*“My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains*

*of childbirth until Christ is formed in you…”*

**Galatians 4:19**

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**I. Introduction – Why Make Disciples?**

There’s a lot to do in life and we have a lot of responsibilities, so how can we be sure that we don’t miss the most important things? Imagine sitting down with Jesus and asking, “Jesus, what should be the primary focus of my life?” Jesus would say something like, “Out of your love for God and your neighbor, I want you to go and make disciples.” He said this to his disciples and, by extension, to you and me:

*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore* ***go and make disciples*** *of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

*Matthew 28:18-20*

Pastor Rick Warren has said,“The two most important days in your life are the day you were born and the day you discover your purpose.” You were created by God, in the image of God, to fulfill the purposes of God. This is the basic God-given calling of every believer.

Regardless of the career you’ve chosen, your *calling* is bigger! Your purpose is to be a part of God’s plan for reaching the world for Christ. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ is to MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS.

For those willing to live out their calling, we can promise that a fulfilling journey awaits. There is no greater joy than to see God working through you as you help others become more like Jesus. To be sure, it’s hard work. But the life-long disciple maker knows a closeness with God that makes every difficulty worth it. Jesus came that we “may have life and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10). There’s no better abundance than generations of disciples that result from a life spent laboring to make them.

If you’ve been walking with Christ a short time, you’re in a great spot to grasp the significance of God’s calling on your life to be a disciple and make disciples. If you’ve been walking with Christ for a longer period of time, you have so much to offer the next generation! No matter where we are in our walks with God, we can have the same goal as Paul in 1 Cor. 11:1:

*Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.*

**This Primer is designed to help you in three areas:**

1. Provide a Biblical definition and framework for making disciples as Jesus did.
2. Elevate the importance of a relational approach to disciple making.
3. Offer proven practices and strategies for making disciples.

**II. The Goal: Becoming a Disciple, a Fully Formed Follower of Christ**

What is a disciple? The apostle Paul put it this way: “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you…” Galatians 4:19**.** Paul “labored,” which is to say, “he worked hard” to see Jesus formed in others. That’s what it means to be a disciple – to have Jesus formed in our lives. Here’s a simple definition:

**Definition**

***Fully Formed Followers of Jesus understand what Christ has done for them (Grace), who they are in Christ (Identity), and have set their hearts to pattern their lives after Christ’s until they look and live like Jesus (Life Patterns).***

What characteristics are we working hard to form in others? There are many indicators, but after reflecting on the words of Scripture and their own lives, the pastors and elders at Hill Country Bible Church concluded there are four basic identities with corresponding life patterns that encompass the core characteristics of a follower of Jesus.

* **Worshiper**: Disciples grow in their devotion to God and away from devotion to anything else.
* **Witness**: Disciples faithfully share the good news of Jesus with others and see people come to faith in Christ.
* **Servant**: Disciples know how God has gifted them and they use their gifts to serve others.
* **Disciple Maker**: Disciples understand their primary ministry calling and disciple others to become fully formed followers of Jesus.

You don’t have to be a “spiritual giant” to recognize God’s call on your life, follow Him with a whole heart, and begin to pass on to others that with which God has blessed you. Paul’s confidence in exhorting others to “follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” didn’t flow from personal pride or an abundance of technical knowledge. Paul had a deep-seated faith in God and some practical experiences in being discipled and how Jesus wanted him to disciple others.

**III. How to Disciple**

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? The word DISCIPLE refers to a student, learner or apprentice. Disciples in Jesus’ day would follow their rabbi (teacher) wherever he went, learning from the rabbi’s teaching and being trained to DO as the rabbi did. A disciple left everything to follow the rabbi and was committed to imitating the rabbi in every way…until he was ready to take on his own disciples.

A disciple of Jesus understands *what* Christ has done for him, *who he is* in Christ, and *sets his heart to pattern his life* after Christ’s until he looks and lives just like Jesus. A disciple sets his heart to imitate his teacher and in so doing, shares what he has “*learned or received or heard or seen*” in the teacher. (Philippians 4:9)

It’s not our intention that you to take someone through a discipleship class, attend Sunday school, listen to sermons, or to start mentoring, counseling, or accountability relationships. We are *making disciples*. This implies a very relational and personalized process whereby the disciple maker teaches and models attitudes and actions that others can imitate. Disciples learn to live out their faith in practical ways and are able to pass this on to others.

“*So, we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.”* 1 Thessalonians 2:8

**The Difference between a Discipleship Course and Making Disciples**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A Discipleship Course** | **Making Disciples** |
| It’s a curriculum to complete | It’s a person to equip |
| It’s something I did | It’s someone I’m becoming |
| Information focused | Transformation focused |
| Results in Addition | Results in Multiplication  |
| Helping people become better Christians | Helping people become disciple makers |
| It’s a program of the church  | It’s a command of Jesus  |

**Key Practice – YOU must be the example!**

The most important key practice in making disciples is to ensure that YOU are following Jesus yourself! Are YOU growing in understanding of God’s grace that defines your identity in Christ? Are YOU growing in life patterns as a worshiper, witness, servant, and disciple maker? Have YOU answered God’s life-long call to love Him supremely and make disciples sacrificially?

