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DISCIPLESHIP FOR LIFE, AN EVANGELICAL APPROACH TO MAKING
CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLES AT THE BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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*DISCIPLESHIP FOR LIFE, AN EVANGELICAL APPROACH TO MAKING
CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLES AT THE BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE*

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Abstract

DISCIPLESHIP FOR LIFE, AN EVANGELICAL APPROACH TO MAKING CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLES AT THE BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

The *telos* of this study is the development of disciples, who passionately pursue Christlikeness and actively seek to fulfill the Great Commission. A commitment to be a Christlike disciple and to make Christlike disciples must be the goal of every Christian and every church.

This objective is consistent with Scripture and the Evangelical tradition that exists in cooperation with the Church of the Nazarene's mission "to make Christlike disciples in the nations." As a response to Christ's command "to go and make disciples," this study focuses on the historical, philosophical, and theological foundation for the thesis "*Discipleship for Life, An Evangelical Approach to Making Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.*"

Research for this study included exploring the history and philosophy of Christian education, completing an exegesis on the Great Commission, and studying discipleship and spiritual transformation. Methodology included administering a congregational survey, developing a curriculum entitled *Discipleship for Life*, and teaching a class on discipleship.

This study confirmed that discipleship and spiritual formation are biblically and theologically grounded, and the *telos* is always transformation to the image of Christ. A person learns in order to be changed from depravity to grace. Based on student feedback at the conclusion of the class, thirteen of the fourteen students who participated in the *Discipleship for Life* class can be described as "a more Christlike disciple."

CHAPTER ONE

The Call to Make Christlike Disciples in the Local Church

In *Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was martyred during the Nazi regime, asserts, “Cheap grace is the mortal enemy of our church. Our struggle today is for costly grace.” While the price that was paid is infinitely great, the risk of taking advantage of this grace is also infinitely great.¹

As global missionaries for the Church of the Nazarene, my husband Barry and I had the opportunity to share how God is transforming lives and making disciples on the Eurasia Region with Churches of the Nazarene in the United States. During our home assignment in 2010, I had what I would describe as a “Nehemiah experience.”

The pastor had communicated to us that the congregation was very small, so you can imagine our surprise when our GPS directed us to the parking lot of a large church in the suburb of a major city. The sanctuary could easily seat 300 people; yet, the attendance was only eight. After the service, I walked through the church and saw room after room set up for Sunday School, but all of the chairs were empty. Suddenly, I understood how Nehemiah felt when he heard the news about the wall in Jerusalem.

During our 2012 home assignment, it became increasingly obvious that many churches are struggling to reach people in their communities with the Gospel. It appears that as cultural changes have influenced the church, we have overlooked the symptoms of our biblically illiterate and relationally malnourished congregations. Richard Osmer

¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 43-45.

attributes this spiritual complacency to the absence of a vital teaching office to teach biblical principles and Christian doctrine.²

My Nehemiah experience reminded me of the importance of Jesus's words in Matthew 28:18-20. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

In consideration of the increasing disparity between the Church and culture, the commitment to be a Christlike disciple and to make Christlike disciples must be the goal of every Christian and every church.³ This objective is consistent with Scripture and our Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, as the Church of the Nazarene seeks "to make Christlike disciples in the nations."

As a response to Christ's command "to go and make disciples" and the Church of the Nazarene's mission, this study focuses on the development of "*Discipleship for Life, An Evangelical Approach for Making Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.*" The *telos*⁴ of this study is the development of disciples, who passionately pursue Christlikeness and actively seek to fulfill the Great Commission.

² Richard Osmer, *A Teachable Spirit: Recovering the Teaching Office in the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), Introduction.

³ Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 26.

⁴ Strong's Concordance, <http://biblesuite.com/greek/5056.htm> (Accessed February 2012). *Telos* is Greek and means "the consummation, end goal, or purpose."

The Definition of Fundamental Terms

Fundamental terms that have significant meaning for this study include: *The Story*, Christian education, taught by God, the Great Commission, disciple, discipleship, missional church model, and spiritual transformation.

The Story: In *The Gospel in History*, Marianne Sawicki reveals that the Gospel is not only the “good news,” it is also the “stories about God’s works.” She asserts, “The Gospel is history, but it also *has* a history.” As Christian educators, we must understand “the story of *The Story*,” so we can effectively communicate it to those we teach.⁵

Christian Education: James Estep defines *Christian education* as “a hybrid field of inquiry, a product of the integration between the theological and educational communities, both of which are in the context of culture.”⁶ The word “education” is derived from the Latin word *educere*, which means “to bring out or develop.”⁷

Taught by God: As spiritual teachers, we must be *theodidacti* or “taught by God.”⁸ Our authority is given by God, and it is based on the way we know God and embody his love. Additionally, our hearts and minds must be disciplined to the things of God, and we must teach from this position.⁹

⁵ Marianne Sawicki, *The Gospel in History: Portrait of a Teaching Church – The Origins of Christian Education* (New York/Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1988), 5-6.

⁶ James R. Estep (Editor) *et al.*, *C.E.: The Heritage of Christian Education*, “The Challenge of Christian Education” (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2003), 1.10.

⁷ Oxford Dictionaries, http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/educere (Accessed April 2013).

⁸ Karen Yust and E. Byron Anderson, *Taught by God: Teaching and Spiritual Formation* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 11.

⁹ Yust and Anderson, 17-20.

Great Commission: The Great Commission is God’s means of reconciling and restoring his creation. The *telos* of the mission is spiritual transformation.¹⁰ While Jesus initiated God’s kingdom, the mission was not fully accomplished, and he has commissioned the Church and his followers to continue it.¹¹

Disciple: The word “disciple” comes from the Greek word *mathetes* and means “learner.” In the first century, the cultural understanding of a disciple was a “follower,” who was committed to specific rabbi or teacher in order to become like him.¹² As a disciple, we are to “know Christ” and “learn from him.”¹³

Discipleship: Discipleship is the heart of the Christian experience,¹⁴ and it requires surrendering everything to follow Jesus.¹⁵ Discipleship is an ongoing, lifelong journey on which we are spiritually transformed.¹⁶

Missional Church Model: George Barna identifies a “missional church model” as one that helps people become spiritually mature Christians who are passionately committed to Jesus. They evaluate everything in their lives according to biblical

¹⁰ Hull, 25-26.

¹¹ Roger Hahn, “The Mission of God in Jesus: Teaching on the Kingdom of God,” in *Missio Dei: A Wesleyan Understanding*, Editors Keith Schwanz and Joseph Coleson (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2011), 63.

¹² Hull, 67.

¹³ Paul Wesley Chilcote, *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 28-29.

¹⁴ Hull, 124-125.

¹⁵ James Boice, *Christ’s Call to Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1998), 13.

¹⁶ Hull, 35.

principles, commit to having a healthy family, live a morally pure life, share evangelically with others, and are socially responsible in their community.¹⁷

Spiritual Formation: The term “spiritual formation” is derived from the Greek word *morphe*, and means “to change” or “to shape.” Spiritual formation describes the sanctification of disciples,¹⁸ and the goal of spiritual formation is always transformation to the image of Christ.¹⁹

The Research Methodology and Instrumentation

This study included quantitative and proactive research. Instrumentation included a survey, a discipleship curriculum, and spiritual formation resources. The survey provides quantitative data on the spiritual maturity of the congregants at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, while the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum and spiritual formation resources are qualitative and proactively facilitate spiritual transformation in students.²⁰

Research methodology included exploring the history and philosophy of Christian education, completing an exegesis on the Great Commission, and studying discipleship and spiritual transformation. Research was both empirical and experiential, and it included identifying a missional church model as described by George Barna in *Growing True Disciples* as the venue for a class on discipleship.

¹⁷ George Barna, *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2001), 139-143.

¹⁸ Hull, 35.

¹⁹ Hull, 39.

²⁰ William R. Myers, *Research in Ministry* (Chicago, Illinois: Exploration Press, 2000), 29.

Based on Barna's definition of church models, the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene was identified as a *Missional Model*, and a congregational survey was administered to assess the spiritual maturity of the congregants. The survey also asked the respondents to indicate if they would participate in a class on discipleship.

The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum explicates the call to follow Jesus, teaches biblical principles on discipleship, assesses the student's spiritual SHAPE (Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, and Experience), and equips and empowers them to live like Christ in their community. The spiritual formation forms assess the student's spiritual maturity before and after the class, and the class evaluation form solicits input from the students on the effectiveness of the curriculum and teacher.

The Context of the Study

The context of this study is the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. The city of Bel Air is located in Maryland, and the church is part of the Mid-Atlantic District. The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene was born out of the early holiness movement that swept the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century and a spiritual awakening that touched the lives of several families in Harford County. As the city of Bel Air grew, the church also experienced numerical growth. Over the years, pastoral leadership has helped the congregation transition from a small, country church to a growing, suburban church with a weekly attendance of 405.²¹

²¹ Church of the Nazarene, <http://app.nazarene.org/FindAChurch/summaryReport?report=churchSummary&orgId=7455> (Accessed February 2012). Congregational Statistics are attached as Appendix 1.

Potential Limitations of the Study

Genuine discipleship produces fruit. It develops Christlike disciples whose churches become loving communities, where people can experience God's life-transforming grace.

Several factors that could limit the effectiveness of this study include: the narrow sample and population of the respondents who completed the survey, the number of times the *Discipleship for Life* class met, the unwillingness or failure of the students to engage the discipleship disciplines and principles, and my inability to accurately and clearly communicate *The Story* as one who has been "taught by God."

Barna's study involved a broad sample of respondents, and it included a nationwide random sample from various denominations.²² This study focused on a narrow sample, and it was limited to one religious tradition and a comparatively smaller number of respondents who attend the church. Consequently, the results of this study could be limited by the culture, religious tradition, and number of respondents as well as Barna's definition of church models.

The failure of the students to engage the discipleship principles would limit their development as a Christlike disciple. In *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, Bill Hull explains that a disciple follows Jesus, learns Jesus' words, learns Jesus' way of ministry, emulates Jesus' life and character, and develops their own disciples. If the students fail to emulate these qualities, their spiritual growth would be inhibited.²³ The study could also

²² Barna, 169.

²³ Hull, 62-69.

be limited by their inability to understand and transition from a program or strategy-driven to a relational, people-driven ideology.

Discipleship is a lifelong commitment, and the term implies a sense of journey or the idea of “becoming a disciple,” instead of “being made a disciple.”²⁴ In light of Hull’s description of discipleship, the number of weeks the *Discipleship for Life* class met could be a limiting factor. The class included twelve sessions; however, the participants are at various stages in their spiritual development, and some of them will need ongoing, accountability in order to mature as a disciple.

As Christian educators, we have been entrusted with *The Story*. We must strive to communicate *The Story* accurately and responsibly, so those we teach can become holy characters or Christlike disciples in God’s on-going narrative of grace.²⁵

We must also be *theodidacti* or “taught by God” in order to effectively teach others and make Christlike disciples.²⁶ Since teaching is one of the ways we give an account of our faith, my effectiveness as a teacher will be limited if I am not a single-hearted and single-minded woman of faith.²⁷

²⁴ Hull, 35.

²⁵ Elizabeth Barnes, *The Story of Discipleship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 14-15.

²⁶ Yust and Anderson, 11-12.

²⁷ Yust and Anderson, 20-21.

Subsequent Chapters

The subsequent chapters of this study focus on literary precedents on the history, philosophy, and theology of Christian education and the models of religious education used to make Christlike disciples; the methodology and instrumentation used for the congregational research and the discipleship resources; the research data and results; and the final conclusions and summation of the study.

Chapter Two focuses on the historical and philosophical precedents to establish a philosophy and theology for making Christlike disciples. It includes an exegesis on the Great Commission, and it examines historical and contemporary models of discipleship and religious education. It also includes data from Barna's research on discipleship.

Chapter Three identifies the location and populace of the study, and it describes the contextual history and demographics of the city of Bel Air and the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. It also explains the methodology and instrumentation, which included administering a congregational survey, developing a curriculum entitled *Discipleship for Life*, and teaching a class on discipleship.

Chapter Four reports the results of the congregational survey on discipleship at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene and compares the data to the results of Barna's research. It also includes information on the spiritual growth and development of the fourteen students who participated in the *Discipleship for Life* class.

Chapter Five is a summary of the major conclusions of the study on making Christlike disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. This chapter also includes implications for future ministry, the possible limitations of the study, and the viability of using the curriculum in another ministry or cultural setting.

The Challenge to Make Christlike Disciples

According to Bonhoeffer, many Christians and churches are choosing what he refers to as “cheap grace” instead of “costly grace.” His explanation of “cheap grace” and “costly grace” establishes the foundation for the fervent call to discipleship.²⁸

“Cheap grace” is denial of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It believes in the forgiveness of sins as a general truth and the love of God as a Christian idea. “Cheap grace” is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, and grace without Jesus.²⁹

“Costly grace” is the Gospel; it is the Incarnation of the Word. It costs us our life and gives us life eternal. It is costly because it cost God the life of his Son. This grace is not without responsibility, as it comes to us in the gracious call to follow Jesus.³⁰

As Christians, “the call to follow Jesus” and “the command to go and make disciples” are not options; they are imperatives. We will be held accountable for our mediocrity. The Apostle John addresses mediocrity in his letter to the Church in Laodicea: “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”³¹

“Costly grace...is costly, because it calls us to discipleship; it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ.” This call does not tolerate mediocrity. The call to be a disciple and to make disciples means forsaking everything to follow Jesus.

²⁸ Bonhoeffer, 64.

²⁹ Bonhoeffer, 43-44.

³⁰ Bonhoeffer, 44-45.

³¹ Revelation 3:14-22, *NRSV Bible*.

CHAPTER TWO

A Historical, Philosophical, Theological, and Practical Thesis for the Call to Make Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene

Bonhoeffer asserts, “Christianity without the living Jesus Christ remains necessarily a Christianity without discipleship; and a Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ!”³² Christian discipleship is “Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone; the sole content of discipleship is to ‘follow Christ.’”³³ Discipleship is from beginning to end a call to follow Jesus along the paths illuminated by God’s Word and the cross of Christ.³⁴

This study includes several threads that synthesize the historical, philosophical, theological, and practical thesis for “*Discipleship for Life, An Evangelical Approach to Making Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.*” This study explores the history and philosophy of Christian education, and it includes an exegesis of the Great Commission. It also examines various models of Christian education. Collectively, the threads provide a holistic understanding of “the call to follow Jesus” and “his command to go and make disciples.” Additionally, this study provides the theological and philosophical foundation for the curriculum entitled *Discipleship for Life*. It also includes data gleaned from Barna’s survey on discipleship and missional church models.

³² Bonhoeffer, 59.

³³ Bonhoeffer, 4.

³⁴ Bonhoeffer, 23.

A History and Philosophy for Making Christlike Disciples

A History of Christian Education

In *A History of Christian Education*, James Reed and Ronnie Yost espouse that to be valid a construction of history must synthesize Christian education with biblical, theological, philosophical, cultural, political, and social ideas. By studying the challenges of Christian education in history and the methods used to resolve issues, we can more effectively serve the Church's current needs and address the educational challenges we will inevitably encounter as we seek to make Christlike disciples.³⁵

Christian education can be defined as “a hybrid field of inquiry, a product of the integration between the theological and educational communities, both of which are in the context of culture.” Christian education is much broader than our limited experience; however, we are able to expand our empirical boundaries by studying its history, which gives us insight into the principles and practices of education in the faith community.³⁶

Furthermore, the philosophy of Christian education must be addressed within its historical context in order to understand its relevancy in the church. By studying world events, we are able to identify the philosophies of education in each historical period that have influenced and shaped the development of Christian education over the past six thousand years.³⁷

³⁵ James E. Reed and Ronnie Provost, *A History of Christian Education* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), Introduction-xxii.

³⁶ Estep, “Answering Your Questions,” Introduction 1.

³⁷ Michael Anthony and Warren Benson, *Exploring the History & Philosophy of Christian Education, Principles for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 13.

Old Testament history outlines God’s original design for education, as it chronicles God’s relationship with humanity.³⁸ Hebrew culture and education were focused on God and centered on Scripture. Education was dynamic, experiential, familial, holistic, and heterogeneous.³⁹

During Judaism, we see the establishment of educational systems that emphasized the importance of higher education, the integration of faith and learning, and the teacher-student relationship.⁴⁰ Greek ethnicity believed the goal of education was character formation, and their schools continue to influence history and culture.⁴¹

The Roman era taught Christianity the importance of education and its relevancy to the preservation of civilization and culture. Rome also had a significant impact on the educational ideals of Europe and America through its transmission of cultural thought.⁴²

Most significantly, the teaching of Christ, ministry of his followers, and spread of Christianity during the time of the early Church in the New Testament period provided the spiritual principles of discipleship and godly examples to effectively shape Christian education.⁴³

Although early Christian education resembled Jewish education, a distinctive Christian education emerged when the Church assumed a separate identity from Judaism. The Alexandrian ideology of combining the sacred and secular ensured the Church’s

³⁸ Anthony and Benson, 17.

³⁹ Estep, “Education Among the Hebrews (2300-586 B.C.),” 2.2.

⁴⁰ Estep, “Education in Ancient Judaism (586 B.C.-A.D. 400),” 3.16.

⁴¹ Estep, “It’s All Greek to Me! Education in Greek Culture,” 4.1.

⁴² Estep, “When in Rome: Education in the Roman World,” 5.15.

⁴³ Anthony and Benson, 97-107.

continuing influence and existence, as the Augustinian influence on theology and education strengthened Christian educational curriculum and traditions.⁴⁴ During the Middle Ages, the church was the most significant institution and is credited for ensuring our intellectual heritage.⁴⁵

Modern Christian education originated during the Renaissance, as Christian educators were encouraged to rethink earlier methodology and develop new curriculum. It was also shaped considerably during the Reformation by early reformers, humanism, the printing press, and the political government.⁴⁶

Sunday school was developed by Robert Raikes in the late eighteenth century and is recognized as the most widely used method of Christian education among Evangelicals today.⁴⁷ Although the theology of Sunday school has varied, the basic pattern of Christian education has not, and its primary focus is the teaching that occurs on Sunday morning before or after the congregational worship service. Sunday School continues to be one of the most effective small group ministries in the church; however, questions are being raised about its use as the primary venue of teaching in the church.⁴⁸

Over the years, Christian concerns have continued to influence American education. Horace Bushnell's *Christian Nurture* was the impetus for a renewed religious education movement in the nineteenth century. Christian education was expanded and diversified in the twentieth century because of an increased emphasis on education. The

⁴⁴ Reed and Provost, 107-108.

⁴⁵ Reed and Provost, 163.

⁴⁶ Reed and Provost, 289.

⁴⁷ Reed and Provost, 255.

⁴⁸ Osmer, 62.

spectrum of Christian education has also broadened as diverse communities contribute, and various educational philosophies and methodologies operate congruently.⁴⁹

Additionally, the twentieth century is known as “a revolutionary period in the history of Christian education.” It was during this time, religious education was renamed Christian education because of the renewed emphasis on Scripture and its authority as the foundation for life and education.⁵⁰

Jonathan Kim asserts, “Millennial challenges confronting Christian education are the opportunities for progress.” While the theological, philosophical, and sociocultural challenges are great, God is raising up Christian educators, who are grounded in biblical truth, knowledgeable of the history of Christian education, and filled with godly courage. Together, they are seeking to pioneer innovative ways to transform the hearts and minds of the people in the third millennium.⁵¹

The evolution of Christian education beginning with the Hebrew people, who understood education was commanded by God, provides us with a biblical, historical, and philosophical foundation upon which we can establish our ministry of Christian education and discipleship.

⁴⁹ Reed and Provost, 364-366.

⁵⁰ Anthony and Benson, 374-375.

⁵¹ Jonathan Kim, “Christian Education in our Millennium,” in *C.E.: The Heritage of Christian Education*, Editor James R. Estep, Jr. (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2003), 16.10-11.

A History of The Story

In *The Gospel in History*, Marianne Sawicki states, “The Gospel *is* history, but it also *has* a history.”⁵² As Christian educators, we must understand “the story of *The Story*,” so we can effectively communicate it to those we teach.

The Church is a theological symbol of God’s reconciling love,⁵³ and *The Story* is a kaleidoscopic portrait of the Church communicating the Gospel. The Church is first a *result* of the telling of the Gospel story in our history – the gathering of all of the people who have heard and accepted the Good News. Second, it is the *agent* of the Gospel, as it tells *The Story* to the world. Third, it is the *medium* through which the Gospel message is communicated to people globally. Fourth, it embodies the *message* of the Gospel, as an ecclesiastical and compassionate community.⁵⁴

Together, Christology, anthropology, and ecclesiology are given to us through the interlacing of biblical stories and other stories, thus conveying the identity of Christ to us as well as our personal identity. The biblical narratives transform our lives and empower us to become Christlike characters in God’s on-going narrative of grace. This transformation is critical, because our personal story can be flawed and hinder the telling of *The Story*. Barnes elucidates, “The power of the Spirit is the power to interlace the biblical narratives with humanity’s multitudinous narratives so transformation occurs and the true story is told.”⁵⁵

⁵² Sawicki, 5-6.

⁵³ Sawicki, 35-36.

⁵⁴ Sawicki, 9-11.

⁵⁵ Barnes, 9-11.

In *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, Christopher

Wright confirms the importance of *The Story* we have been entrusted with:

When we grasp that the whole Bible constitutes the coherent revelation of the mission of God, when we see this as the key that unlocks the driving purposefulness of the whole grand narrative (to cite our subtitle), then we find our whole worldview impacted by this vision. As has been well documented, every human worldview is an outworking of *some* narrative. We live out of the story or stories we believe to be true, the story of stories that 'tell it like it is,' we think. So what does it mean to live out of *this* story? Here is *The Story*, the grand universal narrative that stretches from creation to new creation, and accounts for everything in between. This is *The Story* that tells us where we have come from, how we got to be here, who we are, why the world is in the mess it is, how it can be (and has been) changed, and where we are ultimately going. And the whole story is predicated on the reality of this God and the mission of this God. He is the originator of the story, the teller of the story, the prime actor in the story, the planner and guide of the story's plot, the meaning of the story and its ultimate completion. He is its beginning, end and center. It is the story of the mission of God, of this God and no other.⁵⁶

As Christian educators, we must look to the biblical narratives to help us accurately, imaginatively, intentionally and responsibly communicate *The Story*. Only then will people be able to experience the gracious hospitality of Christ and the intimate fellowship of his Church.

Sawicki reminds us, "...the endurance of the Gospel through almost twenty centuries of teaching gives us cause to hope."⁵⁷

A Philosophy for Making Christlike Disciples

As cultural changes have influenced the Church, people have moved from the cities to the suburbs. They continue to attend worship services on Sunday; however, they

⁵⁶ Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2006), 533.

⁵⁷ Sawicki, 291-292.

eventually lose touch with their old community, and churches become isolated from the world. Instead of equipping people to be disciples, they succumb to a maintenance or survival ministry devoid of community and personal intimacy with God. The result is people who desire more than a nominal Christian experience.⁵⁸

In addition to the widening chasm between the Church and the world, there is an increasing concern about the disparity between a life of faith in Jesus and the behavior of those who claim to be his followers.⁵⁹ A defective theology has separated faith from discipleship and grace from obedience. It teaches that Jesus can be received as one's Savior without being received as one's Lord, and people take the name of Christ without experiencing spiritual transformation. Bonhoeffer refers to this as "cheap grace," because it is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, and grace with Jesus Christ.⁶⁰

My philosophy of making Christlike disciples espouses the importance of the teaching office in the local church and the role of the teacher in the discipleship process. According to Martin Luther, the primary function of the teaching office is "to communicate the Gospel it has received."⁶¹ Furthermore, the role of the teacher is "to be the divine revelation of the Word and to model the Christian faith for the learner."⁶²

⁵⁸ Milfred Minatrea, *Shaped by God's Heart* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), Preface.

⁵⁹ Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus's Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), Introduction.

⁶⁰ Boice, 14.

⁶¹ Osmer, 93.

⁶² Mark Maddix, "The Early Days of Religious Education: 1900-1950s," in *C.E.: The Heritage of Christian Education*, Editor James R. Estep, Jr. (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2003), 14.16.

The Teaching Office in the Local Church

In *A Teachable Spirit: Recovering the Teaching Office in the Church*, Richard Osmer reveals that an authentic teaching office has been missing from churches for so long it is difficult to recognize the void, and we have overlooked the symptoms of our biblically illiterate and relationally malnourished congregations. This is attributed to the absence of a teaching office to teach biblical principles and Christian doctrine. Many churches have also lost their ability to articulate a dynamic, life-changing, and culture-transforming vision of religion, which has affected American religion.⁶³

The “teaching office” is defined as the structure and process of three specific tasks: the determination of normative beliefs and practices of the Church, the reinterpretation of these beliefs and practices in changing cultural and historical contexts, and the formation and sustenance of educational institutions, processes, and curricula.⁶⁴

The key to understanding the teaching office is based on “the absolute priority of the Gospel in the Christian life and the distinctive kind of authority it has in human experience.”⁶⁵ As Christian educators, we must teach that the Gospel is the sovereign authority in the Church and the theological foundation for everything. It is the good news of God’s gratuitous mercy revealed in Jesus Christ and stands at the beginning and end of the Christian life. We must also develop teaching congregations and denominational leaders who will teach with authority and be guardians of our Christian tradition.⁶⁶

⁶³ Osmer, Introduction.

⁶⁴ Osmer, 15.

⁶⁵ Osmer, 91.

⁶⁶ Osmer, 250-251.

The Role of the Teacher in Making Christlike Disciples

In *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions*, Mary Boys defines *teaching* as “pioneering,” because it involves the painstaking labour of breaking new ground, so others can have access to the knowledge.⁶⁷ Religious education is viewed as *educating in faith*, and it is “the making accessible of the traditions of the religious community and the making manifest of the intrinsic connection between tradition and transformation.”⁶⁸ It is a personal journey that results in intellectual, moral, and spiritual transformation.⁶⁹

Christian education must be grounded in a theology that recognizes God as the center and goal of the education process.⁷⁰ Thus, the essence of teaching the Bible is so God may speak through it to those we teach. As teachers, we do not simply communicate content or curriculum; instead, we become the divine revelation of the Word of God and the Incarnation of the Holy Spirit.⁷¹

Competency in biblical wisdom and the Christian faith is essential, and we must participate in worship, fellowship, and service. Our spiritual, intellectual, and personal development is critical to the teaching-learning process, and we must possess a genuine love for those we teach. This love will create an environment that fosters trust and encourages students to explore and experience the realities of the Christian faith.⁷²

⁶⁷ Mary C. Boys, *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions* (Lima, OH: Academic Renewal Press, 1984), Introduction.

⁶⁸ Boys, 193.

⁶⁹ Boys, 204.

⁷⁰ Maddix, 14.14.

⁷¹ Maddix, 14.16.

⁷² Maddix, 14.16.

In *Taught by God*, Karen Yust and E. Byron Anderson explain that it is “foolish but also dangerous to think we can begin to teach about the Christian spiritual life without having been formed in it by learning to live it.”⁷³ The phrase “taught by God” occurs in Christian writings across centuries, and it proposes that those who teach the spiritual life are *theodidacti* or have been “taught by God.”⁷⁴ To be “taught by God” infers an internal rather than external experience, as God’s law is written on our hearts. We develop “spontaneous discipline,” which means we have internalized Scripture and knowledge of God so fully that we can respond faithfully by heart.⁷⁵

James 3:1 reminds us of the significance of teaching, “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.”⁷⁶

Our authority as a Christian teacher or spiritual mentor is not based on what we know about God. It is based on how we know God, our love for God and others, and the way we have been “taught by God.”⁷⁷ As men and women who are called to be Christian teachers, teaching is one of the ways we give an account of our faith. We must prepare to teach through prayer, which will enable us to become single-hearted as well as single-minded people of faith. Then we must teach from this position.⁷⁸

⁷³ Yust and Anderson, 9.

⁷⁴ Yust and Anderson, 11.

⁷⁵ Yust and Anderson, 13.

⁷⁶ James 3:1, *New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005). All Scripture references are from the *NRSV Bible* unless noted.

⁷⁷ Yust and Anderson, 18.

⁷⁸ Yust and Anderson, 20-21.

