

THE DISCIPLE LEADER

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SESSION 1: THE DISCIPLE LEADER COURSE INTRODUCTION

Discipleship is the foremost call of a leader. If we are to say to others as Paul did in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ," and if we are to fulfill the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, we must first be true disciples ourselves.

What is a disciple? With many descriptions available of discipleship and a variety of examples of discipleship, both good and bad, in the Church, our goal in this session is to search the Scripture for God's basic definitions and pictures of discipleship and leadership. In examining a biblical definition, we also want to cultivate a personal commitment to the pursuit of discipleship and to identify elements that may block our development as disciples.

As we study and meditate on God's Word and His main purpose for our lives during this course, the primary desired outcomes will be 1) your own personal growth as Christ's disciples and leaders, 2) concrete plans as to how you will apply the truths we learn together to your lives, and 3) that you would begin reproducing these truths in the lives of others.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

Matthew 4:19 ESV

And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

1 Corinthians 11:1 ESV

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

1. BASIC DEFINITIONS OF A DISCIPLE & LEADER FROM THE BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT. (TOGETHER IN MEETING)

Review Matthew 4:19 above and make observations on what a disciple is.

A Disciple is:

Review 1 Corinthians 11:1 above and share observations on what a leader is.

A Leader is:

Verse memory exercise with Matthew 4:19 and 1 Corinthians 11:1. (Go around and repeat the verses - they're easy to memorize!)

4. BASIC BIBLE STUDY METHODS

During this course we will focus on learning and practicing basic Bible study methods. The basis for all good Bible study methodology focuses on three essential elements, or building blocks – observation, interpretation, and application.

Observation: Understanding what is THERE and what is NOT THERE.

Interpretation: Understanding what the AUTHOR MEANT when he wrote the passage through consideration of content, context, comparison, culture and consultation.

Application: Answering the questions, “WHAT do I do with this now that I understand it?” and “HOW does this apply to or change my life?”

5. THE DISCIPLE LEADER DIAGRAM

This diagram is not meant to be a “how to” in figuring out your purpose and what God has called you to do, but rather a tool to help explain God’s *current* call. Throughout the class we will build upon what God has called us all to do collectively and begin to pray and think about how that might impact us individually. During the course everyone will present their Disciple/Leader diagram.

6. WEEKLY MEETINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

Proper coverage of the material in The Disciple/Leader requires at least an hour and a half weekly meeting for each assignment. It is also recommended that TDL participants NOT do their homework at one sitting. We believe in order to get the most out of each assignment, you should break up the week’s homework into several study sessions prior to the group meeting time. Each assignment will take roughly 2-3 hours to complete.

Memorization of all the scripture verses is a must. Each week the students will pair up to recite their memory verses for that week and review the verses they had previously memorized.

Discipleship (as we will learn) is the call on every Christian’s life. A key part in discipleship is reaching others with the gospel, and calling them to follow Christ. Every week we will break-up and discuss our impact list, and how God is interacting with those who don’t know Him through us. This is meant to be both encouragement, and accountability.

7. PRAYER

Every week we will be in prayer together, asking God to draw us closer in fellowship, more passionate about the lost, more dedicated to building others up in Him, and strengthening our personal walks with Christ. May God give you great grace to know Him throughout this course.

SESSION 2: SEEING LIFE FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

The normal focus of our world is the present. The Internet and e-mail, instant coffee and potatoes, cell phones and texting, and the fast-food explosion. We want to have it now, do it now, achieve it now. With all the advantages of the information age and its immediate gratification comes the risk of losing perspective of God's purpose and plan for us. Sometimes, God has a *long-term* plan! In ministry, the loss of this perspective brings at least frustration and discouragement and at worst poor decision-making, discernment, and leadership. Jesus addressed the issue of perspective early in his ministry, challenging His followers to look beyond the present to an eternal perspective. In this lesson, we will begin to focus on life and ministry from God's perspective, which is essential for spiritual leadership. As we move from the temporal to the eternal, we will clearly see what is true and false, real and unreal, worthless and valuable.

One of Jesus' primary goals in developing leadership in His men was to look at the present in the context of the eternal plan of the Father. As they watched Him face public scrutiny, demands, conflict, judgment, criticism, and ultimately His trial and crucifixion, his disciples saw Him do what was required for leadership because of the scope of His eternal perspective. He placed the immediate circumstances of life into the context of the eternal. As spiritual leaders, our eternal perspective must have that scope; it must permeate every area of our lives, we must help those we influence and lead to view their circumstances and responsibilities through the lens of God's eternal plan as revealed in His Word.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

Matthew 6:33 ESV

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL?	WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP WITH THIS PERSON?	WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITH THEM?

