

Discipleship

The First Steps to Fulfilling the Great Commission

J.C. Hoogeveen III

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Scripture references are given for reading in the Bible version of your choice.

OPENLY LEARNING CLASS WORKBOOK

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UNIT 1 OF 8

What is a Disciple?

Disciples: Who are they?

How would you describe a disciple? What are some characteristics of a disciple?

Discuss this in your small group. What are the common themes?

Read

> **Matthew 28:19-20**

Based on Matthew 28:19-20, how would you describe who a disciple is?

Discuss this in your small group. What are some common theme words?

Looking at Matthew 28:19-20, we can think of a disciple as someone who exemplifies four areas.

1. One who loves Jesus.
2. One who accepts what Jesus teaches.
3. One who obeys what Jesus teaches.
4. One who spreads what Jesus teaches.

Reflection

What are some ways you have shown others that you love Jesus, accept what Jesus teaches, obey what Jesus teaches, and have spread what Jesus teaches?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

It can be easy to mistake religion for being a disciple. As we begin walking as disciples of Jesus, we must remember why we are walking like disciples. There are five questions we can ask ourselves that can help us keep the WHY at the forefront.

1. Why do I love Jesus?
2. Why do I accept the teachings of Jesus?
3. Why do I obey the teachings of Jesus?
4. Why do I spread the teachings of Jesus?
5. Why am I a disciple?

Self-Reflection

Take some time for yourself and answer these questions. Be honest with yourself. Answer these questions from your life perspective, not from the standpoint of having right or wrong answers.

Apply It

Begin thinking of people in your life whom you may be able to begin discipling. Write these names down and start to pray over them.

Names I will pray over this week:

UNIT 2 OF 8

What is Love?

Love: What is it?

What is your understanding of love? How do you believe love is shown to others?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> 1 John 4:7-21; 1 John 2:15-17; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Hebrews 12:4-13

What do you see in these Scriptures about love? What or who is love? How is love displayed?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Reflection

How have you shown love to others from a biblical worldview perspective?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Being a disciple of Jesus is founded on biblical love. Everything we do should be done because of our love for God and people. There are two questions we can ask ourselves that can help reveal where our heart is and what our purpose for being a disciple of Jesus is.

1. Am I applying Scripture to my life and obeying Jesus because I should do it or because I love God and love people?
2. Am I a disciple and making disciples because it is a command or because I love God and love people?

Self-Reflection

Take some time and answer these for yourself.

Apply It

Be intentional this week about loving God and loving others. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you new ways to love people around you.

Come ready to share your experience next week.

UNIT 3 OF 8

Who Disciples Who?

Discipling: Who does it?

Whom do you believe should disciple others?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> **Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:1-10; Acts 2:1-21; 2 Timothy 2:2**

Who does Scripture tell us should be making disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Here are some whom the Scriptures tell us should be making disciples.

1. Those filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. Those trustworthy, reliable, and qualified by biblical standards, not man's.
3. All disciples of Jesus.

Reflection

Does your local church teach that all trustworthy, reliable, and biblically qualified disciples of Jesus who are filled with the Holy Spirit should be the ones making disciples? If not, who is making disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Many churches teach that the pastors or leadership are the only qualified believers to make disciples. This teaching does not align with what is taught in Scripture.

1. What are some reasons this may often be the case?
2. What will you do to begin making disciples?

Self-Reflection

Take some time and answer these for yourself.

Apply It

Pray for the Holy Spirit to open doors to begin talking with those you have been praying for from Unit 1. Ask if they would be open to being part of a relational discipleship group.

Come prepared next week to share what God has done.

UNIT 4 OF 8

Multiplying Disciples

Multiplying Disciples: What are the characteristics?

What characteristics would you consider worthy of multiplying?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> **2 Timothy 2:2**

What does this Scripture present as a trustworthy person? Why might we be taught to teach trustworthy people?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Here are some reasons why we have been taught to teach trustworthy people.

1. So they will spread the gospel.
2. So they will spread the correct gospel.
3. So they can train others.
4. So our time is not spent on those who do not obey what they are taught.

Reflection

Are you a 2 Timothy 2:2 trustworthy person? If so, why? If not, why?

Are you searching out and teaching 2 Timothy 2:2 trustworthy people? If so, why? If not, why?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Many people spend significant time attempting to turn an untrustworthy person into a trustworthy person. If the Great Commission is to make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey everything Jesus taught, how can it ever be fulfilled if we do not teach trustworthy people? Here are a few questions to ask yourself.

1. Are those I am teaching trustworthy people?
2. What is my purpose for teaching others?
3. In what ways are those I am teaching or have taught teaching others?

Self-Reflection

Take some time and answer these for yourself.

