**OUR VALUES**

**Intentionally Pursuing:**

**Discipleship**

A healthy Christian life is characterized by a deep, abiding faith in Jesus Christ, expressed through a life of love, obedience, and service to God and others. It involves spiritual growth, characterized by prayer, Bible study, and fellowship, as well as physical and emotional well-being. Ultimately, a healthy Christian life is one that reflects the character of Christ in all aspects of life. Intentional discipleship is a conscious and active pursuit of spiritual growth, going beyond passive adherence to faith. It involves actively engaging with faith, seeking to understand God more deeply, and striving to live out Jesus' teachings in all aspects of life. This journey requires a deliberate choice to prioritize following Jesus over personal goals and involves ongoing transformation and reorientation towards Christ.

Here's a more detailed look at the key aspects of a healthy Christian life:

**Active Engagement:**

It's not just about attending church or knowing facts about the Bible, but actively participating in the spiritual journey, responding to the Holy Spirit's guidance, and seeking a deeper relationship with God.

**Deliberate Choice:**

Intentional discipleship involves making a conscious decision to follow Jesus and prioritizing that commitment above personal desires and goals.

**Ongoing Transformation:**

It's a lifelong process of change, involving a continuous turning away from sin and towards Christ, and striving to become more like Him.

**Learning and Growth:**

This includes studying scripture, engaging in spiritual practices, and learning from others who are also on the journey of discipleship.

**Discipleship of Others:**

A key aspect is also sharing one's faith with others, helping them grow in their relationship with God, and equipping them to disciple others as well.

How to pursue intentional discipleship:

**Connect with others:**

Find a community where you can learn, grow, and be held accountable in your faith journey.

**Study scripture:**

Regularly read and meditate on God's Word, seeking to understand its meaning and application to your life.

**Engage in spiritual practices:**

Incorporate practices like prayer, worship, and meditation into your daily routine.

**Serve others:**

Find opportunities to use your gifts and talents to serve others and share God's love.

**Be intentional about your choices:**

Make decisions that align with your faith and help you grow closer to God.

In essence, intentional discipleship is a commitment to living a life that is fully devoted to following Jesus, actively seeking to grow in faith, and helping others do the same.

Spiritual Health

**Love for God and Others:**

A healthy Christian prioritizes loving God with all their heart, soul, and mind, and loving their neighbor as themselves. This love is not just an emotion but a commitment to living in accordance with God's will and treating others with compassion and grace.

**Faith in Jesus Christ:**

A healthy Christian's faith is rooted in the gospel, recognizing Jesus as the Son of God and their Savior. This faith is not just intellectual agreement but a living, active trust that impacts every area of life.

**Daily Devotion:**

This involves spending time in prayer, reading the Bible, and seeking God's guidance through the Holy Spirit. It's a conscious effort to connect with God and grow in understanding of His word.

**Obedience to God's Word:**

Healthy Christians strive to live according to God's commandments, not just out of obligation, but out of love and gratitude for His grace.

**Fellowship with other Believers:**

Community with other Christians is essential for encouragement, accountability, and spiritual growth.

**Outward Focus:**

Healthy Christians are not self-absorbed but are actively involved in serving others and sharing their faith.

**Growth in the Fruit of the Spirit:**

A healthy Christian life is marked by the evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in their life, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Physical and Emotional Health

**Prioritizing Rest and Sabbath:**

Recognizing the importance of rest and setting aside time for spiritual renewal and physical rejuvenation.

**Practicing Moderation and Self-Control:**

Avoiding extremes and striving for balance in all things, including diet, exercise, and activities.

**Maintaining a Balanced Diet:**

Making healthy food choices that nourish the body and provide the energy needed for daily life and service.

**Engaging in Regular Physical Activity:**

Taking care of the body, which is considered a temple of the Holy Spirit, through exercise and movement.

**Fostering Positive Relationships:**

Building healthy relationships with family, friends, and fellow believers based on love, respect, and support.

**Seeking Christian Counseling when Needed:**

Recognizing that emotional and mental health is important and seeking help when needed from a qualified Christian counselor.

Living out the Healthy Christian Life:

The healthy Christian life is not a destination but a journey of ongoing growth and transformation. It's a process of becoming more like Christ through faith, obedience, and service. It involves recognizing that God's grace empowers us to live a life that honors Him in all aspects.