1. BEGIN REVIEWING "THE DISCIPLE LEADER DIAGRAM."

All students will present this diagram to the class at some point during the course.

2. MATTHEW 6:19-34.

This passage provides the context for our memory verse. Read the passage and make 25 observations that relate to eternal vs. Temporal perspective.

3. **TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND YOUR SCOPE OF ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE, CROSS-REFERENCE AND SEARCH THE SCRIPTURE AND FOR FOUR MORE PASSAGES OR VERSES WHICH REFLECT AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE.** Summarize the truth communicated in that passage and note how it applies in your life. (Possible passages: Gen. 50:18-21; Heb. 12:1-13, etc.)

Example:

PASSAGE

Matthew 6:33

TRUTH

Eternal values take priority over everything.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week I will rethink my work as it relates to eternal values. I will stop worrying about what I can't control and try to trust God.

Passage

Truth

Personal Application

Passage

Truth

Personal Application

Passage

Truth

Personal Application

Passage

Truth

Personal Application

4. **LUKE 6:20-26.** These words were Jesus' first words of discipleship given to men through whom He would establish His church. Notice that the teaching is not in the form of directives or imperatives but addresses the mind-set or attitude for effective leadership. What was the mind-set that Jesus was establishing for his disciples and future leaders, and why do you think it was so important?

5. **IN MAKING OBSERVATIONS OF THIS PASSAGE, USE THE COLUMNS BELOW TO LIST "BLESSINGS" AND "WOES."**
Make note of the tense of the verbs.

<i>BLESSED</i>	<i>WOE</i>

What implications and conclusions can you draw from exploring this passage?

In what way are these contrasts relevant to your life, your family, your church?

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE IN LEADERSHIP CANNOT BE EXAGGERATED.

Reviewing this lesson, write a one sentence definition of "eternal perspective."

Why is cultivating an eternal perspective so very essential in light of our purpose and discipleship in general?

Why is eternal perspective so essential to church leaders as they shepherd a congregation?

What kind of resistance or barriers should a leader expect as he teaches eternal perspective, which is essential for following Christ?

How does having an eternal perspective change the way you view suffering?

Personally, how does eternal perspective affect your role as . . .

...church leader?

...spouse?

...parent?

...ambassador of Christ?

...professional?

SESSION 3: LIVING LIFE FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Studying and talking about Biblical truths and perspectives are always easier than actually personalizing them or integrating them into our minds, hearts, and lives. Personalizing involves measuring the reality of true discipleship in our lives against the standard of Scripture. We must approach Scripture by submitting our will as well as our mind, asking, "How should this change my life?" Only then can we challenge others to examine and apply what we are discovering to be true in our own lives.

Every one of us can identify with the apostle Paul's words, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Rom. 7:15). The most basic and essential element of an effective leader is implementing God's Word into his life and then teaching, encouraging, and helping others to do the same. The breakdown comes not in the "knowing" but in the "doing." Almost anyone can teach. Some have great wisdom in understanding how Biblical truth applies to life's circumstances. However, Biblical leaders not only know and understand but implement and model their teaching.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

Matthew 4:4 ESV

But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

1. REVIEW "THE DISCIPLE/LEADER DIAGRAM."

All students will present this diagram to the class at some point during the course.

2. DISCUSS THIS WEEK'S IMPACT LIST.

WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL?	WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP WITH THIS PERSON?	WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITH THEM?

3. MATTHEW 4:1-11. Read through Matthew 4:1-11 at least three times in order to obtain a good overview of the passage.

Identify a key phrase in the passage. (Pervasive or recurring theme)

Jesus was tempted by Satan in three different ways. What did Satan use to tempt Jesus and how do they relate to your life and circumstances today?

How did Jesus deal with each temptation?

Cross-reference to 1 Corinthians 10:13 and James 1:22-25. What is one big temptation for you and what is your “way out?”

4. **PHILIPPIANS 1:12-30.** Read through Philippians 1:12-30 at least three times in order to obtain a good overview of the passage.

Describe Paul’s eternal perspective in this passage.

What was most important to Paul in this passage?

In Philippians 1:19-26, Paul clearly states that he would prefer to be at home with Christ. However, he is more than willing to remain. Why is he so willing to remain and what does this say about our God-given purpose?

