



## FIRST BAPTIST MULVANE

At First Baptist Church, we exist *to make and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.*

We do this through worshiping, connecting, and serving



WORSHIP



CONNECT



SERVE

**What is a Disciple?** – At its most basic level, the word disciple means “learner” or “follower.” There is no difference between a disciple of Christ and a Christian. Jesus often called his followers disciples but He never used the word “Christian.” Believers were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) by those outside the church. Therefore, a disciple is not a “super-Christian,” but all Christians are disciples.

Making disciples is the mission of the church – Matt. 28:18-20

**What is Discipleship?** – Discipleship is a direction not a destination. It is the lifelong process by which believers are always deepening in their relationship to Christ and moving closer to Christlikeness in their walk.

There are 8 attributes of a growing disciple

1. Bible engagement
2. Obeying God / Denying Self
3. Serving God / Serving others
4. Sharing Christ
5. Exercising Faith
6. Seeking God
7. Building Relationships
8. Being transparent / accountable <sup>1</sup>

Each of these attributes may be subsumed under three headings: Worship – Connect – Serve

While there are many facets to following Jesus, disciples who are growing in relationship with Christ are worshiping, connecting, and serving. Each of these categories, defined below, are integral for the discipleship process.

**Worship** – Worship is man’s proper response to the person and work of the Triune God. We worship as we delight in Him, ascribing to Him all honor, worth, and adoration. Worship acceptable to God presupposes that one has been born again spiritually, and worships God as He has revealed Himself (John 4:23). Although, worship is experienced in every aspect of a believer’s life, growing disciples worship both corporately in the local church, as well as privately in personal devotions and spiritual disciplines.

1. Corporate Worship –

- a. Assembling together for worship in a local assembly is commanded in Scripture (Hebrews 10:24-25) and necessary for the encouragement of one another.
- b. Corporate worship is the pattern throughout the Scripture, both Old and New Testament (i.e. the Epistles are written to churches, Acts 2:46 - And day by day, attending the temple together...)

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<sup>1</sup> Geiger, Eric, Michael Kelly, and Phillip Nation. *Transformational Discipleship: How People Really Grow*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group and Lifeway Research, 2012. 59

- c . A disciple's faith is fueled by hearing the proclamation of the word of God (Rom. 10:17)
- d. Scripture speaks of the local assembly of believers as the "pillar and buttress of the truth" in 1 Timothy 3:14-15
- e. Participating in the Lord's Supper together and publicly announcing our faith through baptism expresses worship to God

## 2. Personal Worship

- a. This consists of an individual's private spiritual disciplines (i.e. Bible reading, memorization, prayers, giving, fasting, etc.)
- b. Spiritual disciplines are "ways we can place ourselves in the path of God's grace and seek Him much as Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus placed themselves in Jesus' path and sought him."<sup>2</sup>
- c. Cultivating our personal relationship with God by private worship practices is essential for a disciple's growth

**Connect** – Growing as a disciple of Christ cannot be done in isolation. Jesus' model of disciple-making involved an intentionally small group of disciples who were relationally bound together under His teaching. They followed and learned as they daily walked with Him through His earthly ministry. In this same pattern, the early church continued the practice of smaller groups (Acts 2:46-49.)

- a. Paul commanded Timothy to intentionally seek and disciple men – 2 Ti. 2:2
- b. The myriad of "one another" commands in the New Testament cannot be obeyed without an ongoing lifestyle of intimacy with God's people. For example, it is impossible to "bear one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2) apart from developing personal discipleship relationships.
- c. Life Groups at FBC are small groups of Christ followers building discipling relationships while biblically and prayerfully wrestling with transformational issues. What are "discipling relationships?"
  1. Discipling relationships are marked by intimacy, accountability, and fellowship
  2. Discipling relationships involve full, mutual responsibility of participants
  3. Discipling relationships are customized to the unique growth process of the individuals
  4. Discipling relationships focus on learning "to observe everything that Jesus has commanded" (Matt. 28:19)<sup>3</sup>

## Scriptural Basis for Small Groups –

Acts 5:42 - And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Acts 2:46 - And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,

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<sup>2</sup> Whitney, Donald S. *Spiritual Disciplines For The Christian Life*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991. 19

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Greg Ogden's *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples A Few At A Time*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2003.

Acts 20:20 - how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house,  
Rom. 16:5 - Greet also the church in their house.  
1 Co. 16:19 - The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

**Serve** – A growing disciple is engaged service for Christ. Every believer, without exception, is given spiritual gifts to enable service (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Co. 12:8-10.) “In addition to the study of Scripture, the best way to discover and confirm which spiritual gift is yours is through serving.”<sup>4</sup> All believers are called to serve the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10; Phil. 2:3-4), the community in which they live (Luke 14:13-14; Gal. 6:9-10), and the world (Matt. 28:18-20.)

- a. Service is not relegated only to the outwardly grand and noble tasks. Most often, service is hard, sacrificial, and goes unrecognized by men.
- b. Service to Christ is done from a heart of gratitude and Love for Christ (John 21:17) not from a sense of legalistic duty.
- c. Service is empowered as believers are dependent on Christ in their labors

## DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS



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<sup>4</sup> Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 124