As teachers, “We’re participating in something that God is doing.” When we come together as teachers and learners, we come together as people called by God to participate in the ongoing realm of his creation on earth.⁷⁹ Our responsibility is to guide students in the formation of a community of teaching and learning. We encourage them to develop ears that hear and eyes that see God’s transformational activity in the world, and we invite them to join us in responding to this activity by offering their spiritual gifts and abilities to his ministry.⁸⁰

Based on the work of Yust and Anderson, “...to teach well in the sight of God, then, we must hold fast to the idea that God chooses to use us for a time as facilitators of an educational process in which God is the Great Teacher and we are God’s assistants. To be worthy assistants, we must continually receive direction from the master teacher.”⁸¹

The authority of the spiritual teacher is given by God and is recognized as authentic by the way the teacher lives.⁸² The teacher is to be an icon that directs the student’s attention and every aspect of their body, mind, and soul to God.⁸³

⁷⁹ Yust and Anderson, 39.

⁸⁰ Yust and Anderson, 39.

⁸¹ Yust and Anderson, 162.

⁸² Yust and Anderson, 15.

⁸³ Yust and Anderson, 17.

A Theology for Making Christlike Disciples

The call to follow Jesus is the essence of faith, and James Boice describes the invitation he extends to us. “The Master is going before you. He is looking back at you with a most compelling gaze. He is saying, ‘Come!’ He is commanding, ‘Follow me!’”⁸⁴

We are compelled to follow; yet, we cannot follow Jesus without a desire to become like him.⁸⁵ My theology for making Christlike disciples incorporates “the call to discipleship” and “the command to go and make disciples.”

The Call to Discipleship

In *Christ’s Call to Discipleship*, Boice asserts, “There is a fatal defect in the life of Christ’s church in the twentieth century: a lack of true discipleship.” He explains that discipleship requires “forsaking everything to follow Christ.” For many who profess to be Christians, there is a lot of talk about Christ, but there is very little following of Christ.⁸⁶

Our Christian faith and following Jesus are irrevocably connected.⁸⁷ Discipleship is not a second step in Christianity. One does not first become a believer in Jesus, and if he or she chooses, a disciple. Discipleship is the essence of what it means to be a Christian, and it begins with “a call to follow Jesus.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Boice, 23.

⁸⁵ Hull, 16.

⁸⁶ Boice, 13.

⁸⁷ Hull, 47.

⁸⁸ Boice, 16.

The operative words “follow me” are noted thirteen times in the gospels, and there are numerous other references to following Christ.⁸⁹ The elements of following include obedience, repentance, submission, commitment, and perseverance.⁹⁰

Obedience: The words “follow me” are an imperative. They are known as God’s “effective call,” which is why those Jesus called immediately dropped their nets and left their boats to follow him. Boice elucidates, “...without obedience there is no real Christianity.”⁹¹

Repentance: Jesus is the holy, sinless Son of God, and those who follow him must first repent of their sins and seek his righteousness.⁹² The word “repent” comes from the Greek word *metanoéo*, which means “to change one’s mind or purpose.” Biblically speaking, the best translation of “repent” is “a change of heart,” as it refers to a person’s inner change of mind and moral direction.⁹³

Submission: In his teaching, Jesus uses the metaphor of “putting on a yoke” to illustrate discipleship. A yoke is the connection between submission and subjection. The word “submit” comes from the Latin words *sub*, which means “under,” and *mitto*, which means “to put” or “place.” Submission involves putting oneself under the authority of another. To follow Jesus is to submit to him as Lord of our life.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Boice, 17.

⁹⁰ Boice, 17-21.

⁹¹ Boice 18.

⁹² Boice, 18.

⁹³ Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, <http://studybible.info/vines/Repent> (Accessed June 2013).

⁹⁴ Boice, 19.

Commitment: It is impossible to follow Jesus without being committed to him. Unless we recognize Jesus as our sovereign Lord and Master, we are committed to some other person or thing. Christ must be first and foremost in our life.⁹⁵

Perseverance: The final element in following Christ is perseverance. Discipleship is not simply a door to be entered, but a path to be followed. Boice reveals, “The true disciple follows Jesus to the end of everything.”⁹⁶

Jesus said, “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’ In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”⁹⁷

There is a cost to discipleship. The failure to understand the commitment often results in people who eventually fall away from the Christian life. The cost must be paid if a person is to be Christ’s disciple and experience salvation, which is based on the three interrelated principles of *sola scriptura*, *sola fide* and *sola gratia*.⁹⁸

Sola scriptura or “Scripture alone” affirms that the written Word of God is the only fully authoritative rule for Christians. We must repent of any thought or behavior that is contrary to Scripture, if we are to follow Christ.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Boice, 20.

⁹⁶ Boice, 21-22.

⁹⁷ Luke 14:28-30, 33, *New International Version Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984).

⁹⁸ Boice, 107.

⁹⁹ Boice, 107.

Sola fide states that “salvation is the work of Christ received through faith alone.” This saving faith includes an intellectual assent and an intentional commitment to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.¹⁰⁰

Sola gratia emphasizes that “salvation is by the grace of God alone.” We cannot earn salvation with good works. Jesus urges us to carefully count the cost, because we must always be prepared to surrender everything we are and have to be his disciple.¹⁰¹

Dallas Willard espouses, “The New Testament is a book about disciples, by disciples, and for disciples in Jesus Christ.” We cannot be a Christian without first being an active 24/7 disciple of Christ.¹⁰²

The word “Christian” appears in the New Testament three times and was first used to describe the early believers who left everything to follow Jesus, but the word “disciple” is used 269 times.¹⁰³

The distinction between “Christian” and “disciple” was never intended by Christ or the early Church. Unfortunately, the Gospel is often limited to spiritual conversion, and discipleship of new Christians is overlooked. The meaning of disciple, which comes from the Greek word *mathetes*, is “learner.” In the first century, the cultural understanding of a disciple was a “follower,” one who was committed to a specific rabbi or teacher.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Boice, 108.

¹⁰¹ Boice, 110.

¹⁰² Willard, 3.

¹⁰³ Willard, 3.

¹⁰⁴ Hull, 67.

Discipleship is often referred to as “following Jesus.” When “ship” is added at the end of “disciple,” it conveys “the state of” or “contained in.” Discipleship is defined as “the state of being a disciple,” and it is an ongoing, lifelong process. The term implies a sense of journey or “becoming a disciple,” instead of “being made a disciple.”¹⁰⁵

When Jesus called the disciples “to follow him,” he was comparing Christianity to a path his followers were to walk, as he went ahead of them. When he instructed his disciples “learn from me,” he was comparing Christianity to a school in which he was both the subject and the teacher. They were to “know Christ” and “learn from him.”¹⁰⁶ The call to follow Jesus and become like him included transformation.¹⁰⁷

Spiritual formation is the transformation of God’s creation, as people are restored to the image of God. John and Charles Wesley stated, “The ultimate purpose of theology is transformation.” In *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision*, Paul Chilcote writes, “For the Christian, Jesus Christ is the central reference point in that ongoing process, the goal of which is to be changed by God into more loving, more Christlike people. This is theology, and nothing could be more exciting or relevant in our lives.”¹⁰⁸

Despite some of the tensions in their views, John and Charles Wesley provide a balanced approach to theology and discipleship. They espouse a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” theology. The value of their theological approach is experienced in the Wesleyan concept of salvation. Salvation was *both* Christ’s work for us *and* the Spirit’s

¹⁰⁵ Hull, 35.

¹⁰⁶ Chilcote, 28-29.

¹⁰⁷ Hull, 130.

¹⁰⁸ Chilcote, 15.

work in us. Additionally, they saw salvation as *both* the freedom from sin *and* the freedom to love with the purpose of theology being personal transformation.¹⁰⁹

Discipleship connects believers to Jesus and focuses on the formation of the character of each disciple. The term “spiritual formation” is derived from *morphe*, the Greek word for “form,” and means “to change” or “to shape.”¹¹⁰

Discipleship and spiritual formation are biblically and theologically grounded, and the *telos* is always transformation to the image of Christ.¹¹¹ The word “transformation” is derived from the Greek word *meta*, which means “to move something from one place to another.” In “spiritual transformation,” we move from the person we were and continue to change into the image of Christ.¹¹²

Philippians 2:5-11 describes the manual or pattern for developing a Christlike character. Paul explains that Jesus is the *morphe theou* or the veritable and full revelation of God.¹¹³ He is literally saying, “The attitude of mind I have been urging on you is exactly that of God himself, as it has been spelled out in the Incarnation.” We are not called to merely imitate God by what we say and do. We are to have the mind of Christ developed in us, so we reflect his image.¹¹⁴

Spiritual transformation is often referred to as “the Transformational Triangle” or “the Golden Triangle.” The three sides are comprised of the Holy Spirit, spiritual

¹⁰⁹ Chilcote, 12-15.

¹¹⁰ Hull, 35.

¹¹¹ Hull, 39.

¹¹² Hull, 188.

¹¹³ John A. Knight, *Beacon Bible Commentary: Philippians* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1969), 318-320.

¹¹⁴ Gordon D. Fee, *Philippians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 91-98.

disciplines, and life circumstances and events. At the center of the triangle is community, which includes our relationship with God and the ones we develop to help us live out our spiritual beliefs.¹¹⁵ While it is God who spiritually transforms a disciple's life, we must be positioned for the process by living in community with other believers, respecting the authority of Scripture, submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit, and interpreting life circumstances through the lens of Scripture with insight from the Spirit and in the context of community.¹¹⁶

A disciple must also exercise the disciplines that are essential for spiritual formation: prayer, Bible reading, Scripture memorization, worship, evangelism, service, and stewardship. These disciplines help us develop an intimate relationship with God and equip us for ministry.¹¹⁷

God's love for his people is expressed in the cross and discipleship. Then as his disciples, we are commanded "to go and make disciples."¹¹⁸

The Command to Go and Make Disciples

The Apostle John's first comment after declaring "the Word became flesh" was the Word "made His dwelling among us."¹¹⁹ John is describing the first and greatest miracle he ever witnessed – God walking around Galilee. It is here the Incarnation first resonates as God seeks to redeem humanity.

¹¹⁵ Willard, 26-29. "The Transformational Triangle" is illustrated on Appendix 2.

¹¹⁶ Hull, 192-193.

¹¹⁷ Hull, 193.

¹¹⁸ Hull, 33.

¹¹⁹ John 1:1-18, *NRSV Bible*.

In John 6:38 Jesus states, “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.” Jesus faithfully carries out the mission given to him by God, his Father and the sender.¹²⁰ In Jewish culture, the metaphor of the sent son was easily understood, as a father often sent his oldest son to legally represent him in matters of important business. This relationship also provides us with a pattern for continuing Jesus’ mission, which cannot be proclaimed in Word alone; it must be embodied as the living Word.¹²¹

In *Missio Dei: A Wesleyan Understanding*, Roger Hahn explicates, “God’s mission may be defined as the restoration of all creation to God’s creation purposes. Within the grand narrative of Scripture God’s sending Christ is the central and climatic expression of God’s mission.”¹²²

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God through his earthly ministry, but it was not fully accomplished. Thus God has commissioned the Church through Christ to incarnate his mission of restoring creation to its original purposes.¹²³

“Then Jesus...said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God’s People: A Biblical Theology of the Church’s Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 221.

¹²¹ F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 19.

¹²² Hahn, 58.

¹²³ Hahn, 63.

¹²⁴ Matthew 28:18-20, *NRSV Bible*.

This passage of Scripture is known as the Great Commission, and Jesus is revealing God’s plan for the Church and his followers as he commands them “to go and make disciples.” They were to lead people to faith through the preaching of the gospel, bring them into the fellowship of the Church through the sacrament of baptism, and then within that fellowship continue to teach all that Jesus had commanded them. He promised that he would always be with the disciples as they did this.¹²⁵

The Great Commission contains four universals marked by the word *all*: “all authority,” “all nations,” “everything (or *all*) that I have commanded you,” and “always (or for *all* days).”¹²⁶

In addition to speaking with authority, Jesus used the word “authority,” which reflects “the source” as well as “the exercise” of power. Jesus is sovereign, and the declaration of his authority is the basis of the Great Commission. This includes authority in heaven as the authority of the Father and the authority of the Son are one, authority over all spiritual forces such as principalities and powers, authority on earth and over all of the events that occur, authority over his disciples and their work, and authority over all the nations or people, even those who do not acknowledge his authority but to whom he sends us. This authority also empowers us.¹²⁷

Each gospel possesses a unique character, and Matthew is primarily a Jewish gospel. It is written to validate that Jesus is the son of David and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah. No other gospel is limited to the immediate historical and ethnic climate into which Jesus was born and ministered. Yet, it ends on

¹²⁵ Boice, 159.

¹²⁶ Boice, 163.

¹²⁷ Boice, 159-162.

the most universal note, as the disciples are commissioned “to go and make disciples of all nations or people.” Boice elucidates, “...discipleship demands the Great Commission; it is an aspect of our obedience as Christ’s followers, and Jesus blesses obedience. If we are following Jesus, we will go to all for whom he died.”¹²⁸ While many English translations use the word *nations* to describe the intended populaces of discipleship, the Greek New Testament uses the word *ethne*, which means “various people groups.”¹²⁹

One of the most important universals in the Great Commission is the command to teach those we disciple. We must teach them to obey “everything” Christ commanded, especially as our world seeks to eliminate the teachings of Jesus.¹³⁰

The final universal in the Great Commission is “always,” or as the Greek notes, “all the days, even to the consummation of the age.” This is a great promise! In the first chapter of Matthew, Jesus is introduced as *Immanuel*, which means “God with us.” In the last verse, the promise is reiterated.¹³¹

The final instructions Jesus gave his disciples before his ascension was “to go and make disciples.” His words are an imperative, and he commanded them to go to the world, because the world has no reason to go to the Church.¹³²

¹²⁸ Boice, 153.

¹²⁹ Hull, 27.

¹³⁰ Boice, 164.

¹³¹ Boice, 168.

¹³² Hull, 254.

God's love is the foundation for the Great Commission and discipleship.¹³³

Chilcote notes, "To be a Christian is to 'flesh out' love." Our responsibility is to declare God's amazing grace and love to everyone.¹³⁴

We are called to become Christlike disciples, so we can learn to love like Jesus. Then we are sent to actively share his love with all people. We are to offer Christ to others through intentional acts of compassion and expressions of love.¹³⁵

The Christian life is manifested through the "incarnational principle," which means "to become flesh." Just as God entered into our physical world and became a human being through the person of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to make the spiritual reality of God's love a physical reality in the lives of others.¹³⁶

Boice challenges us to passionately pursue the call to discipleship with these words from John Stott: "...to those who go, who go as Christ himself came into the world...to them the presence of the living Christ is promised... 'I am with you all the days unto the end of the world.'"¹³⁷

¹³³ Chilcote, 19.

¹³⁴ Chilcote, 93.

¹³⁵ Chilcote, 107-108.

¹³⁶ Chilcote, 108-109.

¹³⁷ Boice, 168.

Models for Making Christlike Disciples

A Biblical Model of Making Christlike Disciples

In *Transforming Discipleship*, Greg Ogden asserts there is something faulty about the way we have attempted to produce disciples of Christ. We have substituted programs for relationships, because we have forgotten the model Jesus gave us to make disciples.¹³⁸

As the central figure of the Christian religion, Jesus is recognized as the Master Teacher. The methodology and content of his teachings have shaped our Christian faith and religious education over the centuries, as Christian educators have taught biblical principles and modeled discipleship.¹³⁹

The biblical model of making disciples modeled by Jesus requires the investment in three foundational principles. First, we invest in the lives of others by shifting from an emphasis on making disciples through programs to making disciples through loving relationships. Second, we invest in multiplication by helping Christians grow in spiritual maturity, so they become disciples who make disciples, which results in multiple generations of disciples. Third, we invest in developing a relational, discipleship system that stimulates the ongoing transformation of people to the image of Christ.¹⁴⁰

Discipleship is what a disciple does, and the term disciple-making comes from the Greek verb *mathetusate*, which means “to make disciples.” The three characteristics that distinguish disciple-making from discipleship are found in the Great Commission. The

¹³⁸ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 17.

¹³⁹ Reed and Provost, 61.

¹⁴⁰ Ogden, 121-122.

evangelism component instructs us to “baptize them,” the spiritual formation aspect exhorts us to “teach them to obey everything,” and after a disciple is equipped for ministry, the final step is the sending or the “go” aspect of the Great Commission.¹⁴¹

Discipleship has been a common practice throughout history, and the five characteristics of first-century discipleship included making a decision to follow a teacher in a teacher-disciple relationship, memorizing the teacher’s words, learning the teacher’s way of ministry, emulating the teacher’s life and character, and developing their own disciples. These are the principles that Jesus used with his disciples, and they are the ones he expected us to use when he said, “Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.”¹⁴²

Discipleship is the heart of the Christian experience, and it is characterized by a passion to become like Christ. Just like the first-century disciples, we are called to follow Jesus on a lifelong journey that will demand every resource we possess. It is one on which we will learn about him and his mission.¹⁴³

When Jesus ascended to the Father, he commissioned his disciples to continue the mission he began. As Jesus’ disciples, we have also been entrusted with his mission. We are God’s strategy, as we are commanded “to go and make disciples.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Hull, 34.

¹⁴² Hull, 62-64.

¹⁴³ Hull, 124-125.

¹⁴⁴ Hull, 184.

Contemporary Models for Making Christlike Disciples

Over the centuries, various models or theories of Christian education were developed and used to educate religiously. In addition to the model Jesus used in teaching his disciples, this study explores historic models of education that have influenced Christian education and contributed to our present day models. This study also examines *Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education* by Jack Seymour and Donald Miller and *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions* by Mary Boys. Furthermore, it explicates the development of the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum.

Models of Religious Education

In *Models of Religious Education*, Harold Burgess emphasizes the relationship between theory and practice in the broad field of religious education. After comparing and contrasting twentieth century Christian education theories within their historical and philosophical context, he identifies the unique contributions of five models of religious education to our present models of religious education.¹⁴⁵

According to Burgess, "...models have been employed first, as keys to understand the past, and second, as bridges leading to the future."¹⁴⁶ In the Old Testament, parents were responsible for teaching their children about God.¹⁴⁷ During the New Testament period, Jesus was the Master Teacher and modeled effective teaching principles.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Harold W. Burgess, *Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Practical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Bridgepoint, 1989), Introduction.

¹⁴⁶ Burgess, 18.

¹⁴⁷ Burgess, 26.

¹⁴⁸ Burgess, 27.

Consequently, his apostles and the early Church Fathers (e.g., Augustine) patterned their teaching after Jesus.¹⁴⁹

The five models of religious education Burgess surveys include: *Historic Prototype*, *Liberal Model*, *Mid-century Mainline Model*, *Evangelical/Kerygmatic Model*, and *Social-Science Model*.¹⁵⁰

The *Historic Prototype* reflects the prevailing worldview and religious convictions of the Church during the first nineteen centuries, and it focuses on educating future generations for Christian living and incorporating them into the Church.¹⁵¹

The *Classical Liberal Model* focuses on the present and maintains a worldview that God and his relationship with humanity have dramatically changed. The term “liberal” refers to the optimistic, classical liberalism that shaped religious education.¹⁵²

The *Mid-century Mainline Model* believes religious education occurs most effectively through dynamic interaction within the Christian community.¹⁵³

The *Evangelical/Kerygmatic Model* recognizes Christ as the essence of education, which enables students to live as Christians.¹⁵⁴ The teacher must be a Christian, and this model promotes lecture, even preaching, as the ideal teaching paradigm.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ Burgess, 37.

¹⁵⁰ Burgess, 21.

¹⁵¹ Burgess, 21.

¹⁵² Burgess, 22.

¹⁵³ Burgess, 22.

¹⁵⁴ Burgess, 169.

¹⁵⁵ Burgess, 22.

The *Social-Science Model* sustains a value-free relationship to theology, but accepts and inserts it as appropriate into the process of teaching religion.¹⁵⁶

Each model of education was developed to improve the learning process and help students grow in the knowledge of God.¹⁵⁷ As Burgess espouses, “Theology is central to Christian education, revelation plays an important role in the process of generating aims, and the church’s educational task is to introduce each new generation into the life and ministry of the faith community.”¹⁵⁸

Mark Maddix reiterates this ideology, “The influence of theology in Christian education was not just to teach theology but to make theological truth relevant in bringing learners into a right relationship with God and mankind.”¹⁵⁹

Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education

In *Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education*, Jack Seymour and Donald Miller along with four other experts in the field of Christian education describe five approaches to understanding Christian education. These include: *Religious Instruction*, *Faith Community*, *Spiritual Development*, *Liberation*, and *Interpretation*.¹⁶⁰ All of the authors meticulously explore Christian education from psychological, philosophical,

¹⁵⁶ Burgess, 22-23.

¹⁵⁷ Burgess, 160.

¹⁵⁸ Maddix, 14.14.

¹⁵⁹ Maddix, 14.24.

¹⁶⁰ Jack Seymour and Donald Miller, *et al. Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 16.

sociological, and theological viewpoints. They emphasize that the ultimate goal of each approach is the teaching of the Gospel and spiritual transformation of the student.¹⁶¹

The *Religious Instruction* approach is derived from the discipline of education and the transmission of Christian religious beliefs, practices, feelings, knowledge, and effects in order to help people understand and respond to the Gospel. It is taught in a classroom setting through the church's educational program.¹⁶²

The *Faith Community* approach is used to describe the creation of a community into which a member is immersed in the Christian Story, the patterns of living, the rituals and symbols, and the actions and mission of the faith community. This approach reminds Christian educators that the Church is the primary setting and resource for education.¹⁶³

The *Spiritual Development* approach is experiential and sequential, as it focuses on the religious pursuit or development of an individual. The person's spiritual life is the purpose and context for education.¹⁶⁴

The *Liberation* approach encourages an educational style that incites social consciousness and empowers people to be advocates for social transformation that is consistent with biblical principles.¹⁶⁵

The *Interpretation* approach perceives education as the interpretation of Christian tradition and a person's experience or "story" as connected to *The Story*. The interactions

¹⁶¹ Seymour and Miller, *et al.*, 16.

¹⁶² Seymour and Miller *et al.*, 18.

¹⁶³ Seymour and Miller *et al.*, 19-22.

¹⁶⁴ Seymour and Miller *et al.*, 22.

¹⁶⁵ Seymour and Miller *et al.*, 26.

between the person and world, tradition and culture, and faith and life are the process and content of Christian education.¹⁶⁶

Although none of these approaches fully identify Christian education, they explore the ideologies that help define it for us.¹⁶⁷ They also confirm that the *telos* of Christian education is still the proclamation and teaching of the Gospel, as both theology and education theory inform and transform each other. The challenge for Christian education is to remain faithful to the revelation of Christ in history.¹⁶⁸

Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions

In *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions*, Mary Boys defines a *classic expression* as a “specific, historical manifestation of educating in faith that has resulted from the intersection of a particular theological perspective with a particular educational outlook.”¹⁶⁹ The four classic expressions or models Boys surveys include: *Evangelism*, *Religious Education*, *Christian Education*, and *Catholic Education (Catechetics)*.¹⁷⁰

Evangelism is defined as “preaching or teaching the Scriptures in such a way as to arouse conversion.”¹⁷¹ It is didactic and transmissive, and it has provided the context for the development of religious education and Christian education.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ Seymour and Miller, *et al.*, 28-29.

¹⁶⁷ Seymour and Miller, *et al.*, 34.

¹⁶⁸ Seymour and Miller, *et al.*, 162-163.

¹⁶⁹ Boys, 8.

¹⁷⁰ Boys, 10.

¹⁷¹ Boys, 13.

¹⁷² Boys, 31-32.

Religious Education “weds classic liberal theology and progressive educational thought.”¹⁷³ As the successor to evangelism, spiritual growth replaced conversion as the primary emphasis, which reflected a theological and educational divergence from earlier modes of educating in faith.¹⁷⁴

Christian Education was the result of a theological thrust among Protestant educators who emphasized “the distinctiveness of a Christian education.” It begins with a relationship between religion and culture; yet, it can only be fully described in the context of the two classic expressions it mediates, *evangelism* and *religious education*.¹⁷⁵

Catholic Education or Catechetics is the only classic expression that does not reflect American, Protestant traditions. This classic expression was developed in the Catholic school system, and it is understood as “a normative set of educational values and ideals” that recognizes the relationship of faith to society.¹⁷⁶

Boys urges Christian educators to develop innovative expressions of Christian education. She contends, “If, as Moran has suggested, religious education is ‘the attempt to keep education open to the undreamt possibilities of the human race,’ its practitioners in the churches must find ways of embodying that vision in the world. Only when religious educators in the church move beyond the ecclesial boundaries will they become leaven.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Boys, 39.

¹⁷⁴ Boys, 59.

¹⁷⁵ Boys, 66.

¹⁷⁶ Boys, 80.

¹⁷⁷ Boys, 181.

The Church of the Nazarene

From its inception, the Church of the Nazarene has professed to be a branch of the “one, holy, universal, and apostolic church.” It recognizes that the Christian faith was mediated to Nazarenes through the Wesleyan revival in the 18th century and is exemplified through regeneration by grace through faith, Christian perfection or sanctification, and the witness of the Spirit to the assurance of grace. This theology was shaped further by a renewed emphasis on Christian holiness in the 19th century.¹⁷⁸

As previously noted in this study, theology, history, and philosophy are central to understanding Christian education and the development of Christlike disciples. Nazarene leaders have always understood this ideology, and education remains one of the means by which the Church of the Nazarene fulfills its mission.¹⁷⁹

Describing the mission of the Church in general, *The Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states:

The mission of the Church in the world is to share in the redemptive and reconciling ministry of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfills its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, showing compassion, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.¹⁸⁰

Burgess’ description of the development of Christian education includes many traditions that influence the Church of the Nazarene’s implicit philosophy of Christian education. Subsequently, in order to teach spiritual principles and to make Christlike disciples, the denomination established Christian organizations and institutions dedicated to different approaches to education, which include churches, schools, colleges, and

¹⁷⁸ *The Manual Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing, 2009), 14-15.

¹⁷⁹ *The Manual*, 23-24.

¹⁸⁰ *The Manual*, 35.

universities.¹⁸¹ However, these institutions collectively reflect a more Protestant and evangelically oriented education. The distinguishing quality of evangelical Christian education is the authority of Scripture as being fundamental to the content and process of Christian education.¹⁸²

I would describe the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, which was founded during the early holiness movement, as an *Evangelical/Kerygmatic* model. The congregants recognize Scripture as the inerrant Word of God and Christ as the essence of education that empowers them to live like Christians, and they perceive biblical teaching and preaching as the ideal teaching paradigm.¹⁸³ The church's philosophy of Christian education mediates evangelism and religious education to facilitate spiritual formation, and the congregants have been responsive to this style of religious education.¹⁸⁴

Based on this premise, the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum best represents what Boys describes as an “evangelism” or “evangelical” approach. The methodology advocates “preaching or teaching the Scriptures as a way to arouse conversion” with “revivalism and evangelicalism” constituting its two closely linked manifestations.¹⁸⁵

Evangelicals educate in faith powerfully and pervasively. This classic expression recognizes “religious education” as transmission of the Truth, faith shared in countercultural community, and the urgency of mission.”¹⁸⁶ To distinguish from the

¹⁸¹ *The Manual*, 47-48.

¹⁸² Maddix, “The Rise of Evangelical Education 1951-2000,” 15.10.

¹⁸³ Burgess, 22.

¹⁸⁴ Boys, 75.

¹⁸⁵ Boys, 13.

¹⁸⁶ Boys, 112.

conventional act of evangelism, I will use the term “evangelical” to describe this approach to Christian education. It includes an emphasis on both initial conversion and ongoing, spiritual transformation.

As a classic expression, evangelical Christian education reflects my philosophy. It recognizes that the purpose of religious education is to transmit the Truth, the conversion experience results in a change of heart and transformation of character, the practice of spiritual disciplines modeled by Jesus promotes spiritual growth, the fellowship of the *ecclesia* fosters the transformation process, and God’s mission is seen as urgent.¹⁸⁷

Christian teachers recognize that spiritual knowledge incites transformation, as it unifies thinking, feeling, and action.¹⁸⁸ Like Jonathan Edwards, who sought to convey knowledge that was spiritual and salvific, we want to provide students with access to the life-transforming knowledge of God. We want them to become disciples in the school of Christ.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ Boys, 33.

¹⁸⁸ Boys, 33.

¹⁸⁹ Boys, 17.

