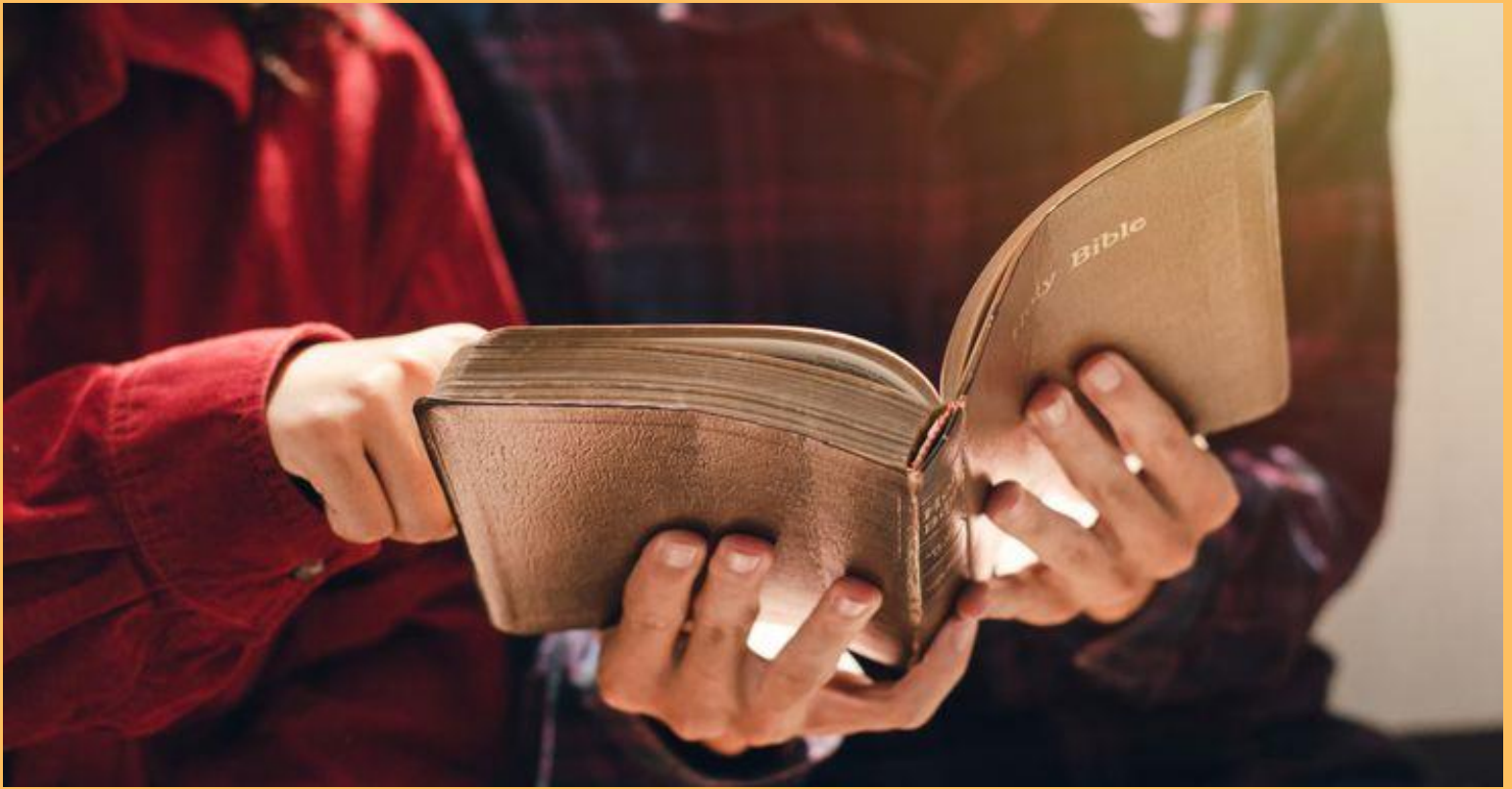




PERSONAL DISCIPLINE

**VICTORY BIBLE CHURCH INTERNATIONAL
CHURCH GROWTH**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Discipleship is a deeply rewarding ministry that involves walking alongside someone as they grow in faith, understanding, and obedience to Jesus Christ. Discipleship is not about perfection but about intentionality, humility, and reliance on God to work through you. Paul's relationship with Timothy (*2 Timothy 2:2*) demonstrates discipleship as mentoring, teaching, and equipping for ministry. Discipleship is ultimately about helping others grow to be more like Jesus (*1 Corinthians 11:1; Romans 8:29*). In the Great Commission, Jesus' command emphasizes teaching, baptizing, and modeling obedience.