5. **II PETER 1:2-11.** Few passages speak more clearly of the magnitude and impact an eternal perspective has in the life of the disciple than II Peter 1:2-4. "Everything we need for life and godliness" is found in the extension of God's grace, which allows each of us to participate in the "divine nature" through spiritual birth. The impact of this supernatural work on our character and lives is outlined in the following verses, 5-11.

There are at least seven character qualities that are a direct result of developing an eternal perspective of our participation in the divine nature. List each character quality and beside each note a specific area of your own life to which it applies or challenges.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

How closely tied is a person's perspective to his character and conduct? What are the implications for your life and for the lives of those you shepherd?

If a disciple is not reflecting the "divine nature" in his life through his character and conduct, what could be some possible problems? (list at least 10 possibilities-try to be exhaustive)

What do you see in this passage that would indicate that building godly character is a process?

6. Just as biblical leaders must continually keep an eternal perspective before the church family, so they must individually incorporate an eternal perspective into each aspect of their lives. That perspective can be articulated by stating "**CORE VALUES.**" Hammering out your core values in each area of your life will hopefully be a fundamental step in hammering those values into your heart and attitude. These core values must be the glass through which you view life, circumstances, decisions, and relationships. In each of the following areas, write at least 2 core values that reflect an eternal perspective by which you want to live. Make note of any specific influential Scripture passages. Leave room for additions as you gain insight from the other men in your group.

SPIRITUAL AND PERSONAL LIFE

EVANGELISM

FAMILY

LEADERSHIP

MINISTRY (focus on the specific area(s) of ministry in which you are currently involved)

WORK/CAREER

FINANCES

3. **LUKE 9:23-24.** These two verses contain incredible, concentrated insight into true discipleship. Make 20 observations about discipleship (what it is, what one does, the cost, etc.) from Luke 9:23-24.

What are your impressions or conclusions in light of Luke 9:23-24?

4. **LUKE 14:25-35.** Jesus has a rather large crowd becoming impressed with His ministry. What do you think was the attraction to Jesus? They may have considered themselves disciples. What parallels do you see today with those who may consider themselves disciples?

In this section Jesus clarifies a picture of true discipleship. List at least 10 traits or commitments of someone who wants to truly follow Jesus according to this passage.

What would this standard for discipleship look like today? In other words, what would believers be like today if they lived according to this description of discipleship?

5. **MARK 7:1-9.** In our efforts to pursue discipleship, frequently we confuse it with religion, tradition, habits, and some kinds of legalism. Jesus addressed one of these situations in this passage. (Legalism can be defined as holding others to an extra-Biblical standard.)

What conclusions can you make about tradition, religion, and legalism from this passage? Is tradition bad? What is Jesus' real point?

In what ways do you see tradition – as a help or a hindrance in your personal spiritual growth? (cf. 2 Thess. 2:13-17; Col. 2:8-23)

Compare Mark 7:6-7 with Paul's warning to the church in 2 Tim. 3:1-5. Do you see any similarities between Jesus' warning and Paul's? How would this apply to the Church today? Do you see any need for personal changes?

6. **JOHN 15:1-13.** As you read through this final passage of this assignment, what stands out as the distinguishing characteristics of a disciple?

Write out a prayer that reflects your desires for these characteristics to be reflected in your life.

7. REVIEW THE FOUR PASSAGES WE HAVE CONCENTRATED ON IN THIS LESSON.

What conclusions can you make about the call to discipleship and your relationship to that call?

8. If you were a part of a group of disciples and the success of the group was dependent upon every member's meeting the expectations defined by Jesus, what would you do if one of the members failed to follow through?

What do you personally find to be the most convicting challenge in the passages studied this week?

SESSION 5: LIVING OUT GOD'S PURPOSE

Jesus' challenging call to commitment as a disciple was purposeful. In other words, the high biblical standards of commitment for a true disciple are set in order to accomplish the incredibly high purpose that God has for our lives as His followers. The more we think in terms of discipleship, the greater our need to understand our purpose as a disciple. As our vision for purposeful discipleship develops, our vision as leaders for what we desire to reproduce in those we personally disciple also becomes clear. In this session, we will study the Scriptural purposes for a disciple and develop our ability to see circumstances and people through the lens of our purpose. First, we will overview some of the many passages that speak to the general purpose of a disciple. Then, we will look specifically at the vertical focus of a disciple (personal holiness) and the horizontal focus of a disciple (personal ministry) in achieving God's purpose for each disciple.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

1. DISCUSS THIS WEEK'S IMPACT LIST:

WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL?	WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP WITH THIS PERSON?	WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITH THEM?