The *Discipleship for Life* Curriculum

The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum¹⁹⁰ is based on Jesus' words in John, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."¹⁹¹ The *telos* of the *Discipleship for Life* class is the development of Christlike disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene by making accessible the traditions of our faith community and making manifest the intrinsic connection between the traditions and a student's spiritual transformation.¹⁹²

The timeless traditions of the Christian faith provide the foundation for the *Discipleship for Life* class within an evangelical framework. The curriculum is didactic and based on the inerrant Word of God, and it reflects the holiness doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene and our mission "to make Christlike disciples in the nations."¹⁹³

The design of the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum was adapted from Rick Warren's *Life Development Process*. Although the curriculum is structured like Warren's curriculum, the content has been revised and integrates material from my research on the Great Commission and discipleship.

Maddix asserts, "Christ is the central theme in Christian education...the heart of the content of education, which enables learners to live as Christians."¹⁹⁴ In that spiritual knowledge incites transformation in students, the four modules of the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum include: "Disciple for Life," "Spiritual Disciplines for Life," "Ministry for Life," and "Mission for Life."

¹⁹⁰ See Appendix 15 for the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum.

¹⁹¹ John 10:10, *NRSV Bible*.

¹⁹² Boys, 193.

¹⁹³ *The Manual*, 5.

¹⁹⁴ Maddix, 15.9.

Module One, “Disciple for Life,” establishes the foundation for discipleship. The call to follow Jesus includes spiritual conversion and results in a change of heart and moral direction.¹⁹⁵ Given that it can be difficult to gauge a person’s spiritual commitment, the module explains the purpose of life, the salvation experience, and the characteristics of a Christian and disciple of Christ consistent with the evangelical tradition that supports this view. It also helps students understand that faith is developed through experiential knowledge. This approach resembles the basic hallmark of evangelical approaches to Christian education noted earlier in this chapter.

Module Two, “Spiritual Disciplines for Life,” describes the characteristics of first-century discipleship and the spiritual disciplines that Jesus modeled and taught: prayer, Scripture, worship, fellowship, ministry, and stewardship. The call to follow Jesus is a call to live counterculturally, and the module begins by explaining the transformation process. It helps students learn the spiritual disciplines that will nurture their relationship with God and incite spiritual growth in conjunction with their evangelical conversion. It also stresses the importance of the *ecclesia* in the spiritual transformation process.

Module Three, “Ministry for Life,” teaches students that God has a purpose for their life and a call to discipleship is a call to ministry. It begins by scripturally examining how we are shaped for ministry; then it helps students discover their unique SHAPE based on their Spiritual gifts, Heart for ministry, Abilities, Personality, and Experiences. The module utilizes resources and worksheets to ascertain information, which is recorded on the student’s personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.” This enables them to discover a ministry that is fulfilling and fruitful as they primarily serve their local church.

¹⁹⁵ Boys, 202.

Module Four, “Mission for Life,” explicates God’s mission and focuses on Jesus’ command to go and make disciples. It also clarifies that discipleship includes serving others as Christ.¹⁹⁶ The module instructs students how to develop a life mission statement, serve incarnationally, innately share their faith, and actively disciple others. It also includes the history of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, its mission statement, and an overview of mission opportunities.

The final session of the class is a one-day retreat that focuses on the prayer life of Jesus. It concludes with a communion service, and the students are commissioned with the evangelical dictum “to go and make disciples.”

Barna’s Research on Discipleship and Church Models

Sociological changes have influenced our culture and created a widening chasm between the Church and world. As a result, churches are confronted with the challenge to be culturally relevant in a precipitously changing environment while maintaining biblical integrity.¹⁹⁷ A commitment to be a disciple and to make disciples must be the *telos* of every Christian and every church, and we must be careful not to categorize discipleship as just one of the ministries of the church. A missional church understands this ideology and is committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.¹⁹⁸

In *Shaped by God’s Heart*, Milfred Minatrea defines a missional church as a reproducing community of authentic disciples who are fully devoted to God. They are

¹⁹⁶ Hull, 171.

¹⁹⁷ Barna, 8-11.

¹⁹⁸ Hull, 26.

men and women who are called to become Christlike disciples, and then they are sent to proclaim his kingdom to their world.¹⁹⁹

The four aspects of a missional church include loving God by worshiping and obeying him, living his mission by serving and sharing, loving people by embracing and inviting them to participate in community, and leading others by equipping and empowering them for ministry.²⁰⁰

Since Barna is recognized as one of the foremost experts on church growth, I used questions from his survey to create the survey for this study. The results of Barna's research and the research conducted at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene are reported in Chapter Four of this study.

Barna also examined five models of churches that have been effective in making disciples. He describes the *Missional Model* as one whose approach to discipleship helps people become spiritually mature Christians who are passionately committed to Jesus.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Minatrea, 12.

²⁰⁰ Minatrea, 17. The concept of the sent church is illustrated on Appendix 3.

²⁰¹ Barna, 139-143.

Five Models for Making Christlike Disciples

In Barna's study of twenty-four churches, he identified five models that are effective in "growing true disciples" or making Christlike disciples: the *Competencies*, *Missional*, *Neighborhood*, *Worldview*, and *Lecture-Lab* models.²⁰²

The *Competencies Model* is used by the Pantego Bible Church in Dallas, Texas. It advocates a highly integrated approach to discipleship that emphasizes personal assessment and assimilation. It is based on the Great Commandment and Great Commission and focuses on thirty competencies that include ten core beliefs, ten core practices, and ten core virtues. The church sponsors small groups, and each member creates a Personal Development Plan that is lived out in community. Although this model is effective in its use of an objective strategy, it can discourage people as they become aware of their weaknesses in a specific area.²⁰³

The Fellowship Bible Church of Little Rock, Arkansas is described as a *Missional Model*. The church's approach to discipleship is aligned with its mission to help people become spiritually mature Christians who are passionately committed to Jesus. They evaluate everything in their lives according to biblical principles, are deeply committed to having a healthy family, live a morally pure life, share evangelically with others, and are socially responsible in their community. This model develops small groups around life stages, and the church provides classes that focus on the six core, missional qualities of the church, and sermons and ministry are mission-oriented. This model is easy to

²⁰² Barna, 134.

²⁰³ Barna, 135-138.

facilitate, missional, and self-directed; however, the theological foundation is not always as fundamental as several of the other models.²⁰⁴

Although the Perimeter Church in Atlanta, Georgia developed the *Neighborhood Model* independently, it includes elements of the *Worldview*, *Competencies*, and *Missional* models. People who are new to the church are invited to attend a class for an overview of the church. When they decide to become actively involved in the church, they join a neighborhood group of fifteen to twenty people that meets in a geographic area. The small group meets twice a month and is the church's primary method of pastoral care and spiritual nurture. The *Neighborhood Model* employs a pragmatic and systematic approach to theology, and members are encouraged to be actively involved in ministry and community outreach. While this group is effective in discipleship, a viable concern is the time commitment required for it to be effective.²⁰⁵

The Fellowship Bible Church in North Plano, Texas uses the *Worldview Model*, which teaches biblical principles that lead to personal transformation. The objective of this model is to encourage people to develop a biblical worldview and to think and act biblically. The church uses a curriculum entitled the *Discovery Series* and four topical books. The participants identify issues and study the Bible for wisdom in addressing them. While the *Worldview Model* is helpful in teaching biblical principles, it is difficult to evaluate its efficacy.²⁰⁶

The *Lecture-Lab Model* developed by the North Coast Church in Vista, California focuses on building faith-based relationships that lead to godly character development

²⁰⁴ Barna, 139-143.

²⁰⁵ Barna, 144-147.

²⁰⁶ Barna, 148-151.

and involvement in ministry by conveying knowledge through sermons and using small groups to follow through on the application of information. This model centers everything on Scripture and has the potential to spiritually transform a person's life; however, it is the loosest model and lacks an effective method of evaluation.²⁰⁷

While all of the models focus on character development, the cognitive and decision process, and nurturing relationships, the primary difference is in the approach to accomplishing the objectives.²⁰⁸ In light of the pros and cons noted for each model, Barna recommends a sixth model, the *Hybrid Model*. This model incorporates the most effective qualities of all five models.

In the *Hybrid Model*, the lead or senior pastor is the foremost advocate of discipleship, a person is not accepted into church membership until they complete an inclusive, discipleship curriculum, all of the ministries of the church are aligned with the discipleship objective, the number of church programs is limited in order to focus on discipleship, preaching and teaching venues are coordinated to ensure congruency for discipleship, and the church's mission statement serves as a gauge to ensure ministry outcomes are connected to the goals that relate directly to the mission statement and to the spiritual state of the congregation.

Barna explicates that the *Hybrid Model* can be implemented on the foundation of a church's ministry and will work well for any size church. It can also stimulate us to develop our own model based on the ones he presented. The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, which was the venue for this study, was identified as a *Missional Model* with the potential to become a *Hybrid Model*.

²⁰⁷ Barna, 151-155.

²⁰⁸ Barna, 134.

CHAPTER THREE

Discipleship for Life, **An Evangelical Approach for Making Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene**

In *Growing True Disciples*, George Barna asserts, “It will take zealots for Christ; individuals who are intractably devoted to knowing, loving, and serving Him will all their heart, mind, strength, and soul, if we are to transform our world.”²⁰⁹ He defines a disciple as “a complete and competent follower of Jesus Christ,” who is committed to reproducing spiritually mature zealots for Christ.²¹⁰

The biblical meaning of disciple is “learner.”²¹¹ When Christ is the central theme in Christian education or the heart of the content of education, spiritual knowledge incites transformation; and we are changed into the image of Christ.²¹²

As noted in Chapter One, this study focuses on the development of disciples, who passionately pursue Christlikeness and actively seek to fulfill the Great Commission. We are called “to follow Jesus” as his disciple; then we are sent “to go and make disciples.” A commitment to be a Christlike disciple and to make Christlike disciples must be the *telos* of every Christian and every church.²¹³ This objective is consistent with Scripture and our Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, as the Church of the Nazarene seeks “to make Christlike disciples in the nations.”

²⁰⁹ Barna, Introduction.

²¹⁰ Barna, 17-18.

²¹¹ Hull, 67.

²¹² Hull, 188.

²¹³ Hull, 26.

The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene

Church Venue

The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, where I formerly served as an associate pastor for five years prior to my assignment on the Eurasia Region and currently serve, was the venue. The congregation was the general populace for the study.



Geographical Context

Bel Air, Maryland is located on the Mid-Atlantic seaboard of the United States,



and it continues to experience exponential growth because of its proximity to Baltimore, Maryland; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington, DC; and New York City. It is a part of the Mid-Atlantic District, and Dr. Kenneth Mills, the District Superintendent, has described it as a great mission field because of the growing number of ethnicities.

Cultural Demography

Bel Air was once a rural, farming community in Harford County; however, it is now a small city. It is only minutes from Interstate 95, the Light Rail, and MARC (Maryland Area Regional Commuter) Train, which makes commuting easy for people who work in the Baltimore-Washington area but have moved to the suburbs to avoid crime and the high cost of living.

While the Bel Air community was once comprised of primarily Anglo-Americans, it has recently experienced an influx of ethnicities, which include Asian, Indian, Latino, Haitian, and African-American.²¹⁴ The cultures of the community have struggled to blend, and there are numerous ethnic subcultures. The Bel Air congregation is also primarily Anglo-American; however, it has a growing Spanish-speaking ministry that is ministering to the Latinos in the community.

The demographics of the church reflect those of the county and reveal that the residents of Harford County are primarily middle age and older adults with families. This is the result of the high cost of living and the lack of affordable housing for younger families.²¹⁵ The church has become a white-collar church, as the descendants of the founding members pursue higher education and newcomers are educated, professionals.

The church is no longer a small church with fifty members; it is a church with a weekly attendance of 405. In 2008, the attendance was 487; however, statistics reveal that attendance has declined over the last five years.²¹⁶ Based on a conversation with Dr. Russell Long, the lead pastor, this is due to several factors. These include the death of older members, who supported the church with their attendance and tithe; the change in church attendance patterns by regular attendees and the increasing number of new attendees whose attendance is inconsistent; and the loss of a pastoral team member who was responsible for assimilation and small group ministry.

²¹⁴ Demographics for Bel Air, Maryland, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Bel-Air-Maryland.html> (Accessed February 2012).

²¹⁵ Demographics for Bel Air, Maryland, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Bel-Air-Maryland.html> (Accessed February 2012).

²¹⁶ Congregational statistics obtained from the Church of the Nazarene's research center are attached as Appendix 1 (Accessed February 2012).

Pastoral leadership has helped the congregation transition from a small, country church to a growing, suburban church. As the *ecclesia*, the church is a ministry center for the community. In addition to Hickory Child Development Center, a nursery and preschool ministry, the church partners with other churches in the community and county agencies, such as the Harford County Homeless Ministry and Tabitha's House to provide housing, food, and clothing for people in need.

Contextual History

The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene was born out of the holiness movement that swept the United States in the beginning of the twentieth century and a spiritual awakening that touched the lives of several families in the early 1920's. In 1921, a group of dedicated Christians, united by an experience referred to as second blessing holiness, met for cottage prayer meetings and held tent meetings on a regular basis.

God poured out his Spirit upon the small body of believers. In 1931, the growing congregation purchased the site of the first tent meeting in Hickory and constructed a church. In spite of the Great Depression and the economic difficulties in the 1930's, the founders of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene demonstrated sacrificial living, and the church was effective in its outreach to the community.

As church attendance steadily increased over the years and the need for a larger facility became obvious, God faithfully revealed his plan for the future of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. In 1986, the congregation voted to accept the recommendation of the church board to purchase the sixty-three acre, Hoopes orchard located a few miles north of the church. In February of 2001, the congregation moved to their new facility, where the church continues to grow the next generation of disciples.

Spiritual Milieu

God has blessed the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene with both tangible and intangible resources. The tangible resources include a multi-purpose ministry center and beautiful recreation area to minister to the congregation and the community and the monetary resources to fund local, district, and global ministries. The intangible resources include the extended families of the founding members of the church who are deeply committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission and the congregants who give sacrificially of their financial resources, spiritual gifts, and time.

Approximately sixty percent of the congregants are connected to families of the founding members. While many of them appear to be committed Christians, I wonder if they really understand what it means to be a Christlike disciple. Additionally, with the increasing number of new attendees and Christians without a church background, a discipleship ministry is imperative.

The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene's Mission Statement

The leadership of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene is committed to discipleship, and their mission statement is “growing the next generation of disciples.”²¹⁷ They strive to fulfill this by planting seeds of hope, cultivating devoted Christ followers, grafting new believers, feasting on the harvest of grace, and serving the world with their resources. The mission statement provides direction and purpose for every ministry, as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission by making Christlike disciples.

²¹⁷ Bel Air Church of the Nazarene Mission Statement, <http://www.belairnazarene.org/about/our-mission> (Accessed February 2012).

Research Methodology and Instrumentation for Making Christlike Disciples

As a Christian, we are called “to follow Jesus” as his disciple; then we are commanded “to go and make disciples.” Research methodology and instrumentation for making Christlike disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene included a survey to discern the spiritual maturity and practices of the congregants and a discipleship curriculum and spiritual formation resources to incite spiritual growth in students.

Congregational Survey

In order to ascertain quantitative data for this study on discipleship, a survey²¹⁸ was developed. It was administered on a Sunday morning following the worship services and a message on discipleship. The survey assessed the spiritual maturity of the congregants and their practice of spiritual disciplines as well as their willingness to participate in a discipleship class.²¹⁹

After compiling the data from the survey, I met with Pastor Long to discuss the results. We also reviewed the list of fifty-one respondents who had indicated an interest in attending a class on discipleship and selected fourteen potential participants based on their responses to the questions on spiritual maturity and commitment to grow spiritually. I then met individually with the fourteen respondents to review their responses to the survey. All fourteen said they were committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple and wanted to attend the class.

²¹⁸ See Appendix 4 for the Discipleship Survey.

²¹⁹ The results of the Discipleship Survey are reported in Chapter Four.

The *Discipleship for Life* Curriculum

The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum is based on Jesus' words in the Gospel of John, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."²²⁰ The *telos* of the *Discipleship for Life* class is the development of Christlike disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene by making accessible the traditions of our faith community and making manifest the intrinsic connection between the traditions and a student's spiritual transformation.²²¹

The *Discipleship for Life* class provided the venue for students to learn what it means to follow Jesus, learn Jesus' words, study Jesus' way of life, emulate Jesus' character, and evangelize and disciple others. Jesus used these principles with his disciples, and they are the ones he expected us to use when he said, "Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."²²²

The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum is didactic and based on the inerrant Word of God, and it reflects the holiness doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene and our mission "to make Christlike disciples in the nations."²²³ The curriculum has four modules, which include: "Disciple for Life," "Spiritual Disciplines for Life," "Ministry for Life," and "Mission for Life." The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum helps students gain spiritual knowledge, nurture their relationship with God, develop as a Christlike disciple, and prepare for ministry.

²²⁰ John 10:10, *NRSV Bible*.

²²¹ Boys, 193.

²²² Hull, 62-64.

²²³ *The Manual*, 5.

Module One, “Disciple for Life,” establishes the foundation for discipleship. The call to follow Jesus includes spiritual conversion and results in a change of heart and moral direction. It is a redirection from being self-centered to God-centered.²²⁴

Given that it can be difficult to gauge a person’s spiritual commitment, the module explains the purpose of life, the salvation experience, and the characteristics of a Christian and disciple of Christ consistent with the evangelical tradition that supports this view. It helps students understand that faith is developed through experiential knowledge and elucidates the personal qualities of a disciple found in John 15:7-13.²²⁵ As noted in Chapter Two, this approach resembles the basic hallmark of evangelical approaches to Christian education.

Module Two, “Spiritual Disciplines for Life,” describes the characteristics of first-century discipleship and the spiritual disciplines that Jesus modeled and taught: prayer, Scripture, worship, fellowship, ministry, and stewardship. The call to follow Jesus is a call to live counterculturally, and this module explains the transformation process. It encourages students to learn the spiritual disciplines that will nurture their relationship with God and incite spiritual growth in conjunction with their evangelical conversion.

The module emphasizes the importance of the *ecclesia* in the spiritual transformation process, and it also addresses the significance of church membership. The resources included in this module help students practice the spiritual disciplines to become a more Christlike disciple and prepare them for ministry.

Module Three, “Ministry for Life,” teaches students that God has a purpose for their life and a call to discipleship is a call to ministry. According to John 13:13-17,

²²⁴ Boys, 202.

²²⁵ Hull, 47.

following Christ means serving others.²²⁶ As his disciples, we have a responsibility to make the spiritual reality of God’s love a physical reality in the lives of others through our ministry to them.²²⁷

The module scripturally examines how we are shaped for ministry; then it utilizes resources and worksheets to ascertain information, which is recorded on the student’s personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.” These resources include “The Spiritual Gifts Inventory,” “Monitoring My Heartbeat,” “Applying My Abilities,” “Myers-Briggs Type Indicator,” “Examining My Experiences.” The module also helps students discover a ministry that is fulfilling and fruitful as they primarily serve the local church.

Module Four, “Mission for Life,” explicates God’s mission and focuses on Jesus’ command to go and make disciples. Jesus chose the disciples for two purposes. He called them to establish a relationship with him; then he sent them out to continue his mission. Jesus calls us as his disciples for the same purposes. He wants us to develop a relationship with him, so he can transform us and empower us for his mission.²²⁸

The module instructs students how to develop a life mission statement, serve incarnationally as Jesus, innately share their faith, and actively disciple others. It also includes the history of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, its mission statement, and an overview of local, regional, and global mission opportunities.

²²⁶ Boice, 61.

²²⁷ Chilcote, 108-109.

²²⁸ Hull, 180.

The Discipleship for Life Class

The *Discipleship for Life* class met on Wednesday evenings. During the first session, we reviewed the calendar²²⁹ and introduction to the curriculum; then each student shared their spiritual journey. This established a gracious milieu for the class.

Each session began with a time for students to share how they had experienced God and practiced the spiritual disciplines they were learning. This was a vital part of the class as the students eagerly related their experiences. We also shared praises and prayer requests, which was followed by prayer. After a brief review of the previous week's lesson, we focused on the lesson for the week. We ended each session with a reading from Oswald Chamber's *My Utmost for His Highest*.

The *Discipleship for Life* class culminated with a one-day retreat.²³⁰ After a devotion from Luke 5:16 on the prayer life of Jesus and concerted prayer, we focused on discovering our sacred pathways and keeping a spiritual journal. The retreat also included a time for personal prayer, meditation, and journaling. It concluded with communion, and the students were commissioned with the evangelical dictum "to go and make disciples."

After the retreat, the Class Evaluation and the Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form were distributed. The students were asked to complete and return the evaluation form before they left the retreat and to bring their Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form with them when we met to discuss their personal profile. Following the retreat, two of the students hosted a potluck dinner and time of fellowship for the members of the class at their home.

²²⁹ See Appendix 5 for the *Discipleship for Life* calendar.

²³⁰ See Appendices 6-10 for the agenda and resources for the *Discipleship for Life* retreat.

The Discipleship for Life Spiritual Formation and Evaluation Forms

Several forms were developed to assess the spiritual growth of the students and to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Discipleship for Life* class. The Pre-Class Spiritual Formation Form²³¹ asked students to indicate their spiritual maturity on a continuum scale at the beginning of the class and to note their objective for taking the class. The Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form²³² asked them to indicate their maturity on a continuum scale at the end of the class and to confirm if they achieved their objective. It also asked them to identify the spiritual disciplines that had influenced their spiritual growth and to include the name of at least one person they planned to disciple.

The *Discipleship for Life* Class Evaluation²³³ asked students to evaluate the teacher, length of the class, effectiveness of the curriculum and resources, and the elements of the class that influenced them the most and least spiritually. The evaluation form also asked students to submit information on how the class could be improved.

At the conclusion of the *Discipleship for Life* class, I met with each student to discuss their spiritual growth. We reviewed their pre-class and post-class spiritual formation forms as well as their personal profile. I concluded our meeting²³⁴ by reaffirming their commitment to become a more Christlike disciple and praying for their continued spiritual growth.

²³¹ See Appendix 11 for the *Discipleship for Life* Pre-Class Spiritual Formation Form.

²³² See Appendix 12 for the *Discipleship for Life* Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form.

²³³ See Appendix 13 for the *Discipleship for Life* Class Evaluation.

²³⁴ Feedback from these meetings is included in Chapter Four in the post-class spiritual précis for each student.

CHAPTER FOUR

Making Christlike Disciples at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene

George Barna asserts, “Churches that are most effective in discipleship have a philosophy of ministry that places daily spiritual growth at the core of the ministry.” They understand that discipleship does not occur in a vacuum; it is most effectively accomplished in the context of the *ecclesia* and with the support of spirit-filled Christians. It is also essential that every church provide ministry and relational opportunities to facilitate the spiritual growth of its congregants.²³⁵

Based on the description of church models by Barna in Chapter Two, the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene was identified as a *Missional Model*. The church helps people develop as spiritually mature Christians who are passionately committed to Jesus. They evaluate everything in their lives according to biblical principles, commit to having a healthy family, live a morally pure life, share evangelically with others, and are socially responsible in their community.²³⁶

Pastor Long is a discipleship advocate and his messages reflect the church’s mission statement, “growing the next generation of disciples.” Several areas that could be improved include accepting new members only when they understand the spiritual commitment of membership, ensuring all ministry programs and small groups focus on making disciples, and reducing the number of programs to create a more effective discipleship emphasis.

²³⁵ Barna, 31.

²³⁶ Barna, 139-143.

Congregational Survey on Discipleship

The results of this study²³⁷ varied significantly from Barna's research. Barna surveyed a broad sample of born-again Christians from different traditions across the continental United States; however, the survey for this study was administered at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, a holiness church that teaches living as Christ.

In Barna's survey of 1,737²³⁸ adults who profess to be born-again Christians, none of the people he interviewed said their goal in life was to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ.²³⁹ They also lacked accountability and did not have a clear, measurable goal for discipleship. While most of the believers said their faith was significant, statistics confirm that only a few pursue spiritual growth. Data revealed only forty percent of the believers who attend church have established spiritual growth goals, and sixty percent of the believers have no sense of what they want to achieve or become.²⁴⁰

The survey at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, which was completed by 165 adults, revealed that ninety-five percent of the respondents desire to develop a more intimate relationship with Christ. Additionally, sixty-eight percent of the believers have established spiritual growth goals and only twenty-eight percent do not know what they want to achieve. This information is reported on Figure 1: Respondents Who Have Established Spiritual Goals.

²³⁷ The results of the survey at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene are attached as Appendix 14.

²³⁸ Barna, 170.

²³⁹ Barna, 8.

²⁴⁰ Barna, 33-43.

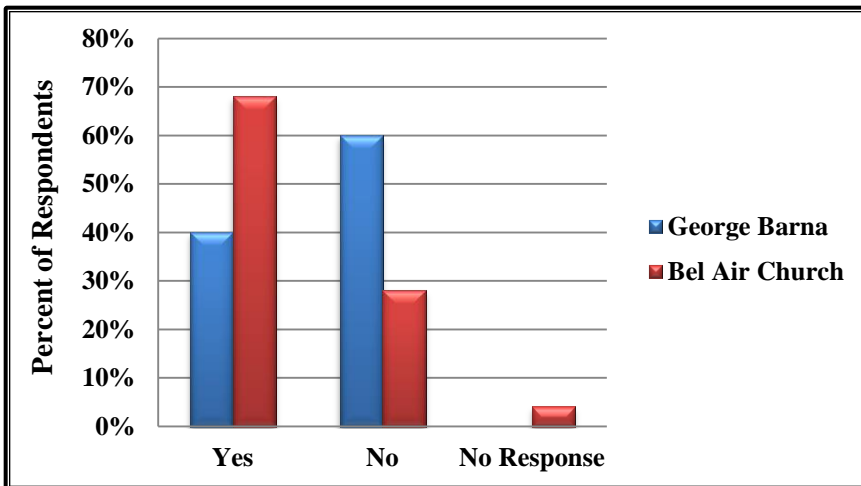


Figure 1: Respondents Who Have Established Spiritual Goals

In Barna’s study on spiritual development, he reveals the primary reasons believers do not pursue spiritual growth. He reports that approximately fifty-six percent of those who participated in the survey said they were too busy, twenty-four percent stated they lacked the motivation or passion, ten percent reported health problems, and another ten percent stated personal factors or limitations. While these explanations seem rational, Barna contends they are also evidence of a mediocre or lukewarm relationship with Christ.²⁴¹

The survey of the Bel Air congregation revealed that only thirty-nine percent of the respondents noted their daily schedule and lack of time as a factor that limited their spiritual development, while twenty-four percent listed health reasons as a limiting factor. This larger percentage represents the demographics of the congregational members who completed the survey. The statistics for lack of motivation and personal factors were comparable to those Barna reported. Figure 2 reports the factors that limit spiritual growth in the survey respondents.

²⁴¹ Barna, 43-44.

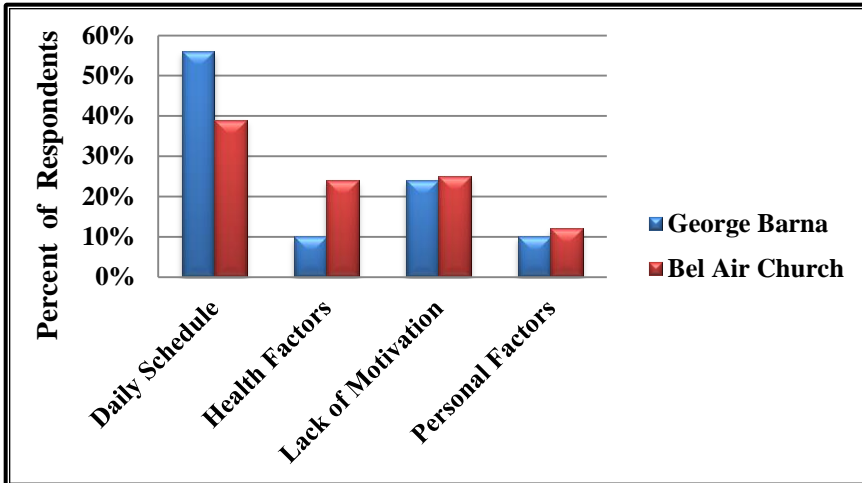


Figure 2: Factors That Limit Spiritual Growth in Respondents

Figure 3 reveals that the majority of the 165 congregants who participated in the congregational survey consistently practice the spiritual disciplines of Bible reading, praying, serving, and tithing.