The Bible encourages Christians to pursue a healthy life as an act of worship and stewardship, recognizing that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Scripture emphasizes the importance of caring for our physical health, including dietary choices, exercise, and rest, while also prioritizing spiritual health and godliness.

Following are some scriptures that address the different aspects of intentionally pursuing a healthy Christian life.

General Health and Physical Well-being:

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**, **1 Corinthians 10:31**, **Proverbs 17:22**,

**3 John 1:2**

Spiritual Health and Godliness:

**Romans 12:1-2**, **Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Timothy 4:8**

Stewardship and Balance:

**1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

**Connection**

Building connection involves cultivating genuine relationships characterized by trust, respect, and mutual understanding. It requires effort, including active listening, open communication, and shared experiences. Key elements include honesty, empathy, and a willingness to appreciate differences and commonalities.

Here's a more detailed look at how to build meaningful connections.

Be Authentic and Genuine:

**Be yourself:** Don't try to be someone you're not. Authenticity is crucial for building trust and genuine connections.

**Be honest:** Start with honesty to break down barriers and create a foundation of trust.

**Show vulnerability:** Sharing your thoughts and feelings can create deeper connections.

Active Listening and Communication:

**Listen attentively:**

Pay close attention when others are speaking, showing genuine interest in what they have to say.

**Ask meaningful questions:**

Go beyond surface-level conversations and ask questions that encourage deeper discussion.

**Communicate openly and honestly:**

Share your thoughts and feelings in a respectful way, and be receptive to the other person's perspective.

Shared Experiences and Common Interests:

**Find common ground:** Discover shared interests and passions, and pursue them together.

**Spend quality time:** Dedicate time to be with the other person, engaging in activities and conversations.

**Create shared memories:** Participate in experiences that will create lasting memories and strengthen your bond.

Respect and Boundaries:

**Respect boundaries:** Recognize and respect the other person's boundaries, both physical and emotional.

**Be considerate:** Show appreciation for their time, effort, and feelings.

**Avoid judgment:** Listen to their perspectives without judgment, even if you don't agree with them.

Empathy and Appreciation:

**Practice empathy:**

Try to understand their perspective and feelings, even if they differ from your own.

**Show appreciation:**

Express gratitude for their presence in your life and acknowledge their positive qualities.

**Be supportive:**

Offer encouragement and support during challenging times, and celebrate their successes.

Patience and Persistence:

**Be patient:** Building meaningful relationships takes time and effort, so be patient and don't expect immediate results.

**Be persistent:** Stay in touch, follow up, and look for opportunities to connect again.

**Don't give up easily:** Some relationships may require more effort than others, but it's worth it to cultivate meaningful connections.

By focusing on these key elements, you can build and strengthen relationships that are fulfilling, supportive, and lasting.

Below are biblical principles for meaningful relationships.

**Love:**

Love is the foundation of healthy relationships. It's not just an emotion, but a choice to act in the best interest of others.

**Forgiveness:**

Relationships require forgiveness to move forward from hurts and offenses.

**Encouragement:**

Building each other up through words and actions strengthens relationships.

**Service:**

Showing love through acts of service demonstrates care and builds deeper connections.

**Truthfulness:**

Honesty and open communication build trust and intimacy in relationships.

**Unity:**

Striving for unity and peace in relationships fosters harmony and strengthens bonds.

By applying these biblical principles, individuals can cultivate meaningful relationships that are characterized by love, forgiveness, encouragement, and mutual support.

Several Bible verses emphasize the importance of love, forgiveness, and encouragement in building meaningful relationships. Check out these verses: 1 Peter 4:8, Ephesians 4:2-3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24-25, Ephesians 4:32, Philippians 2:3, Proverbs 27:17, Romans 12:10

**Excellence**

Excellence is a core value emphasizing a commitment to continuous improvement and high standards in all aspects of work and personal life, not just in specific tasks. It means “striving for the best possible outcome and fostering a culture of innovation and dedication” (according to the U.S. Air Force). It's about more than just meeting minimum requirements; it's about a mindset of constantly seeking ways to improve and excel.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

**Continuous Improvement:**

It's not about achieving perfection in every single task, but rather about consistently seeking ways to improve processes, products, and performance.