2. A LOOK AT OUR PURPOSE

A vast amount of Scripture addresses the purpose of a follower of Jesus Christ. In order to get a taste for God's desire in using our lives purposefully, read through the following passages to glean truths regarding our purpose, and write out a simple sentence for each one that helps define your purpose as a disciple and leader.

a) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

b) Genesis 1:26-28

c) Isaiah 43:7

d) John 17:1-4

e) Ephesians 5:1 & 1 Corinthians 11:1

f) Mark 3:13-14 & John 21:15-17

g) Ephesians 4:13-15

h) 2 Timothy 3:16-17

i) 1 Corinthians 9:27

j) Matthew 28:18-20

k) Acts 1:8

l) 2 Timothy 2:2

You may have noticed the direct correlation of these passages to The Disciple/Leader Diagram. We should also correlate these truths with our own mission statement: *To make much of Jesus, by reproducing disciples, who impact the world, for the glory of God.*

When we as a church are impacting people for Jesus Christ, we will see God's purpose put into practice or "fleshed out" in their lives.

3.WHAT CONCLUSIONS CAN YOU MAKE AS LEADERS ABOUT OUR GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CHURCH?

4.WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR YOUR OWN LIFE?

A LOOK AT THE VERTICAL FOCUS—PERSONAL HOLINESS

- 5. 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20.** A key focus in fulfilling our purpose as a disciple is our character or personal holiness. This is truly a vertical focus, looking at who we are when we are alone before God. List as many truths and insights as you can from this passage that bear on our goal of personal holiness.

Count the pronouns in this passage and consider the "person" of each pronoun. What conclusions can you make?

In order to build a clearer picture of glorifying God with our bodies, read all of 1 Corinthians 6:9-20. Continue to look for truths about the character or personal holiness of a disciple.

6. **LUKE 6:17-38.** List more character qualities of a disciple.

LUKE 6:39-49. Why is personal holiness so critical to personal ministry and fulfilling the purpose of God for our lives?

7. **BRINGING THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD TO BEAR IN YOUR OWN LIFE, IN WHAT SPECIFIC AREAS OF PERSONAL HOLINESS IS GOD CHALLENGING YOU TO GROW?**

A LOOK AT THE HORIZONTAL FOCUS—PERSONAL MINISTRY

8. **JOHN 21:15-17 AND MATTHEW 28:18-20.** The other key focus in fulfilling our purpose as a disciple is personal ministry or reproducing purposeful discipleship in the lives of others. The emphasis here is horizontal, looking at our responsibility to build into the lives of people and help them take steps toward discipleship. From these two passages, what are Christ's directives for us in personal ministry?
9. **LUKE 6:8.** We find here an interesting phrase that describes one reason Jesus was so effective as a disciple-maker. The phrase, "but He knew what they were thinking," tells us a tremendous amount about leadership in disciple-making. Why do you think it is important for a spiritual leader to "know what they are thinking" as he relates to those with whom he has been entrusted?

10. 2 TIMOTHY 2:2. How does this passage add to the concept of "knowing" those you lead?

What significance does the principle of "knowing" have for you as a spouse, parent, leader?

How does your study of true and purposeful discipleship equip you to help those you are leading take spiritual next steps? (Think back through your observations.)

SESSION 6: UNDERSTAND CHRIST'S MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP

True spiritual leadership does not come naturally. When stepping from the foundation of a disciple to the platform of a leader, one enters a whole new dimension in his spiritual walk with God. He becomes more than a learner; he now enters into the sphere of servanthood. The spiritual leader begins to taste and feel what Jesus experienced as the One who "did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." Servant leadership is antithetical to the world's concept of leadership. In the world's model, the majority of benefits flow *to* the leader *from* those he leads. In contrast, the benefits and blessings flow *from* the biblical servant-leader *to* those he is leading. In this lesson, we will examine Jesus' perspective on leadership, identifying the attitudes and responses that characterize a biblical leader. We will also consider the value of eternal perspective to one who serves as a spiritual leader, search the Scriptures for insight into serving, and contrast the spiritual and secular views of leadership.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

MARK 10:45 ESV

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

1. DISCUSS THIS WEEK'S IMPACT LIST:

WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL?	WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP WITH THIS PERSON?	WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITH THEM?

2. **MARK 10:35-45.** Make as many observations as you can from this passage regarding greatness and leadership and the theme of servanthood. Use back if necessary.