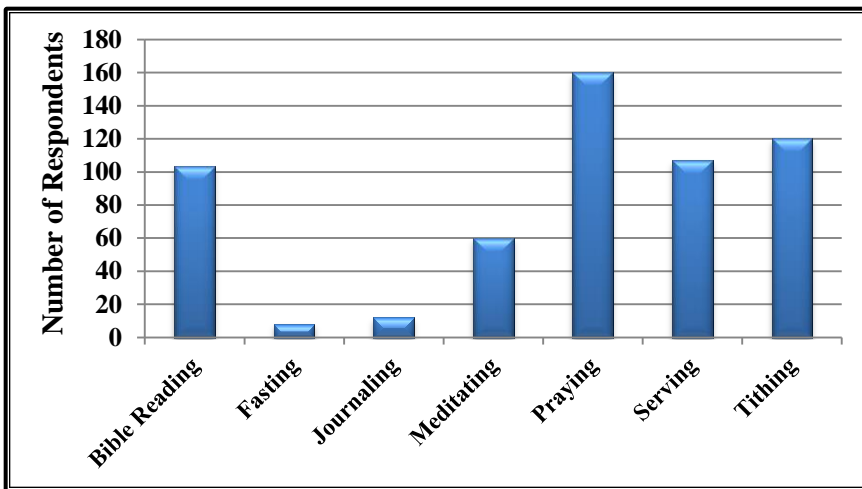


Figure 3: Spiritual Disciplines Practiced By Respondents

Two questions on the survey at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene contributed significantly to this study: “Were you raised in a Christian home?” and “How satisfied are

you with your spiritual life?" Figure 4 reports that respondents who were raised in a Christian home experienced a more satisfying spiritual life.

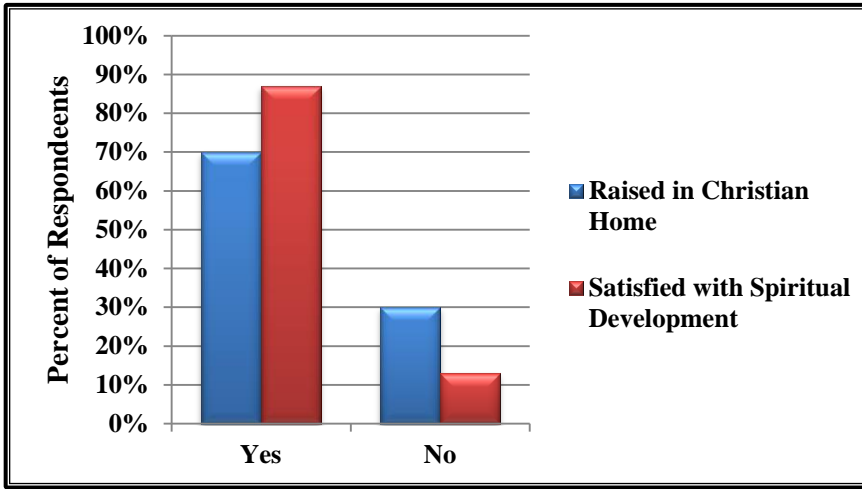


Figure 4: Respondents Raised In Christian Home

Statistics on spiritual maturity from the continuum scale on the survey reflect those of the congregational respondents who indicated they were satisfied with their spiritual life. This data is noted on Figure 5.

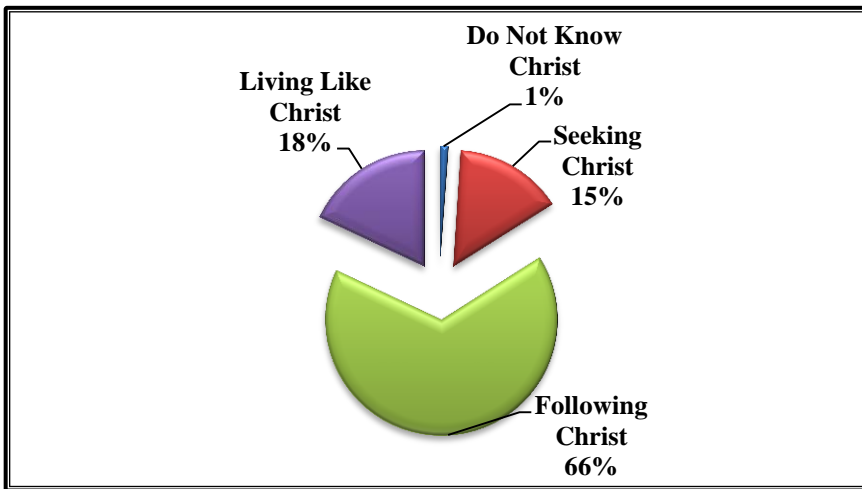


Figure 5: Spiritual Maturity of Respondents

The *Discipleship for Life* Class

Spiritual Formation Instruments

Although all of the class participants said they had accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and are committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple, they are at different places in their spiritual development. This proved to be beneficial as the students encouraged and prayed for one another.

The Pre-Class Spiritual Formation Form asked disciples to indicate their spiritual maturity on a continuum scale before taking the class, note their objective for taking the class, and identify the spiritual disciplines they wanted to develop.

The Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form asked the students to indicate their spiritual maturity on a continuum scale after taking the class. It also asked them to confirm if they had achieved their objective for taking the class, identify the spiritual disciplines that influenced their spiritual growth, and describe how the disciplines they learned helped them become a more Christlike disciple.

Figure 6 reports the spiritual maturity of the students before taking the *Discipleship for Life* class and their spiritual maturity after taking the class.

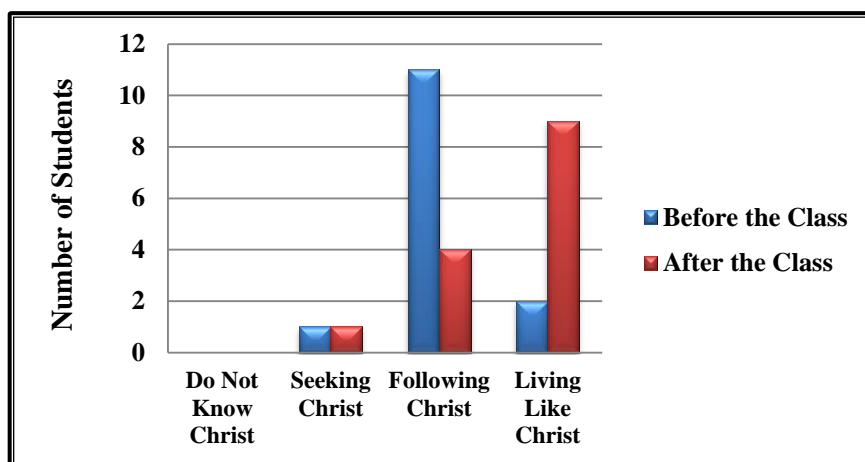


Figure 6: Spiritual Maturity of Students

The practice of spiritual disciplines is essential in the spiritual development of Christlike disciples. The spiritual disciplines practiced regularly by the fourteen students who participated in the *Discipleship for Life* class are noted on Figure 7.

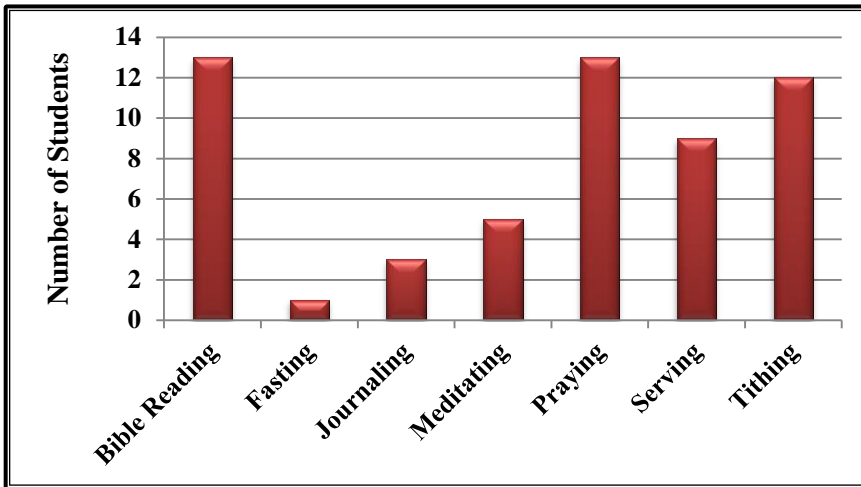


Figure 7: Spiritual Disciplines Practiced By Students

The Discipleship for Life Disciples

For this report, students are referred to as Disciple #1, Disciple #2, etc. Each disciple is listed in a pre-class spiritual précis and a post-class spiritual précis that includes information on their spiritual development.

In addition to the data reported on the survey, information on the spiritual maturity and development of the fourteen students who participated in the *Discipleship for Life* class was ascertained from several sources. These include the student's Pre-Class Spiritual Formation Form, Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form, Class Evaluation, and their personal profile, "My SHAPE for Ministry," as well as their verbal responses in class discussions and personal meetings.

Pre-Class Spiritual Précis of Disciples

Disciple #1 was not raised in a Christian home, and she became a Christian after being introduced to the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene and her husband through a friend, who attended the church. She is following Christ, and she consistently reads the Bible, prays, and tithes. She wanted to deepen her relationship with Christ but lacked the motivation to do it. She also wanted to learn how to more effectively witness to her non-Christian friends.

Disciple #2 was raised in a Christian home; however, she did not accept Christ as her Lord and Savior until she was a teenager. She was following Christ and somewhat satisfied with her spiritual life. She consistently prays, serves, and tithes; however, she wanted to share her faith more openly with her coworkers.

Disciple #3 was not raised in a Christian home and became a Christian as an adult after a divorce. Although he reads his Bible and prays, he wanted to develop a more Christlike attitude. At the beginning of the class, he indicated he was in the early stage of following Christ and was only somewhat satisfied with his spiritual life.

Disciple #4 was raised in a Christian home and is a committed Christian who is living like Christ. She consistently reads her Bible, journals, prays, serves, and tithes, but she wanted to experience more “oomph” in her spiritual walk.

Disciple #5 is a mature adult who struggles with consistency in her relationship with God because of depression. She was raised in a Christian home and is somewhat satisfied with her spiritual life. She reads her Bible, prays, and tithes on a consistent basis; however, she desired to learn more about God.

Disciple #6 accepted Jesus as a child and indicated that she is living like Christ on the continuum scale. She reads her Bible, meditates, prays, serves, and tithes on a regular basis. As director of the church's daycare and preschool program, she wanted to be more intentional in discipling her staff and witnessing to the children and their families.

Disciple #7 grew up in a Christian home, and she reads her Bible, prays, and serves others. Family and friends often take advantage of her spiritual gifts of compassion and service, which causes her to feel overwhelmed and results in burnout.

Disciple #8 was raised in a Christian home. He indicated he was following Christ and was somewhat satisfied with his spiritual journey. He is a mature Christian who practices all of the spiritual disciplines; however, the county agency he works for was being restructured. This created a lot of stress for him and his colleagues, and he wanted to maintain a positive attitude through the transition.

Disciple #9 accepted Jesus as her Savior as a young child, and she is living like Christ. She practices all of the spiritual disciplines except for fasting. She is satisfied with her relationship with God; however, she wanted to be more effective in discipling her children and grandchildren, which she views as her ministry.

Disciple #10 invited Jesus into her heart as a child, and she indicated that she is following Christ. Although she reads her Bible, prays, and tithes, she is dissatisfied with her spiritual life. She wanted to grow spiritually by developing a more intimate prayer life. She also wanted to be more open in sharing God's love with others, especially with her siblings who are estranged from God.

Disciple #11 was not raised in a Christian home. He stated that he reads his Bible, prays, and tithes. He said he is following Christ; however, he is dissatisfied with his spiritual life. He realized he needs “to be still and know God” but lacked motivation. He stated that he wanted to grow in his relationship with Christ, but work prevents him from spending time with God.

Disciple #12 was raised in a Christian home, and she is following Christ. She reads her Bible and prays; yet, her daily schedule and personal limitations prevent her from developing spiritually. She was somewhat dissatisfied with her spiritual life and wanted to learn more about God by studying Scripture.

Disciple #13 was raised in a Christian home, and she consistently practices the spiritual disciplines. She is living like Christ, but she is only somewhat satisfied with her spiritual life. She wanted to learn how to more effectively disciple her family and friends, especially a daughter who is not a Christian.

Disciple #14 grew up in a Christian home. He is following Christ but is only somewhat satisfied with his relationship with God. He tries to read his Bible, meditate, pray, serve, and tithe; however, he wanted to be more consistent in practicing the spiritual disciplines. As one of the owners of an engineering company, he also wanted to disciple several of the employees who work for him.

Post-Class Spiritual Précis of Disciples

Disciple #1 has moved closer on the continuum scale to living like Christ, and she attributes this to prayer journaling. She also ordered *The Purpose-Driven Life* book for two friends. While she was initially apprehensive, they thanked her. She also stated that she is praying for them and wants to disciple them.

Disciple #2 indicated that she is growing closer to Christ on the continuum scale, because of her commitment to prayer and Scripture memorization. She is going through a painful divorce, and her coworkers cannot understand how she has maintained a positive disposition. She attributes the peace she is experiencing to her relationship with God.

Disciple #3 has moved closer on the continuum scale to living like Christ. He has more patience with people, because of spending time in God's Word and prayer. After discovering he has the gifts of helps and compassion, he is ministering to an older neighbor by doing errands for him, mowing his lawn, etc. When his neighbor was sick, he took him to the emergency room and stayed with him until he was treated, then he drove him to the pharmacy and home.

Disciple #4, a committed Christian who is living like Christ, reported that the class has helped her become more intentional in discipling the teenage girls in the small group she leads at church. She stated that she is committed to making "more disciples and better disciples!"

Disciple #5 stated that she has made significant progress in following Christ on the continuum scale. She attributes this to the consistent practice of the spiritual disciplines, especially praying and reading God's Word. Her spiritual growth has helped her become more effective in discipling her children.

Disciple #6, the director of our church's daycare and preschool, noted that Scripture memorization has increased her ability to handle the stress of family and work, and prayer journaling has enabled her stay focused in her devotions. The class has also helped her realize the importance of the Bible study that she leads for her staff.

Disciple #7, who was experiencing burnout, discovered that the practice of the spiritual disciplines promotes spiritual renewal. After identifying her spiritual SHAPE and developing a life mission statement, she has learned that she can say "no" to some requests without feeling guilty.

Disciple #8, a long-time board member, told the church board that the *Discipleship for Life* class helped him get through the restructuring at work. By increasing the amount of time he spent in prayer and God's Word, he is a more Christlike disciple who is witnessing at work and discipling his children – especially his sons.

Disciple #9 reported that she has developed a more intimate relationship with God. One of the disciplines she focused on was Scripture memorization, which has enabled her to gain godly wisdom. She now feels spiritually equipped to disciple her children and grandchildren.

Disciple #10 shared that the practice of the spiritual disciplines, especially more time in prayer, helps her experience God's presence more consistently. This in turn helps her share his love with her siblings who are estranged from God.

Disciple #11 said he wanted to develop his relationship with Christ; however, like many of the respondents in Barna's survey, he was not willing to practice the spiritual disciplines. Consequently, his spiritual growth was stymied.

Disciple #12 has learned to practice the presence of Christ, which helps her respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. After being prompted to greet a neighbor, she learned she is going through a divorce. She then invited her neighbor to attend a special service at our church for people experiencing grief or life-transitions. She is also praying for her neighbor and inviting her to church.

Disciple #13, who has struggled to share Christ with her family, has learned that she can also share her faith through acts of kindness and expressions of love. This has been effective, especially with family members who have been closed to conversations about God.

Disciple #14 stated, “The *Discipleship for Life* class has helped me understand what it means to be a Christlike disciple, and spiritual journaling helps me think through my issues with God’s guidance. It has also encouraged me to spend more time with God.” An introvert, he is now willing to step outside of his comfort zone. He has developed a plan to spend time each day with several men who work for his company as a means to develop a relationship with them.

The Discipleship for Life Class Evaluation

The *Discipleship for Life* Class Evaluation asked the students to evaluate the teacher, the length of the class, the element of the class that influenced their spiritual growth the most and the least, and the effectiveness of the curriculum.

All of the evaluations reported that the teacher modeled the discipleship principles and spiritual disciplines she taught. Twelve of the students reported that the length of the class was appropriate, and two students reported the class was too short.

The responses were unanimous that the *Discipleship for Life* class helped the participants become a more Christlike disciple. This was also confirmed by the students' responses on their Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form.

The elements that influenced the students most include experiencing an intimate sense of community, developing and practicing the spiritual disciplines, discovering their spiritual SHAPE for ministry, learning the theology of discipleship, and developing a life mission statement.

Suggestions for improving the class included increasing the number of sessions and eliminating the fill-in-the-blanks in the curriculum. I plan to increase the number of sessions to allow more time for class discussion; however, the majority of students responded that the fill-in-the-blank format helped them stay focused on the lesson.

Concluding Thoughts on the *Discipleship for Life* Class

The evaluations for the *Discipleship for Life* class were all very positive. In an informational video for *E100*, an all-church emphasis to help congregants engage 100 passages of Scripture, one of the students credited *The Discipleship for Life* class for helping him learn what it really means to be a Christlike disciple.

Data reported by the students who attended the *Discipleship for Life* class on their pre-class and post-class spiritual development forms confirmed that nine students are committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple. The students understood the curriculum, engaged the spiritual disciplines and discipleship principles, and embraced the relational ideology of the curriculum. Four students made significant progress; however, their responses revealed that they had not fully engaged the spiritual disciplines.

Additionally, one student said he was committed to becoming a Christlike disciple, but each week he stated he was too busy to complete the work.

Although all of the students are at a different place in their spiritual development, thirteen of them are committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple. As a means to encourage their ongoing spiritual growth, an accountability small group was established. Eight students have faithfully attended the meetings. These students are also spiritual leaders at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.

When I began to teach another discipleship class this year, I asked Disciple #14, who has embraced the *Discipleship for Life* ideology, to lead the group. He has become a Christlike disciple who is making disciples.

In my final meeting with the students, I reminded them of Dennis Kinlaw's challenge in *The Mind of Christ*.

Since the key to each person's salvation lies in someone else, you can be sure the key to someone's life lies within you. The only hope for that person is for you to allow Christ's burden to become your own. If you let him do that within you, you'll be thinking the way Christ thinks, because the mind of Christ is the cross. The cross is clearly a symbol of death, but it is also the most powerful symbol of life itself. May God help us to enter into the fellowship of his suffering and become instruments of his redemption. We will never regret saying a total yes to him.²⁴²

In reflecting on the *Discipleship for Life* class, the members of the class had gathered as the *ecclesia* to learn the spiritual principles that Jesus had taught his disciples. When the class ended, they were commissioned as Christlike disciples and sent "to go and make disciples!"

²⁴² Dennis Kinlaw, *The Mind of Christ* (Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 1998), 123.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Command to Go and Make Disciples!

Bonhoeffer asserts, “Christianity without the living Jesus Christ remains necessarily a Christianity without discipleship; and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ!” “The call to discipleship is a commitment solely to the person of Jesus Christ. Christ calls; the disciple follows. This is grace and commandment in one. Jesus does not call us to discipleship simply as a teacher; he calls us as the Christ, the Son of God.”²⁴³ As recipients of grace, we are called to be Christlike disciples; then, we are commanded “to go and make disciples.”

Discipleship and spiritual formation are biblically and theologically grounded, and the *telos* is always transformation to the image of Christ.²⁴⁴ God is the center and goal of the education process, and the essence of teaching the Bible is so that God may speak through it to those we teach.²⁴⁵

As Christian educators, we understand the teaching office is founded on the absolute priority of the Gospel in the Christian life. Our authority to teach is based on our relationship with God, our love for God and others, and the way we have been “taught by God.” We prepare to teach through prayer, which enables us to become single-hearted and single-minded people of faith; then we teach from this position.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ Bonhoeffer, 57-60.

²⁴⁴ Hull, 35.

²⁴⁵ Maddix, 14.14-16.

²⁴⁶ Yust and Anderson, 18-21.

Implications of the Research Data

Although most people believe that anyone who accepts Christ as their personal Savior is a disciple, this study confirms that the biblical understanding of a disciple is someone who submits to at least one person in a healthy, accountability relationship as a means to fully develop as a follower of Jesus.²⁴⁷ We must remember discipleship is not a program. Discipleship is an ongoing process to transform us to the image of God. It is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside a disciple, and we encourage and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ.²⁴⁸

The *Discipleship for Life* class provided the venue for spiritual transformation, as the students learned to respect the authority of Scripture, submit to the will of the Holy Spirit, and interpret their life circumstances through the lens of Scripture with insight from the Spirit and in the context of community. Furthermore, the *Discipleship for Life* curriculum included the spiritual disciplines to incite spiritual growth.²⁴⁹ These disciplines also enabled the students to develop an intimate relationship with God and spiritually prepared them for ministry.

During our weekly fellowship, the students eagerly shared their experiences. As the *ecclesia*, the spirit-filled body of believers and the flesh and blood expression of the kingdom of God, they are ministering to their family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors through intentional acts of compassion and expressions of love.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ Hull, 67.

²⁴⁸ Ogden, 129.

²⁴⁹ Hull, 192-193.

²⁵⁰ Chilcote, 107-108.

Potential Limitations of the Study

Several factors were identified in Chapter One that could limit the effectiveness of this study. They included the narrow sample and population of respondents, Barna's definitions of church models, the number of sessions the *Discipleship for Life* class met, the failure of the students to embrace the discipleship ideology, and my ability to communicate accurately *The Story* as one who has been "taught by God."

Barna's study involved a broad sample of respondents. It also included an extensive, nationwide random sample of 4,108 respondents in the forty-eight continental states from various denominations.²⁵¹

This study focused on a narrow sample, and it was limited to one religious tradition and a small number of respondents in a specific, geographical area. The respondents included the congregants of the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, a holiness church located on the Mid-Atlantic District. The survey was administered on a Sunday morning following the worship services, and 165 congregants completed the survey. Consequently, the results could be limited by the culture, religious tradition, and number of respondents.

The survey for this study, which is based on Barna's survey, could also be limited by the definition of the terms he used to ascertain information. One question asks, "Please indicate the personal, spiritual disciplines you practice on a regular basis." The word "regular" could imply daily, weekly, monthly, etc. Therefore, it could have different meanings for the respondents, which could limit the results of the survey.

²⁵¹ Barna, 169-170.

As noted in Chapter Two, “discipleship” is not a program; it is an ongoing, lifelong process. It is referred to as “the act of following Jesus.” The term implies a sense of journey or the idea of “becoming a disciple,” instead of “being made a disciple.”²⁵²

In light of Hull’s description of discipleship, the number of weeks the *Discipleship for Life* class met could be a limiting factor. The class met for twelve weeks; however, all of the students are at various stages in their spiritual development. For some of them, the length of the class was long enough to establish or reinforce the disciplines necessary for spiritual vivacity. Others will need ongoing discipleship to experience spiritual transformation and become a more Christlike disciple.

The effectiveness of the *Discipleship for Life* class could also be limited by the students, if they are not genuinely committed to spiritual growth. All of the students except one were committed to spiritual growth, understood the curriculum, engaged the discipleship principles and spiritual disciplines, and developed the relationships to experience spiritual transformation.

Another factor that could limit the effectiveness of the study was if the students did not emulate the five characteristics of a Christlike disciple. A disciple follows Jesus, learns Jesus’ words, learns Jesus’ way of ministry, emulates Jesus’ life and character, and finds and teaches others to follow Jesus. While the second, third, and fourth qualities are fairly easy to achieve, the first and fifth are more challenging.²⁵³ The Post-Class Spiritual Formation Form asked “who” the student planned to disciple. All of the students except one noted at least one person.

²⁵² Hull, 35.

²⁵³ Hull, 68-69.

I was aware of several factors that could limit me from effectively teaching the *Discipleship for Life* class. These included my understanding of the theological and discipleship resources I used for my research and the curriculum, my ability to accurately and clearly articulate *The Story*, and my commitment as a teacher of faith.

As the teacher of the *Discipleship for Life* class, my authority to teach is based on the way I know God and embody his love. I prepared to teach through prayer, and the biblical narratives helped me to accurately, consciously, imaginatively, and responsibly communicate *The Story* to the students as one who was “taught by God.” Based on the positive feedback from the students on their spiritual formation and evaluation forms, I assisted the Master Teacher as the facilitator of the *Discipleship for Life* class.

Potential for Implementation in Another Setting

This study and the *Discipleship for Life* resources could be utilized in almost any ministry setting with minor revisions. I recommend that the teacher exegete the cultural venue because some of the illustrations used to explicate spiritual principles in the curriculum may not be appropriate for all ethnicities.

I also recommend assessing the spiritual milieu of the church to ensure it is a viable setting for a discipleship class as well as confirming that the people who want to take the class are committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple.

Unexpected Conclusions

Unexpected conclusions that emerged from this study included data from Barna's research on spiritual maturity and my response to the student who chose not to embrace the *Discipleship for Life* ideology.

There was a significant difference in the data reported in Barna's study and the data reported in this study. In his study of adults who profess to be born-again Christians, none of the adults he interviewed said their goal in life was to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ or to make disciples. They also lacked accountability and did not have a clear, measurable goal for discipleship.²⁵⁴ The survey at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene revealed that ninety-five percent of the respondents desire to develop a more intimate relationship with Christ, and sixty-eight percent have established spiritual growth goals.²⁵⁵ I believe this is because the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene is a *Missional Model* that is committed to making Christlike disciples.

I was also surprised by my attitude toward the student who was not committed to becoming a more Christlike disciple. Initially, I felt that as the teacher I had failed him. Then I realized I was not responsible for his decision to not fully engage in the *Discipleship for Life* class. The call to follow Christ and to discipleship includes a price, and like the rich, young ruler, one student was unwilling to pay it.

²⁵⁴ Barna, 8.

²⁵⁵ The results of the survey at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene are attached as Appendix 14.

Implications of Study on Future Ministry Studies or Plans

Teaching the *Discipleship for Life* class has fueled my passion for making Christlike disciples. Congregants continue to inquire about the class, and I look forward to teaching it again; however, I plan to make several revisions in the curriculum. I am going to expand the section on baptism in Module One to address infant baptism and baby dedication. I am also going to increase the number of class sessions to allow more time for interactive discussion, which is critical in the spiritual transformation process.

One of the participants from the *Discipleship for Life* class suggested that we encourage everyone at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene to take the class. He stated, “You need to teach this class for every small group at our church.” I plan to talk with Pastor Long about his suggestion.

After one of our district deputation tours in 2012, Barry and I were invited to speak at several Faith Promise conventions and a zone mission rally for the district. One of the pastors also invited me to preach on the Sunday morning following the mission rally. I preached on the call to follow Jesus and discipleship. After the worship services, the pastor said, “Our district needs to hear this. What can we do?” We talked during lunch and agreed to stay in touch.

The words “What can we do?” still resonate in my mind. I am praying about the development of *Discipleship for Life*, because I believe it has the potential to be a vital, discipleship resource for churches that are committed to making Christlike disciples.

Concluding Statements on the Call to Make Christlike Disciples

When Nehemiah heard the news about the condition of the wall in Jerusalem, which represented the spiritual complacency of the Israelites, it pierced his heart. As Christian leaders and teachers, we must be concerned about the spiritual complacency of people, especially those who call themselves Christians.

God is the epicenter of the didactic process and all education in faith is oriented toward the holistic transformation of the student; a person learns in order to be changed from depravity to grace.²⁵⁶ Like Jonathan Edwards, who sought to convey knowledge that was spiritual and salvific, we must provide students with access to the life-transforming knowledge of God, so they can become disciples in the school of Christ.²⁵⁷

As Christians, Jesus calls us to be his disciples; then, he invites us to participate in the greatest mission ever known to humanity. If we will abandon everything to follow Jesus, when we hear him say, “Come,” then he will continue to say, “Come,” through us. We will become reproducing disciples who echo the call of Christ’s “Come.”²⁵⁸

Dallas Willard asserts that we cannot be a Christian without first being an active 24/7 disciple of Christ.²⁵⁹ This discipleship is costly; however, it graciously accepts responsibility for those who have not heard the Gospel.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ Boys, 26.

²⁵⁷ Boys, 17.

²⁵⁸ Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, June 13.

²⁵⁹ Willard, 3.

²⁶⁰ Minatrea, 29.