“Go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. Disciple makers must commit to investing in others consistently (*2 Timothy 2:2*). Recognize that God's power works through your weakness (*2 Corinthians 12:9*). Discipleship is not instantaneous, growth takes time; be patient with the process (*Ephesians 4:2*). In order to be effective in discipleship, genuinely care for the person you are discipling and be willing to learn and grow yourself (*Proverbs 9:9, John 13:34-35*).

CHAPTER ONE

How To Help A Disciple Grow

1. Build a Discipling Relationship

Initiating the relationship will require that you pray for guidance and opportunities to disciple. Jesus's way of discipling reveals that we need to approach the person to be discipled with humility and a willingness to serve. In doing that your expectations must be clear. Establish clear goals and mutual commitment. However, discuss time commitments, communication methods, and meeting frequency with the disciple. Foster an atmosphere of encouragement and grace.

2. Help a Disciple Grow Spiritually

Assessing the spiritual needs of your disciples is very crucial. Ask about their faith journey, current struggles, and spiritual goals. Identify areas where they need encouragement or teaching.

Encouraging regular devotion can be achieved by guiding the disciples in daily bible reading and prayer. The disciple maker must provide accountability without being overbearing to the disciple. In nurturing the spiritual growth of the disciples, celebrate milestones, such as new insights, answered prayers, or personal breakthroughs. Challenge them to step out in faith and obedience.

3. Teach Foundational Doctrines

To teach foundational doctrines, use scripture to explain and reinforce truths. While it is advisable to share your personal testimony and experiences, encourage questions and discussions.

Essential Topics to Cover

- A. **The Gospel:** Salvation through Jesus (*Ephesians 2:8-9*).
- B. **God's Character:** Fruit of the Spirit holiness and sovereignty (*Galatians 5:22-23, Psalm 145:8-9*).
- C. **Identity in Christ:** Being a new creation (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).
- D. **The Church:** Importance of fellowship and unity (*Hebrews 10:24-25*).
- E. **The Bible:** Its authority and relevance (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*).

CHAPTER TWO

Spiritual Practices

Spiritual practices are the foundation for a deep and vibrant faith. As a disciple-maker, your role is to guide, encourage, and model these disciplines, always pointing your disciple to God's grace and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Help your disciple understand why spiritual practices matter. These disciplines are not about earning God's favor but about cultivating intimacy with Him and aligning with His will.

1 Timothy 4:7 *"Train yourself to be godly"*

John 15:5 *"Apart from me, you can do nothing"*

1. Encouraging Spiritual Practices

- A. **Bible Study:** Teach them how to study Scripture effectively.
- B. **Prayer:** Model and encourage consistent communication with God.
- C. **Worship:** Cultivate a heart of gratitude and adoration.
- D. **Fasting:** Introduce fasting as a means of seeking God deeply.
- E. **Service:** Encourage them to serve others in love and humility.

2. Guiding Through Challenges and Struggles

Challenges and struggles are a natural part of every believer's journey. As a disciple-maker, your role is to provide guidance, encouragement, and biblical wisdom to help your disciple navigate difficulties while growing in their faith. Struggles are part of sanctification and God's refining process (*James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7*). Disciples should be reminded that trials can deepen their faith and draw them closer to Christ (*Romans 8:28-29*).

Addressing Common Struggles with Biblical Guidance

- Doubt

You need to encourage honest questions. Assure disciples that questioning is not the same as unbelief. Show examples of biblical figures like Thomas (*John 20:24-29*) and David (Psalms) who wrestled with doubt yet remained faithful. Recommend apologetics books or sermons that address their specific doubts.