3. **LUKE 6:27-38.** List as many imperatives in the form of principles as you can from this passage. Beside each principle, identify a personal challenge you have in light of the command.

(e.g.) Love your enemies – I have a hard time loving my enemies, I would rather see justice on them rather than justice on Christ. I need to consider them more and see them how God sees them.

4. **JESUS BEGAN HIS SERMON IN THE PRECEDING SECTION OF LUKE 6 FOCUSING ON ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE.** In this section, he transitions to the concept and theme of servanthood. What is the significance of this order or juxtaposition of teaching? How do the two issues relate?

What are the implications of the order and relationship of these two issues for your own life? (as an employee/employer, husband, father, friend, leader, etc.)

5. **WHAT CHARACTER QUALITIES IN LUKE 6:27-38 DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE CHURCH?** Why do you think much of this is lacking in modern churches? How can you be a servant leader and bring some of this about?

6. **SCRIPTURE IS LOADED WITH THE THEME OF SERVANTHOOD, YET WE EASILY MISS THIS EMPHASIS IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES AS BELIEVERS, LET ALONE AS SPIRITUAL LEADERS.** Through the use of your concordance to cross-reference the words **serve** or **servant**. Select 15 of the most dramatic and descriptive passages you discover. What are the personal implications of these passages? Put your observations in the form of principles.

7. **THE WHOLE THEME OF SERVANTHOOD IS ALL BUT EXTINGUISHED IN SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TODAY.** Why do you think this is true?

We must be diligent to think biblically regarding servant leadership, alert to the contradictions thrown at us from the world. Read again through Mark 10:35-45 and Luke 6:27-38. Identify examples of marketing, articles, movies, business traits, or cultural attitudes which most flagrantly contrast to the imperatives regarding a servant's spirit.

- 8. REVIEW THE DISCIPLE/LEADER DIAGRAM.** How does this diagram relate to the theme of servant leadership?

To what extent has the world's perspective influenced your thinking and experience? List specific examples.

2. **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11.** List at least 15 character qualities of a servant leader from your observations in this passage.

What do you think is the significance of the conditional clause in the first verse of this passage as it relates to the imperatives in the following verses?

3. **I PETER 2:18-25.** What does this vividly tell you about the character qualities of a servant's spirit, your life, and leadership?

4. FREQUENTLY WE GLOSS OVER A PASSAGE AND MISS NOT ONLY ITS CUTTING THRUST BUT ALSO THE APPLICATION TO OUR OWN LIVES. Since as leaders we cannot give to others what we do not possess, we must take special care to stop and allow Scripture to confront our spirit and will. We need to honestly face the conflict that Scripture presents to our personal and cultural norms. In the context of Phil 2:1-11 and 1 Peter 2:18-25, what are you learning about yourself?

5. A significant word is somewhat hidden in Luke 6:27-38 and implied in Phil. 2:1-11 which is crucial to being a servant: "*Forgive.*" From these two passages, how does forgiveness fit into the scheme of servanthood?

What are some examples of forgiveness that you need to cultivate in your own life in order to be a Biblical servant?

In what ways would forgiveness affect your ability to take the initiative to serve/lead in specific areas?

6. SERVANTHOOD IS NOT SIMPLY A LEADERSHIP TRAIT THAT CAN BE TAUGHT; spiritual servanthood is a product of divine empowerment of the heart and mind as we are transformed into the image of Christ. Serving is not a task but an attitude that permeates the mind of the servant of God. We can see the progression of this mindset of Jesus as revealed by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 49:1-5; Isaiah 53. What is the mind of the servant reflected in these Scriptures?

7. **1 PETER 4:7-11.** To create a practical picture of servanthood in action, quickly list all the commands in this passage. Now underline all the words that focus on the underlying attitude of a servant and circle the words that are the actual actions of a servant.

8. Taking into consideration all that we have studied regarding servanthood, your memory verses, and your role as a disciple, think about yourself as a servant to your wife and children, to your ministry and church, and to those with whom you work

How would your wife and children evaluate your demonstration of servanthood?

...your fellow workers?

...your co-laborers in ministry?

List some of your most common barriers to exemplifying a servant's spirit.

9. Review and memorize (at a general level) the Disciple/Leader diagram and be ready to give a short presentation to the group at the next meeting.

ACTION PLAN FOR:

Devotional Life

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

ACTION PLAN FOR:

EVANGELISM

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

ACTION PLAN FOR:

LEADERSHIP

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

- 5. If time permits, take some time as a group to discuss what the Lord has been teaching you.** How is He currently moving in your life? What have you been learning through this study so far?