“*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. Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”*2 Timothy 2:2-3

**Understanding the Fundamentals**

**Key Principles and Practices as you embark on your disciple making journey – your methods should be...**

1. **Simple** – This primer is not meant to be a curriculum. We want you to depend on the depth of your own walk with God and his resources of his Holy Spirit and his Word as the necessary elements to form a disciple. You have more than you think! And therefore, you need less than you think.
2. **Transferrable** – Expect your disciples to teach others what they learn from your time with them. There are plenty of great Bible studies to do if you just want them to absorb more information. The goal of the primer is to help you prepare your disciples to pass on what they learn.
3. **Relational** – Disciple in community. The dynamic of you and 2-3 other people interacting reduces the likelihood of perpetuating dependence upon you. Watching other people experience God and make major changes helps encourage each person. Jesus worked very closely with three men instead of 1. Discipling 2-3 in a group increases the investment of your time and the probability of seeing more people become disciple makers.
4. **Transformational** – Focus on new life patterns, not more Bible information. Our foundational disciple making method is that our IDENTITY fuels our LIFE PATTERNS which reinforce our IDENTITY. In most “discipleship” plans, the focus is on information transfer; “Do my disciples *understand* what I’m teaching them?” Our goal is life change; “Do my disciples *live out consistently* what Jesus commands them?”

Jesus was clear about the danger in believing that head knowledge is sufficient in becoming like Christ and following him.

*“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”*

Matthew 7:24-27

**Identity and Life Patterns**

There are two important distinctions that are critical to making disciples: We need to know who we ARE – our IDENTITY. And who we are is revealed in what we DO – our LIFE PATTERNS.

**Jesus is the Vine and We are the Branches**

In John 15:5 Jesus said, “*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* And in Matthew 7:16, He said, “*By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?”* The answer to Jesus’ question is obvious: there is a simple connection between the identity of the vine and the fruit it produces. The vine (Jesus) is connected to a certain type of branch (us) and those branches will result in a certain kind of fruit. This is the relationship of Identity and Life Pattern.

God defines clearly in the Bible (his Word) who we are and what he wants us to become. He created us and knows what is best for us. When we come to faith in Christ, Paul calls us “a new creation” in 2 Corinthians 5:17. The way he creates us is our identity! In the context of that same thought, Paul goes on to state in 2 Corinthians 7:1 that we should “purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit” which is a reference to our responsibilities (life patterns) in living out our faith in Christ. For example, if I say that I honor and serve God above all else (my identity as a Worshiper), then my life patterns would validate this. As a worshiper, my lifestyle would display a daily time of prayer and Bible reading. I would also be consistent in gathering weekly with the body of Christ for corporate worship.

My identity is shaped either:

* by my experiences and what I or other people say about me, *or*
* by God and who he says I am and what he says I should do.

**Identity and Life Patterns are Interdependent**

My identity (who I really am) fuels my life patterns (what I actually do) and my life patterns, in turn, reinforce my identity. The life-changing reality of Jesus Christ re-shapes my being which leads to Christ-like ways of doing life. This illustration shows how this works.

**Identity (BE)**

**Reinforces DISCIPLE** **Fuels**

**Life Pattern (DO)**

**IV. Beginning Well**

**How do I Get Started?**

First and foremost, pray! Pray that God would lead you to the people he wants you to invest in. Pray for specific people and pray that he would bring others to mind. Pray that he would bring together the right mix of people for you. God loves to answer prayer!

Secondly, consider people God has already placed around you. Is there someone in your current small group that appears eager, or is asking for help, to grow spiritually? Who are the people in the ministry you serve in at the church? Are there any people at work you could invite to join you? Do you have any neighbors or family members that are hungry to follow Christ?

Finally, what about some of the non-believers you know? Is there anyone you know, perhaps on your FRANC List, who is far from God that is interested in drawing closer to Jesus? Have you led anyone to faith in Jesus Christ recently who needs to be discipled? Are there any unchurched people you could bring into a relationship with Jesus and disciple them?

**Key Practice – Take Initiative in Relationships**

Jesus took initiative with all of the men he eventually called to follow him. He found them and engaged them in conversations. He called them to himself. We also have to take initiative! All ministry is based on relationships. Get to know people better, find out where they are spiritually, and put yourself in a position to help them grow spiritually. This gives you a “pool”

from which to call people into following Christ.

Experience tells us that taking initiative is a weakness in our disciple making efforts and a struggle for many disciple makers. HCBC works hard to network relationships within the Church, but Disciple Makers learn to take initiative constantly in relationships.

Jesus himself selected men in his culture that wouldn’t have been considered to be very close to God. Jesus discipled these men into belief and trust in God and then prepared and equipped them to take over his own mission in the world! (Matthew 4:19 and Matthew 28:19-20)

**Whom do I invite into my FFF group?**

First and foremost, think in terms of constant personal evangelism. We want to see people come to faith in Jesus and then move immediately into a discipling relationship. Those we lead to faith in Christ are our own “spiritual babies” and we have a responsibility to care for them the best we can. Just as physical or adoptive parents have responsibility for their child’s physical growth, so spiritual parents have responsibility for their spiritual children’s spiritual growth.

Secondly, if you are a pastor, director, small group leader, or ministry area leader, get to know people in your area of ministry and disciple those who are willing. It’s essential that leaders take responsibility for discipling people in their ministries. We need to be certain that people under our care are becoming fully formed followers of Jesus. This is also the first step in developing future leaders for the body of Christ.

