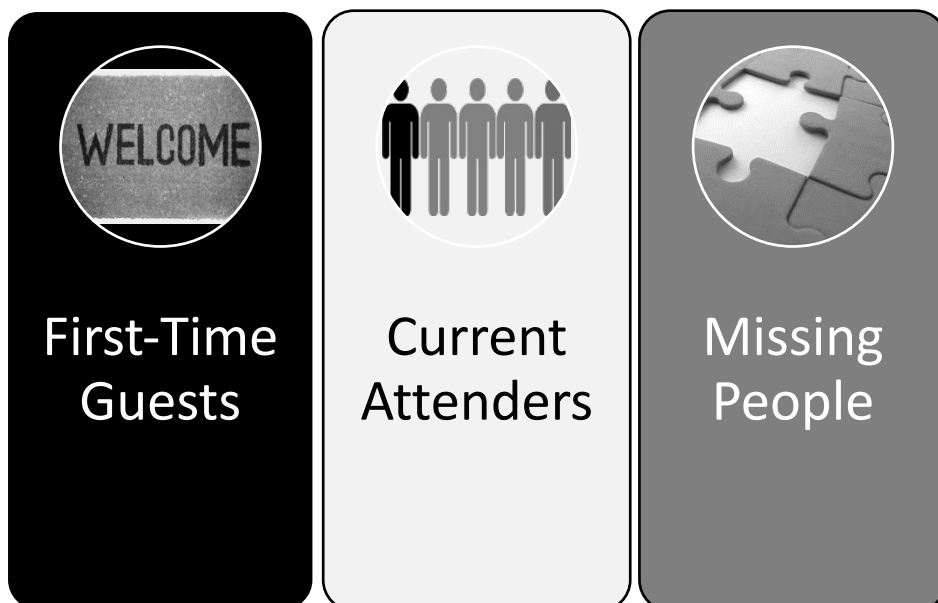
From the book, *MOVE* by Greg L. Hawkins & Cally Parkinson

STAGE TWO: IMPLEMENTATION

7) – Communication

8) – Launch!

9) – Connections



STAGE TWO: IMPLEMENTATION

10) – Coaching

Best Practices:

- Invest in training a person or two in coaching skills
- Develop a pre-work self-assessment of spiritual practices and feelings
- Celebrate their journey, listen to their experiences, explore their gifts/passion and connect them to appropriate ministries
- Create a next step plan for the next season – send a follow-up note
- Offer to meet with them again – schedule a day/time

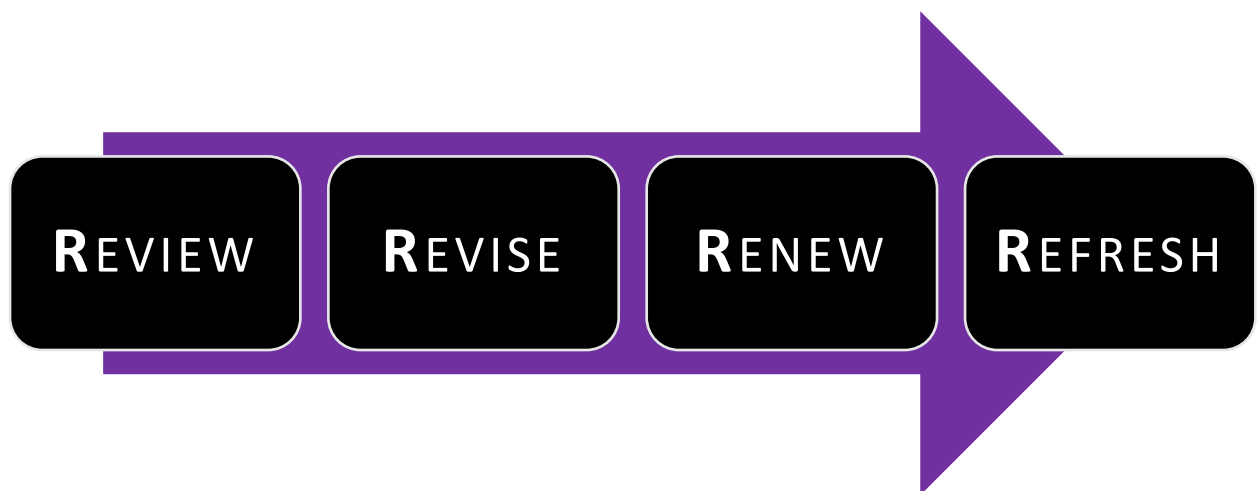


STAGE THREE: SUSTAINING

11) – Leadership & Membership

12) – Measure & Celebrate!