2. **1 THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW.** Read through 1 Thessalonians in one sitting. Go back and identify those Godly character qualities that Paul and the Thessalonians modeled.

VERSE

1:2
1:5
1:5
1:6

GODLY CHARACTER QUALITY

Thankfulness
Worked in the power of the Holy Spirit
Had deep spiritual convictions and modeled Christ
Joy in spite of severe suffering, welcomed the Gospel

3. **1 THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW.** Read through 1 Thessalonians again in one sitting. Go back and identify the Godly activities that Paul and the Thessalonians modeled.

VERSE

GODLY ACTIVITY

1:1

Paul was not a loner, but worked with a team of believers

1:1

Paul followed up his stay in Thessalonica with a letter to the believers there

1:2

Paul prays for the Thessalonians

1:4

Paul proclaimed the Gospel (words)

4. **REFLECT BACK ON THE DISCIPLE/LEADER DIAGRAM.** The wheel illustration is another way to depict the importance of our vertical relationship with God (Word and Prayer) and our horizontal relationships with people (Fellowship and Evangelism). The wheel shows the main areas of spiritual disciplines and summarizes what obedience to Christ in Matthew 28:19-20 means in practical terms. These general areas of spiritual disciplines translate the power of Jesus Christ in the center of our lives to practical obedience in our daily living.



Read through 1 Thessalonians again and make observations on how these areas of spiritual disciplines are emphasized in the letter.

Christ in the Center

The Word

Prayer

Fellowship

Witnessing

- 5. EVALUATE YOUR OWN LIFE WITH RESPECT TO THE WHEEL ILLUSTRATION.** Write a statement on your current practice and where you think God wants you to be in the near future for each area.

The Word

My Current Practice:

Changes I Need to Make in the Near Future:

Prayer

My Current Practice:

Changes I Need to Make in the Near Future:

Fellowship

My Current Practice:

Changes I Need to Make in the Near Future:

Witnessing

My Current Practice:

Changes I Need to Make in the Near Future:

SESSION 10: UNDERSTANDING PAUL'S MINISTRY MODEL

Modeling Christ was never meant to happen in isolation. Many times we consider the imperatives to “imitate Christ” and “reflect His character” as something we do to please God and meet His qualifications for leadership. This view limits our effectiveness as spiritual leaders. The scope of modeling Christ is bigger than our personal relationship with God. A true spiritual leader must ask not only what am I modeling, but also who is observing and imitating my life. The spiritual leader must concern himself with more than personalizing biblical principles. He has the responsibility of modeling the Savior contagiously, creating a desire in the heart of his disciple to become like Christ. An important measure of the effectiveness of a spiritual leader is his ability to influence and equip his disciple to model Christ in his own life. We must reproduce Christlikeness in future leaders.

Modeling Christ is also not for the benefit of the Father who knows everything anyway. Why, then, is imitating, reflecting, or modeling Christ an imperative for the believer? Again, the obvious purpose for any “model” is the benefit of the observer. We are created in His image; and through His regeneration and His power, we have the unique privilege and purpose to be a means of reflecting who Christ is to those who may have very little idea of who God is and the change He can work in one’s life. To “model Christ” is to reflect the image of the Father so that others can either: 1) come to know Him personally; or 2) see the image of the One whom they are to imitate also (1 Cor. 11:1). In either instance, the effect is profound upon the observer. The question then is, “How do I as spiritual leader, modeling Christ in a way that will draw others to Him and to be like Him?” In this lesson, we will look deeply into Paul’s model for ministry in 1 Thessalonians. We will identify specific areas of life in which we can better model Christ as well as develop an overall perspective of our lives as leaders who emulate the person of Jesus Christ and draw others to Him.

In sessions 9 and 10, you are also learning the Overview or Synthetic Method of Bible Study. This methodology is simply a “Reading for Purpose” approach that you can employ with any book or letter in the Bible. Focused reading to gain the main intent or purpose of the author is essential for understanding the Bible and making effective life applications.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

1 THESSALONIANS 1:6-7 ESV

⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

1. DISCUSS THIS WEEK’S IMPACT LIST:

WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL?	WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP WITH THIS PERSON?	WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITH THEM?

2. **1 THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW.** Read through 1 Thessalonians once or twice again in one sitting. Before reading, ask the question, “What is Paul’s primary intent or purpose in writing this letter to the Thessalonians?” There may be many topics or themes in any given letter, but one over-arching purpose normally stands out above all others. In addition to identifying Paul’s primary purpose, begin to identify a verse or short passage in the letter that summarizes that purpose.