Third, get to know people on Sunday morning at church, in men’s or women’s Bible studies, and in your neighborhood and workplace. Initiate spiritual conversations to see if there’s anyone God is working in that you could disciple.

With new or younger believers you’ll want to offer something very basic like the Cru Foundations material, focusing on daily Bible reading and prayer, foundational Biblical truths, and simple evangelism tools. See the appendix for a list of resources.

For those who have been believers for years, but have never been personally discipled, discern if the person is Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

* **Faithful**

To what degree is the person committed and dependable? Will they be consistent?

* **Available**

Does the person actually have time to meet regularly and do the assignments? Does the person travel for business or are they frequently out of town?

* **Teachable**

Does the person accept advice or challenge? Can you see a desire in them to learn and change?

If any of these characteristics are missing, disciple making will be very difficult. The common thread is commitment. *You can only go as fast as the least-committed person.* Again, it’s most efficient and effective to disciple 2-3 people at a time. Each disciple can get input, ideas, and accountability from others in the context of a small discipleship community.

**How do I make the ask?**

We should model our call to be a disciple and make disciples after Jesus’ call to discipleship in Matthew 4:19:

*“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”*

Jesus made this call to self-employed, professional fishermen. He asked them to leave their business and they did (follow me). He promised he would transform their lives, and he did (I will make you) and he told them he would give them an incredible mission, and he did (fishers of men). Following Christ is costly and life-changing. We should never “under-sell” the commitment, but we should be clear how faith relates to every believer! God offers us abundant life and this can’t be fully experienced without fully following him. Can there be any higher or satisfying calling than Jesus’ call to follow him? Can there be any higher or satisfying mission than the mission Jesus himself calls us to? The loving God of the universe is calling us to his universal mission:

*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:18-19)*

The high calling of Jesus and his mission should be the basis of our own call to discipleship. This vision should be your starting point in making the ask.

Next, explain our definition of a disciple (a fully formed follower of Christ) and the importance of understanding our identity in Christ and how we live that identity out.  Focus on the four characteristics of a follower of Jesus and how we develop life patterns as a Worshiper, Witness, Servant and Disciple Maker. This will impact every role in our lives – husband, wife, father, mother, child, employee, neighbor and friend.

Invite them to join you in a life-on-life journey to discover their full identity as a follower of Jesus and become a disciple who makes disciples. This commitment includes eventually inviting 2-3 people to go through this journey with them in order to multiply disciples.

Finally, ask them to prayerfully consider the commitment to become a disciple maker by spending time reading and praying through Jesus' call in Matthew 4:19 and his command in Matthew 28:18-20. Let them know that you will follow up in a week to get their answer.

Seek to have 2-3 people in your discipleship group with you. One-on-one only gives them your perspective on life, but more than four total in a discipleship group diminishes the sharing and the growth of the individuals.

**Answering Questions Resulting from Making the Ask**

**How long will an FFF group last?**

The speed at which we travel will be directly related to how committed we are to Jesus and his plan for our lives.Our goal is to embrace our identity in Jesus and change our life patterns to reflect that identity. We’ll take the time we need to develop lifelong habits and patterns well.

Generally, groups meet weekly for a year or so in order to solidify good practices and habits and to reinforce disciple making commitment and know-how.

**Will everyone in the group be my same demographic?**

We initially seek to bring groups together with a like demographic, but this may not work out exactly. Those experiencing intergenerational or intercultural groups have found them to be very helpful and challenging.

**Will everyone in the group be at the same place spiritually?**

In reality, nobody is at the exact same place spiritually. Although we try to group people with similar spiritual maturity, people’s ideas about what constitutes maturity varies greatly. The essential element that really makes a discipleship group work well is *equal commitment*. Commitment is the “glue” that binds followers of Christ and catalyzes real spiritual growth.

**What is the time commitment?**

Generally, the time commitment is 1.5 hours for a weekly meeting, 1.5 hours for assignments, and an occasional time to meet your discipler one-on-one or to do a spiritual growth project together.

**What will the schedule of meetings look like?**

Those who commit to entering an FFF group will meet together and work out a schedule that works for everyone. There are no set times for when groups should meet.

**Will there be a curriculum?**

We do not have a set curriculum; instead we prefer to center our efforts on understanding the Bible and applying those truths and principles to our lives. However, depending on the age and life stage, and spiritual needs of the group members, you may read a book together, do some video training, or work a proven disciple making curriculum together. You may also do a service, outreach, or missions project together as part of you discipling experience.

***Our goal is to develop Fully Formed Followers of Jesus Christ, not to complete a curriculum. Remember this: our definition of a disciple, our approach to making disciples, and our language we use to describe these are all fixed. Curricula are methods and are not fixed. A curriculum is only a method that bridges us to the specific Biblical outcomes we desire.***

**Specific disciple making outcomes we’d like to see in every disciple.**

**Worshiper**

I can move on from the Worshipper Identity when my disciples are…

1. Attending Sunday corporate worship regularly (the goal is weekly).
2. Having a meaningful, **daily** time in God’s Word and prayer.
3. Praying regularly for people on their FRANC List.
4. Dealing with what detracts us from their allegiance to God (Idols).
5. Generous with personal finances, priorities, and time.
6. Able to explain their Worshipper identity from scripture.
7. Living out that identity in visible life patterns.
8. Able to articulate their Identity, Life Patterns, and key verse from memory.