13) – Review, Revise, Renew, and Refresh



BIG IDEAS

No More “One & Done”

Make Your Process Clear & Visible

Discipleship Coaching is the Secret Sauce

Create a Culture of Next Steps



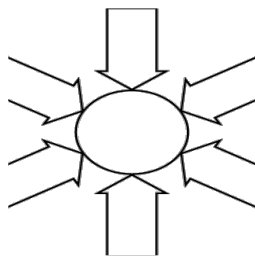
TEN KEYS TO A CLEAR DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS

1. Offer the congregation, the unchurched, and the marginally churchd a clear place to **enter** your process
2. Provide a **safe** and structured way for people to explore and ask questions
3. Help people develop and grow **relationships** within your church
4. Present a common **foundation** of church values, beliefs, culture, etc.
5. Equip people to take **next steps** as they follow Jesus Christ
6. Match people with ministries based on their **passions** and **gifts**
7. Encourage existing members to **come alongside** others on their journey
8. Remind everyone that we are all imperfect and a **work-in-progress**
9. Promote a more **sacrificial** model of church membership
10. Grow current and new **leaders** for ministry

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

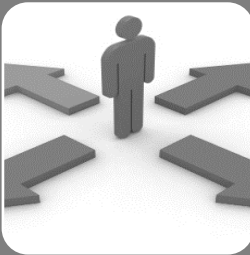
Celebration of Discipline by Richard J. Foster

- Joy is the keynote of all the Disciplines.
- In our enthusiasm to practice the Disciplines, we may fail to practice discipline.
- We must always remember that the path does not produce the change (transformation); it only places us where the change (transformation) can occur.



The Inward Disciplines

- Meditation
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Study



The Outward Disciplines

- Simplicity
- Solitude
- Submission
- Service



The Corporate Disciplines

- Confession
- Worship
- Guidance
- Celebration

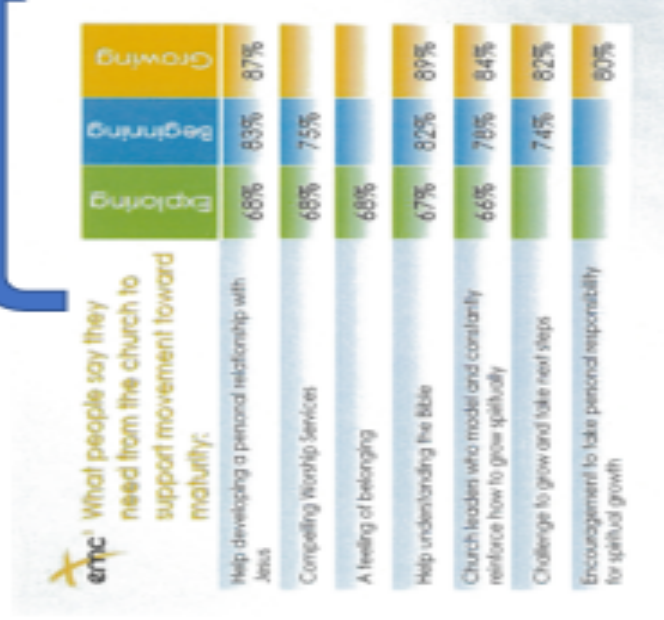
“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:2

Creating a Discipleship Pathway - Begin with the end in mind

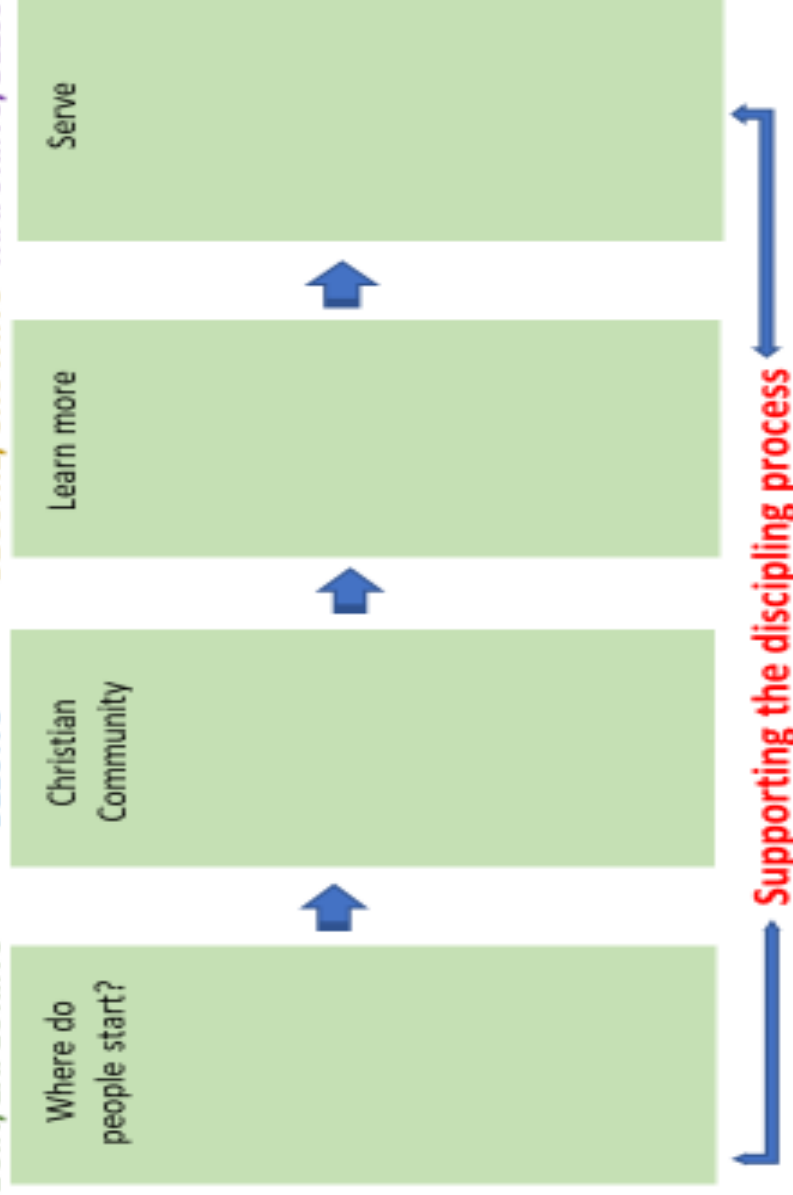
Clarity: What do we hope for as people become maturing disciples of Jesus Christ?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