Apply It

Meet with those open to joining a relational discipleship group to get to know them and see if they are a 2 Timothy 2:2 person. If they are, continue to meet with them. If they are not, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to those who are.

Come prepared next week to share what God has done.

UNIT 5 OF 8

Biblical Christian Community

Biblical Christian Community: How do we get there?

What is your understanding of a biblical Christian community?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> **Acts 2:36-47; Romans 12:9-21**

What does Scripture teach about the Christian community?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Here are some biblical aspects of the Christian community.

1. Christian teaching is taking place.
2. Prayer is taking place.
3. Christians meet together frequently and regularly.
4. Christians are eating meals together.
5. Christians are meeting each other's needs to the point where they have no needs.
6. God grows the community.

Reflection

A biblical Christian community is “the church” and a “local church.” Does your local church reflect what we find in Scripture? If so, how? If not, what is needed?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Just because you meet in a building, preach, listen to a message, and worship does not mean your local church is a biblical Christian community. Many local churches have room to grow into the picture of Acts 2:42-47.

1. In what areas does your local church need to improve?
2. What steps will you personally take to make that happen?

Self-Reflection

Take some time and answer these for yourself.

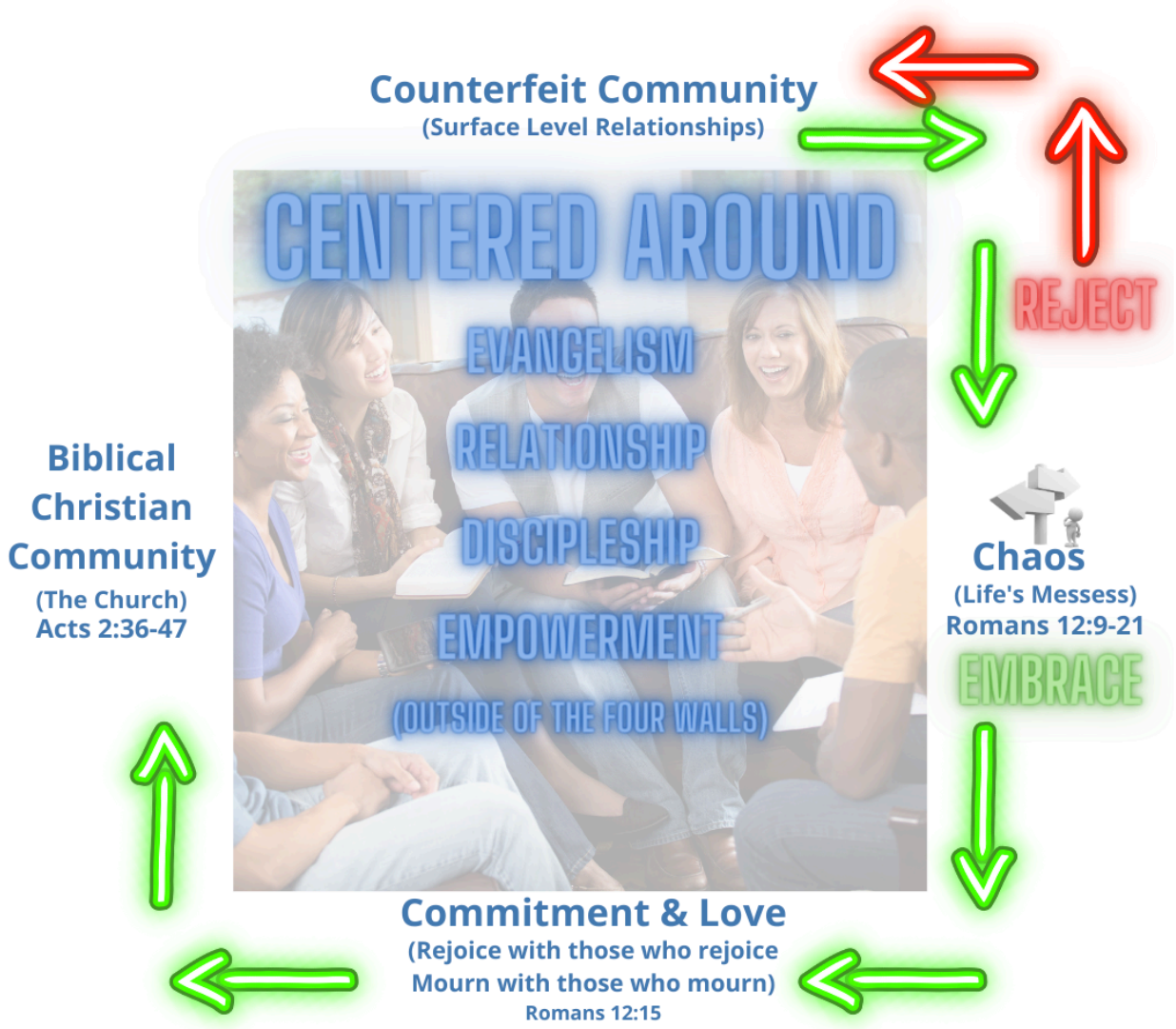
Apply It

Choose at least two areas of a biblical Christian community where you could improve. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you opportunities to improve, and do it.