**Witness**

I can move on from the Witness Identity when my disciples are…

1. Praying regularly for people on their FRANC list and living out basic BLESS activities.
2. Able to share their testimony effectively with a non-believer and have done it.
3. Able to share a Gospel illustration from memory, ask for a response, and have done it with a non-believer.
4. They can explain their Witness identity from scripture.
5. Able to validate that identity in visible life patterns.
6. Able to articulate their Identity, Life Patterns, and key verse from memory.

**Servant**

I can move on from the Servant Identity when my disciples are…

1. Aware of their spiritual gifts and regularly using them to serve others in the body of Christ.
2. Developing a heart and attitude of humility (Character).
3. Living in community with other believers (Small Groups).
4. Able to explain their Servant identity from scripture.
5. Able to validate that identity in visible life patterns.
6. Able to articulate their Identity, Life Patterns, and key verse from memory.

**Disciple Maker**

I can move on from the Disciple Maker Identity, and “Launch my Disciples” when they have…

1. Invited 2-3 of their own disciples into an FFF group and have begun meeting for a month.
2. Demonstrated that they can defend their Disciple Maker identity from scripture.
3. Validated that identity in visible life patterns.
4. Able to articulate their Identity, Life Patterns, and key verse from memory.

**Meeting Together: Set the right tone and cast vision for the journey.**

**Key Practice:** Our definition of a disciple and our approach to making disciples are clear and should drive all of our disciple making. However, there are differences between new or “not yet” believers and those who have been believers for many years. With those who haven’t yet trusted Jesus as Savior, or have just recently come to faith in him, we suggest starting with a method that focuses on trusting Christ, assurance of salvation, basic identity as a believer, and simple approaches to daily Bible reading and praying. The CRU Foundations material is ideal for this as a starting point. Imparting workable knowledge of Bible books and where they are located is also necessary.

In addition, it’s typical for older believers not to be practicing daily quiet times. Be sure they become consistent with daily time in the Word and prayer before moving on to a deeper dive into identities and life patterns.

**First Meeting:**

Although you’ve received a verbal “yes,” we want to press into their decision a little more to confirm it. Keep this principle in mind: People don’t grow into commitments; they grow through makingcommitments. In this first time together with your disciples lay out three tasks for them to accomplish and report back on the next time you meet.

1. Discussion: Help them establish their *daily* time in God’s word by explaining your daily devotional time: prayer, Bible reading, and journaling. You might also pick a short section of Scripture, read it together, and talk about what stood out in the passage. Essentially, you would be having a devotional time together, thus modelling it for your disciples.

Assignment: Give them the “7 Minutes with God” Pamphlet or website address (see resources in the Appendix) and have them read it. Also, pick a book in the Bible (start with one of the Gospels), have them read a chapter a day, and journal their answers to these essential “*Three Questions*.”

* 1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
	2. What are you going to do about it?
	3. Who can pray for you, or help you get it done?
1. Assignment: Have your disciples watch Pastor Tim’s FFF explanation and vision video to get a fuller understanding of the biblical foundation for disciple making, as well our method for accomplishing it. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/9ra8g0r4tnn0luk/Explanation%20of%20FFF.mp4?dl=0>
2. Assignment: Have them prayerfully read Luke 14:25-35 and consider the “cost of discipleship.”

**Second Meeting**:

1. Confirm Their Commitment: Ask them about their meditation on Luke 14:25-35.
	* What stood out to them?
	* Are they ready to make that kind of commitment to following Christ?
	* Ask for a verbal commitment to be a disciple and to make disciples.
	* You want to hear them verbalize their commitment to themselves and the group.
2. Clarify Their Understanding: Discuss Pastor Tim’s FFF Explanation video.
	* Have them tell you what they think FFF is. Correct and explain any misconceptions.
	* Make sure they have the big picture understanding.
3. Focus on Time with God: What did they hear from God this past week in their devotionals?
	* Talk about what they heard from God in their Quiet Times.
	* Use the “*Three Questions*” approach.
		1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
		2. What are you going to do about it?
		3. Who can pray for you, or help you get it done?
	* How many days did they have a Quiet Time? Did they journal?
	* What will it take to be more consistent if you didn’t have a Quiet Time daily?

**NOTE:** Establishing the life pattern of a **daily** time with God is imperative. It lays the foundation for all life change to follow. Expect this to be a hurdle if they are not yet consistent.

1. Format the Meetings: In general, we will walk through this format as a group...

(Example Format)

* + Share one of your journal entries from the prior week answering the *three questions*.
	+ Discuss other assignments and work toward application.
	+ Cover any new assignments.
	+ Pray together.
1. Assignments:
	* Have a daily time in the Word and prayer.
	* Journal the key thought God gives you each day.
	* Come prepared to discuss the Three Questions:
		1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
		2. What are you going to do about it?
		3. Who can pray for you, or help you get it done?

