



Glow



Discipleship Course

Term Three



Welcome to the Discipleship Course!

Every study has a short video, study notes and discussion points. Our prayer is that as we study together, we are transformed by His Word and His Spirit, strengthening our relationship with God and one another.

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|---------------|---|
| WEEK 1 | Introduction + Father
The Father Heart of God |
| WEEK 2 | Son
The work of Jesus on the Cross |
| WEEK 3 | Holy Spirit
The person and power of the Holy Spirit |
| WEEK 4 | Community Accountability
Following Jesus together |
| WEEK 5 | Reflective Reading and Persistent Prayer
'Why' and 'how' we read the Bible and pray |
| WEEK 6 | Total Stewardship and Sabbath
Everything we have from God/ Rhythms of rest |
| WEEK 7 | Praying for the sick + dealing with the demonic
Continuing Jesus' ministry |
| WEEK 8 | Expanding the Kingdom of God
Making disciples, serving the poor |



THE DISCIPLESHIP COURSE

WEEK 8: Expanding the Kingdom of God



Glow

**Discipleship
Course**

Expand the Kingdom of God

YESSS!!

“Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions... 7 Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

MATTHEW 10: 5-8

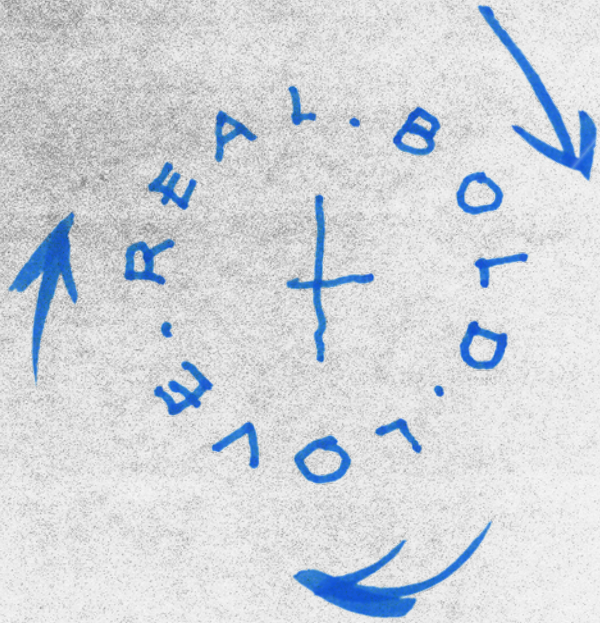
“If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.”

1 JOHN 3: 17-18

“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.”

MATTHEW 28: 18-19

If you had the ability to go back in time and observe Jesus or the Early Church you would be amazed at the things that Jesus and His followers did, but you would also notice a consistent pattern in what they talked about. What you would have noticed is that they would have spoken a lot about the Kingdom of Heaven, they would have served the poor and that they would have consistently invited others to become disciples of Jesus.



The Kingdom of Heaven

If you were to survey people on what Jesus talked about most, you may get responses such as 'love' or 'peace'. The truth is that the message Jesus preached about the most was 'the Kingdom of Heaven' and that it was near. We aren't really used to the term 'kingdom' anymore because for the most part, our westernised countries are not ultimately ruled by a king with a kingdom, but we live within a democracy with a prime minister or president.

In Jesus' day there was a kingdom and that kingdom was Rome. Rome was the world superpower and it was ruled by an emperor called Caesar. It was a kingdom that used its power to suppress the helpless and champion the wealthy. If you lived in the upper-class of this kingdom your goal was to eat, drink and be merry, which was just a superficial life that lead to more consumerism and more emptiness - sound familiar? Jesus came along and spoke of a different Kingdom with a new King, Himself. The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome:

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

ROMANS 14:17 NIV

God's Kingdom is about:

Righteousness - God making you presentable, pleasing and without shame.

Peace (shalom) - God giving you peace, wholeness and health.

Joy - A deep sense of inner happiness and contentment.