In closing, Bill Hull reminds us of our responsibility:²⁶¹

Making disciples has nothing to do with winning others over to a philosophy or turning them into nice people who smile a lot. Rather the Great Commission launches a rescue mission; all followers receive orders with full authority to take action wherever they happen to be. Discipleship involves saving people from themselves and eternal oblivion, permitting the power of God to change them from the inside out. *All* is the Great Commission's key word – *all* authority, *all* sacrifice, *all*–out effort, *all* the time, for *all* people. How could anything the church thinks up be nearly as important?

“We know love by this that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.”²⁶² This is “costly grace,” but there is no greater love or mission!

²⁶¹ Hull, 24.

²⁶² I John 3:16, *NRSV Bible*.

APPENDICES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

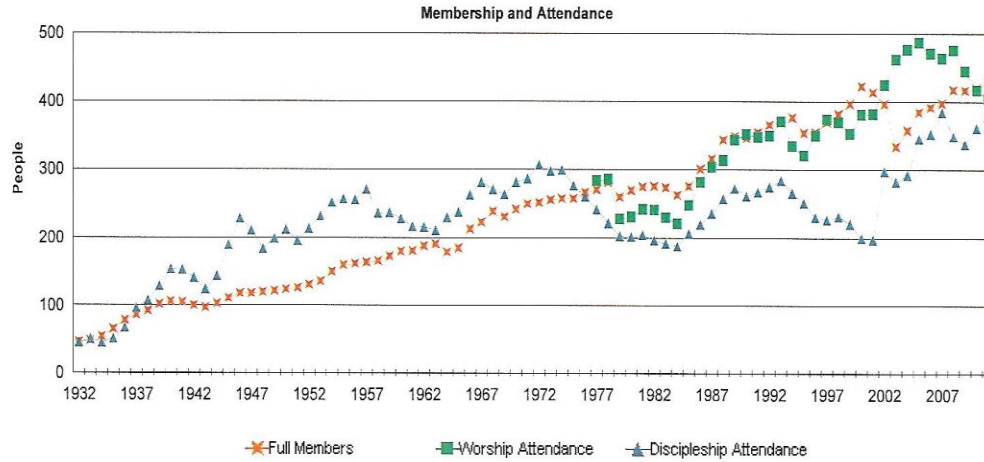
Appendix 1

Summary Report

Bel Air Church of the Nazarene
Mid-Atlantic District

Current Status: Organized, Active
Organized: 1932

Location: Bel Air MD United States
Predominant Culture: White/English-speaking



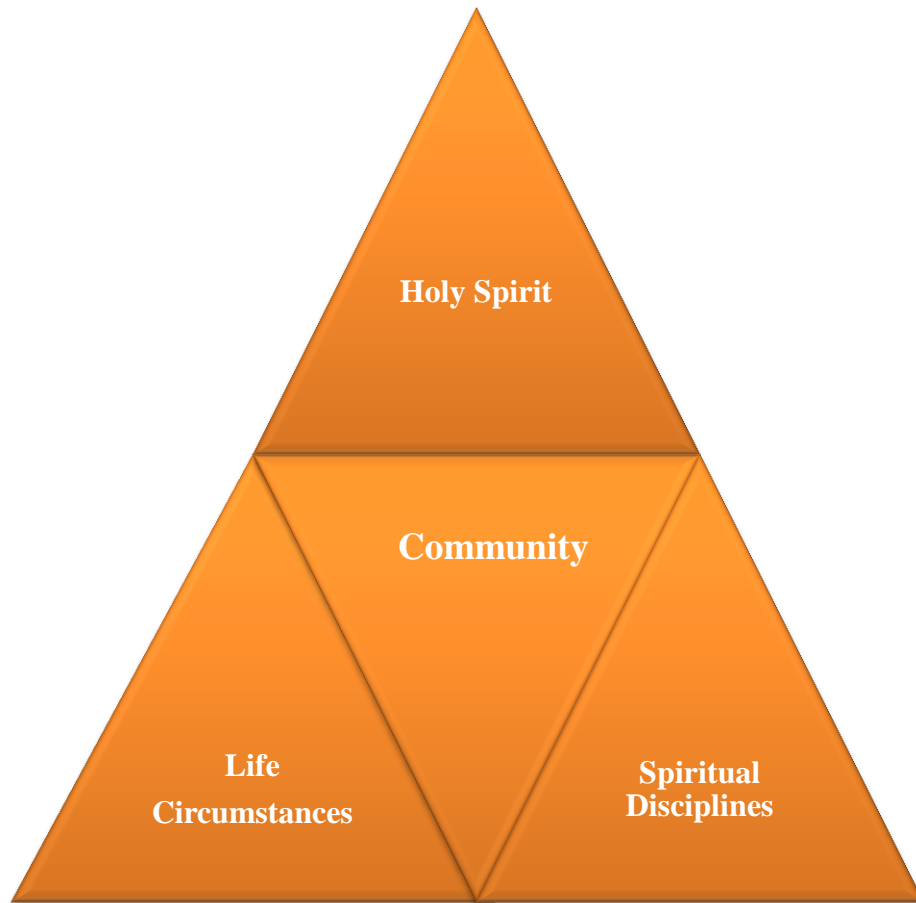
Decadal (2001-2011) Information:

Decadal Membership Growth:	3.62%	Annual Avg. Membership Growth:	0.36%
Decadal Worship Attendance Growth:	6.02%	Annual Avg. Worship Attendance Growth:	0.59%
Decadal Discipleship Attendance Growth:	91.41%	Annual Avg. Discipleship Attendance Growth:	6.71%

Year	New Nazarenes	Full Members	Associate Members	Worship Attendance	Discipleship Enrollment	Discipleship Attendance	Sunday School Attendance	New Church Sponsor	Total Church Income	Allocations Paid?
2011	13	429	388	405	501	379	336	0	\$746,548	Y
2010	14	420	379	417	444	362	342	0	\$712,999	Y
2009	6	417	0	445	473	338	338	N	\$767,638	Y
2008	36	418	0	476	476	349	349	N	\$803,857	Y
2007	4	398	0	464	473	385	385	N	\$800,935	Y
2006	15	392	0	471	397	353	353	N	\$716,121	Y
2005	28	385	0	487	433	346	346	N	\$861,888	Y
2004	25	358	0	477	377	293	293	N	\$771,163	Y
2003	12	334	0	462	436	283	283	N	\$925,267	Y
2002	12	397	0	425	375	298	298	N	\$867,972	Y
2001	1	414	0	382	340	198	198	N	\$732,197	Y
2000	27	423	0	381	337	200	200	N	\$498,335	Y
1999	16	397	0	353	337	221	221	N	\$459,457	Y
1998	21	382	0	370	418	232	232	N	\$445,957	Y
1997	10	370	0	374	406	227	227	N	\$437,577	Y
1996	0	355	0	350	425	231	231	N	\$385,659	Y
1995	17	354	0	321	445	252	252	N	\$405,359	Y
1994	17	377	0	335	530	266	266	N	\$474,179	Y
1993	12	370	0	371	530	285	285	N	\$575,513	Y
1992	6	366	0	350	521	275	275	N	\$570,995	Y
1991	14	355	0	348	466	268	268	N	\$447,467	Y
1990	5	347	0	352	453	262	262	N	\$357,284	Y
1989	11	349	0	344	457	273	273	N	\$315,755	Y
1988	27	344	0	314	427	258	258	N	\$293,503	Y
1987	17	316	0	304	400	236	236	N	\$242,708	Y
1986	21	301	0	282	393	220	220	N	\$210,369	Y

Appendix 2

The Spiritual Transformational Triangle²⁶³



²⁶³ Willard, "The Transformational Triangle," 26-29 (Created to illustrate concept).

Appendix 3

The Four Dimensions of Missional Churches²⁶⁴

1 John 4:10-12
“This is love...”

#1
Love God
Worship and Obey



#4
Lead
God's People
To Follow
Equip and Empower

#2
Live
God's Mission
As Christ
Serve and Share

#3
Love People
Embrace and Invite

²⁶⁴ Minatrea, 17-20. I used a cross for the illustration instead of intersecting lines to form a cross.

Appendix 4



Where you raised in a Christian home?

Yes ____ No ____

Please indicate your spiritual maturity by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|
Do Not Know Christ Seeking Christ Following Christ Living Like Christ

Please indicate how often you attend worship by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|
Several Times a Year Once a Month Twice a Month Almost Weekly

Please indicate how often you attend Sunday School or a Small Group by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|
Several Times a Year Once a Month Twice a Month Almost Weekly

Are you currently involved in a ministry?

Yes ____ No ____

Please indicate the personal, spiritual disciplines you practice on a regular basis:

Bible Reading ____
Fasting ____
Journaling ____
Meditating ____
Praying ____
Serving ____
Tithing ____

Please prioritize the importance of the following disciplines in your spiritual development by numbering them 1 to 7:

Bible Reading ____
Fasting ____
Journaling ____
Meditating ____
Praying ____
Serving ____
Tithing ____

Please indicate how satisfied you are with your spiritual life by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Somewhat Satisfied Satisfied

Do you have established spiritual goals or disciplines you want to accomplish?

Yes _____ No _____

Please indicate the factors that hinder your spiritual development:

My Daily Schedule _____
Personal Limitations _____
Health Problems _____
Lack of Motivation _____
Other Factor(s) _____ Please List _____

Do you want to develop a more intimate and fulfilling relationship with Jesus?

Yes _____ No _____

Would you attend a class on discipleship?

Yes _____ No _____

If you are interested in participating in a discipleship class with Pastor Judy Burnell,
please include your name and telephone number:

Name _____ Telephone Number _____

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire on discipleship!
I pray that you will continue to grow in the grace and favor of our Lord, Jesus Christ!***

Pastor Judy

Appendix 5



CALENDAR

Wednesday, August 29	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Class Orientation
Wednesday, September 5	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module One: "Disciple for Life"
Wednesday, September 12	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Two: "Spiritual Disciplines for Life"
Wednesday, September 19	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Two: "Spiritual Disciplines for Life"
Wednesday, October 3	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Two: "Spiritual Disciplines for Life"
Wednesday, October 10	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Three: "Ministry for Life"
Wednesday, October 17	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Three: "Ministry for Life"
Wednesday, October 24	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Four: "Mission for Life"
Wednesday, October 31	<i>Discipleship for Life Class</i> Module Four: "Mission for Life"
Wednesday, November 14	Conclusion and Review of Class
Saturday, December 1	Discipleship Retreat "Practicing Spiritual Disciplines"
December	Meet Individually with Class Participants Complete Spiritual Development Form Review Spiritual Profile

Appendix 6



DISCIPLESHIP RETREAT *December 1, 2012*

Welcome

Devotion²⁶⁵

Prayer

Keeping a Spiritual Journal²⁶⁶

Personal Prayer & Reflection

Lunch

Sacred Pathways²⁶⁷

Time of Sharing

Communion and Commissioning

Closing Prayer

²⁶⁵ Based on the prayer life of Jesus modeled in Luke 5:16. See Appendix 7 for devotion.

²⁶⁶ See Appendix 8 for resource on keeping a spiritual journal.

²⁶⁷ Gary Thomas, *Sacred Pathways* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996).

Appendix 7



DEVOTION FOR DISCIPLESHIP RETREAT

Scripture Reference: Luke 5:16²⁶⁸

Luke 5:16 states, *“Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”*

I believe we are all familiar with the phrase, “What would Jesus do?” This morning, I would like to ask you another question, “What did Jesus do?” Luke 5:16 tells us that Jesus prayed “often.” He withdrew to pray, and he prayed often – early in the morning, late at night, and on some occasions all night. Have you ever wondered “why” Jesus needed to pray, or “what” he prayed for? After all, he was the Son of God.

First, I believe Jesus yearned to be with his Father. At this point in his ministry, most people – even the disciples – didn’t fully understand his purpose. While people flocked to Jesus, only his Father knew his mission or purpose for becoming the incarnate Word. So, when Jesus withdrew to pray, it provided with him with an opportunity to be with his Father.²⁶⁹

Secondly, Jesus withdrew for prayer as an expression of his dependence upon the Father. It helped him keep his ministry in perspective, because everything he did was in obedience to the Father’s will and in the power of Holy Spirit.²⁷⁰

Throughout the Gospels, we read that Jesus “often withdrew” to pray to his Father. He also prayed regarding “every aspect” of his life.

This morning, I would like to ask you, can we – you and I – say the same about our prayer life?

Do we “often” withdraw to pray to our Father in heaven, and do we pray about “every aspect” of our life? If not, why?

²⁶⁸ Luke 5:16, *NRSV Bible*.

²⁶⁹ Luke 5:16, <http://bible.cc/luke/5-16.htm> (Accessed July 2012).

²⁷⁰ Luke 5:16, http://www.gracecommentary.com/luke-5_12-16 (Accessed July 2012).

Appendix 8



A GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL JOURNALING²⁷¹

The Benefits of Journaling

As you walk with God, recording your journey in a spiritual journal is a very effective means of evaluating your spiritual development. Journaling will also help you develop a sensitivity toward God and his presence in your life.

A journal is more than a place to record daily events. It will help you monitor your spiritual life and maintain your Christian morals. It also acts as a mirror, and it is a safe place to reflect on your experiences and to explore your thoughts with God. By keeping a record of your spiritual journey, you can observe how God is working in your life and how you are developing as a disciple.

Your journal is a safe place to process what God is doing in your life and the lives of those around you. I recommend that you do not immediately evaluate what you write; simply write, allowing your thoughts to flow uninterrupted. You can record your deepest thoughts as well as your prayers and God's answers, wisdom and insights gleaned from God's word and other sources, and encounters with other Christians that God allows you to share the journey with or those with whom your paths intersect briefly. It can be whatever you would like it to be!

Steps to Journaling

- **Start by praying:** Ask the Holy Spirit as your counselor to lead you as you journal.
- **Date every entry:** This helps you see your progress and makes it easier to find entries.

²⁷¹A Closer Walk With God, <http://acloserwalkwithgod.blogspot.com/2006/10/guide-to-spiritual-journaling.html> (Accessed July 2012). Revised for the *Discipleship for Life* class.

- **Write what is on your heart:** Talk to God; be honest with him and yourself. Share your joys, desires, frustrations, sorrows, uncertainties, heartaches, and even your anger with him. Write down your goals, prayers, memories, and special events; record biblical and spiritual insights and revelations. Pour out your heart to God!
- **Listen and record:** Record what God puts on your heart and what he is saying to you through your dreams and thoughts, as well as through other Christians.
- **Highlight Scripture:** Highlight Scripture God gives you and words he speaks to your heart, so you can easily find them in your journal when you want to read them again.

Sometimes God communicates the same thing in different ways as he tries to get our attention and impress on us the importance of what he is saying. A journal can help us identify these experiences and record the lessons we learn as we walk with Jesus.

A spiritual journal helps us to make sense of our life. It encourages us to stop and observe what is happening and what is being said around us, so we can understand our experiences and respond appropriately. It helps us be aware of God's presence in the everyday circumstances of our life.

If you have any questions about spiritual journaling, please talk with me. I pray your journey with God will be an exciting adventure – one you will want to record!

Resources for Spiritual Journaling

How to Keep a Spiritual Journal: A Guide to Journal Keeping for Inner Growth and Personal Discovery by Ron Klug (Augsburg Fortress – Amazon)

Journal Keeping: Writing for Spiritual Growth by LuAnn Budd (InterVarsity Press – Amazon)

Planted by Streams of Water: Five Simple Steps to Scriptural Meditation and Journaling [Kindle Edition] by Joshua Snyder (Tyndale House Publishers – Amazon)

The Purpose-Driven Life Journal by Rick Warren (Zondervan – Amazon)

Appendix 9



Sacred Pathways²⁷²

As described in *Sacred Pathways* by Gary Thomas, a “pathway” represents the way people connect with or relate to God.²⁷³ Like many people, you may believe the best way to connect with God is through a thirty-minute “quiet time” involving Bible reading, journaling, and intercessory prayer; or you may have grown up in a church, where tradition and ritual are emphasized.²⁷⁴

Thomas emphasizes there is no “one size fits all” spiritually, and he describes the nine different ways or pathways we can encounter God. He explains that people relate to God differently, and he encourages us to discover our unique pathway and to respect how others relate to God.²⁷⁵ The nine distinct spiritual temperaments include:

- *Naturalists* love God and connect best with him in the out of doors. They are contemplative but like to be surrounded by his creation.
- *Sensates* love God and use all of their senses to worship him. They are deeply affected by a beautiful piece of art, music, and worship that engages them.
- *Traditionalists* love God through rituals and symbols. They enjoy liturgical worship and find celebrations and observances very meaningful.

²⁷² Gary Thomas, *Sacred Pathways* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996).

²⁷³ Thomas, 21.

²⁷⁴ Thomas, 13-17.

²⁷⁵ Thomas, 22-29.

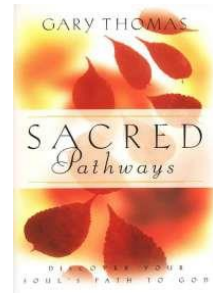
- *Ascetics* love God through solitude and simplicity. They live a fundamental internal existence and are often isolated from people.
- *Activists* love God through confrontation. They are spiritually nurtured by encouraging other Christians to live ethically and morally pure lives.
- *Caregivers* love God by loving others, and their faith is developed by serving other people.
- *Enthusiasts* love God with mystery and celebration, and they enjoy experiential worship.
- *Contemplatives* love God through adoration with the purest, deepest, and brightest love imaginable.
- *Intellectuals* love God with their mind and believe faith is something to be understood as much as experienced.

A classical movement in the Middle Ages encouraged Christians to think of their soul as a garden; yet, many of us have lived with the idea that our faith only needs to be planted. If a garden is to grow and bear fruit, it must be carefully nurtured and tended. So it is with our soul. As Christians, our goal is to become like Christ. In order for this to happen, we must purposefully tend the garden of our soul. This is done by developing a personal relationship with Jesus, discovering our spiritual temperament and SHAPE, and practicing the spiritual disciplines that Jesus modeled and taught.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁶ Gary Thomas, 216.

Appendix 10

*Sacred Pathways*²⁷⁷
Discovering Your Soul's Path to God
by Gary Thomas



INSTRUCTIONS

At the end of each section describing the nine spiritual temperaments is an exercise to help you determine your dominant spiritual path(s). In each section, please score a series of statements on a scale of five to one with five being very true and one being not true at all. Record your answers in the space provided:

ARE YOU A NATURALIST?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am surrounded by what he has made – the mountains, the forests, or the sea.
- _____ 2. I feel cut off if I have to spend too much time indoors. Nothing makes me feel closer to God than being outside.
- _____ 3. I would prefer to worship God by spending an hour beside a small brook than by participating in a group service.
- _____ 4. If I could escape to a garden to pray on a cold day, walk through a meadow on a warm day, and take a trip by myself to the mountains on another day, I would be very happy.
- _____ 5. A book called *Nature's Sanctuaries: A Picture Book* would appeal to me.
- _____ 6. Seeing God's beauty in nature is more moving to me than understanding new concepts or participating in a formal religious service or social cause.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

SCORING

Record your score for Naturalist on page 6.

The highest number of points possible is obviously thirty; the higher you score, the stronger the dominance of this spiritual temperament in your life. But remember most of us have more than one spiritual temperament. Any score of fifteen or higher indicates a tendency toward this temperament.

²⁷⁷ Gary Thomas, *Sacred Pathways* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996). The inventory for each pathway was taken from the respective chapter describing the spiritual temperament.

ARE YOU A SENSATE?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am in a church that allows my senses to come alive – when I can see, smell, hear, and almost taste His majesty.
- _____ 2. I enjoy attending a “high church” service with incense and formal Communion or Eucharist.
- _____ 3. I would have a difficult time worshipping in a church building that is plain and lacks a sense of awe or majesty. Beauty is very important to me, and I have a difficult time worshipping through second-rate Christian art or music.
- _____ 4. The words *sensuous*, *colorful*, and *aromatic* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 5. A book called *The Beauty of Worship* would be appealing to me.
- _____ 6. I would really enjoy using drawing exercises or art to improve my prayer life.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU A TRADITIONALIST?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am participating in a familiar form of worship that has memories dating back to my childhood. Rituals and traditions move me more than anything else does.
- _____ 2. Individualism within the church is a real danger. Christianity is a corporate faith, and most of our worship should have a corporate expression.
- _____ 3. The words *tradition* and *history* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Participating in a formal liturgy or prayer-book service, developing symbols that I could place in my car, home, or office, and developing a Christian calendar for our family to follow are activities that I would enjoy.
- _____ 5. A book titled *Symbolism and Liturgy in Personal Worship* would be appealing to me.
- _____ 6. I would really enjoy developing a personal rule (or ritual) of prayer.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU AN ASCETIC?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am alone and there is nothing to distract me from focusing on His presence.
- _____ 2. I would describe my faith as more “internal” than “external.”
- _____ 3. The words *silence*, *solitude*, and *discipline* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Taking an overnight retreat by myself at a monastery where I could spend large amounts of time alone in a small room, praying to God and studying His Word, and fasting for one or more days are all activities I would enjoy.
- _____ 5. I would enjoy reading the book *A Place Apart: Monastic Prayer and Practice for Everyone*.
- _____ 6. I would really enjoy spending time on a night watch, taking a short vow of silence, simplifying my life.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU AN ACTIVIST?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am cooperating with him in standing up for his justice: writing letters to government officials and newspaper editors, picketing at an abortion clinic, urging people to vote, or becoming familiar with current issues.
- _____ 2. I get very frustrated if I see apathetic Christians who do not become active. I want to drop everything else I am doing and help the church overcome its apathy.
- _____ 3. The words *courageous*, *confrontation*, and *social activism* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Activities like confronting a social evil, attending a meeting to challenge the new curriculum before the local school board, and volunteering on a political campaign are important to me.
- _____ 5. The book written by Frank Schaeffer, *A Time for Anger*, would be an important book for me to read.
- _____ 6. I would like to awaken the church from its apathy.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I see Him in the needy, the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned. I feel God's presence most strongly when I am sitting beside the bed of someone who is lonely or ill or taking a meal to someone in need.
- _____ 2. I grow weary of Christians who spend their time singing songs while a sick neighbor goes without a meal or a family in need does not get help.
- _____ 3. The words *service* and *compassion* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I sense God's power when I am counseling a friend who has lost a job, preparing meals for or fixing the car of a family in need, or spending a week at an orphanage in Mexico.
- _____ 5. A book entitled *99 Ways to Help Your Neighbor* would be appealing to me.
- _____ 6. I would rather nurse someone to health or help someone repair their house than teach an adult Sunday school class, go on a prayer and fasting retreat, or take a lonely walk in the woods.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU AN ENTHUSIAST?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when my heart is sent soaring and I feel like I want to burst, worship God all day long, and shout out his Name. Celebrating God and his love is my favorite form of worship.
- _____ 2. God is an exciting God, and we should be excited about worshipping him. I do not understand how some Christians can say the love God, and then act like they are going to a funeral whenever they walk into church.
- _____ 3. The words *celebration* and *joy* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I would enjoy attending a workshop on learning to worship through dance or attending several worship sessions with contemporary music. I expect that God is going to move in some unexpected ways.
- _____ 5. I would enjoy reading the book *The Mystery and Excitement of Walking with God*.
- _____ 6. I spend more money on music and worship CD's than on books.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU A CONTEMPLATIVE?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when my emotions are awakened, when God quietly touches my heart, tells me that He loves me, and makes me feel like I am his closest friend. I would rather be alone with God, contemplating His love, than participating in a formal liturgy or being distracted by a walk outside.
- _____ 2. The most difficult times in my faith are when I cannot feel God’s presence.
- _____ 3. The words *lover, intimacy, and heart* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I really enjoy having thirty minutes of uninterrupted time a day to sit in quiet prayer and “hold hands” with God, writing love letters to Him and enjoying His presence.
- _____ 5. I would enjoy reading *The Transforming Friendship*.
- _____ 6. When I think of God, I think of love, friendship, and adoration more than anything else.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

ARE YOU AN INTELLECTUAL?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I learn something new about him that I did not understand before. My mind needs to be stimulated. It is very important to me that I know exactly what I believe.
- _____ 2. I get frustrated when the church focuses too much on feelings and spiritual experience. Of far more importance is the need to understand the Christian faith and have proper doctrine.
- _____ 3. The words *concepts and truth* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I feel close to God when I participate in several hours of uninterrupted study time – reading God’s Word or good Christian books and then perhaps having an opportunity to teach or participate in a discussion with a small group.
- _____ 5. A book on church dogmatics would be appealing to me.
- _____ 6. I spend more money on books than music.

_____ **The Total of Your Answers**

_____ **THE TOTAL OF ALL YOUR ANSWERS**

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SACRED PATHWAY

Now that you have looked at each of the nine spiritual temperaments, you are ready to determine your spiritual personality. Remember that you will probably have more than one dominant temperament.

Also, spiritual temperaments can evolve over time. Just as a married couple will express their love for each other differently in their fifties than they did in their twenties, so our love relationship with God undergoes changes as we mature and walk through life.

The evaluations describe where you are right now and what activities you find most helpful as you seek to grow spiritually today. You can then move on to incorporate and learn from other temperaments.

You have already filled in your score for each of the temperaments:

_____ Naturalist

_____ Sensate

_____ Traditionalist

_____ Ascetic

_____ Activist

_____ Caregiver

_____ Enthusiast

_____ Contemplative

_____ Intellectual

Please note your highest two or three indicate your primary sacred pathways.

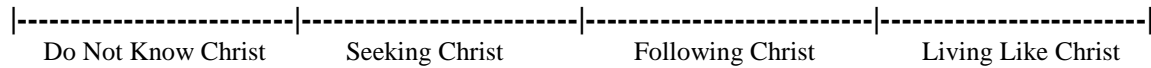
Appendix 11



PRE-CLASS SPIRITUAL FORMATION FORM

Name _____

Please indicate your spiritual maturity before you take the *Discipleship for Life* class by placing an “X” on the scale below:



Please state “why” you want to take the *Discipleship for Life* class.

Do you feel you are currently living as a “complete and competent” follower of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

Please identify “one or two” spiritual disciplines you want to develop through the *Discipleship for Life* class and explain why.

If you had the opportunity to do anything as a disciple of Christ, what would you do?

Have you participated in a discipleship relationship? Have you ever discipled another person?

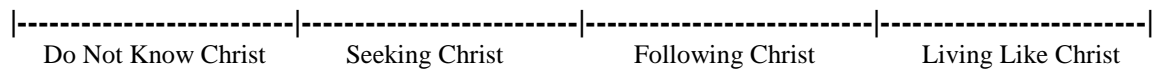
Appendix 12



POST-CLASS SPIRITUAL FORMATION FORM

Name _____

Please indicate your spiritual maturity after you complete the *Discipleship for Life* class by placing an “X” on the scale below:



Were you able to achieve your objective for taking the *Discipleship for Life* class? How?

How has the *Discipleship for Life* class helped you develop as a more Christlike disciple?

Which spiritual disciplines have influenced your spiritual growth most?

How has the class as the body of Christ contributed to your spiritual growth?

How does knowing your spiritual SHAPE encourage you to serve in ministry?

As you consider your life purpose statement, what is the “one thing” that you are willing to “live and die” for?

Please include the name of at least one person you would like to disciple: _____

Appendix 13



CLASS EVALUATION

Your feedback is critical to evaluating the effectiveness of the *Discipleship for Life* class. Please take a few moments to respond to the questions below.

1. The *Discipleship for Life* teacher modeled the discipleship principles in the class:
 Yes
 No

2. The length of the *Discipleship for Life* class was:
 Appropriate
 Too Short
 Too Long

3. The *Discipleship for Life* class has helped me become a more Christlike disciple:
 Yes
 No

4. What element of the *Discipleship for Life* class influenced you the **most** spiritually and why?

5. What element of the *Discipleship for Life* class influenced you the **least** spiritually and why?

6. The *Discipleship for Life* class can be improved by:

Additional Comments:

Thank you for taking a few moments to complete the evaluation form!

Pastor Judy

Appendix 14



Please Note: 165 respondents completed the survey.

Where you raised in a Christian home?

Yes 70% No 28% No Response 2%

Please indicate your spiritual maturity by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----1%-----|-----15%-----|-----66%-----|-----18%-----|
Do Not Know Christ Seeking Christ Following Christ Living Like Christ

Please indicate how often you attend worship by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----2%-----|-----1%-----|-----9%-----|-----87%-----|
Several Times a Year Once a Month Twice a Month Almost Weekly

Please indicate how often you attend Sunday School or a Small Group by placing an “X” on the scale below:

|-----19%-----|-----3%-----|-----9%-----|-----36%-----|
Several Times a Year Once a Month Twice a Month Almost Weekly

Are you currently involved in a ministry?