**Third Meeting and Beyond**:

1. Focus on Time with God: What did I hear from God this past week?
	* Talk about what they heard from God in their Quiet Times.
	* Use the “*Three Questions*” approach.
		1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
		2. What are you going to do about it?
		3. Who can pray for you, or help you get it done?
	* How many days did they have a Quiet Time? Did they journal? Have they been consistent?
2. Cast Vision for BLESS: Review the BLESS Plan
	* Review the importance of Prayer and Planning and how the combination catalyzes intentionality in personal witnessing.
	* Give them each a copy of the BLESS Plan and explain the FRANC List. Have your disciples take a few minutes to write down the names of some people that God would have them commit to pray for regularly.
	* Cadence. What is “regular prayer” for you with respect to your FRANC list? Does it vary for different people? Would you pray for some daily or some weekly depending on your relationship and where God is leading you? Help them establish their “regular.”

**Key Practice:** Questions help you get granular in order to know when someone is consistently practicing a Life Pattern. The litmus test will be when you transition to Witness; then you’ll be able to tell if they have been consistently praying for their FRANC List.

* + “Show and tell” your own FRANC List with your specific steps to BLESS others.
	+ Cast the vision that their future disciples might very well be people on their FRANC List that they BLESS and see come to faith!

**Key Practice:** Introducing these rhythms in your first several meetings and following up with them each week will assure that you’ve had MANY discussions about praying for and BLESSing people on your FRANC Lists before you get to the Witness Identity.

1. Assignments:
	* Have a daily time in the Word and prayer. Journal the key thought God gives you.
	* Come prepared to discuss the Three Questions:
		1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
		2. What are you going to do about it?
		3. Who can pray for you, or help you get it done?
	* Prayerfully complete your FRANC List, determine what “regular prayer” is for those on your FRANC List, and begin that prayer rhythm. Be ready to discuss how God worked.

This is a template for your first three meetings. The intention is to give you ideas about priorities and approaches in discipling others. Each week thereafter, your meeting should focus on the same topics. Expect to stay here for a while until you know your disciples have exchanged old habits for new Life Patterns in their approach to the Word and prayer. Don’t move on until everyone is committed to the daily practice of prayer, reading God’s Word, journaling what God’s Spirit is teaching them, and praying for people far from God.

**V. Continuing Well**

**Developing Identity Statements and Life Patterns**

**Key Practice**: Don’t get into Identity Statements until your disciple understands how to have a Quiet Time and is consistently doing it. Being a member of the group means doing the Bible reading, prayer, journaling, and praying for their FRANC Lists.

Get into Scripture with your disciples to discover what the Bible reveals about our identity in Christ starting with Worshiper (see pp. 24-26 for ideas of Scripture to focus on). See what Jesus said about his own identity – who he was. Then have them write a simple and short identity statement and help them develop life patterns. Do this also for each of the other characteristics of a fully formed follower of Christ – witness, servant, and disciple maker. Have them pick a key verse that best supports their identity statement for each characteristic and memorize it.

Instead of completing curricula, we want followers of Christ to understand who they are in Christ (Identity) and then begin practicing new Life Patterns that correspond to their Identity. See Appendix on page 28 for Identity and Life Pattern Grid. Know the spiritual maturity of your disciples. If one or more are new believers, you’ll need to spend more time at the beginning explaining how to have devotional time, what to look for in the biblical text, and how to listen for God’s Spirit.

**When do I move on to the next Identity?**

In short, the answer to that question is, “When they have developed the current identity and are consistently (although not perfectly) displaying the life patterns which support it.” Remember, our goal is **not** information transfer but **life transformation**. Our disciples must be living out the identities, not merely understanding biblical information concerning an identity (Matt 7:24-27). It’s important that each disciple formulates and memorizes a personal Identity Statement for each of the four characteristics and is able to articulate them from memory.

Refer to page 12 for the specific outcomes we’d like to see in every disciple.

**What do I do with the uncommitted?**

**Key Practice:** There will be times when a disciple is not making sufficient progress in the process of becoming a fully formed follower of Christ. Here are some suggestions for what to do in that case.

* Have a private conversation with your disciple after group time to affirm your commitment to them in the process their development and that these requirements must be built into their life or they’ll be invited to leave the group and try again at a later date.
* Have the conversation in the moment (don’t put it off) during group time when you see that a disciple isn’t following through on what’s required. Remember, you are training your disciples each week on how to disciple, and part of that is holding others accountable to the process.
* Ask, “Why were you unable to complete the assignments?” Upon hearing a satisfactory response, bring your disciple back to the “3 Questions.”
	+ What is God saying to you about this requirement?
	+ What are you going to do about it?
	+ How can we pray for you/help you?
* If the disciple, after time is given (discretion of the disciple maker) to deliver on the requirement, another conversation during group time should be had where the choice is offered to commit to the discipleship process or step out of the group.

Taking such action can be embarrassing and hurtful for a person. You’ll need to reassure your love and concern for them and always go back to the original, agreed-upon commitments you established for the group. These decisions cannot be arbitrary, but tied to specific group norms that everyone agreed to before the group started.

Asking a person to step out of the group doesn’t mean that they are a bad person. It only means that the group may not be the best thing for them at that moment. Perhaps they need to deal with extenuating life circumstances, personal sin, or other priorities prior to entering a high-commitment discipleship group.

In addition, it’s better to move forward with two committed disciples than to limp along with two that want to see life transformation and one that doesn’t. Remember that the factor that makes a discipleship group work well is not common maturity, but common commitment.

*Jesus himself had disciples join for a time and then not continue*! See John 6:66.