- Temptation

Disciples must know scriptural responses to temptation. Equip them to combat temptation with Scripture, as Jesus did (*Matthew 4:1-11*). Offer to check in regularly or help them find an accountability partner. The disciple-maker should emphasize God's faithfulness. Remind them that God always provides a way out of temptation (*1 Corinthians 10:13*).

- Suffering

Acknowledge their pain. Disciple makers should avoid offering quick fixes or "fast food" answers. Point them to God's sovereignty: Share verses like Romans 8:28 and Psalm 46:1-3 to remind them of God's presence and purpose in suffering. It is important to encourage perseverance. Highlight promises of future glory and restoration (*2 Corinthians 4:16-18*). Pray with them and ask God for comfort, strength and wisdom together.

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

- **Spiritual Dryness**

It is possible for disciples to become or feel spiritually dry. They can backslide, no more be consumed by the zeal of the Lord, not fervent in Spirit and become lukewarm towards the things of God. In such a state, remind them of God's faithfulness, reassuring them that feelings don't define their relationship with God (*Hebrews 13:5*). Exemplifying model perseverance really helps by sharing personal experiences of spiritual dryness and how God carried you through. Encourage Seeking God Intentionally by suggesting practical steps like journaling, worship, or reading Psalms. Walk with them through difficult times without judgment.

- **Identity Issues**

Identity issues can significantly affect a believer's spiritual growth, relationships, and sense of purpose. These struggles often stem from past experiences, cultural pressures, or a lack of understanding of their identity in Christ. As a disciple-maker, you can play a vital role in helping them find their true worth and purpose in God's design. Help them shift their focus from worldly measures of identity to what Scripture says about who they are in Christ.

- A. **Teach Them Their Identity in Christ:** Reinforce truths like being a child of God (John 1:12), a new creation (*2 Corinthians 5:17*), and deeply loved (*Romans 8:38-39*).
- B. **Combat Lies with Truth:** Help them replace negative self-perceptions with Scripture-based affirmations.

Equipping for Service and Leadership

- Identifying Gifts and Talents

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us” (Romans 12:6).

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them” (1 Corinthians 12:4).

Identifying gifts and talents is crucial for helping believers understand their God-given abilities and how they can use them to serve others and glorify God. This process involves prayer, observation, teaching, and encouragement, all aimed at discovering and developing the unique contributions each disciple can make to the body of Christ. Help them discover their spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). Encourage them to use their talents for God's glory. Disciples must be reminded that identifying and using their gifts is a partnership with God, encouraging them to remain humble, reliant on the Holy Spirit, and focused on glorifying Christ. As disciples grow in their gifts and talents, they will find joy and fulfillment in serving God's Kingdom and contributing to the body of Christ.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

- Training for Ministry

Equipping disciples for ministry is a vital part of the Great Commission. It involves teaching, mentoring, and empowering believers to effectively serve in

the church, community, and beyond. Ministry is service to God and others, motivated by love and obedience.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Every believer is called to ministry according to their gifts and calling (*Ephesians 4:11-12*). Provide opportunities to serve alongside you. Disciple makers must teach practical skills, such as leading Bible studies for sharing the gospel. Training disciples for ministry is about equipping them to serve God faithfully and fruitfully. The need to emphasize that ministry is not about perfection but about obedience, reliance on God, and a heart to serve others. As Paul wrote to Timothy:

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:2).

Through prayerful guidance and intentional training, you can prepare disciples to fulfill their God-given calling and impact the world for Christ.

- Empowering Them to Lead

Empowering disciples to lead involves equipping them with the confidence, skills, and spiritual maturity needed to take initiative and guide others in faith. Leadership in discipleship is about serving others and modeling Christ-like character. Jesus taught that leadership is rooted in humility and service. Encourage disciples to take initiative in serving others.

“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant” (Matthew 20:26).

Leaders are called to serve, not dominate, reflecting Christ's example (Philippians 2:5-7). True leadership flows from dependence on the Holy Spirit.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8).

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Disciples must learn to seek the Spirit's guidance in every aspect of leadership. It is needful for them to learn to follow those who through faith and patience have inherit promises and led exemplary lives. Feedback and affirmation must be provided as they step into leadership roles.