Come prepared next week to share what God did.

Biblical Christian Community Tool

Understanding the process of becoming a biblical Christian community can be difficult. The tool below has helped countless Christians recognize where improvements can be made to better reflect a biblical church by functioning like a biblical Christian community.



Biblical Christian Community Square

Some characteristics of a counterfeit community

- Surface-level conversations
- Limited personal life knowledge
- Small talk

- Repeated conversations
- Only seeing certain people at certain “official” times (school, work, church gathering, coffee shop, and so on)

What are some examples of counterfeit communities in your life?

Discuss with your small group why you consider these counterfeits.

What are some examples of biblical Christian communities?

Discuss with your small group why you consider these biblical Christian communities.

UNIT 6 OF 8

The Results of the Great Commission

The Results of the Great Commission: What are they?

What are some results you believe local churches would have because of making disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> **Matthew 4:18-22, 8:22, 19:21, 28:19-20; Mark 8:34-36; Luke 9:57-62, 14:26-33; Acts 2:41-47**

What does Scripture teach about the results of making disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Here are some biblical results of making disciples.

1. Followers of Jesus are doing so only after counting the cost.
2. Followers of Jesus immediately act upon what they learn.
3. Followers preached the gospel, and it spread.
4. Followers lived noticeably different lifestyles than non-believers.

Reflection

Think about your local church for a moment. Do you see significant results that reflect the ones above? If so, what are they?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Many churches and the Christians who share the gospel do so in a way that neglects the cost of following Jesus. This is often done to increase "salvation numbers" or out of compassion for those not ready to follow Jesus. The issue is that Scripture does not show Jesus or his disciples ministering this way. Jesus clearly explains that following him will be difficult and gives examples.

1. What could be considered the costs of following Jesus?
2. Have you counted the cost of following Jesus?
3. Have you shared the cost with others, expecting them to count the cost before following Jesus themselves?

Self-Reflection

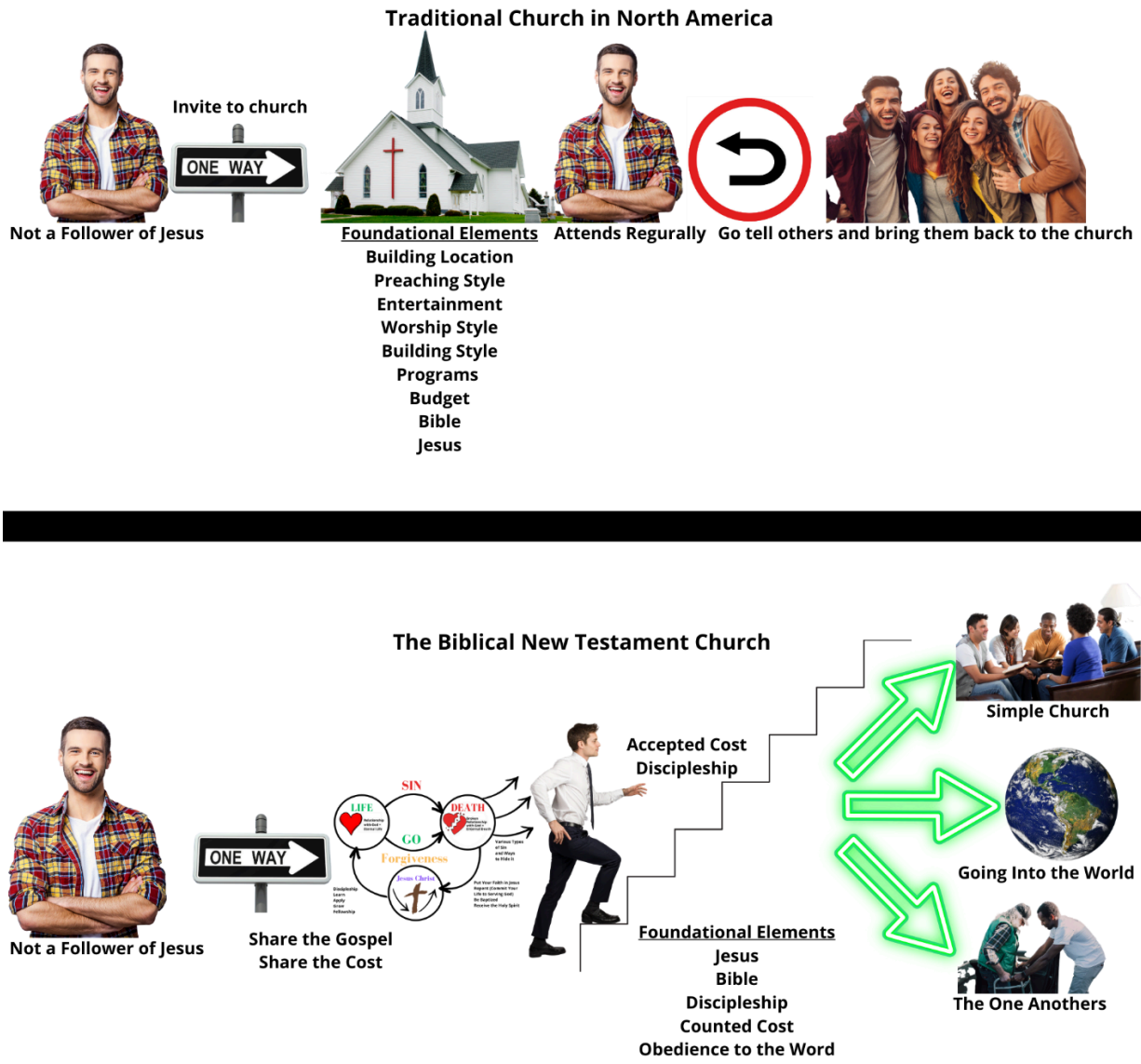
Take some time and answer these for yourself.