A great example of this methodology is the book of Acts. Identifying the primary purpose and a key verse for this long historical document would seem to be a complicated task. After reading through Acts several times, the purpose jumps from the pages: “The work of the Holy Spirit in establishing the early church.” The verse that best summarizes this purpose statement is Acts 1:8 and the book can be outlined in the exact same structure as the key verse!

Record your results after reading through 1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians Purpose Statement

1 Thessalonians Key Verse (summarizes the primary purpose)

3. **1 THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW.** Read through 1 Thessalonians again in one sitting with your purpose statement in mind. Develop a very high-level, basic outline of the letter.

1 Thessalonians Outline

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.

V.

VI.

- 4. REFLECT BACK ON YOUR OVERVIEW STUDY OF 1 THESSALONIANS FROM LAST WEEK WHERE YOU IDENTIFIED GODLY CHARACTER TRAITS AND ACTIVITIES.** Also, think about the main purpose of Paul's letter that you have just identified. Paul had a well-defined ministry "approach" or "model" when he went to Thessalonica. In his follow-up letter of 1 Thessalonians, he explained what he had done and how he had done it (his ministry model). He also outlined what he would continue to do with and for them.

Paul said in 1 Thess. 4:2, "For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus." Summarize Paul's ministry model in your own words. You might list the most important things to think, be, and do. You may also draw some kind of chart or picture. You might look at it in terms of most important attitudes and activities. It may be just a simple summary of the most important elements of a vibrant gospel ministry. Be creative.

5. EVALUATE YOUR OWN LEADERSHIP, AND THAT OF YOUR MINISTRY TEAM, IN LIGHT OF PAUL'S MINISTRY MODEL THAT HE EMPLOYED IN THESSALONICA.

In light of 1 Thessalonians, what are you and your team doing well in ministry?

What are some areas that you and your team can improve in order to be more in line with Paul's approach to ministry?

2. JOHN 14 – OBEDIENCE Read through John 14 twice.

John 14:1-11 gives us the basis for obedience to God. Make at least 10 observations on what is most important a motivation for obedience to God in this passage.

Cross-reference John 14:12-14 with Ephesians 2:8-10. Make at least 5 observations on how these two passages similar in terms of obedience to God stemming from faith in God.

Read John 14:15-31 again and make at least 10 observations on the relationship between obedience to God and love for God.

- 3. READ MATTHEW 28:18-20 AND JOHN 14 AGAIN.** Write a summary on the importance of obedience to God in following Christ. Make it personal and in a form that would be easy to communicate with another person.

4. CROSS-REFERENCE 10 OTHER VERSES ON THE TOPIC OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOVE FOR GOD AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD. Make a summary statement for each verse on the importance of love for God and obedience to God.

Matthew 22:36-40

Luke 6:46

- 5. REVISIT THE ACTION PLANS YOU BEGAN IN SESSION 8.** Refine your Action Plan for Leadership based on any new information from the last several sessions and be prepared to present it.

ACTION PLAN FOR:

Leadership

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

2. JOHN 15 – ABIDING IN CHRIST: Read through John 15 through three times.

John 15:1-11 delves into the concept of abiding in Christ.

The word “abide” means to continue, to be present, remain, not depart, and endure. Make at least 10 observations on abiding in Christ in this chapter.

The word “fruit” means, “that which originates or comes from something else, an effect or result of work, acts, or deeds.” Given your knowledge of Scripture resulting from this study and the context of John 14 and 15, what is the “fruit” Jesus is referring to here?

What are some practical ways you can “abide in Christ” on a daily basis?

What are some practical ways you can “abide in Christ” on a moment-by-moment basis?

3. If obedience has its roots in anything other than the empowerment of the indwelling Holy Spirit, then that act of obedience must be considered a work in the flesh (Rom. 8:13). Such work will be laborious, fruitless, and exhausting with no small amount of insecurity. All productive Christian obedience must come from being a new creation in Christ who is indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The following passages are just a few of those which reflect how the Spirit of God produces obedience that results in fruitfulness and blessing. After each passage, write out the results of Spirit-led obedience in the most practical terms possible.

