

PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP OVERVIEW

The Path of Discipleship defines the process of discipleship and presents clear goals in different growth areas. Your role as LG leaders is to help the people in your group progress on the Path. Therefore, we need to know different growth stages in order to evaluate where we are and need to go next.



STEPS OVERVIEW

1. **Convert to Christ:** At Redeemer Church, we do not assume salvation (Matthew 7:21). A person cannot spiritually grow without being born again (John 3; 5:24; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, the starting point of the Path of Discipleship is conversion. Conversion takes place by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8-9). If someone is not yet alive in Christ, they will not be able to sustain efforts towards spiritual growth. More importantly, they are in eternal peril. The spiritual priority for anyone who is not a follower of Jesus is converting to Christ through repentance and faith in Him (Rom 10:9-10).

Note: There will be some natural step-by-step progression through steps 2-5, but growth in these areas can also happen simultaneously. For example, people can join Redeemer soon after becoming believers and can start sharing the gospel with others right away.

2. **Commune with God:** The height of human flourishing is walking with God in a close relationship. Knowing Christ surpasses any pleasure life offers (Psalm 63:3; Philippians 3:8). Convinced of this, we want people to experience the delight found in the Word of God (Psalm 1:2, 119; Jeremiah 15:16) and all the spiritual disciplines (1 Timothy 4:6-7). God normally works through means of grace to grow us spiritually, such as Bible reading, prayer, corporate worship, and Christian community. This step focuses on the cultivation of a healthy, fruit-bearing relationship with God.

In this stage of spiritual growth, we teach the “Killing Sin Process” (Appendix A). A disciple of Jesus must actively pursue obedience to Christ's commands (John 14:15) and putting to death the deeds of the body by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:13).

3. **Commit to Redeemer:** The focus of this step is understanding the importance of becoming a Missional Partner (member of Redeemer). Christ is the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22) and the New Testament pattern is to make disciples and form local churches as the gospel spreads (Book of Acts; Gal 1:2; Eph 1:1-2; Titus 1:5). Time and again, we experience something healthy unlocking for people when they join a faithful local church. God uses that submission to authority and commitment to help people learn new things about themselves and follow Christ in a way that blesses the entire body.

We encourage every Missional Partner to participate in a Life Group and invite regular attenders who are not yet members to join as well. Life Groups can be a key environment for experiencing life with other missional partners and deciding to join Redeemer. The starting point for anyone interested in learning more about membership is to take our Consider Redeemer classes.

4. **Communicate the Gospel:** Fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) includes verbally sharing the gospel and is something God calls every believer to do (2 Corinthians 5:11-21). Jesus commands us to bear witness to Him and the Holy Spirit empowers us to do just that (Acts 1:8). Sharing the gospel with others is a beautiful thing in God's sight (Romans 10:15). Evangelism is also necessary to experience all the blessings God has in store for His children (Philemon 6).

The Communicate the Gospel step in the Path of Discipleship includes learning to build relationships with lost family members, neighbors and co-workers. In Life Groups, you will talk about and pray for lost people in your life as part of your growth in discipleship. Redeemer also partners with a number of local ministries and global outreach missionaries and organizations.

5. **Cultivate Disciples:** 2 Timothy 2:1-2 says, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, (2) and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." For the faith to carry on and flourish, we must pass it on to others, who in turn pass it on to others. Jesus entrusted 12 men with His gospel, promised them His very presence (Matthew 28:20), and sent them into all the world to proclaim the gospel message. It is now our turn.

CONTEXTS FOR CULTIVATING DISCIPLES:

- **In Your Family** – Husbands and wives who have children must realize that they are the primary disciples for their children. Sharing the gospel starts in the home. We encourage you to focus on marriage and parenting as growth areas in your three-year Life Group cycle.
- **In Your Church** – This entire manual highlights this point. Part of living biblically is obeying the "One Another's" of Scripture within your local church community and other Christians with whom you come into contact (See Appendix B). Redeemer's Missional Partner covenant summarizes these commands in 10 statements we expect every member to commit to.
- **In Your Circle of Influence** – Every Christian has a role to play as one of Christ's ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20) in their workplace, neighborhood, recreational settings and other contexts in the community. Every relationship matters and when Christians pair excellent work with gospel witness, God works through us to save many.
- **In the World** – As followers of Christ, God calls us to be about the work of the Great Commission both locally *and globally*. Every Christian has a part to play in the global evangelization and discipleship of all nations. Redeemer offers short term mission trips every summer to enable Missional Partners to get a taste of global missions and explore a call minister to the nations.