

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

FOR THE CITY

1 - Discipleship is for Everyone

Discipleship is for everyone, as the command to follow Jesus and make disciples applies to all believers regardless of their background, maturity, or profession. This is because the call to discipleship is a fundamental part of being a follower of Christ, not a role reserved for a select few. Discipleship is about actively living out your faith and helping others grow in theirs through teaching, support, and example.

- **It's a command, not an option:** Jesus commanded all of his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations," a call that is not conditional on feeling ready or being a certain type of person.
- **It's for all believers:** While some may be called to specific leadership or ministry roles, *all* Christians are called to discipleship itself—to follow Jesus and help others to do the same.
- **There are no exceptions:** The command to be a disciple applies to introverts and extroverts, lawyers and baristas, pastors and laypeople alike. The only requirement is faith in Christ.
- **Maturity isn't a prerequisite:** Being a disciple isn't limited to "mature" or experienced Christians. It is a journey of growth, and everyone is at a different stage. Mature believers are meant to help those who are less mature grow.
- **It's a reciprocal process:** While it involves learning from those who have gone before you, it is also a process where you can be a source of

encouragement for others. The desire to grow and help others grow is a core part of discipleship.

2 - Discipleship is for Everyday Life

Discipleship is for everyday life because it involves integrating faith into all aspects of daily living, not just formal religious activities. This includes using everyday moments like mealtime and carpool to live out faith intentionally, developing practical life skills alongside theological understanding, and modeling a life of following Jesus in ordinary situations like work, sports, and family life.

Everyday discipleship through intentional living

- **Integrate faith into daily activities:** Discipleship is about inviting God into what you are already doing, making everyday activities like meals, sports, and commutes opportunities for spiritual growth and for showing others what it means to follow God.
- **Embrace "life-on-life" interaction:** Instead of relying on once-a-week events, discipleship is an all-encompassing, life-on-life activity where individuals can observe and learn from one another's daily walk with God.
- **Model practical skills:** Discipleship includes teaching practical life skills like budgeting, patience, and serving others, showing how faith is integrated into every area of life, not just theology.

Examples of everyday discipleship

- **Meeting people where they are:** Jesus met people in their everyday lives, not just in synagogues. He met fishermen by the sea and invited them to follow him, modeling how to meet and connect with people in their context.

- **Modeling weakness:** Some believe that confronting personal weakness and pain is a vital part of discipleship, as it allows for a deeper understanding of God's power at work in and through us.
- **Using ordinary moments:** Take intentional moments to notice the world around you, like an artistic pattern of ice on a car's windshield, to remember and give thanks for God's presence in creation.
- **Seeking guidance:** Actively seek God's guidance for major life decisions, and if unsure of the next step, act "as if" you are the person God wants you to be, which can lead to growing into that person over time.

3 – Discipleship is for the Whole Person

Discipleship involves the whole person, encompassing their "head," "heart," and "hands" to become more like Christ in every aspect of life. This holistic approach integrates spiritual growth with intellectual understanding, emotional transformation, and practical action, including all areas of life such as work, family, and community.

Head, heart, and hands

- **Head (Orthodoxy):** This refers to what a person knows, which involves studying scripture, learning theology, and thinking about God.
- **Heart (Orthopathy):** This includes what a person feels and believes, achieved through prayer, worship, and developing a deeper emotional and spiritual connection with God.
- **Hands (Orthopraxy):** This is about what a person does, which involves putting their faith into practice through actions, deeds, serving others, and demonstrating kindness.

Holistic application

- **Integrates all of life:** Holistic discipleship is not limited to church activities but affects all of life, including work, relationships, and how one spends their time and money.
- **Focuses on transformation:** The goal is transformation into Christ-likeness, which is a process of becoming more mature and complete in Christ across all areas of life.
- **Requires community:** True discipleship is lived out in community with others, where individuals can be nurtured, supported, and help each other grow. Discip
- **Includes all experiences:** Every life experience, including intimate needs and community issues, can be seen as an opportunity for healing and nurturing growth as a disciple.

In summary, the holistic view of discipleship aims to restore the entire person—body, mind, and spirit—to reflect Christ's love and character in the world.

4 – Discipleship Requires Jesus' Power

Christian discipleship requires Jesus' power because it involves more than just personal effort; it requires supernatural empowerment for living, witnessing, and obeying Christ. Disciples are empowered by the Holy Spirit to overcome fear, live a life that aligns with the gospel, and boldly proclaim their faith, even in the face of persecution, which is impossible in their own strength. Jesus grants this power, as seen in his command for his followers to be his witnesses, which is where the Greek word for power, "**dunamis**," originates.

Power for living and witnessing

- **To be witnesses:** The power is not just for conveying information, but for living a life that reflects Christ and overcoming the fear of persecution.
- **To overcome weakness:** The power of the Holy Spirit enables a believer to be fearless, as demonstrated by Peter's transformation from denying Christ to fearlessly proclaiming him after being empowered by the Spirit.
- **To obey commands:** Discipleship is founded on obeying Jesus' commands, and this is something that cannot be done in one's own strength.

The source of power

- **From the Holy Spirit:** The power needed for discipleship is provided by the Holy Spirit, not by one's own will or strength.
- **Given by Jesus:** Jesus promised this power to his followers, empowering them to make disciples of all nations, according to Matthew 28:19.

The purpose of discipleship

- **Glorifying God:** The ultimate purpose of discipleship is to glorify God in all aspects of life, a goal that requires supernatural power to accomplish, as detailed by Just Disciple.
- **Being Christ-like:** Discipleship involves imitating Jesus' love, humility, service, and obedience to the Father, and this imitation requires God's power.

In Summary

In the Christian faith, the statement that **discipleship is for everyone** reflects a central belief that following Jesus Christ is a universal mandate, not an optional activity for a select few. This concept is rooted in biblical teachings and is considered a necessary and natural part of the Christian life.

Key aspects of this belief include:

- **A Universal Calling:** Jesus' "Great Commission" in Matthew 28:19–20 instructs his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations". This command was given to all believers, not just pastors or ministry leaders, and applies across all demographics (older, younger, men, and women).
- **Essential to Faith:** Discipleship is seen as an indispensable component of what it means to be a Christian. True saving faith is understood as the faith that compels a person to follow and obey Christ, making the commitment to be a disciple mandatory, not optional.
- **A Lifelong Journey:** Discipleship is not a program with a graduation date, but a continuous, lifelong process of learning from Jesus, imitating his life, values, and mission, and growing towards maturity in Christ.
- **A Mutual Responsibility:** All members of the church body are called to support one another in growth and maturity. Discipleship happens through authentic relationships where believers help each other, often described as "one beggar telling another beggar where to get food". Everyone has influence, and others need each believer's help to follow Jesus better.

- **Integral to Everyday Life:** Discipleship is meant to shape every part of a believer's life—family, career, friendships—and every church activity. It is the context in which Christians are meant to live out their faith in the world.
- **Empowered by God:** While it is a weighty responsibility, Christians are not expected to accomplish the mission in their own strength but are fueled and guided by the Holy Spirit.

In summary, the principle that "discipleship is for everyone" emphasizes that every Christian is both a learner (a disciple of Jesus) and a teacher (a disciple-maker), called to grow in Christlikeness and help others do the same within the community of the church.

Disciples follow Jesus, they imitate and replicate Jesus, they help others follow Jesus, they intentionally build relationships, and they depend on God's grace.