Ezekiel 36:26-28

Galatians 5:16-24

John 14:25; John 15:26; John 16:5-14

Ephesians 5:18-21

Acts 1:8

Romans 8:26-28

4. **2 TIMOTHY 2:1-3.** According to this passage, what are several factors that make up the life and expectations of a disciple? (The fruit of disciple-making)

5. The Bible offers us a structure for discipling new and old believers in Christ--multiplication. Sometimes, if not most generally, the number of those who come to faith and become a vital part of the church will be in proportion to our faithfulness as leaders to be obedient to the principles of multiplication in discipleship. God will surely increase the harvest as we plant, feed, and water (1 Cor. 3:6-9).

2 Timothy 2:2. Perhaps no passage better addresses the idea of cultivating and multiplying faithfulness than does our memory verse. What are some observations you can make from verse 2 about maintaining the quality and integrity of the discipleship process in keeping with the purpose and character of Christ? (Make 7 Observations)

6. **REVISIT THE ACTION PLANS YOU BEGAN IN SESSION 8.** Refine your Action Plan for Leadership based on any new information from the last several sessions and be prepared to present it.

ACTION PLAN FOR

Devotional Life

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

ACTION PLAN FOR

MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

Next week is our last week together. It is also the most time consuming in terms of assignment. Don't feel guilty if you don't complete it, but try to give yourself more time.

SESSION 13: EVANGELISM IN ACTS

Spiritual discipleship and leadership has its roots in evangelism. The primary mission of Christ was to become the very message of God. Jesus not only preached the Kingdom of God, but also became the central figure of the Good News. His life activities (living the life we can't, suffering and dying for our sins, rising from the dead, and appearing to hundreds) became the central message of Christianity. Paul stated, "...the gospel...is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes..." And in Acts, Jesus clarifies that the primary result of being filled with the Holy Spirit is being a witness for Jesus Christ.

We cannot separate discipleship and leadership from proclamation of the gospel. Healthy and Biblical disciple-making and leadership development models must include evangelism at a personal and individual level. In this session we will see how the first generation of Christ-followers led the early church in the mission of spreading the gospel aggressively wherever the Holy Spirit led them. They saw this as an integral part of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

2 Timothy 2:2 ESV

and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men[a] who will be able to teach others also.

Acts 1:8 ESV

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

1. EVANGELISM IN ACTS

Read through Acts at least one time.

As you are reading, record observations using the following questions:

- How was evangelism done?
- What were the results of evangelism?

Write a summary paragraph on what the Acts assignment and the book assignment mean for you personally. Make it both a statement of clarification and a statement of personal application on evangelism.

How was evangelism done in Acts?

What were the results of evangelism in Acts?

Personal Summary & Application Statement on Evangelism Based on Acts:

- 2. WRITE AN ACTION PLAN FOR EVANGELISM. YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO REVISIT YOUR ACTION PLAN FOR MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES IF NECESSARY.**

ACTION PLAN FOR:

EVANGELISM

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

ACTION PLAN FOR:
MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES

Daily Action Items:

Weekly Action Items:

Monthly Action Items:

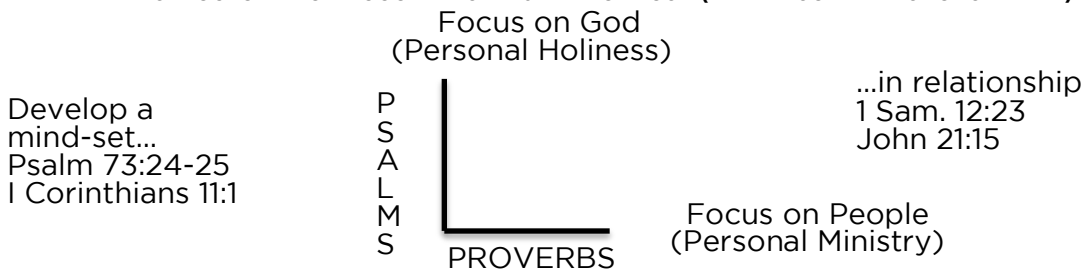
THE DISCIPLE/LEADER DIAGRAM

1. MY PURPOSE FOR LIVING:

- A. General: Gen. 1:26-28; Isa. 43:7; 1 Co. 6:19-20
- B. Specific: John 17:1-4
Emphasize how Christ "...brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."

State your own God-given personal purpose in one sentence.

2. THE STRUCTURE FOR ACCOMPLISHING MY PURPOSE (MY PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY):



3. THE MEANS BY WHICH I WILL ACCOMPLISH MY PURPOSE:

- A. **OBJECTIVE**
Full Stature
Ephesians 4:13
- B. **POWER**
Power of the Word
1 Tim. 3:16-17
- C. **METHOD**
Spiritual Disciplines
I Corinthians 9:27