**Innovation:**

This value encourages a proactive approach to finding new and better ways of doing things, pushing boundaries and striving for progress.

**Personal Responsibility:**

"Excellence in all we do" applies to individual actions and how individuals approach their roles and responsibilities.

**Teamwork:**

It also extends to how individuals contribute to the overall success of a team or organization, working together to achieve common goals.

**A Mindset:**

It's not just a slogan, but a way of thinking that permeates all aspects of life, promoting a culture of dedication, hard work, and a commitment to excellence.

**Biblical Excellence:**

This concept is often connected to the idea of "telos," which refers to the purpose or end goal of something. God has a purpose for each individual, and pursuing excellence means striving towards that purpose.

For a more Biblical view on excellence, here is some further food for thought.

Working for the Lord:

**Colossians 3:23-24** - This verse highlights that our work, regardless of its nature, should be approached with the same dedication and effort as if we were directly serving God.

Doing All Things for God's Glory:

**1 Corinthians 10:31 -** This verse broadens the scope of excellence to encompass all aspects of life, reminding us that even everyday activities should be done with the intention of glorifying God.

Excellence in Specific Areas:

**2 Corinthians 8:7 -** This verse encourages believers to pursue excellence in various areas, including faith, knowledge, and kindness.

Doing All Things with Diligence:

**Ecclesiastes 9:10 -** This verse emphasizes the importance of putting forth our best effort in all that we do, regardless of how big or small the task.

Excellence as a Reflection of God's Character:

**Philippians 4:8 -** This verse encourages believers to focus on things that are excellent and praiseworthy, reflecting God's own attributes.

Pursuing Excellence in Relationships:

**Colossians 3:14 -** Love is the ultimate expression of excellence in relationships, and it should be the driving force behind all interactions.

In essence, biblical excellence is not just about achieving a high standard in our work, but about doing everything with a heart focused on God, reflecting His character, and striving to fulfill His purpose for our lives.

**Hospitality**

A culture of hospitality emphasizes creating a welcoming and enjoyable experience for guests, extending beyond mere service to encompass genuine care and connection. It involves fostering an environment where both guests and staff feel valued, respected, and appreciated. This culture is not just about the final interaction, but also about the internal environment and the values that drive the organization.

Here's a breakdown of key aspects.

Core Principles:

**Welcoming and Respect:** Hospitality begins with a genuine desire to welcome guests and treat them with respect, regardless of background.

**Empathy and Understanding:** Recognizing and responding to individual needs and preferences is crucial.

**Authenticity and Connection:** Building genuine relationships with guests fosters trust and loyalty.

**Creating a Positive Atmosphere:** A welcoming environment, both internally and externally, is essential for a positive experience.

Internal Culture:

**Inclusivity and Diversity:** Creating a diverse and inclusive workplace where every team member feels valued and respected.

**Teamwork and Collaboration:** Encouraging a sense of teamwork and shared responsibility for guest satisfaction.

**Leadership by Example:** Managers and leaders should model the desired behavior and values.

**Training and Empowerment:** Providing employees with the training and resources they need to excel in their roles and feel empowered to make decisions.

**Safety and Well-being:** Prioritizing the safety and well-being of both guests and employees.

External Impact:

**Positive Guest Experiences:**

Ultimately, a strong culture of hospitality leads to positive guest experiences, increased satisfaction, and loyalty.

**Community Engagement:**

Hospitality can also play a role in promoting cultural exchange and supporting local communities.

**Reputation and Success:**

A positive culture of hospitality contributes to a strong reputation and long-term success for the organization.

Several scriptures highlight a culture of hospitality as a virtue, emphasizing the importance of welcoming strangers, sharing with those in need, and reflecting God's love through generosity. Key verses include Romans 12:13, which encourages believers to practice hospitality, and Hebrews 13:2, which reminds us that some have entertained angels without realizing it. These passages encourage believers to extend kindness and support to others, reflecting God's own welcoming nature. For more scriptures on biblical hospitality, check these out: 1 Peter 4:9-10, 1 Timothy 3:2, Matthew 25:40, Titus 1:8, Genesis 24:31, Acts 28:7 & Acts 2:46.