Yes 48% No 45% No Response 7%

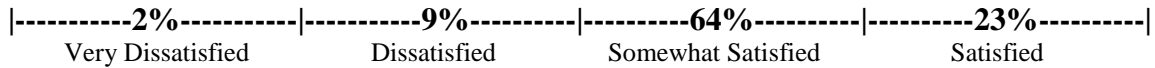
Please indicate the personal, spiritual disciplines you practice on a regular basis:

Bible Reading	62%
Fasting	5%
Journaling	7%
Meditating	36%
Praying	97%
Serving	65%
Tithing	73%

Please prioritize the importance of the following disciplines in your spiritual development by numbering them 1 to 7:

#2 Bible Reading	#1 – 23, #2 – 55, #3 – 31, #4 – 10, #5 – 7, #6 – 3, #7 – 0
Fasting	#1 – 0, #2 – 0, #3 – 1, #4 – 6, #5 – 9, #6 – 35, #7 – 64
Journaling	#1 – 0, #2 – 0, #3 – 3, #4 – 9, #5 – 18, #6 – 43, #7 – 43
Meditating	#1 – 2, #2 – 12, #3 – 20, #4 – 19, #5 – 47, #6 – 21, #7 – 3
#1 Praying	#1 – 95, #2 – 29, #3 – 6, #4 – 2, #5 – 0, #6 – 0, #7 – 0
#3 Serving	#1 – 9, #2 – 23, #3 – 41, #4 – 38, #5 – 9, #6 – 6, #7 – 1
#4 Tithing	#1 – 3, #2 – 12, #3 – 29, #4 – 43, #5 – 28, #6 – 9, #7 – 5

Please indicate how satisfied you are with your spiritual life by placing an “X” on the scale below:



Do you have established spiritual goals or disciplines you want to accomplish or develop?

Yes **68%** No **28%** No Response **4%**

Please indicate the factors that hinder your spiritual development:

- My Daily Schedule **55%**
- Personal Limitations **23%**
- Health Problems **13%**
- Lack of Motivation **37%**
- Other Factor(s): **15%**
 - Spiritual Burn Out
 - Job Change
 - Care of Elderly Parent(s)
 - Insincere or Fake Christians
 - Unsaved Spouse
 - Peer Pressure
 - Lack of Spiritual Passion at Church
 - No Community

Do you want to develop a more intimate and fulfilling relationship with Jesus?

Yes **95%** No **1%** No Response **4%**

Would you attend a class on discipleship?

Yes **44%** No **36%** No Response **20%**

If you are interested in participating in a discipleship class with Pastor Judy Burnell, please include your name and telephone number:

Fifty-one respondents noted that they would like to participate in a discipleship class.

Name _____ Telephone Number _____

*Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire on discipleship!
I pray that you will continue to grow in the grace and favor of our Lord, Jesus Christ!*

Pastor Judy

Appendix 15



*Discipleship
for Life*

"I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly."

John 10:10

Please Note

The *Discipleship for Life* curriculum was developed for my Pastoral Research Project at Nazarene Theological Seminary from a compilation of resources as noted in Chapters Two and Three of my project work.

Unless noted, Scripture is from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Other Scripture References Include:

New International Version (NIV)

Today's New International Version (TNIV)

The Message (MSG)

The Good News (GN)

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Note that this page and any subsequent blank pages are to facilitate pagination for double-sided pages in the curriculum modules.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Discipleship for Life* class! I would like to affirm you for your commitment to become a more Christlike disciple!

Many church leaders are discovering that an increasing number of people are questioning the relevancy of the church. It appears that we have done a good job at making Christians, or people who have accepted Christ; however, we are not making Christlike disciples, and there is “a lack of true discipleship.”

The call to follow Jesus is the essence of faith, and James Boice describes the invitation he extends to us. “The Master is going before you. He is looking back at you with a most compelling gaze. He is saying, ‘Come!’ He is commanding, ‘Follow me!’”

Discipleship describes the process of following Jesus. It is the heart of the Christian experience and is characterized by a passion to become like Christ. Just like the first-century disciples, we are called to follow Jesus on a lifelong journey that will demand every resource we possess. It is one on which we will learn about him and his mission.

In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus asserts, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

God’s love is the foundation for the Great Commission and discipleship. Paul Chilcote states, “To be a Christian is to ‘flesh out’ love.” As a disciple, our responsibility is to declare God’s grace and love to everyone through the “incarnational principle,” which means “to become flesh.” Just as God entered into our physical world and became a human being through the person of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to make the spiritual reality of God’s love a physical reality in the lives of others.

John Stott asserts, “...to those who go, who go as Christ himself came into the world...to them the presence of the living Christ is promised...‘I am with you all the days unto the end of the world.’”

God’s multi-faceted love is the foundation for discipleship in Christ. For the Christian, love of self and love of one’s neighbor cannot be separated. The two are intricately woven together by God’s love and must be expressed in love of others.

My hope is that you will experience the joy known only to those who abandon everything in pursuit of God. I pray you will be willing to sell everything to buy the pearl of great price!

Pastor Judy

Discipleship for Life

Class Accountability

As we embark on the journey of becoming a more Christlike disciple, I would like to emphasize the importance of accountability and confidentiality. I have discovered that accountability to the *ecclesia*, which is the Spirit-filled fellowship of believers, is critical to our spiritual development.

In light of this, confidentiality is very important. We want to create a safe place, where we can openly share how God is working in our lives as well as any prayer concerns.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of completing class assignments and attending class consistently. At the conclusion of *Discipleship for Life*, I plan to provide a venue for participants to meet once or twice a month for accountability and encouragement.

Class Logistics

The class will start at 6:45 pm with a time of sharing and prayer. Then, we will move into our lesson for the evening. After the class, I will be available to talk with individuals.

Class Calendar

The calendar for the class is located in the “Resources” section of the notebook.

Time to Get Acquainted

I would like to spend a few minutes this evening getting acquainted. I would like each person to share your name and the names of the members of your family, your vocation, why you want to participate in the *Discipleship for Life* class, and a brief summary of your spiritual journey.

Prayer Partners

Closing Prayer

MODULE ONE



Disciple for Life

**"I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly."
John 10:10**

DISCOVERING MY PURPOSE OF LIFE

The Purpose of Life

Some of the most puzzling questions in life include:

- Who are we and why were we created?
- What is the meaning of life?

In Genesis 1:26-27 God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

These verses confirm that every object of creation, including humankind, has a purpose and value. However, because God created us with the ability to reason, we continue to search for the purpose we exist.

Knowing our purpose frees us from selfish pursuits and helps us develop a right relationship with God, our Creator and heavenly Father.

We discover that real happiness comes from understanding our **purpose** in life!

Our Purpose As God’s Creation

God created you to love you!

God says, “I have loved you with an everlasting love!” Jeremiah 31:3

“Just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.” Ephesians 1:4-5

We were created to enjoy a personal relationship with God and to manage his creation.

Jesus said, “I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly!” John 10:10

When we love God and have a relationship with him, we understand his purpose for our life and experience the following:

A Clear Conscience – Romans 8:1

Help with Weaknesses – Romans 8:26

Confidence in Christ – Romans 8:31

Power and Strength – Philippians 4:13

A Life of Peace – Romans 8:6

A Sense of Purpose – Romans 8:28

A Sense of Security – Romans 8:39

Fulfillment – Philippians 4:19

Freedom – John 8:32, 36

If this is the kind of life God intends for us, why aren't people happy?

The Problem

As human beings, we have a natural desire to be self-centered and ignore God's principles for living.

- We want to “look out for #1; to do our own thing.
- If it feels good, we do it – regardless of what God says.

Most people are looking for something to fill that place or vacuum within us that was put there by God and can only be filled by him. It is God's way of ensuring that each person – even those who don't believe in him – keep searching until they find him and the purpose of life he has designed for them.

We must realize that we were created and chosen by God, and we need him in order to experience a meaningful and fulfilling life.

The Solution

Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” John 3:16

God did this for us because he loves us and wants us to know him!

God has already done his part to restore our relationship to him. He took the initiative; now he waits for each of us to accept what he has done for us.

God wants us to:

- **Admit** that God has not been first in our life and ask him to forgive us.
“If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9
- **Believe** that Jesus died for our sins, he rose again on Easter, and he is alive today!
“If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9
- **Accept** God’s free gift of salvation.
“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9
- **Invite** Jesus Christ to come into your life and be Lord (manager) of your life.
“But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12-13

The Symbols of Salvation

Jesus never asked his disciples to remember his birth. Instead, he instructed them to remember his death and resurrection. He gave the Church two visible symbols as reminders: **Baptism** and the **Lord’s Supper**.

Baptism

- We practice baptism to follow the example of Christ, because he commands it, and it reveals that you are a **believer**.
- Baptism represents Christ’s death and resurrection, and it is a witness of our **new life** in Christ.
- Baptism does not make you a believer; it indicates that you already believe. Baptism does not “save” you; only your **faith** in Christ saves you.
- Baptism is like a wedding ring; it is the outward symbol of the inward **commitment** you have made in your heart.

“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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20

The Greek word for baptize is *baptizo*, which means to “immerse or dip under water,” and it symbolizes a burial and resurrection.

Every person who **believes** in Christ should be baptized. This includes children who are old enough to believe in Jesus as their Savior and understand the meaning of baptism.

Based on the experience of Christ and others in the Bible, the Church of the Nazarene baptizes by immersion. However, we also understand there are extenuating circumstances where baptism by immersion is not suitable for an individual, and we are not opposed to the use of pouring or sprinkling in these situations.

The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper represents a great spiritual truth for believers. It is also an opportunity to **examine** our heart, **confess** any sin, **recommit** to Christ, and **reconcile** relationships.

“The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.



BECOMING A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

The Cost of Discipleship

In *Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian who was martyred for his faith during the Nazi regime, asserts, “Christianity without discipleship is Christianity without Christ.”

Bonhoeffer emphasizes the relationship between grace, faith, works, and obedience. His explanation of “cheap grace” and “costly grace” establishes the foundation for his fervent call to **discipleship** and for the community of believers to be the *ecclesia* or spirit-filled community of believers.

Bonhoeffer defines “cheap grace” as grace that is perceived as a doctrine, principle, or system. It is an **intellectual** assent that believes in the forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth and the love of God taught as the Christian idea of God.

“Cheap grace” results in the **denial** of the living Word of God and the Incarnation of the Word of God. It means justification of sin without the justification of the sinner and the preaching of forgiveness without repentance, baptism without church discipline, and Communion without confession.

“Cheap grace” is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, and grace without Jesus Christ.

Bonhoeffer explains that “costly grace” is the **treasure** hidden in the field. It is the pearl of great price for which the merchant will sell all of his earthly goods to buy.

“Costly grace” is the Gospel, which must be sought again and again. It is costly, because it calls us to **follow** Jesus Christ.

It costs us our life and gives us life eternal; it condemns the sin and justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son.

“Costly grace” is the Incarnation of God, and it is the grace of Christ inviting us to leave all to follow him. Discipleship also **connects** believers directly to Jesus and focuses on the formation of the character and passion of each disciple.

In light of the Great Commission, **transformation** became mission, and Jesus’ words reveal his heart and the priority of his mission. Discipleship is inclusive, and all Christians become a disciple when they intentionally choose to follow Jesus.

Discipleship and spiritual formation are biblically and theologically grounded, and the goal is always transformation to the **image** of Christ.

The Definition of a Disciple

In *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, Bill Hull exhorts Christians to be disciples and to make disciples. He explains the contemporary distinction between “Christian” and “disciple” was never intended by Christ or the early church.

The word “Christian” appears in the New Testament three times and was first used to describe the early **believers** who left everything to follow Jesus, but the word “disciple” is used **269** times.

In the first century, the cultural understanding of a disciple was a **follower**, one who was committed to a specific rabbi or teacher.

Although most people believe that anyone who accepts Christ as Savior is a disciple, the biblical understanding of a disciple is someone who submits to at least one person in a healthy, accountability relationship as a means to **fully** develop as a follower of Jesus.

The Call to Become a Disciple

“Jesus said, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’” Matthew 4:19

When we accept Christ as our Savior, we experience a call to **follow** Jesus just like the early disciples.

In *Growing True Disciples*, George Barna defines discipleship as “becoming a **complete and competent** follower of Jesus Christ.”

Most Christians refer to discipleship as “the act of following Jesus.” When “ship” is added at the end of “disciple,” it means “the state of being a disciple,” and it is an ongoing, lifelong **process**.

Discipleship is the **intentional** training of people who voluntarily submit to the lordship of Christ and who want to emulate him in every thought, word, and deed.

The term “discipleship” also implies a sense of **journey** or the idea of “becoming a disciple,” instead of “being made a disciple.”

“...continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
2 Peter 3:18

Discipleship is not a ministry or a program; it is a lifelong commitment to:

- Pursue spiritual growth
- Grow in Christlikeness
- Reflect Christ's character in our relationships
- Be actively involved in a church community
- Be committed to living like Christ

In John 15:7-13 Jesus states,

“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. ‘This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.’”

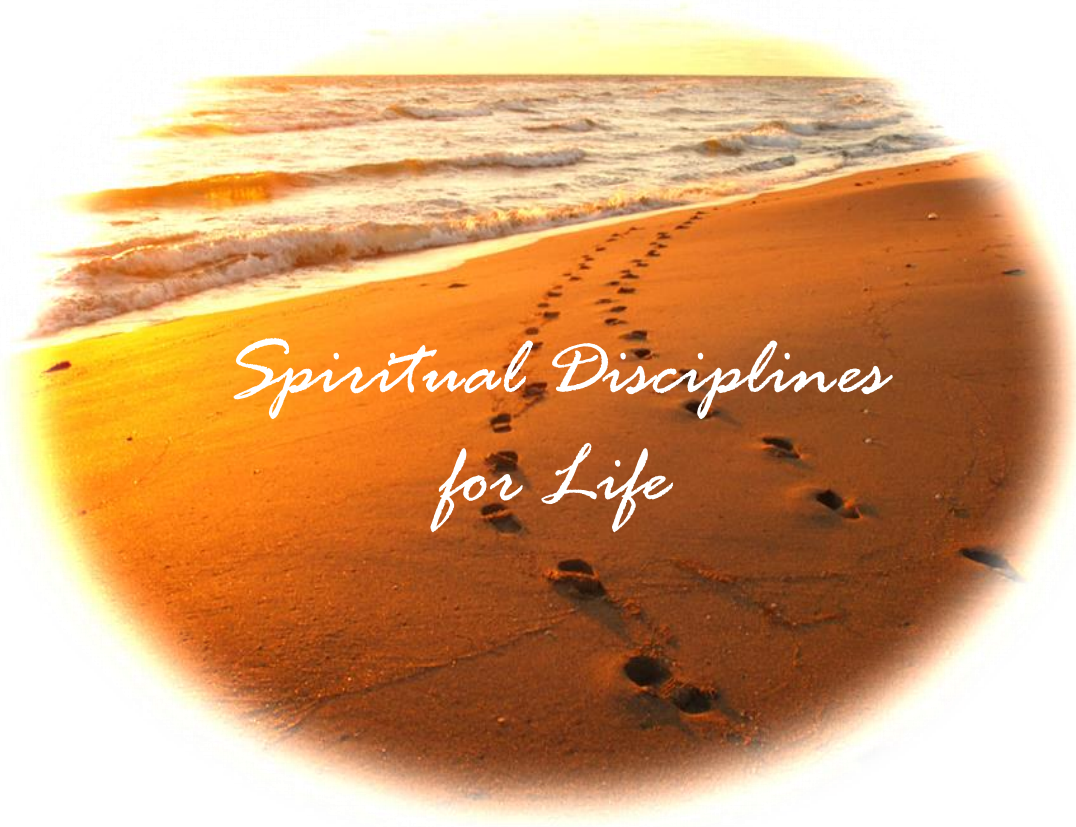
Based on Jesus' words, the personal qualities of a disciple include:

- Abiding in Christ through the Word and prayer
- Bearing much fruit
- Responding to God's love by obedience
- Being filled with joy
- Loving others as Christ loves us

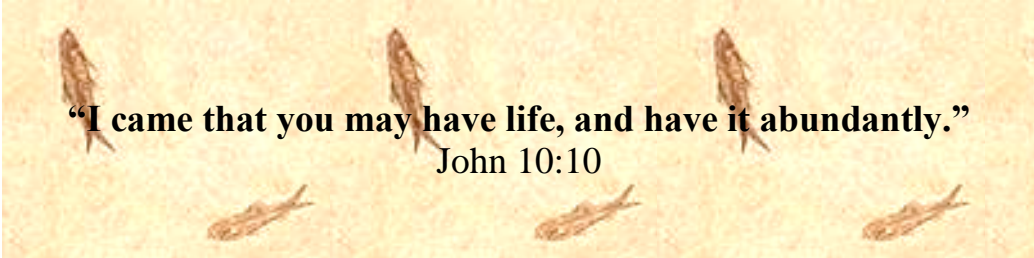
Remember, we cannot be a Christian without first being an active 24/7 disciple of Christ!



MODULE TWO



*Spiritual Disciplines
for Life*



**“I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly.”
John 10:10**

A horizontal strip of parchment with a textured, aged appearance. It features several small, simple line drawings of fish scattered across the surface. The text is centered on the strip.

LEARNING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The Purpose of Spiritual Disciplines

Discipleship is the **heart** of the Christian experience, and it is characterized by a passion to become like Christ. Like the first-century disciples, we are called to follow Jesus on a lifelong journey that will demand every resource we possess. It is one on which we will learn about him and his mission.

Discipleship is inclusive, and all Christians become a disciple when they **intentionally** choose to follow Jesus.

The meaning of disciple, which comes from the Greek word *mathetes*, is “learner,” and the goal of discipleship is always **transformation** to the image of Christ.

The word “transformation” is derived from the Greek word *meta*, which means “to move something from one place to another,” and the Greek word *morphe*, which means “to change.” In spiritual transformation, we are moved from the person we were and continue to be changed into the **image** of Christ.

While it is God who spiritually transforms the lives of his disciples, we must be positioned for the process by:

- Living in community with other believers.
- Respecting the authority of Scripture.
- Submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit.
- Interpreting life circumstances through the lens of Scripture with insight from the Spirit and in the context of community.

Spiritual transformation is often referred to as “the Transformational Triangle” or “the Golden Triangle.” The three sides include the **Holy Spirit**, **spiritual disciplines**, and **life events and circumstances**. At the center of the triangle is **community**, which includes our relationship with God and the relationships we develop to help us live out our spiritual beliefs.



Discipleship is the process used to transform us to the image of God, and it can be compared to the maturation of children. If they eat the right foods and practice good habits, they will grow to be healthy adults. So, it is with Christians. If we practice the spiritual disciplines modeled and taught by Jesus, we will become Christlike disciples.

“...by this time you ought to be teachers yourselves, yet here I find you need someone to sit down with you and go over the basics on God again, starting from square one – baby's milk, when you should have been on solid food long ago! Milk is for beginners, inexperienced in God's ways; solid food is for the mature, who have some practice in telling right from wrong.” Hebrews 5:12-13 (MSG)

The Spiritual Disciplines Jesus Modeled and Taught

Apprenticeship or discipleship has been a common practice throughout history, and the five characteristics of first-century discipleship included:

- Making a decision to follow a teacher in a servant–master relationship
- Memorizing the teacher's words
- Learning the teacher's way of ministry
- Imitating the teacher's life and character
- Becoming a discipler

These characteristics describe biblical discipleship, and they are the ones Jesus used with his disciples. They are also the characteristics he expected them to use when he said, “Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

A disciple also exercises the spiritual disciplines that are essential for spiritual formation:

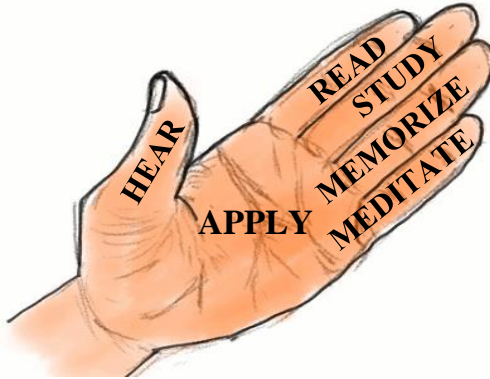
- Bible Reading and Scripture Memorization
- Daily Time with God
- Prayer, Fasting, and Meditation
- Service or Ministry
- Stewardship or Tithing

These disciplines enable us to develop an intimate relationship with God and shape us for his mission.

BECOMING A CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLE

THE DISCIPLINE OF GOD'S WORD

“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17



The Six Ways to Get a Grasp on Your Bible Include:

- Hear God's Word
- Read God's Word
- Study God's Word
- Memorize God's Word
- Meditate on God's Word
- Apply God's Word

Hear God's Word

The problem is that we forget 95% of what we hear after 72 hours.

We can improve our hearing by:

- Be ready and eager to hear God, and develop a sensitivity to God's voice. Romans 10:17
- Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God, and cultivate an open and receptive mind. Luke 8:18
- Confess any sin in your life, and maintain an attitude of humility. James 1:21
- Take notes on what you hear, and keep a spiritual journal to record insights from God's Word and sermons. Hebrews 2:1
- Act on what you hear! Practice it! James 1:22

Read God's Word

“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it.” Revelation 1:3 (NIV)

The following suggestions can help you in reading God's Word:

- Pray for God's direction as you read
- Use a Bible without study notes
- Read different translations of the Bible
- Read it aloud to yourself
- Underline or color code key verses
- Select a reading plan (Please see the example in the “Resources” section)
- Spend approximately 15 minutes a day reading

Study God's Word

“...for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day.” Acts 17:11 (NIV)

The difference between reading and studying the Bible is that you use a **pen** and a notebook or **spiritual journal** to record biblical insights.

The secret of effective Bible study is asking the **right** questions.

- Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Suggested Resources

Study Bibles:

- *The Wesley Study Bible* (New Revised Standard Version – Abingdon Press)
- *The New International Version Study Bible* (Zondervan)
- *The Disciple's Study Bible* (New International Version – Holman)
- *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* (New International Version – Kirkbride)

Bible Handbooks and Bible Study Resources:

- *Eerdmans' Bible Handbook* (Eerdmans)
- *Haley's Bible Handbook* (Zondervan)
- *The New Bible Dictionary* (Eerdmans)
- *The New Bible Commentary* (Eerdmans)
- *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands* (Moody)
- www.Biblegateway.com (An online Bible resource)

Memorize God's Word

“...keep my commandments and live.” Proverbs 7:2

The Benefits of Memorizing God's Word

- It helps me **resist** temptation.
“I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.”
Psalm 119:11
- It helps me make **wise** decisions.
“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105
- It **strengthens** me when I'm under stress.
“...your promises to me are my hope.” Psalm 119:49 (LB)
- It **comforts** me when I'm sad.
“Your words are what sustain me...and bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me.” Jeremiah 15:16 (LB)
- It helps me **witness** to unbelievers.
“Always be prepared to give an answer...for the hope that you have.”
2 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

When to Memorize a Verse

- During your Quiet Time
- While Exercising (It helps to pass the time.)
- While Waiting (This is my favorite time!)
- At Bedtime (Psalm 63:6)

How to Memorize a Verse

- Select a verse that speaks to you.
- Say the reference before and after the verse.
- Read the verse aloud many times. Record it!
- Break the verse into natural phrases.
- Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
- Write or type out the verse on an index card and carry the cards with you.
- Display your verses in prominent places.
- Always memorize the verse word perfect.
- Ask someone to be your partner, so you can help each other.

Three keys to memorizing God's Word are **review, review, review!**

We remember what is **important** to us!

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

The following Scripture verses help establish a solid “foundation” for the Christian life and spiritual growth, and they provide a “balance” in Scripture memory.

New Life in Christ

Christ the Center	2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20
Obedience to Christ	Romans 12:1, John 14:21
The Word	2 Timothy 3:16, Joshua 1:8
Prayer	John 15:7, Philippians 4:6-7
Fellowship	Matthew 18:20, Hebrews 10:24
Witnessing	Matthew 4:19, Romans 1:16

Proclaim Christ

Confession of Sin	Romans 3:23, Isaiah 53:6
Sin’s Penalty	Romans 6:23, Hebrews 9:27
Christ Paid the Penalty	Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 3:18
Salvation Not by Works	Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5
Christ as Savior	John 1:12, Revelation 3:20
Assurance of Salvation	1 John 5:13, John 5:24

Rely on God’s Resources

The Holy Spirit	1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16
Strength	Isaiah 41:10, Philippians 4:13
Faithfulness	Lamentations 3:22, Numbers 23:19
Peace	Isaiah 26:3, 1 Peter 5:7
Provision	Romans 8:32, Philippians 4:19
Help in Temptation	Hebrews 2:18, Psalm 119:9, 11

Be Christ’s Disciple

Put Christ First	Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:23
Be Separate from the World	1 John 2:15-16, Romans 12:2
Stand Firm or Steadfast	1 Corinthians 15:58, Hebrews 12:3
Serve Others	Mark 10:45, 2 Corinthians 4:5
Give Generously	Proverbs 3:9-10, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7
Develop a Biblical Worldview	Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20

Grow in Christ-Likeness

Love	John 13:34-35, 1 John 3:18
Humility	Philippians 2:3-4, 1 Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Ephesians 5:3, 1 Peter 2:11
Honesty	Leviticus 19:11, Acts 24:16
Faith	Hebrews 11:6, Romans 4:20-21
Good Works	Galatians 6:9-10, Matthew 5:16

Meditate on God's Word

“...but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.” Psalm 1:2-3 (NIV)

Meditation is **thinking** about a Bible verse or passage of Scripture in order to discover how you can apply its truth to your own life.



Meditating on God's Word is the Key to:

- **A Christlike Life**
“...be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2 (NIV)
- **Answered Prayer**
“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” John 15:7
- **A Fruitful Life**
“This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful.” Joshua 1:8

Six Ways to Meditate on a Verse

- Picture it! Visualize the scene in your mind.
- Pronounce it! Say the verse aloud.
- Paraphrase it! Rewrite the verse in your own words.
- Personalize it! Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
- Pray it! Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
- Probe it! Ask if you have a sin to confess, a promise to claim, a command to obey, or a truth to believe.

Apply God's Word

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”
James 1:22

Ask the following questions:

- What did it mean to the original hearers?
- What is the underlying timeless principle?
- Where or how could I practice the principle?

You can write out a sentence that describes a project or action you will take to apply the truth. I would recommend that you record this in your spiritual journal.

Most biblical applications will focus on one of **three** areas of relationships:

- With God
- With myself
- With other people

“Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” John 3:17 (NIV)



THE DISCIPLINE OF DAILY TIME WITH GOD

A daily time is a quiet time that I set aside to be alone with God to get to know him through the Bible and prayer.

The Importance of a Daily Quiet Time

Your time alone with God should have priority for the following reasons:

- We were **created** to have fellowship with God.
“So God created humankind in his image...” Genesis 1:27
- Jesus died to make our **relationship** with God possible.
God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship...” 1 Corinthians 1:9
- Personal time alone with God was Jesus’ **habit**.
“Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” Luke 5:16 (NIV)
- Everyone who has been effective in **ministry** for God practiced this discipline.
Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, and others
- You cannot be a **healthy** Christian without it!
“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4

The Purpose of a Daily Quiet Time

- To **give** glory and honor to God
“Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy splendor.”
Psalm 29:2
- To **get** wisdom from God
“In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”
Proverbs 3:6
- To **gain** joy from God
“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”
Psalm 37:4
- To **grow** more like God
“His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness...”
2 Peter 1:3

**The goal of my quiet time is not to study about Christ, but to spend time with Him!
The better I get to know Christ, the more I love Him!**

How to Begin a Daily Quiet Time

Select a specific time that works best for you, but it seems logical to start your day with God. This also demonstrates that meeting God is your first priority, as you give him the first part of your day. This is usually the time when your mind is not cluttered and you are not as easily distracted.

Whatever time you choose, should be best for you.

- Choose a special **place**
Jesus often withdrew to the Mount of Olives or the wilderness.
- Gather the **resources** you will need
A Bible
A spiritual journal or notebook to record insights from God and prayer requests
A songbook, if you like to sing
- Begin with the right **attitude** and wait confidently
“Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10
- Pray for God’s **revelation**
“Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”
Psalm 119:18
- Expect God to **speak**
“Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.” John 7:17 (TNIV)
- Follow a simple **plan**
Relax
Read God’s Word: Begin reading where you left off the day before, and read until you feel God has told you something; then stop and pray.
Reflect or meditate on God’s Word.
- Apply God’s **Word**
Write out a personal application statement that is practical and measurable.
- **Pray, Pray, Pray!**



How to Overcome Problems with Your Quiet Time

The Problem of Discipline

You may encounter a problem in establishing a quiet time, especially in the morning.