This is what the Holy Spirit produces in you as you enter into the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught His disciples to pray:

"Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

MATTHEW 6:10

One of the greatest ways to view the Kingdom of God is like this: in just about every foreign country you will find an embassy of your home country. Although that embassy is in a different country, as soon as you walk across the gate of that embassy you are no longer in a foreign country, you are in your home country. All the rules or authority of your country apply within that embassy, even though the rule and authority outside of that country are different. That embassy is viewed as sovereign territory of its nominated nation. In a very similar way as Jesus followers we have been asked to establish 'Kingdom Embassies' all around our city. Your home is meant to be an embassy, your workplace is meant to be an embassy, your school, etc. As Jesus followers we are called to expand the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. We are called to push back the kingdom of darkness and increase the Kingdom of Heaven.

On top of that, Jesus' message was that the Kingdom of Heaven is not far off, not distant, not one day, but HERE and NOW and all humanity is invited to enter into it. How? Through accepting Jesus' offer of life as our Lord and Saviour.

Our job as Christians is to tell people about the kingdom, or another way to put it, is to share this good news of the Gospel. Evangelism simply means sharing this amazing news that everyone is welcome into this new kingdom through Jesus.

To be a disciple of Jesus is to continue sharing the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven and expand his Kingdom here on earth.

LET'S CHAT

- Q. How does your new understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven change your everyday life?
- Q. Do you know how to share what Jesus has done for you to other people?
- Q. Who in your world could you share your story with?

Serve the Poor

It doesn't matter how advanced, free, wealthy or progressive our world gets, there is still so much poverty. There are many reasons why poverty still remains, and we must do our best to fight greed and injustice, but the bigger focus for the Christian is 'what will we do to serve those who are less fortunate?'

The Early Church lived in a time when there was very clear distinction between the societal classes, there was the very rich and the very poor, and before Christianity there was no such thing as social welfare or government aid, especially for people you had nothing to do with. In fact, it was the Christian community that invented homeless shelters, hospitals, and movements like social justice. Christianity has always been at the forefront of helping those who are poor or underprivileged.

As Christians, we should be known as generous people, especially towards the poor, it is an active expression of God's love through us.

The Apostle John said,

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

1 JOHN 3: 17-18

Practically meeting the needs of the poor or less fortunate is taking God's love and putting it into action.

John Wesley, the founder of what is now called 'Wesley Mission', said:

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

JOHN WESLEY

'The poor' are not just those who are homeless and living on the streets, although that is amazing place to start, but it is also the single mum who you know is going through a rough time, or the school kid who doesn't have enough money to go to school camp with his friends, or the university student who struggling to pay his school fees so he is living on two minute noodles. All these are moments to serve those less fortunate

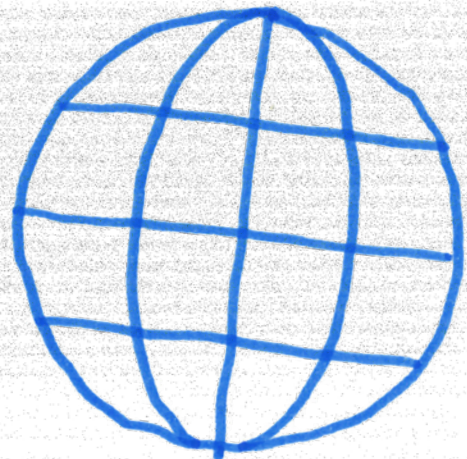
LET'S TALK

Q: Why should we help the poor?

The greatest act of love is doing something for someone who you know can do nothing in return. It's one way love. It's Godly love.

Q: Why do you think it is so important to serve the poor?

Q: How can you help/serve those less fortunate than you?



Help Others to Become Disciples

The Great Commission, in Matthew 28, was not a suggestion or an option, but a command. We all have many great gifts and callings on our lives, but there is one thing Jesus required all of His followers to do, once you have become a disciple, you now need to help others become a disciple as well. Remember the word 'disciple' in the greek is the word 'mathētēs' which means 'apprentice'. To follow Jesus is to commit to a lifelong journey of apprenticeship to Jesus, and just like an apprenticeship, the longer you do, the more competent and skilled you become. But as you grow in this apprenticeship Jesus now asks you to help others become an apprentice. In fact, Matthew 28 basically says that to be a disciple you need to be making disciples.

So how do you make disciples?

1. Discipleship is not a program, it's a personal journey someone takes with another person.

Jesus didn't teach his disciples a program, he showed and taught them a lifestyle to be followed. Programs run for a matter of weeks or months, but a lifestyle is a long term commitment.