**VI. Finishing Well**

**We’re Finished When They’re Making Disciples**

We previously went over how important it is to begin your fully formed group well and now it’s time to finish well. There’s a temptation to “let your disciples go” before they’ve begun discipling their first fully formed followers. The best practice is to continue to meet weekly while they recruit and begin discipling their first disciples until their new group has met at least three times.

What previous disciple makers have found is that if the current group stops meeting before the new disciple makers have found their disciples and started their groups, there’s a tendency to stall out. What we mean is that they fail to gather disciples in a timely manner and six months later (and longer in some cases) have yet to “launch” their FFF group.

**Remember, we can’t call ourselves disciple makers until one of our disciples goes on to make a disciple. That’s the goal, not that we “finished” taking 3 people through fully formed follower.**

**Discipling Your Downline**

*“Know well the condition of your flocks and pay attention to your herds.” Proverbs 27:23*

Another important learning is to continue to disciple your launched disciple makers. We’ve realized that there needs to be some level of ongoing check-ins with them to encourage, further equip, and ensure they are living out their commitment to lifelong disciple making.

This doesn’t mean we are still meeting with them weekly, but there should be some regular get together to see how they’re doing, what’s working well as they disciple others, and what’s not going well.

*We recommend getting into at least a quarterly rhythm of an hour meeting to ask how it’s going as a disciple maker*. For some, things are going well and no further action is required. For others, you’ll find that they’ve gotten off track in their disciple making and need to be encouraged to get back on track.

The main take-away is that we can’t let our disciple makers “launch” thinking they’ll flourish without any follow up. While that may be true for a few, there will be many who need some input in order to persevere, and be fruitful for a lifetime.

**Key Practices for continuing to build into your downline disciples:**

1. **Weekly:** Prayer for Your Downline – Prayer Journal/List/Rhythm
2. **Quarterly**: Conduct a check-in meeting with your disciple makers
	1. Preferably in person
	2. If not in person, text or call to encourage them
	3. Offer help, send resources and learnings you are discovering
	4. Solicit prayer needs
	5. **At this meeting do a qualitative review—use the Tracking Tool and Questions on the next page to help.**
3. **Annually or Bi-annually**: take a picture of your group at every Equipping & Commissioning Night and post it as a reminder to pray.
4. **Create a Downline Tree** of all the names of those you have discipled and keep it in your bible or Journal. This is your Legacy and will motivate you to continue discipling as you see 2 Timothy 2:2 come to reality in your life! \**Find an example in the Appendix.*

**Tracking Tool**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Discipler’s Name**  | **Status of their disciples** | **Last Contact** | **Notes** |
|   | Name Circle 1: Stopped | Stalled | Thriving |  |  |
|   | Name Circle 1: Stopped | Stalled | Thriving |  |  |
|   | Name  Circle 1: Stopped | Stalled | Thriving |  |  |
|   | Name  Circle 1: Stopped | Stalled | Thriving |  |  |
|  | Name  Circle 1: Stopped | Stalled | Thriving |  |  |

**Questions for Your Disciple Makers**

**Name: Date:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How are you personally processing your progress as a Disciple maker? |  |
| Have your disciples written down their Identity Statements and Life Patterns?Can they articulate them?How confident are you that they are becoming internalized? |  |
| What are you most encouraged about in your disciple making efforts? Most challenged by? |  |
| Have any of your disciples stopped or stalled? |  |
| When do you think your disciples will have started discipling someone? |  |

**Appendix**

**Suggested Resources to Choose From in Making Disciples**

**Worshiper**

Devotional Life and Prayer

* 7 Minutes with God: <https://www.usna.edu/Navigators/_files/documents/7minwithgod.pdf>
* Tyranny of the Urgent: <http://crossbridgediscipleshipschool.weebly.com/uploads/7/8/2/3/78234118/tyranny_of_the_urgent.pdf>
* Basic Bible Reading and Prayer:
	+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIwHSEpYyX0&t=45s>
	+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXXAQW_5vGs>
	+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51IWOAvtsaU>
* Extended Prayer Times:
	+ [www.navigators.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/navtool-extended-prayer.pdf](http://www.navigators.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/navtool-extended-prayer.pdf)
	+ [www.biblestudytools.com/blogs/chris-russell/how-to-have-a-half-day-of-prayer-with-god.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/blogs/chris-russell/how-to-have-a-half-day-of-prayer-with-god.html)
* BLESS Plan – FRANC List; praying for people far from God

Methods & Approaches

* [Foundations Study (CRU)](http://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/help-others-grow/discipleship/adult-discipleship-resources/foundations-study.html) – A new believer early follow-up and discipleship tool to establish a person’s basic identity in Christ and initial steps to follow Christ. Great evangelism tool, too.
* [Foundations: Missional Community Guidebook](https://www.amazon.com/Foundations-Missional-Community-Bob-McNabb/dp/194237402X/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=foundations+mcnabb&qid=1600966456&sr=8-1)
* [Topical Memory System-Navigators](http://www.amazon.com/Topical-Memory-System-Navigators/dp/1576839974/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=topical+memory+system&qid=1592322364&s=books&sr=1-1) – Scripture memory course from the Navigators
* Simple Bible Study Methods
	+ [Simple Steps for Studying the Bible](http://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/tips/3-simple-steps-for-studying-the-bible.html)
	+ [Navigator Bible Studies Handbook](http://www.amazon.com/Navigator-Bible-Studies-Handbook-LifeChange/dp/0891090754/ref%3Dsr_1_6?dchild=1&keywords=bible+study+methods&qid=1592321819&sr=8-6)
	+ [Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods](http://www.amazon.com/Rick-Warrens-Bible-Study-Methods/dp/0310273005/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=bible+study+methods&qid=1592321930&sr=8-1)
* Counterfeit Gods Assessment Guide
	+ <https://steve4040.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/study-guide-to-counterfeit-gods.pdf>