Suggestions

- Go to bed at a regular time
- Get up as soon as you wake up
- Be aware of quiet time interruptions
- Fall asleep thinking expectantly

The Problem of Distractions

Satan will use anything and everything to get your mind to wander during a quiet time.

Suggestions

- Find a special place of solitude
- Get thoroughly relaxed
- Read and pray with focus
- Write during your prayer time
- Keep a spiritual journal

The Problem of Spiritual Dryness

Sometimes you will feel like you are not getting anything out of your quiet time. Never judge your quiet time by your **emotions**.

Possible Causes of Spiritual Dryness

- Your physical condition
- Disobedience to God
- Rushing your quiet time
- Getting in a rut
- Not sharing insights with others

The Problem of Diligence

Your greatest problem will be your struggle to stay consistent. Remember, when you spend quiet time with God, Satan always fights harder.

Suggestions

- Make a commitment or covenant to God
- Include a time for God on your daily schedule
- Be prepared for Satan's excuses
- Leave your Bible open at night to the passage for the next day

If you miss a day...

Don't quit!
Don't beat yourself up!
Don't worry!

It takes **two** weeks for you to become familiar with a new habit or spiritual discipline, and it takes another **five** weeks before it becomes comfortable or natural.

“Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9



THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER

Talking With God

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” Romans 12:11-12

“Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:5-8

Approach prayer with the right attitude

- Be real
- Don't try to impress others
- Don't try to impress God
- Be relaxed
- Be revealing

Use the Model of Prayer Jesus Gave Us

“Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:9-15



The Six Parts of Jesus Prayer

1. **Praise:** Begin by expressing my **love** to God through adoration and thanksgiving. Adoration is praising God for **who** he is. Thanksgiving is praising God for **what** he has done.
2. **Purpose:** Commit myself to God's **purpose** and will for my life. Pray for God's will to be done...in my family, church, ministry, job, future, city, the nation, the world, etc.
3. **Provision:** Ask God to **provide** for my needs, and I pray for the needs of others. Be specific! Write down your requests with a promise you are claiming from the Bible; then, expect an answer! (Please see the enclosed Prayer Sheet on page 35.)
4. **Pardon:** Ask God to **forgive** my sins.

The Steps to Forgiveness Include:

- **Ask** the Holy Spirit to reveal every sin.
"Search me, O God, and know my heart..." Psalm 139: 23-24
 - **Confess** each sin specifically.
"Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)
 - **Make** restitution to others when necessary.
"If you remember that your brother or sister has something against you...first be reconciled..." Matthew 5:23-24
 - By faith, **accept** God's forgiveness.
"If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9
5. **People:** Pray for **other** people.
Develop a list of people you want to pray for and record them on a prayer list. (Please see the enclosed Prayer Sheet on page 35.)
 6. **Protection:** Ask for **spiritual** protection.
Christians face a spiritual battle every day. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face the situations you encounter.

"...the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." 1 John 4:4

Prayer and Fasting

Fasting is the voluntary act of **abstaining** from something for the purpose of growing in self-discipline, which is the essence of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The most common form of fasting is from food. This is because, as Paul says, for some people their stomach is their god. By fasting from food, you can learn to enjoy food as a gift from God without allowing it to become a functional god that controls you.

You can also fast from activities or modern conveniences, such as television, the internet, email, or cell phone, especially if you find yourself compulsively spending too much of your time and energy checking websites, emails, phone calls, and voicemails.

Fasting is considered to be one of the most **powerful** spiritual disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life. However, fasting is also one of the most neglected spiritual disciplines.

The central idea of fasting is the voluntary denial of a normal function for the purpose of intense spiritual activity. Along with spiritual values, fasting provides a sense of mental clarity as well as improved power in the physical senses.

Richard Foster states, “Fasting can bring breakthroughs in the spiritual realm that could never be had in any other way.”

Forms of Fasting Include:

- Abstinence from all food
- Abstinence from specific foods
- Liquids only (clear juices – fruit juice, vegetable broth, herbal tea, water)
- Water only
- Nothing (complete abstinence from all solids and liquids)
- Anything God speaks to you about fasting
- A continuous period of time (days, weeks, Lent, etc.)
- One day a week
- One meal a day

A Word of Caution!

If you have a physical condition that could be affected by not eating, please consult your physician before you fast.

THE HEBREW NAMES OF GOD

The three primary names for God in the Old Testament include: God – *Elohim*, Lord – *Jehovah or Yahweh*, and Lord or Master – *Adonai*. However, the Hebrew people had over 80 compound names for God that describe a facet of his character. The following is a list of the eight most common names. The list can help you to focus on the immutable characteristics of God.

Jehovah-Shammah: “God is Present with me.” Ezekiel 48:35

You are always with me. I am never alone!

Jehovah-Rohi: “God is my Shepherd.” Psalm 23:1

You lead me, feed me, and protect me.

Jehovah-Jireh: “God is my Provider.” Genesis 22:14

You know what I need even before I ask.

Jehovah-Rophe: “God is my Healer.” Exodus 15:26

You can heal my body, emotions, and relationships.

Jehovah-Tsidkenu: “God is my Righteousness.” Jeremiah 23:6

You accept me and forgive me because of Jesus.

Jehovah-M’Kiddish: “God is my Sanctification.” Leviticus 20:8

You make me holy and like Jesus.

Jehovah-Shalom: “God is my Peace.” Judges 6:24

You give me peace in spite of my circumstances!

Jehovah-Nissi: “God is my Banner.” Exodus 17:15

You are my victory in conflict and confrontation.

**As you meditate on the names of God,
you will discover that you have a lot to praise him for!**

*Praise
the Lord*

THE PEOPLE I AM PRAYING FOR

Family

Christian Friends

People Who Need Christ

Spiritual Leaders

Government Leaders

Other People

Other Requests

THE DISCIPLINE OF TITHING

Honoring God With My Giving

“On the first day of each week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn.”

1 Corinthians 16:2 (LB)

Key Bible Words Include: **Believe Pray Love Give**

Believe appears 272 times

Pray appears 371 times

Love appears 714 times

Give appears 2,162 times

What is a “tithe?”

- A “tithe” means “a 10th part.”

What is the difference between a “tithe” and an “offering?”

- A “tithe” is giving the first 10% of my income.
- An “offering” is anything I give in addition to my tithe.

Why should I tithe? Eight reasons from God’s Word include:

1. God commands it. Leviticus 27:30
2. Jesus commends it. Matthew 23:23
3. Tithing demonstrates God has first place in my life. Deuteronomy 14:23
4. Tithing reminds me that everything was given to me by God. Deuteronomy 8:18
5. Tithing expresses my gratitude to God. Deuteronomy 16:17
6. God says that refusing to tithe is stealing from him. Malachi 3:9-10a
7. Tithing gives God a chance to prove he exists and wants to bless you. Malachi 3:10
8. Tithing proves that I really love God! John 14:15

What should I tithe?

The first part of what I earn, not the leftovers. Proverbs 3:9

Where should I give my tithe?

The church where I worship. Malachi 3:10

When should I tithe?

Regularly, when I worship. 1 Corinthians 16:2

How can I remember?

- Keep a record of your giving
- Use weekly giving or tithe envelopes
- Teach your children to tithe

Give With the Right Attitude

- Give Willingly 2 Corinthians 9:12
- Give Cheerfully 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Give Generously 2 Corinthians 8:3-4
- Give Expectantly 2 Corinthians 9:6

The Key to Giving

“They gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us...”
2 Corinthians 8:5

Titling is an indication that God is first in my life!



THE DISCIPLINE OF FELLOWSHIP

Participating in God's Family

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25

Why is fellowship so important?

- I belong in God's **family** with other believers. Ephesians 2:19
- I need **encouragement** to grow spiritually. Hebrews 10:24
- I need spiritual **accountability** to a small group of believers. Hebrews 3:13
- Christ is **present** when we fellowship and worship together. Matthew 18:20
- There is great **power** when people pray together. Matthew 18:19
- Fellowship is a **witness** to the world. John 17:21
- I have a **responsibility** to the body of believers. 1 Corinthians 12:5, 27

The “one anothers” of fellowship include:

- Serve one another
- Accept one another
- Forgive one another
- Greet one another
- Bear one another's burdens
- Be devoted to one another
- Honor one another
- Teach one another
- Submit to one another
- Encourage one another

***Koinonia* (Fellowship in the Spirit)**

The Greek word for “church” is *ecclesia*, which means “the community of God's people.” The two key elements here are the church as “the spirited-filled **people** of God,” and the church as the *koinonia* or “the **community** of believers” in “the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit.”

The church is to be the **flesh and blood** expression of the kingdom of God; and the people are to live together as a spirit-empowered community of believers and a witness to a holy God.

Individuals are called and gathered as the *ecclesia*, then they are sent and scattered to actively participate in the **mission** of God. They express the incarnational reality of Christ present and ministering in the world.

The two types of church fellowship include:

- Large group celebrations and corporate worship services
- Small group meetings, Bible studies, etc.

In Acts 2:42-47 we read,

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

As noted in Acts 2:42-47, the early believers practiced the following:

- Bible Study
- Fellowship
- Communion
- Prayer
- Support of One Another
- Hospitality
- Praise and Worship
- Evangelism and Outreach

The Bel Air Church encourages people to participate in large group worship and small group Bible study and fellowship!



The Significance of Membership

At the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, we understand the importance and need for church membership, and we believe the difference between “attenders” and “members” is **commitment**.

We encourage people to commit to membership for four reasons.

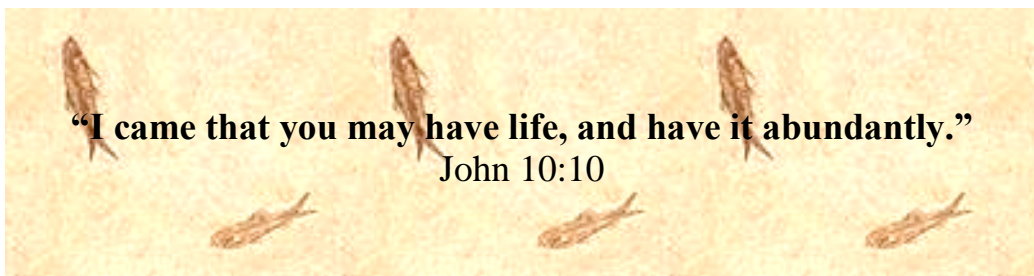
- A **Biblical** Reason: Christ is committed to the church.
“...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” Ephesians 5:25
- A **Cultural** Reason: It is a solution to many of the problems in our world.
We live in an age where very few people want to be committed to anything; however, membership is a commitment that builds character.
- A **Practical** Reason: It documents the members of our church.
Every team has a roster. Every school has an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every military branch has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and registers voters. Membership identifies our family.
- A **Personal** Reason: It produces spiritual growth.
The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable, when you are not committed to a specific church family.



A Special Note

The Bel Air Membership Covenant requires that people seeking church membership have received Christ as their Lord and Savior, have been baptized, and are in agreement with the Church’s statements, strategy, and structure. If you feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Bel Air Church family, please contact me. I would be glad to talk with you about church membership and refer you to the lead pastor, Dr. Russell Long.

MODULE THREE



BEING SHAPED FOR MINISTRY

God's Purpose for Your Spiritual SHAPE

“The gifts he (God) gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12



God Has a Special Plan

God has a special plan for my life, and my ministry is determined by my **SHAPE**, which includes my:

- Spiritual gifts
- Heart
- Abilities
- Personality
- Experiences

The secret to knowing God's will or purpose for my life is to **understand** how he created or shaped me.

God is consistent in his plan for each of our lives. He would not give us natural talents, temperaments, spiritual gifts, and all sorts of life experiences, and then not use them!

By reviewing and studying these factors, we can discover the ministry God has for us, as well as the **unique** way God intends for us to serve him.

The two results of discovering the ministry we have been shaped for are **fruitfulness** and **fulfillment**.

The word “ministry” comes from the Greek word *diakonos*, and it means “to serve.”

The purpose of ministry is to use the gifts and talents God has given us to **serve** him and the needs of other people!

It is our prayer that you will discover your unique SHAPE for ministry and commit to developing and using your God-given gifts and abilities to **serve** him and others.

Spiritual SHAPE for Ministry

We will focus on **Five Personal Factors** that have combined to shape the “real” you. By identifying the specific characteristics you possess in each of these areas, you will discover the ministry God has designed for you.

Spiritual Gift

“Each has a particular **gift** from God, one having one kind and another a different kind.”
1 Corinthians 7:7b

What am I gifted for?

Heart

“God has put it into their **hearts** to accomplish his purpose...” Revelation 17:17

What do I love to do?

Abilities

“There are different **abilities** to perform service...” 1 Corinthians 12:6

What natural abilities and skills do I have?

Personality

“No one can really know what anyone else is thinking or what he is really like, except that **person** himself.” 1 Corinthians 2:11 (LB)

How does my personality empower me to more effectively serve?

Experiences

What spiritual experiences have I had?	Hebrews 5:12-13
What painful experiences have I had?	2 Corinthians 1:4
What educational experiences have I had?	Proverbs 4:13
What ministry experiences have I had?	2 Corinthians 9:13

You will be the most effective and fulfilled when you are doing what God created you to do!

LET'S LOOK AT HOW PAUL'S MINISTRY WAS "SHAPED"

Paul's Spiritual Gifts

"For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher." 2 Timothy 1:11

Paul's Heart

"Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation." Romans 15:20

Paul's Ability

"...There he met a Jew named Aquila, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks." Acts 18:2b-4 (NIV)

Paul's Personality

"You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors." Galatians 1:13-14

Paul's Experiences

Spiritual Experiences

- Watching Stephen be stoned Acts 8:1
- Conversion on Damascus Road Acts 9:1-20
- 3 years maturing in Arabia Galatians 1:18
- Special vision from God 2 Corinthians 12:2-7

Painful Experiences

- "...I have been in prison more times...near death often...been whipped five times with 39 lashes by the Jews and three times by the Romans...once stoned...I've been in three shipwrecks... and once spent 24 hours in the water...In my travels I've been in danger from floods...robbers...enemies...wild animals and false friends...I've served long hours without sleep or food or shelter or even clothing..." 2 Corinthians 11:23-27
- "...in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me." 2 Corinthians 12:7 (NIV)

Educational Experiences

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today." Acts 22:3

Ministry Experiences

Read the Book of Acts!

My SHAPE for Ministry Personal Profile

We have adapted and prepared several instruments to help you discover and think through the five factors that shape you. You will complete these on your own (homework) and record the results on your personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.” Then we will discuss them in class, and I will meet with each of you individually to discuss your profile.

Unwrapping Your Gift will give you an overview of the spiritual gifts and help you identify the ones you have been given by God.

Monitoring Your Heartbeat will help you clarify what you really love to do.

Applying Your Abilities will help you appreciate the natural abilities and vocational skills you have.

Plugging in Your Personality will help you understand how your God-given temperament can best be used in ministry.

Examining Your Experiences will help you review your experiences and discover how God has prepared you for a unique ministry that only you can fulfill.

Please Remember

Have fun! There are no right or wrong answers. The purpose is to discover how God has uniquely created and shaped you!

Each instrument or test is self-evaluating. No one is grading you. We are interested in your feelings, not others. However, it may be helpful to ask for input from those closest to you, after you have noted your own responses.

The value of the resources will vary depending on your age, how long you have been a Christian, your background, your honesty, and the amount of time and thought you are willing to invest in them.

As you complete each test, transfer the results to your personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.” You will bring this profile with you to class and when we meet.



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A **spiritual gift** is a special ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every believer when you accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and it is to be used to minister to others and build up the Body of Christ.

Important Truths:

- Only believers have spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 2:14
- Every Christian has at least one gift. 1 Corinthians 7:7
- No one receives all the gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:27-30
- No single gift is given to everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:29-30
- You cannot earn or work for a spiritual gift. Ephesians 4:7
- The Holy Spirit decides what gifts I get. 1 Corinthians 12:11
- I am to develop the gifts God gives me. 1 Timothy 4:14
- It is a sin to waste the gifts God gives me. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2
- Using my gifts glorifies God and grows me. John 15:8

A Few Cautions About Spiritual Gifts:

- Do not confuse gifts with natural talents.
- Do not confuse gifts with the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23
- **Fruit** reveals my maturity.
- **Gifts** confirm my ministry.
- Do not confuse gifts with Christian roles.
- Be aware of the “gift projection” tendency. Do not expect other people to serve the same way you do and have similar results.
- My gifts do not make me superior to others. 1 Corinthians 12:21
- Realize that using my gifts without love is worthless! 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

You will have both a **primary** and a **secondary** ministry in church. Your primary ministry commitment should be in the area where you are **gifted**. Your secondary ministry includes serving in an area where you are **needed**. Titus 3:14

The Bible does not specify the number of spiritual gifts each person receives or even their definitions. The four major passages noting the gifts are found in Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31, Ephesians 4:11-12, and 1 Peter 4:9-11; however, there are other passages that mention or illustrate the gifts.

The Spiritual Gifts Inventory will be distributed separately. Please read the instructions carefully before you start. Once you complete the test, please record the results on your “Personal Profile.”

MONITORING MY HEARTBEAT

The Bible uses the term **heart** to represent the center of your motivation, desires, and inclinations.

“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” Psalm 37:4

My heart determines:

- Why I say the things I do Matthew 12:34
- Why I feel the way I do Hebrews 4:12
- Why I act the way I do Proverbs 4:23



My heart is the real me!

Physiologically, each of us has a **unique** heartbeat. Each person has a slightly different pattern. Likewise, God has given each of us a unique emotional “heartbeat” that races when we encounter activities, topics, or circumstances that interest us. We instinctively feel more deeply about some things than others.

This motivation comes from God and serves as an internal guidance system much like a spiritual GPS for our lives. It determines what our interests are, and what will bring us the most satisfaction and fulfillment. It also motivates us to pursue certain activities, subjects, and environments.

God has given each person a unique “heartbeat.”

God has a purpose in giving you specific interests. In fact, your emotional heartbeat reveals a very important key to understanding God’s design and intention for your life.

The Bible makes it very clear that your heart was designed by God, but you make the choice to use it for good or evil and for selfish purposes or for ministry.

How can I do God’s will and serve God’s purpose?

By letting my heart **motivate** me for ministry!

TAKING A SPIRITUAL EKG

If you are like most people, you have never taken time to sort out and identify the things you are good at and motivated to accomplish. As a result, it is unlikely that you use these talents as completely or effectively as you could. The key to understanding your heartbeat is to look at your past accomplishments.

This exercise is adapted from the book *Finding a Job You Can Love* by Ralph Mattson & Arthur Miller (Nelson, 1982). We recommend that you read this book.

Step #1: List and Describe Your Accomplishments Since Childhood

Examples:

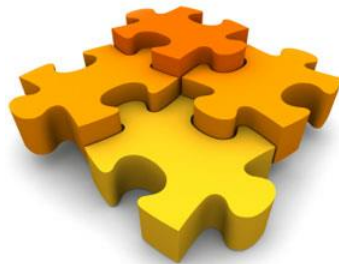
- “I have always liked to build things. Before I got married, I completely rebuilt the little apartment I was living in.”
- “I set a goal to read fifteen books over the summer, and I did.”
- “I started a lemonade stand in fourth grade and expanded it to three stands. It was fun, and I made money.”

You will want to include:

- Accomplishments at home, school, work, etc.
- Things you enjoyed doing
- Things you believe you did well
- Give specific details about what you did
- Forget what other people think about it

Remember, you are recalling the things you enjoyed doing and did well (accomplishments), not simply pleasant experiences.

You do not have to cover every year of your life; just focus on the highlights of the things you have done well.



THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THINGS I DID WELL AND ENJOYED DOING

During My Grade School Years

-
-
-

As a Teenager

-
-
-

In College or Early Twenties

-
-
-

In My Thirty–Something Years

-
-
-

Up to the Present

-
-
-

Step #2: Discover the Motivated Direction of Your Heart

Examine your achievements for a common motivational thread. You might find a key phrase repeated. Remember, the items listed are all God-given motivations. They are only sinful when used selfishly. Do not be embarrassed to identify a basic heartbeat that does not seem spiritual. Almost every one included on the list can be identified in the ministry of Christ's disciples, and they can be used effectively in ministry.

The following example might help you to identify one of the "heartbeats."

Example

I feel the basic motivation God has instilled in my heart is to "**Acquire/Possess**," and my experience confirms:

- I purchased my first car at age 16.
- I have collected a collection of rare stamps.
- I have built up a large cash reserve.
- I have acquired options on three properties.

I LOVE TO...

Design/Develop: I love to make something out of nothing. I enjoy starting something from scratch.

Pioneer: I love to test and try out new concepts. I am not afraid to risk failure.

Organize: I love to bring order out of chaos. I enjoy organizing something that is already started.

Operate/Maintain: I love to efficiently maintain something that is already organized.

Serve/Help: I love to help other people by doing things for them. I often serve behind the scenes or in obscure ministries.

Acquire/Possess: I love to shop or obtain things. I enjoy getting the highest quality for the best price.

Excel: I love to be the best and make my team the best. I enjoy setting and attaining the highest standard.

Influence: I love to influence people. I enjoy shaping the attitudes and behavior of others.

Perform: I love to be on stage and receive the attention of others. I enjoy being in the limelight.

Improve: I love to make things better. I enjoy taking something that someone else has designed or started and improve it.

Repair: I love to fix what is broken or change what is out of date.

Lead/Be in Charge: I love to lead, oversee, and supervise. I enjoy deciding how things will be done.

Persevere: I love to see things to completion. I enjoy persevering until something is finished.

Follow the Rules: I love to operate by policies and procedures. I enjoy meeting the expectations of an organization or supervisor.

Prevail: I love to fight for what is right and oppose what is wrong. I enjoy overcoming injustice.

Please Note

You should be able to support your choice with examples from your achievements.

Once you discern the basic motivational direction of your heart, please record it on your “Personal Profile.”



APPLYING MY ABILITIES

“There are different abilities to perform service.” 1 Corinthians 12:6

One of the most common excuses people give for not getting involved in ministry is “I don’t have any abilities.” Nothing could be further from the truth. The key is matching your abilities with the right ministry!

Five Misconceptions About Abilities (Skills and Talents)

- People are not born with skills. All skills must be learned by experience. This is not true. People often have skills, which seem to be inborn or developed very early in life.
- The skills, which must be learned, are learned primarily in the classroom. Actually, you learned some of your most basic skills at home, in the street, or somewhere outside of the classroom.
- If you have certain abilities, you will be aware that you have them. Again, this is not true. You are probably using a number of skills or talents that you are not even aware you have and need a means of identifying them.
- The skills I use at home or work cannot be used at church or in ministry. Hopefully, by the end of this class, you will see the fallacy of this thought. Remember to be creative!
- Most people only have a very few abilities. Studies have proven the average person possesses from five hundred to seven hundred skills.

How to Discover Your Motivated Abilities

Review your list of accomplishments again and circle all verbs that denote actions performed while you were doing each achievement.

Now compare the verbs to the list below and check the abilities you feel you have. Please note the top two or three on your “Personal Profile.”

SPECIALIZED ABILITIES

Entertaining Ability: to act, perform, dance, speak, or do magic

Recruiting Ability: to enlist and motivate people to get involved

Interviewing Ability: to discover what others are really like

Researching Ability: to read, gather information, or collect data

Artistic Ability: to conceptualize, picture, draw, paint, or photograph

Analytic Ability: to analyze data and draw conclusions

Planning Ability: to strategize, design, and organize programs and events

Managing Ability: to supervise people to accomplish a task or event and coordinate the details involved

Counseling Ability: to listen, encourage, and guide with sensitivity and wisdom

Teaching Ability: to explain, train, demonstrate, or tutor

Writing Ability: to write articles, letters, books, etc.

Editing Ability: to proofread or rewrite

Promoting Ability: to advertise or promote events and activities

Repairing Ability: to fix, restore, or maintain

Feeding Ability: to create meals for large or small groups

Recall Ability: to remember or recall names and faces

Mechanical Operating Ability: to operate equipment, tools, or machinery

Resourceful Ability: to search out and find inexpensive materials or resources needed

Counting Ability: to work with numbers, data, or money

Classifying Ability: to systematize and file books, data, records, and materials, so they can be retrieved easily

Public Relations Ability: to handle complaints and unhappy customers with sensitivity

Welcoming Ability: to convey warmth, develop rapport, and make others feel comfortable

Composing Ability: to write music or lyrics

Landscaping Ability: to do gardening and work with plants

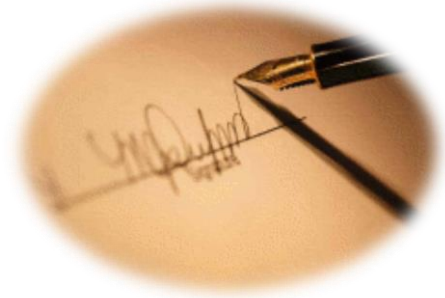
Decorating Ability: to decorate a setting for a special event

Once you are finished, please list your specialized abilities on your personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.”



PLUGGING IN YOUR PERSONALITY

Please write your name on the line below:



Then write your name with your non-preferred hand on the line below:

What happened? How did it feel?

- You felt uncomfortable.
- It took extra time and effort.
- You still did a lousy job!

The same things are true when we try to minister in areas that we are not gifted to serve in. God has created you with a unique temperament, and this factor is very important in helping you discover the right ministry.

It is obvious that God does not use a cookie cutter to create people. He loves variety – just look around. There is no “right” or “wrong” temperament. We need opposites to balance the church.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

We will be using the *MBTI* to discern your personality type. The *MBTI* is a self-inventory designed to identify a person’s personality type, strengths, and preferences. The test was developed by Isabel Myers and her mother, Katherine Briggs, based on their work with Carl Jung’s theory of personality types.

The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* will be distributed separately. Once you complete the test, please note the letters of your personality type in the four boxes on your personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.”

EXAMINING MY EXPERIENCES

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

“Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.” Philippians 1:12

The Value of Our Experiences

One of the most overlooked factors in determining the ministry God has for us is our experiences, specifically our hurts and the challenges we have overcome with God’s help.

Please remember that God wants us to be open to ministering to people who are going through situations we have experienced.

“(God)...wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them the same help and comfort God has given us!”
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (LB)

Please record the following experiences on your personal profile, “My SHAPE for Ministry.”

- Your Spiritual Experiences: Meaningful decisions and times with God.
- Your Painful Experiences: Life experiences and challenging times that have shaped your character.
- Your Educational Experiences: What were your favorite subjects in school?
- Your Ministry Experiences: How and where have you served in the past?



My SHAPE for Ministry

PERSONAL PROFILE

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

HEART

The things that motivate me or I love to do:

The people and age of people I enjoy or love to work with:

The church ministries that excite me the most:

If I knew I would not fail, I would attempt to do this with my life:

ABILITIES

My current vocation is:

Other jobs or skills I have experience in include:

I have these specialized abilities based on the list in the curriculum:

I have taught a class on:

I feel my most valuable asset is:

PERSONALITY

Please include the four letters from the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* in the box:

--	--	--	--

EXPERIENCES

Spiritual Experiences: Meaningful times with God that have shaped your life.

Painful Experiences: Life experiences and challenges that have shaped your character.

Educational Experiences: What were your favorite subjects in school?

Ministry Experiences: How and where have you served in ministry?

MY STORY

This is how I became a Christian and how it changed my life:

I would describe my relationship with Jesus as:

SERVING AS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

THE BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE MINISTRY STATEMENT

We believe the following...

About Ministry

- Salvation in Jesus Christ automatically includes a call to ministry. Every believer is created, saved, gifted, empowered, and commanded to minister.
- Ministry is the heart of the Christian life. Matthew 20:28
- Function follows form in ministry. Your spiritual SHAPE determines your purpose for ministry. God has uniquely shaped each individual for a specific ministry.
- God has given all of his children gifts that can be developed and used in ministry. Everyone has something to offer, and developing and using your gifts is an act of good stewardship and worship.
- You discover your gifts through ministry, instead of discovering your ministry by identifying your gifts.
- The evidence of an appropriate fit for my “SHAPE” is ministry fruitfulness and personal fulfillment.
- Membership and spiritual maturity are prerequisites to ministry. Therefore, we require a commitment to these areas before serving through the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.