Apply It

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if you have counted the cost of following Jesus and accepted it.

Come prepared next week to share what following Jesus has cost you.

Two Different Churches



Two Different Churches

Compare the Traditional Church in North America with the Biblical New Testament Church. What differences do you see? Which one looks more like your local church today?

UNIT 7 OF 8

How to Make Disciples

Disciples: How do we make them?

What is your understanding of making disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Read

> **Matthew 22:34-40, 28:19-20; James 1:19-27; Titus 2:1-15**

What do the Scriptures teach about how to make disciples?

Discuss this in your small group. What were the common themes?

Here are some ways the Bible teaches us to make disciples.

1. Love the Lord your God and love others.
2. Teach others to love the Lord your God and to love others.
3. Baptize those you lead to Jesus.
4. Teach those you baptize to obey what Jesus teaches.
5. Be doers of the Word.
6. Teach others to be doers of the Word.
7. Teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.

Reflection

How does your local church view making disciples and how to make them?

Discuss this in your small group. What insights have you gained?

Something to Think On

Throughout Scripture, love is the predominant factor in how Jesus made disciples. His teachings were always in the context of relationships. Discipleship is, first and foremost, teaching believers how to live like Jesus, but this should only be done with relational discipleship.

1. How have you and your church lived out relational discipleship in disciple-making?
2. What improvements will you make?

Self-Reflection

Take some time and answer these for yourself.

Apply It

Continue meeting with those with whom you are beginning the discipleship process.

Come prepared next week to share the growth you have seen or anything else God is doing with this meeting.

UNIT 8 OF 8

Relational Discipleship Gathering

Putting it all together

It is good to disciple several people at a time; Jesus had twelve disciples, which is a good goal. Of those twelve, Jesus focused on three to disciple more intentionally. Like Jesus, we can gather as a group when making disciples. However, this should not be solely for teaching, nor should it be the only time you connect. Discipleship is a healthy balance between teaching and authentic relationships. The following is an outline that can be used for gathering.

Fellowship

Care for and get to know each other

1. Share a meal, a refreshment, a snack, or a dessert.
2. Share testimonies from the previous week.
3. Talk about plans for the weekend and life.

Accountability

1. What are some stories of how you have applied what you have been learning?
2. Who has the Lord led you to train in what you have been learning?
3. Who has the Lord led you to share the gospel with?

Teach and Learn

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you this passage from Scripture. Read your chosen Scripture.

My passage:

1. What stood out to you in this Scripture and why?

2. What did you find difficult or challenging about this passage? Why?

Reread this week’s passage and discuss the following questions.

3. What does this passage teach about God?

4. What does this passage teach about people?

Application

Spend a few minutes by yourself, asking the Holy Spirit to show you how to answer the following questions.

Obey the Lord. How is God asking you to obey this passage?

Teach others. Who is God asking you to teach to obey this passage?

Share with others. Who is God asking you to share the gospel with?

Practical Application Practice

Split into groups of two or three.

Practice. Practice what God is asking you to do from the application section.

Discuss. Playing devil's advocate, discuss the topic of study from today.

Pray. Pray for each other individually. Ask God to prepare the hearts of the people hearing about Jesus this week. Ask him to give each of you the strength to obey what he asks of you this week.

Apply It

Take everything you have learned over the past eight units and be a relational discipleship gathering in your home.

Who will I invite, and when will we first gather?