**Generosity**

Missional generosity, rooted in biblical principles, emphasizes giving not just material possessions but also one’s time, talents, and resources to support God's mission in the world. This involves sharing the gospel, showing compassion, and meeting the needs of others, reflecting God's own generous nature.

Missional generosity is the practice of generously giving time, resources, and talents to support a church's mission and outreach efforts, both locally and globally. It involves stewarding one's resources in a way that furthers the gospel and serves others. This can include financial giving, volunteering, and actively participating in the church's mission. Here's a more detailed explanation.

Key Aspects of Generosity:

**Giving Beyond the Minimum:**

There are times when obediently giving generously goes beyond fulfilling basic obligations. It involves a willingness to give over and above, recognizing the needs of others and the mission of the church.

**Supporting Missions:**

This includes financial support for missionaries, church plants, and other initiatives that extend the church's reach.

**Stewarding Resources:**

It's about using one's time, talents, and finances in a way that aligns with the church's mission and values.

**Reflecting God's Character:**

Missional generosity is rooted in the belief that God is generous, and followers of Christ are called to reflect that generosity in their own lives.

**Participating in God's Mission:**

It's about actively participating in God's work of spreading the gospel and serving others.

Examples of Generosity

**Financial Donations:**

Contributing to a church's missions’ budget, supporting missionaries, or giving to specific projects that advance the gospel.

**Volunteering:**

Offering time and skills to serve in various ministries, such as teaching Sunday school, helping with outreach events, or assisting with building and maintenance projects.

**Praying for Missions:**

Actively praying for missionaries, church planters, and the success of the church's outreach efforts.

**Practicing Generous Hospitality:**

Creating a welcoming environment for others, both within the church and in the wider community.

**Sharing Resources:**

Sharing one's possessions, skills, and knowledge with others in need.

**Supporting Local Initiatives:**

Engaging in community service projects and supporting local organizations that align with the church's values.

Why is Generosity Important?

**Fulfills the Great Commission:**

Missional generosity enables the church to fulfill its mission of making disciples of all nations.

**Demonstrates God's Love:**

It allows the church to tangibly demonstrate God's love and compassion to others.

**Strengthens Community:**

It fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose within the church and the wider community.

**Benefits the Giver:**

Giving generously can bring joy, fulfillment, and a deeper sense of purpose to the giver.

**Impacts Lives:**

Generosity can have a profound impact on the lives of those who receive help and support.

Several scriptures in the Bible emphasize the concept of missional generosity, which is giving with the intention of furthering God's kingdom and impacting others for the better. Key themes include cheerful giving, the blessing of giving, and giving as a reflection of God's love.

Specific Scriptures and Themes

**Cheerful Giving:**

2 Corinthians 9:7 encourages giving "not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." This verse emphasizes the importance of giving from a willing heart, not out of obligation.

**Blessing of Giving:**

Deuteronomy 15:10 reminds believers that God blesses those who give generously and without grudging. This highlights the reciprocal nature of generosity, where giving is often met with God's provision.

**Giving Reflects God's Love:**

John 3:16, which speaks of God's love demonstrated through the gift of his Son, sets a tone for sacrificial giving. Many scriptures connect generosity with reflecting God's love and character.

**Missional Focus:**

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) encourages believers to make disciples of all nations. This mission is often supported through generous giving, whether to missionaries, local churches, or other organizations that advance the gospel.

**It is More Blessed to Give:**

Acts 20:35 emphasizes that giving is inherently more rewarding than receiving, a principle that aligns with the idea of missional generosity.

**Giving to the Poor and Needy:**

Several scriptures, like Deuteronomy 15:10 and Proverbs 19:17, highlight the importance of giving to the poor and those in need.

**Generosity as Refreshment:**

Proverbs 11:25 states that a generous person will prosper and one who refreshes others will be refreshed. This highlights the relational aspect of generosity, where giving can bring blessing to both the giver and the recipient.

**Giving Strengthens Faith:**

Many find that generosity strengthens their faith as they witness God's provision and experience the joy of giving.

These scriptures provide a foundation for understanding missional generosity as a vital aspect of Christian life and faith. They emphasize that giving is not just about money but also about a heart attitude that reflects God's love and a desire to see His kingdom advanced. Here’s a few more for you to look at: Luke 12:33, 1 John 3:17-18, Malachi 3:10 & Philippians 4:15-16.