About the Body of Christ

- God intends for ministry to be performed through the context of the local church, and membership includes a commitment to ministry.
- The Holy Spirit has provided our church body with all the spiritually gifted people needed to do everything he wants done. Our task is to discover, enlist, equip, and empower people in ministry.
- The church operates based on spiritual gifts rather than elected officers, and we prefer to empower people who have been gifted and called to serve in a specific ministry.
- The church is the Body of Christ, not a business; it is an organism, not an organization. Therefore, we streamline structure in order to maximize ministry and minimize maintenance.

- The mobilization of every member as a minister is the key to balanced growth in the church.

About the Role of the Pastors

- The people are the ministers and the pastors are the administrators, and the equipping of the members for ministry is the priority of the pastoral staff. Ephesians 4:11-12
- The objective of the pastoral staff is to mobilize ministers who are maximizing their unique gifts, hearts, abilities, personalities, and experiences in a meaningful place of ministry in our church.
- Every ministry is assigned a pastoral staff member who provides training, encouragement, feedback, and resources for the ministers under their care.

About Accountability

- We become what we are committed to, and we encourage growth in commitment to Christ and his Church.
- We are committed to helping leaders reach their full potential, and we evaluate ministries to ensure their ongoing effectiveness.

About Training

- Every leader must be a learner. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading.
- We emphasize on-the-job training more than pre-service training. We understand that people learn experientially, and we delegate to develop and empower people.

About Diversity of Ministry

- We have unity without uniformity. We believe diversity in ministry simply illustrates the unique giftedness of individuals.
- Every ministry must fulfill the mission of the church.

About Performance

- We expect excellence in ministry, not perfection. Excellence is doing our best, and God deserves our best.
- We encourage creativity and innovation in ministry, and we understand people often learn through their ministry experiences.
- There are no “wrong” people...only “right” people in the wrong ministry!

BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- Sunday School Teacher
- Sunday School Assistant Teacher
- Children's Church Leader
- Children's Church Assistant Leader
- Nursery Ministry
- Home Bound Ministry
- One-on-One Discipleship Ministry
- Driver for a Bus or Van
- Intercessory Prayer Ministry
- Nazarene Mission International Council
- Over "60" Ministry
- Over "40" Ministry
- Youth Leader
- Assistant Youth Leader
- Single Adult Ministry
- Young Adult Ministry
- Usher for Worship
- Greeter
- Drama Ministry
- Music Ministry
- Choir
- Pianist
- Special Music
- Office Volunteer
- Telephone Calls/Email Communication
- Bulletin Board Displays
- Work Day Volunteer
- Landscape Ministry
- Hospitality Ministry

This is just a sampling of the many ministries at Bel Air Church of Nazarene. We encourage you to talk to the pastoral staff to find out more about our various ministries.

MODULE FOUR



**"I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly."
John 10:10**

LIVING MISSIONALLY

The Bel Air Church is a missionary-minded church, and you will discover that we get excited about participating in missions. For us, missions is more than a program; it is a lifestyle that reflects what God is doing in the life of each Christian.

We believe that every Christian receives a call to mission. Although many people believe that only pastors and missionaries are called, the Bible is clear that **everyone** is called to follow God. Then like the early disciples, we are commanded “to go and make disciples.”

The Mission of God

The Latin word *missio* is the source for the English words “mission,” “missional,” and “missionary,” which means “**a sending**.” The Latin theological term *missio Dei* is translated as “the mission of God” or “the sending of God.”

Mission is the essence of God and identifies his **nature**. Mission emanates from the heart of God and is the impetus of the missional church, which is “the missionary or sent church.” Mission is not an activity of the church, but an attribute of a missional God.

David Bosch explains, “Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world...a movement of God to the world...There is a church because there is a mission, not vice versa.”

God’s mission may be defined as the **restoration** of all creation to God’s creation purposes. Within the grand narrative of Scripture God’s sending Christ is the central and climatic expression of God’s mission.

In John 1:1-18, the Apostle John’s first comment after declaring “the Word became flesh” was the Word “made His dwelling among us.” John is describing the first and greatest miracle he ever witnessed...God walking around Galilee. It is here the Incarnation first resonates as God’s mission of redeeming humanity.

In John 6:38 Jesus states, “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.” Jesus faithfully carries out the mission given to him by God, his Father and the sender.

In Jewish culture, the metaphor of the sent son was easily understood, as a father often sent his oldest son to legally represent him in matters of important business. This relationship also provides us with a pattern for continuing Jesus’ mission, which cannot be proclaimed in Word alone; it must be **embodied** as the living Word.

The Call to Follow Jesus

The call to follow Jesus is **compelling**! Just as Jesus extended an invitation to the early disciples to follow him, he extends that same invitation to you.

Jesus says, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” Matthew 4:19

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to be his body on earth. We are gathered as the *ecclesia* or the Body of Christ, so we can learn to love like him. Then we are sent to share his love with those in our community.

Our mission is simply offering Christ to others through our intentional acts of **compassion** and expressions of **love**.

In *The Mind of Christ*, Dennis Kinlaw challenges us with these words:

Since the key to each person’s salvation lies in someone else, you can be sure the key to someone’s life lies within you. The only hope for that person is for you to allow Christ’s burden to become your own. If you let him do that within you, you’ll be thinking the way Christ thinks, because the mind of Christ is the cross. The cross is clearly a symbol of death, but it is also the most powerful symbol of life itself. May God help us to enter into the fellowship of his suffering and become instruments of his redemption. We will never regret saying a total yes to him.

The Biblical Concept of God’s Call

- **It is a relational concept.**
It is not an assignment or occupation; it is a call to be in relationship with God.
- **It is a call to spiritual maturity and personal development.**
It is a matter of becoming what we are not yet, but are called to be by God. The goal and objective of our development is to increasingly become like Jesus.
- **It is a general term used to describe the salvation experience.**
It is an awareness that God initiates the call to follow him.
- **It is a call to a new identity.**
We are called to become a member of a community of believers where we are identified as “the people of God.” 1 Peter 2:9-10

Understanding the Call

- **It clarifies the distinction between vocation and occupation.**

Most Christians do not understand that their calling or vocation is related to their occupation.

Biblically, there is no distinction between vocation and occupation. The terms “calling” and “vocation” should be synonymous. We are to do all things to the glory of God!

- **It enables us to move from an outward driven life to an inward directed life.**

The concept of calling conveys that we are not directed by the demands of others; instead, our lives are purpose driven by the call of God.

John the Baptist summarized this understanding of the called life when he said, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30

- **It removes the division between the sacred and secular.**

Martin Luther said, “The work of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.”

- **It enables us to celebrate our unique call and giftedness.**

God calls us along the line of our giftedness, and the purpose of our giftedness is stewardship and service, not selfishness.

A calling should always precede our choice of a job and career. When we fulfill our call, we have a sense that we are fulfilling God’s purpose for our life.

- **It eliminates the need for competition.**

When we realize it is God who calls and equips us for a specific purpose, we have a more cooperative spirit as a member of the Body of Christ.

- **It is an antidote for apathy.**

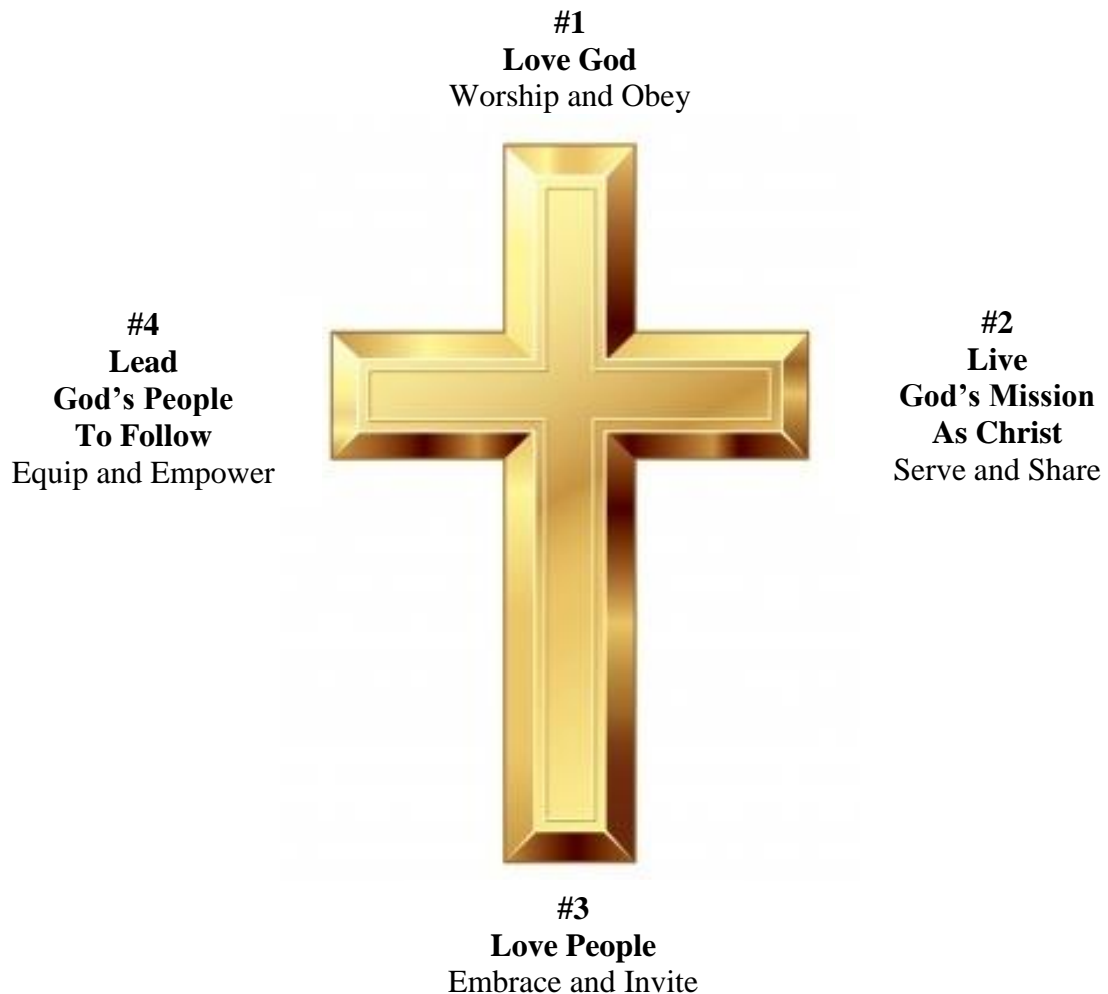
Throughout the Bible, God is portrayed as one looking for an individual willing to be used to make a difference. Once you begin to experience the miraculous work of God in and through your life, you will sense an increase in energy and purpose.

MAKING DISCIPLES

In *Shaped By God's Heart*, Milfred Minatrea encourages churches to become reproducing communities of authentic disciples who are fully devoted to God. They are to be disciples who are equipped and sent by God to live and proclaim his kingdom to their world. This discipleship is costly; yet, it graciously accepts responsibility for those who have not heard the Gospel. The following graphic represents how missional churches develop Christlike disciples.

The Four Dimensions of Missional Churches

1 John 4:10-12
“This is love...”



Committing to the Mission

One of the things that gave Jesus such personal authority was his incredible sense of mission.

Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God...I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.” John 17:3-4

Paul also speaks of his sense of **mission** on a number of occasions in his writing. It was his passion and purpose to “be poured out,” on behalf of a lost world that not only landed him in prison periodically, but also fueled the mission of the New Testament Church.

Paul said, “I only want to complete the mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do. Acts 20:24 (GN)

As Christlike disciples, we must exemplify the character of Jesus and follow his examples and teachings, and we must be **committed** to fulfilling the Great Commission.

I would like to encourage you to prayerfully establish a **life mission** statement that expresses your SHAPE. Your commitment to God’s purpose for your life will enable you to focus your resources more effectively on being a more Christlike disciple and follower of Jesus and a more effective discipler and leader of others.

A Life Mission Statement

A life mission statement is a description of what I believe God wants me to do with my life.

- It’s more than a goal – it is a journey.
- It defines success for me.
- It is based on God’s purpose for me.
- It expresses my SHAPE.
- It clarifies my roles in life.

How do I discover my life mission?

Tony Campolla, the Christian author and speaker, states, “There are two ways I could tell you how to get to my house. I could draw you a map and you could use the map to figure out how to get to my house on your own. You might or might not get there, depending on how good a mapmaker I am and how good you are at reading maps. Instead of giving you a map, it would be better if I got in the car with you and guided you all the way. If I showed you every road to take and every turn to make as you rode along, then you would get to my house without any trouble.”

Rather than giving us directions that we must follow on our own, God directs us as a constant guiding presence – a spiritual GPS. What he is looking for is a willingness on our part to take a step of faith as illustrated in the life of Abraham, who left everything that was familiar to go to a land that was unfamiliar.

If you want to participate in the mission of God, it is important to “keep the tent stakes loose.” The Holy Spirit promises to be a guiding presence in our lives. If you maintain a close relationship with Christ by surrendering daily, you will experience a sense of purpose.



In *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren asserts that defining our life mission enables us to clarify four essential questions:

1. What will the center of my life be?

God created me to know and love 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 greatest and first commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38

2. What will the character of my life be?

God created me to be like Christ.

“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.” Romans 8:29

3. What will the contribution of my life be?

God created me to use my SHAPE to serve others.

“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” 1 Peter 4:10

4. What will the communication of my life be?

God created me to tell others about him.

“But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.” Acts 20:24

SHARING YOUR FAITH

Part of our work as Christlike disciples is to **share** the Gospel, which is also called the Good News. Our lives were dramatically changed when we became a follower of Christ, and it is only natural that we would want to share this good news with others. When something exciting happens, we want to tell everyone!

Although we provide seminars for you to learn how to share your faith more effectively, many Christians are intimidated by the thought of doing evangelism as we have traditionally thought of it. However, we have learned that the most powerful means of communicating the Gospel is simply telling your **personal story**.

We espouse a simple plan for influencing our world, which is found in the book entitled, *How to Become a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels. It includes the following principles:

High Potency + Close Proximity + Clear Communication = Maximum Impact

High Potency: Every Christian should live their life in such a way that their spiritual relationship with Christ is dynamic and influential to the point of being contagious.

Close Proximity: Because spiritually lost people matter to God, we want to make friends with people who do not know him personally. Typically, this includes people with whom we work and live near.

Clear Communication: Because there are so many misconceptions about what it means to be a Christian, we encourage you to share your story clearly and simply.

Maximum Impact: When our lives are full of **High Potency**, and we are in **Close Proximity** to others and tell our story with **Clear Communication**, God has the opportunity to change lives!

We also believe evangelism is the work of the entire church through all of our ministries. If each Christian uses their spiritual gifts, the Bible says that the church will be built up. Some people have the ability to develop friendships, others organize events, and others provide counsel and direction for seekers. We provide a number of events throughout the year that you can invite your non-Christian friends to, so evangelism is a team effort.



Telling Your Story

Everyone has a story, and the Bible is God's story of creation and redemption. When we become a Christian, God invites us to be part of **his story**.

If you have not completed the section entitled "My Spiritual Journey" on your "Personal Profile," please take a few minutes to complete it. This information will help you in telling your story and sharing your faith with others, especially non-Christians.

The Opportunity to Make a Difference

Mother Teresa has been esteemed throughout the world; yet, she was a simple woman who believed that servanthood should characterize a Christian's life. Two of her quotes that have inspired many are:

- "I don't do big things. I do small things with big love."
- "I'm but a pencil in the hand of God."

We now recognize that the entire world is a mission field, because of the immigration of ethnicities to the United States and other countries as well as the number of people who still have not heard the Gospel. Being a missionary and living missionally means that we think as Paul did about reaching lost people when he said, "By all means save some."

The Characteristics of a Missionary

➤ **A Servant's Heart**

In a world where we are so conscious of performance and the evaluation of others, the call of God helps us focus all we do for "an audience of One."

When we do, we are free to function within the area of our giftedness for ministry, and we are able to serve God as a response to his call!

➤ **A Passion for Excellence**

We believe that excellence should characterize our ministry. The prophet Malachi made it clear to the people of Israel that they offended God by offering their blemished animals as a sacrifice and keeping the best ones for themselves.

God's call always challenges us to allow him to stretch us beyond our limits only to discover that we have potential we did not realize.

➤ **A Responsible Person**

People who have experienced the call of God understand that they are accountable to God for the responsibility he has entrusted to them.

➤ **A Team Player**

As members of the Body of Christ, we realize that something will be missing when we do not fulfill our calling.

➤ **A Missional Leader**

As missional leaders, we must exemplify the character of Jesus and follow his examples and teachings. We must be passionately committed to fulfilling the Great Commission. Like Jesus, we must pitch our tents among the people God calls us to disciple and lead. There is no greater love or mission!

➤ **A Sense of Adventure**

For the Christian who responds to God's call to follow him, the journey becomes an adventure as we leave the world of security and continually discover new insights about his grace and love!

FINISHING WELL

For the one who is called, finishing well is critical to having personal integrity.

“As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:6-8

We must remember that God's call:

- Is the stimulus to keep us journeying with purpose.
- Prevents us from confusing our occupation with our vocation.
- Encourages us to leave the entire outcome of our lives to God.

To come to the end of our life and look back with a deep sense of fulfillment and purpose is the next best thing to hearing God say, **“Well done, thou good and faithful servant!”**

THE BEL AIR STORY

The Bel Air Church of the Nazarene was born out of the holiness movement that swept the United States in the beginning of the twentieth century and a spiritual awakening that touched the lives of several families in rural Harford County, Maryland in the early 1920's. In 1921, a group of dedicated Christians, united by an experience referred to as second blessing holiness, met for cottage prayer meetings and held tent meetings on a regular basis.



Bel Air Church of the Nazarene - 1932

God poured out his Spirit upon the small body of believers; and in 1931, the growing congregation purchased the site of the first tent meeting in Hickory and constructed a church. In spite of economic difficulties, the

founders of the Bel Air Church demonstrated sacrificial living during the 1930's, and the church was effective in outreach to the community.

As population in Harford County and church attendance steadily increased over the years, the need for a larger facility became obvious; and God faithfully revealed his plan for the future of the Bel Air Church.



Bel Air Church of the Nazarene

In 1986, the congregation voted to accept the recommendation of the church board to purchase the sixty-three acre Hoopes orchard that was located a few miles north of the church. In February of 2001, the congregation moved to their new facility located at 2430 Conowingo Road, where the church continues to grow the next generation of disciples.

THE BEL AIR MISSION **GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF DISCIPLES**

Our mission is focused on the words of Jesus, “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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

THE BEL CHURCH STRATEGY

Our strategy to “grow the next generation of disciples” is illustrated by an organic metaphor of an orchard in which we approach our mission with five major strategies:

➤ **Planting Seeds of Hope**

We believe the Word of God is a powerful message of good news needed by our world today. We faithfully proclaim the word of Christ, provide Bible study opportunities, and share our faith with others planting the seed of God’s Word.

➤ **Cultivating Devoted Christ Followers**

We believe the process of making a disciple is a multifaceted endeavor in which we attempt to address the needs of the person and tailor the process of discipleship to them. This is a lifelong endeavor that is content-oriented as well as cultivated by life through mentoring, coaching, and serving.

➤ **Grafting in New Believers**

Connecting new believers as well as new individuals and families from other churches is important. We strive to help everyone feel welcome. We have found that the best way to connect is to move beyond Sunday morning worship and take advantage of fellowship activities and small group gatherings.

➤ **Feasting On the Harvest of Grace**

This is how we refer to worship. As God’s people, we gather together on Sunday mornings realizing that we are people who are the recipients of grace. In worship, whether in a contemporary style or a more traditional style, our desire is to encourage our people to enter into an experience of worship of our Lord.

➤ **Serving the World With Our Resources**

We believe God has given us resources that are to be used to bless others. Not only do we partner with community groups that are addressing the needs of the homeless, poor, and marginalized, but we are very involved in cross-cultural ministries particularly in third world areas. Our growing partnerships provide opportunities for our people to make investments that make a difference.

BEL AIR CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Global Mission

The Church of the Nazarene supports over 700 missionaries who serve in over 150 global areas, and we are a church that is actively involved in mission endeavors around the world. Our involvement takes place at every level including prayer support, financial support, and hands on involvement through Work & Witness opportunities. Our church has a rich heritage with several people who have served or are serving as missionaries in other countries.

The best way to learn about missions is through our annual Faith Promise Celebration and Missions Fair or by participating in one of our Work & Witness trips.

We have also published a brochure to help you understand how our church supports missions. It includes information regarding:

- Faith Promise
- Faith Promise Celebration
- Missions Fair
- World Evangelism Fund
- District Budget
- Alabaster
- World Mission Radio
- LINKS
- Deputation
- Memorial Roll
- Work & Witness
- Compassionate Ministries
- Child Sponsorship

In addition to the annual youth mission trips, we have sponsored trips to Bulgaria, Romania, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, and the Dominican Republic.

We also collaborate with the Fawn Grove Church of the Nazarene to support the Compassionate Ministries Center that collects, processes, and packs clothing and Crisis Care Kits that are sent throughout the world.



Local Compassionate Ministries

We believe that missions is something that not only happens in far off places, but also in our own community. The following are opportunities for those who want to be involved in a local ministry:

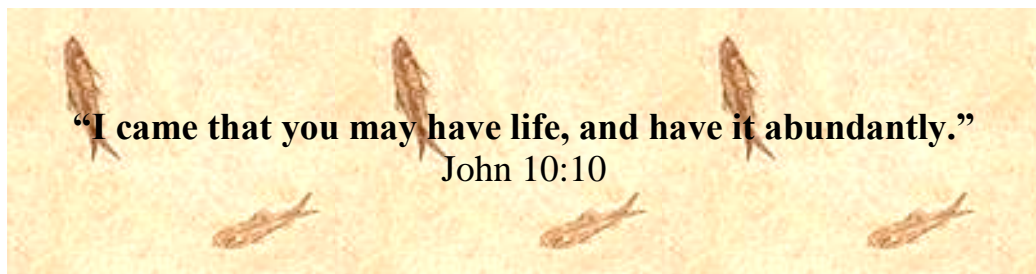
- Prison Ministry
- Tabitha's House (A Ministry of Mountain Christian Church)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Community of Hope – Washington D.C.
- Lighthouse Ministry – Patterson Park
- D.C. 2000 and Beyond
- Nursing Home Visits
- Red Cross Blood Drives
- Inner City Summer Camps
- Harford County Homeless Shelter
- Auto Repair for Single Parents and Widows
- Work & Witness
- Random Acts of Kindness by Our Children
- Meals for Families of New Mothers
- Funeral Meals
- Youth Service Projects
- Christmas Benevolences



RESOURCES



*Discipleship
for Life*



**"I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly."
John 10:10**



*DISCIPLESHIP
FOR LIFE*

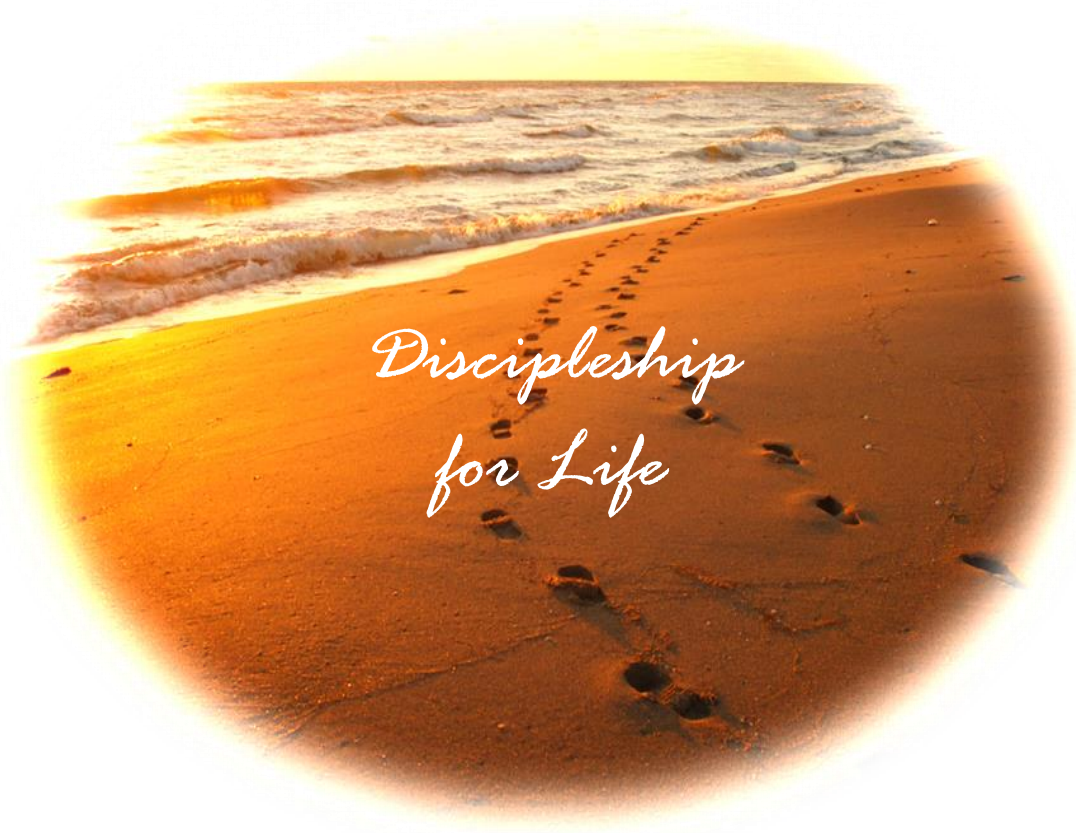
CALENDAR

Wednesday, August 29	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Class Orientation
Wednesday, September 5	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module One: “Disciple for Life”
Wednesday, September 12	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Two: “Spiritual Disciplines for Life”
Wednesday, September 19	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Two: “Spiritual Disciplines for Life”
Wednesday, October 3	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Two: “Spiritual Disciplines for Life”
Wednesday, October 10	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Three: “Ministry for Life”
Wednesday, October 17	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Three: “Ministry for Life”
Wednesday, October 24	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Four: “Mission for Life”
Wednesday, October 31	<i>Discipleship for Life</i> Class Module Four: “Mission for Life”
Wednesday, November 14	Conclusion and Review of Class
Saturday, December 1	Discipleship Retreat “Practicing Spiritual Disciplines”
December	Meet Individually with Class Participants Complete Spiritual Development Form Review Spiritual Profile

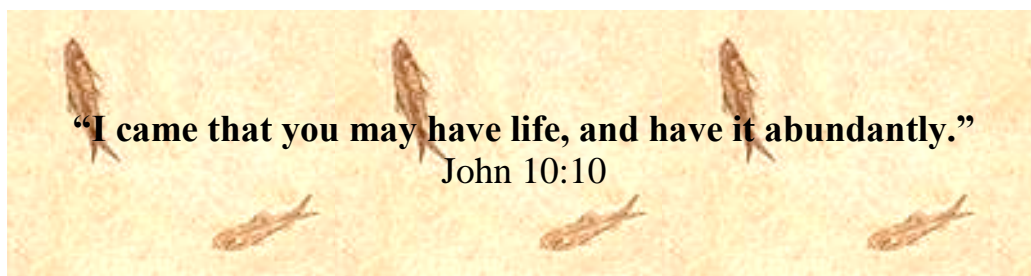
A THIRTY-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. Matthew 1 – 9
2. Matthew 10 – 15
3. Matthew 16 – 22
4. Matthew 23 – 28
5. Mark 1 – 8
6. Mark 9 – 16
7. Luke 1 – 6
8. Luke 7 – 11
9. Luke 12 – 18
10. Luke 19 – 24
11. John 1 – 7
12. John 8 – 13
13. John 14 – 22
14. Acts 1 – 7
15. Acts 8 – 14
16. Acts 15 – 21
17. Acts 22 – 28
18. Romans 1 – 8
19. Romans 9 – 16
20. 2 Corinthians 1 – 9
21. 2 Corinthians 10 – 16
22. 2 Corinthians 1 – 13
23. Galatians – Ephesians
24. Philippians – 2 Thessalonians
25. 1 Timothy – Philemon
26. Hebrews
27. James – 2 Peter
28. 1 John – 3 John
29. Revelation 1 – 11
30. Revelation 12 – 22

MY SPIRITUAL JOURNAL



*Discipleship
for Life*



**"I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly."
John 10:10**

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