Books

* Counterfeit Gods by Timothy Keller
* A Praying Life by Paul Miller
* Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald Whitney
* Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health by Donald Whitney
* The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn

**Witness**

Methods & Approaches

* BLESS Plan – FRANC List, BLESS Definition, and BLESS action items – available on our webpage for disciple makers: <https://www.hcbc.com/disciplemaker/>
* BLESS Guide – Envisioning and equipping for FFF groups and small groups – available on our webpage for disciple makers: <https://www.hcbc.com/disciplemaker/>
* Tim Hawks on Gospel Saturation: <https://vimeo.com/215734662/b4fe959399>
* Three Word Testimony – HCBC Format in Word Document
* Three Circles Gospel Illustration Training Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W8ynRMr59k>
* Bridge Illustration Training Video: <https://vimeo.com/120370274>

Books

* The Art of Neighboring by Pathak and Runyon
* God Space by Doug Pollock
* Organic Outreach for Ordinary People by Kevin Harney
* You Found Me by Rick Richardson

**Servant**

Spiritual Gifts Inventory based on Romans 12

* <https://mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm>
* Connecting Your Gifts to a Place to Serve – serving opportunities at Hill Country

Methods & Approaches

* Scriptures on Living in Community: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-community/>
* The “One-Anothers” in Scripture: <http://storage.cloversites.com/wakarusamissionarychurch/documents/59one_another_scriptures.pdf>

Books

* The Volunteer Revolution by Bill Hybels
* On Being A Servant of God by Warren Wiersbe & Jim Cymbala
* Humility: True Greatness by C.J. Mahaney
* Humility, The Path to Holiness by Andrew Murray

**Disciple Maker**

General Resources

* HCBC Disciple Makers Webpage: <https://www.hcbc.com/disciplemaker/>
* Email for questions and help on making disciples: disciplemaking@hcbc.com
* Born to Reproduce pamphlet by Dawson Trotman – Navigators
* [Foundations Study (CRU)](http://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/help-others-grow/discipleship/adult-discipleship-resources/foundations-study.html) – A new believer early follow-up and discipleship tool to establish a person’s basic identity in Christ and initial steps to follow Christ. Great evangelism tool, too.
* Disciple Maker Assessment: <https://church-multiplication.com/disciplemaker/>
* Discipleship Tree (*in this appendix*)
* Consecration: Pledge of Commitment to Lifelong Disciple Making

Books

* Lost Art of Disciple Making, by LeRoy Eims
* Master Plan of Evangelism, by Robert Coleman
* Discipleshift, by Jim Putman
* Spiritual Multiplication in the Real World, by Bob McNabb
* Foundations: Missional Community Guidebook, by Bob McNabb
* Dedication and Leadership, by Douglas Hyde

**Other Recommended Resources**

* FFF Assessment Activity for Married Couples (Appendix) – to be shared with spouse
* Celebrate Recovery (<http://www.hcbc.com/care-support/care-and-support/celebrate-recovery/> )
* Freedom In Christ (<http://www.hcbc.com/programs/freedom-in-christ-fic/> )

**LifeWork Resources (workplace, stay-at-home moms, marketplace)**

* Every Good Endeavor, by Tim Keller
* Work as Worship – Plan & E4 Assessment

<https://www.jsnatx.org/workshops/work-as-worship/> (under Additional Resources)

* 10 Commandments for Work

<https://cdn.sitepreview.co/assets/uploads/sites/687/2020/06/10comm.pdf>

**Assessment Activity for Married Couples**

The purpose of this assessment is for you to leverage your closest relationship to further your growth as a Fully Formed Follower of Jesus Christ. This is a tool that couples can use to interact around personal discipleship, assist each other with identifying blind spots, and encourage each other to seek change. Rate each other from 1-5 (1 is low and 5 is high) on each statement below. Then have an open discussion on strengths and ways to improve.

**Worshiper Rating**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| My spouse has a consistent daily time in God’s Word and prayer. |  |
| My spouse speaks openly and often about how God is working in and through his/her life personally. |  |
| It is obvious by the way my spouse lives that his/her affections are centered on Jesus Christ. |  |

**Witness Rating**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| My spouse has a FRANC List and prays for non-Christian family, friends, and neighbors regularly. |  |
| My spouse shares regularly with me and others about spiritual conversations he/she is having with non-believers. |  |
| My spouse is an example to others in identifying with Jesus and sharing the Gospel. |  |

**Servant Rating**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| My spouse uses his/her time, talents, and treasures to serve others. |  |
| My spouse looks to the interests of others, and serves me, my family and others in ways that are very meaningful. |  |
| My spouse serves regularly in our church and in our community. |  |

**Disciple Maker Rating**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| My spouse would be able to tell me and others with confidence, “Follow me, as I follow Jesus Christ.” |  |
| My spouse has been discipled intentionally by someone else and is discipling others. |  |
| I can identify specific ways in which my spouse has been a great example to me and our family of following Jesus Christ more closely. |  |

**Sample Identity & Life Pattern Statements (with verses)**

A fully formed follower of Jesus understands what Christ has done for him, who he is in Christ, and sets his heart to pattern his life after Christ’s until he looks and lives just like Jesus.