NEXT STEPS:

Movements: How people grow towards maturity as disciples of Jesus Christ
BEGIN/EXPLORING **BELONG** **BECOME/GROWING** **MATURING/BLESSING**



Who needs to be involved?

How will you know it's working?

KEY LEARNINGS

Who Do You Need to Share This With?

Who Should Be On Your Discipleship Team?

NEXT STEPS

Potential Next Steps

- Prayerfully assemble a team to focus on creating a discipleship process for your church.
- Reach out to another church or two in your area to see if they are willing to walk with you on the journey

Who can you get to hold you accountable? _____

KEN WILLARD

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Beyond the First Visit: The complete guide to connecting guests to your church, Gary L. McIntosh

Building a Discipling Culture: How to release a missional movement by discipling people like Jesus did, Mike Breen and the 3DM Team

Celebration of Discipline: The path to spiritual growth, Richard J. Foster

Church Growth Flywheel: 5 Practical Systems to Drive Growth at Your Church, Rich Birch

Connect: How to Grow Your Church in 28-Days Guaranteed, Don Corder

Cure for the Common Church, Bob Whitesel

Disruptive Discipleship: The Power of Breaking Routine to Kickstart Your Faith, Sam Van Eman

Doing the Math of Mission: Fruits, Faithfulness, and Metrics, Gil Rendle

Evangelism in the Small Membership Church, Royal Speidel

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations, Robert Schnase

Following Jesus: Steps to a passionate faith, Carolyn Slaughter

Fusion, Nelson Searcy

Get Their Name: Grow your church by building new relationships, Bob Farr and Kay Kotan

Generosity, Stewardship, and Abundance: A Transformational Guide to Church Finance by Lovett H. Weems Jr. and Ann A. Michel

Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for producing genuine followers of Christ, George Barna

How People Grow, Henry Cloud

I am a Church Member, Thom S. Rainer

Intentional Disciplemaking: Cultivating spiritual maturity in the local church, Ron and Mary Bennett

Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the greatest leadership role model of all time, Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges

Leading Kingdom Movements, Mike Breen

Membership Matters: Insights from effective churches on new member classes and assimilation, Chuck Lawless

Membership to Discipleship: Growing mature disciples who make disciples, Philip Maynard

Move: What 1,000 churches reveal about spiritual growth, Greg L. Hawkins & Cally Parkinson

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Not a Fan: Becoming a completely committed follower of Jesus, Kyle Idleman

Open Road: The Adventure of a Breakthrough Prayer Initiative by Sue Nilson Kibbey

Race to Reach Out, Doug Anderson and Michael Coyner

Renovate or Die: Ten ways to focus your church on mission, Bob Farr and Kay Kotan

S.H.A.P.E.: Finding and fulfilling your unique purpose for life, Erik Rees

Sacred Rhythms: Arranging our lives for spiritual transformation, Ruth Haley Barton

Shift: Helping congregations back into the game of effective ministry, Phil Maynard

Simple Church: Returning to God's process for making disciples, Thom S. Rainer

Soul Feast: An invitation to the Christian spiritual life, Marjorie J. Thompson

The Come Back Effect: How Hospitality Can Compel Your Church's Guests to Return, Jason Young, Jonathan Malm

The Complete Book of Discipleship: On being and making followers of Christ, Bill Hull

The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Emotionally Healthy Church: A strategy for discipleship that actually changes lives, Peter Scazzero

The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives, Sue Mallory

The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual disciplines for ordinary people, John Ortberg

The Lost Art of Disciple Making, Leroy Eims

The Purpose Driven Church: Every church is big in God's eyes, Rick Warren

The Secret Power of Kindness: 10 Keys to Unlocking Your Capacity to Change the World by Greg Atkinson

Transformational Discipleship: How people really grow, Eric Geiger, Michael Kelley, and Philip Nation

Unbinding the Gospel: Real live evangelism, Martha Grace Reese