In his book "The Lost Art Of Disciple Making" LeRoy Eims brilliantly captures the heart behind helping other become disciples:

"Disciples cannot be mass produced, we cannot drop people into a 'program' and see disciples emerge at the end of the production line. It takes time to make disciples. It takes individual, personal attention.

It takes hours of prayer for them. It takes patience and understanding to teach them how to get into the Word of God for themselves, how to feed and nourish their souls, and by the power of the Holy Spirit how to apply the word to their lives. And it takes being an example to them of all of the above."

When you help someone to become a disciple, you are committing to a relationship, a journey. This is why many Christians and churches aren't really effective in making disciples because there are no shortcuts to discipleship, only the long road. Helping someone become a disciple is committing to journey with that person to help them follow Jesus.

2. Discipleship is largely conversational.

We have grown up in classrooms where we sit, listen and take notes (hopefully). This style of education has been our primary avenue for learning, but to be a disciple in Jesus day was to converse, to bring up a topic and talk about it back and forth, to wrestle out complex or difficult topics, to allow for questions. This is still the best way to help someone become a disciple. Teach them, but don't make it a one way conversation, ask them questions about the topic and allow them to ask questions as well. Conversations takes sharing our thoughts and feelings, it takes engagement of our minds and it brings closeness between people. Discipleship should never be seen as a lecture hall, but more like a round table where everyone is invited to contribute. Discipleship is largely conversational.

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3. Discipleship is not about following a set of rules, it's about helping others follow a person.

Rules are great, they keep much of our society safe and in order, in fact the Bible is also full of what you could call rules and all of them are designed to help us live a more abundant life. But rules are not relational, if rules were enough then God could have stopped with the Ten Commandments. But God is not a God of rules alone, He is firstly a God of relationship. If you have a relationship, then the rules are seen as acts of love, and not a demanding requirement. As a child grows and experiences the love of a parent, the child knows that 'in love' the parent will tell the child what is wrong or dangerous, and it is from the foundation of love that the child trusts the parents' rules.

DISCIPLESHIP COURSE WEEK 8: EXPANDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus came and put on flesh so that we could have a relationship with Him and so that we could have a loving example to follow. Rules alone lead to legalism, and legalism never produces loving acts of obedience.

In helping someone become a disciple, it's extremely important that we help them realise that our faith is not about following rules, but following closely to the loving example of Jesus.

When Jesus said, "Teach them to obey all I have commanded you" it was obedience built on the reality of infinitely loving God. It's so much easier to obey God, when you know how much He loves you and wants what is best for you.

Q: How can I practically equip someone to become a disciples?

There is no one size fits all when it comes to discipleship, however there are key ingredients we see from Jesus and the Early Church's example. What are those ingredients? Everything we have just covered. If you want to equip someone to become a disciple all you need to do is take someone through exactly what you have just learnt.

AMEN

HERE IS A QUICK RECAP:

- 1. Connection**
 - The Father Heart of God
 - The Power of the Cross.
 - The Person and Power of the Holy Spirit
 - Community Accountability
 - Reflective Reading
 - Persistent Prayer
 - Total Stewardship
 - Sabbath
- 2. Continuing**
 - Praying for the Sick
 - Dealing with the Demonic
 - Expand the Kingdom
 - Serve the poor
- 3. Commissioning**
 - Help Others to Become a Disciple.

Q: How longer will this take?

We have covered all this in eight weeks, but remember this isn't a program, this is just a means to help equip others to become a disciple. At the end of eight weeks people won't become perfect disciples of Jesus, but you will have equipped them with all the tools they need to follow. It's not about perfection, it's about progress. But Jesus gave us the responsibility to help others progress in their journey to follow him.

In the words of author Timothy Keller:

"Discipleship is not a sprint; it's a marathon. It's a lifelong journey of following Jesus and becoming more like Him each day."

TIMOTHY KELLER

LOVE THIS

We want to encourage you to take the time to help someone else become a disciple. To lovingly, passionately and patiently walk someone through this content.

Jesus gave all those who follow Him this commission. **'Go and make disciples of all nations.'** For thousands of years, many have done exactly that, impacting billions of people... now it's your turn.

LET'S GO!

GO FORTH!