1. **I am a Worshiper**

**Identity: Because of the finished work of Christ on the Cross, Jesus is becoming my life and I am becoming fully alive in Him and Him alone.**

*“I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”*

Galatians 2:20

*“Jesus looked at him and loved him. ‘One thing you lack,’ he said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’"*

Mark 10:21

Other Verses: 2 Corinthians 1:22a; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:5; Romans 6:6; Genesis 1:27; I Peter 2:9

**Life Pattern:** **Because of who God is, I order the rhythms of my life to invest my time, talent and treasures to demonstrate His glory and grace in every area of my life.**

*”As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in the faith just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.”*

Colossians 2:6-7

 *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Hebrews 10:24-25

*“Honor the Lord from your wealth, with the first of all your crops.”*

Proverbs 3:9

1. **I am a Witness**

**Identity: I am a witness to the life-changing reality of Jesus Christ in my own life and I live with the notion that God can change anyone by the power of the Gospel.**

*“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."*

Acts 1:8

*“Salvation exists in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. When they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and recognized that they had been with Jesus.”*

Acts 4:12-13

Other Verses: Matthew 5:14-16; Matthew 22:37-39; 2 Corinthians 5:20; John 13:34-35

**Life Pattern: I am intentionally sharing the gospel, living it out and sharing the love of Jesus where I live and with those in my proximity.**

*“And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”* Matthew 22:37-38

Other Verses: John 3:13-18**;** John 14:6**;** John 10:10-11 **;** John 16:7-11

1. **I am a Servant**

**Identity: Because of the example of Jesus, I am a servant of God, created to serve people for their good and His glory.**

*“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*Matthew 20:26-28

*“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”*

Philippians 2:4-8

Other Verses: I Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11; Galatians 5:13

**Life Pattern: I seek to live a life of humility, putting the interests of others before my own, using my spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ.**

*“Then he said to them all, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself
and take up his cross daily and follow me.’”*

Luke 9:23 *“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’"*Galatians 5:13-14

Other Verses: I Corinthians 12:7-13; Hebrews 6:10; Romans 7:6; Luke 6:38

1. **I am a Disciple Maker**

**Identity: I was created to become a disciple who makes disciples, that also make disciples until we reach the world for Christ.**

*“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Matthew 28:19-20

 *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”*

Matthew 24:14

Other Verses: John 15:16; Matthew 4:19-20

**Life Pattern: I make every effort to first discover who a person is, where they are at spiritually, and how I can encourage and exhort them to take their next steps until Christ is fully formed in them.**

*“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*2 Timothy 2:1-2 *“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.’”*Matthew 16:24 *“And He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’"*Matthew 4:19

**Identity and Life Pattern Grid**

**Name: Date:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **IDENTITY** | **LIFE PATTERNS** |
| **Worshiper** |     |
| **Witness** |  |
| **Servant** |   |
| **Disciple Maker** |    |

****

**Becoming a Life-Long Disciple Maker**

Assuming you have the next 20 years to invest in spiritual multiplication, what could be the impact of your life? How many disciples could you see living in the wake of your life?

****

**Key Practices from those who have gone before**

* From the start, introduce the two foundational disciplines: The daily quiet time and BLESS Plan – and cover these two things every week.
* Remind people repeatedly that this is not a *program* of Hill Country; this is a *lifestyle*.
* Be a multiplication champion! Finish every session with this statement:
	+ *“When* ***YOU*** *are discipling your next people…”*
* Cover the process in PRAYER, then pray over it more, and finish it off with more prayer!
* Disciple making is far more than going through material, it’s doing life-on-life and very relational. As I follow Jesus, I am available to walk through life’s challenges with my disciples and impart the Lord’s wisdom as the Holy Spirit reveals.
* The connection to each other is often more life-changing than the content of what is discussed.
* Do not rush the process -- backtrack to past Identities if necessary.
* The group members need time to get to know each other so that there is authenticity and vulnerability (ex. Share testimonies). Each member needs to be reminded of their redemption and passion for Christ so that their identity in the four areas (worship, witness, servant, disciple-maker) flows naturally and is not a forced list of things to do.
* Be prepared to dive deeper into topics as needed:
	+ “How to Study the Bible”, “How to share your faith”, “Work life Ministry”
* People are not ready to reproduce unless they themselves are healthy. Make sure you shepherd people into the things that will get them there beyond the “Four Identities.” For example: How can one become a worshipper if they have life-dominating hang ups in need of Celebrate Recovery?
* Communicate frequently that this process is about Disciple-Making not just discipleship. The principle of multiplication needs to drive what we are doing.
* Keep it regular, relational, reproducible.
* Commit to pray about who God wants you to disciple.
* Have a strong accountability partner that can serve as a sounding board and encourager as you lead others in a disciple-making journey.
* Follow through, follow through, follow through.
* **The hardest…and most fulfilling…work on the planet is to help another person look more like Jesus. You don’t have what it takes, but Jesus working through the Holy Spirit in you does!**
* And one more…

*“There’s never a good time to quit.”*

Rollen Anderson, founding member, Elder, Hill Country Bible Church