CHAPTER THREE

Multiplication

Empowering Disciples to Disciple Others

The essence of discipleship is multiplication. Empowering disciples to disciple others ensures the growth and sustainability of the Kingdom of God, fulfilling the Great Commission. Helping disciples to disciple others fulfills Jesus' mandate to multiply His followers. Disciples must understand that making disciples is not just for pastors or church leaders but for every believer (Ephesians 4:11-13). This shows that disciples need to know that God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things for His glory. It is important disciples see themselves as part of God's global mission. Jesus has assured us the promise of His presence:

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus' modelled a discipleship by investing in a few (His 12 disciples) to reach the many. He trained and empowered them to teach and lead others (Matthew 28:19-20).

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

When Jesus walked on earth He modelled a life for His disciples to follow. This was not a mechanical imitation of Jesus' life as we will soon find out. What kind of life did Jesus model?

From the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, He modelled **six major** traits:

1. He lived a life dependent on the Father (**John 5:19, 30**);

2. He lived a life of prayer (**Hebrews 5:7; Mark 1:35**);
3. He lived a life that depicted the centrality of the Scriptures (**Matthew 4:1-10**);
4. He lived a life of constantly exalting and glorifying the Father (**John 17:4**);
5. He lived a life of obedience to God's revealed will (**John 8:29; John 4:34**);
6. He lived a life of building relationships with others characterized by love and integrity (**John 13:1; John 8:46; John 17:19**).

The priorities of Jesus Christ simply talk about the significant matters He revolved His daily activities around. The Gospel accounts of Jesus' activities revealed **three major** priorities:

1. He prioritized seeking and saving the lost (**Luke 19:10; Mark 10:45; Luke 5:32-32**);
2. He prioritized making committed disciples out of His followers (**Luke 9:23-26; Matthew John 8:31; Matthew 11:28-30**);
3. He prioritized making fruitful soul winners out of His disciples (**Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 3:14; Matthew 28:18-20**).

The disciple maker's responsibility is to ensure that in his discipling the character and the priorities of Christ as primarily defined and outlined above are being reproduced in the lives of his converts intentionally, constructively and progressively.

Apostle Paul also modelled a multiplication system. Paul encouraged Timothy to disciple others who would also teach others.

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Paul's discipleship efforts impacted entire regions as those he discipled reproduced their faith in others (*Acts 19:9-10*). Discipling others can transform families, communities, and nations. Through intentional training, encouragement, and reliance on God, disciples can confidently disciple others, creating a ripple effect that transforms lives and expands God's Kingdom. When disciples effectively disciple others, the Church grows spiritually and numerically, and the Kingdom of God advances.

Practical Tips for Discipling Disciples

1. **Be Consistent:** Regular meetings create rhythm and growth.
2. **Stay Flexible:** Adapt to their needs and circumstances.
3. **Use Resources:** Provide books, studies, or tools to enhance learning.
4. **Pray Continually:** Cover your relationship and their growth in prayer.
5. **Focus on Progress, Not Perfection:** Celebrate small steps forward.
6. **Model Christ-Like Living:** Show them how to lead by example, demonstrating faith, love, and humility.
7. **Teach Reproducibility:** Encourage disciples to keep their methods simple and transferable so others can easily replicate the process. Empower disciples to step out and begin discipling others while offering ongoing guidance and support.
8. **Measure Growth and Multiplication:** This will involve evaluating faithfulness, not just numbers: Teach disciples that success in discipleship is measured by faithfulness to God's call, not just the number of people they reach. Encourage disciples to share how their efforts have led to others discipling more people. Celebrate testimonies of spiritual growth and multiplication.
9. **Eternal Impact:**

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3).

Much more than any earth reward, discipleship has eternal impact. Disciple makers must help disciples understand that their efforts will have eternal significance. Encourage disciples to pass on the vision of multiplication to the next generation, creating a ripple effect of disciple-making.

Conclusion

Discipling others is a privilege and responsibility entrusted to every believer. It is a journey of growth, love, and service that draws both disciple and disciple-maker closer to Christ. Rely on God's strength, be faithful in your efforts, and trust the Holy Spirit to bring lasting transformation.

Go and make disciples, trusting that God will be with you every step of the way (Matthew 28:19-20).

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38).