

Discipleship Essentials



Growing Up in Christ

1. Making Disciples
2. Being a Disciple
3. Quiet Time
4. Bible Study
5. Prayer
6. Worship

Becoming Like Christ

14. Filled with the Holy Spirit
15. Fruit of the Holy Spirit
16. Trust
17. Love
18. Justice
19. Witness

Understanding the Message of Christ

7. The Three-Person God
8. Made in God's Image
9. Sin
10. Grace
11. Redemption
12. Justification
13. Adoption

Serving Christ

20. The Church
21. Ministry Gifts
22. Spiritual Warfare
23. Walking in Obedience
24. Sharing the Wealth
25. Money

Followers of Jesus often talk about spiritual growth or spiritual maturity. We do so because the Bible repeatedly speaks of it.

Hebrews 6:1

Therefore, let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity...

1 Peter 2:2

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

2 Peter 1:5

Make every effort to add to your faith...

2 Peter 3:8

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But what does a mature follower of Jesus look like? This is an important question!





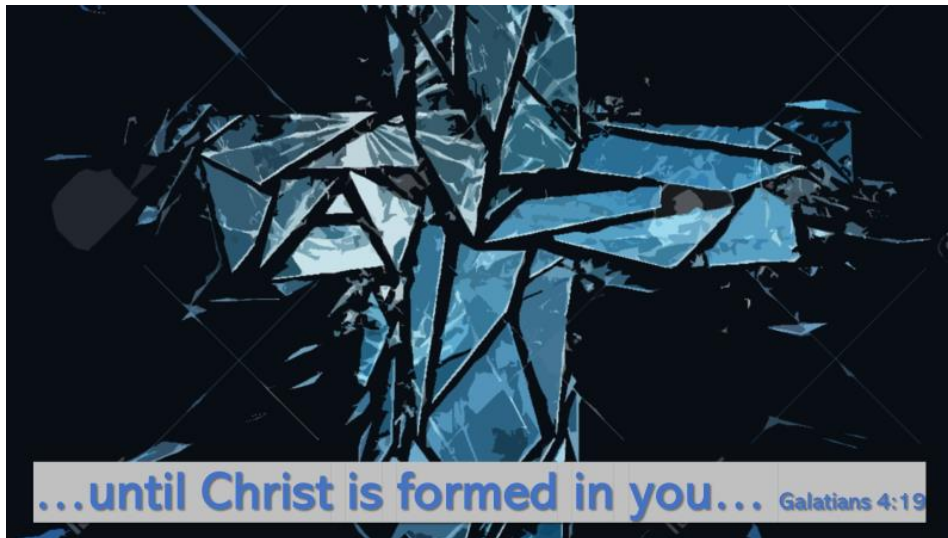
In 2016 the Colombia Mission Team served for a week in the center of Medellin at a recovery home called “Pare.”

In the main meeting room where we began each day with worship in song and the reading of Scripture, there was a large mural hanging at the front... that looked something like this...



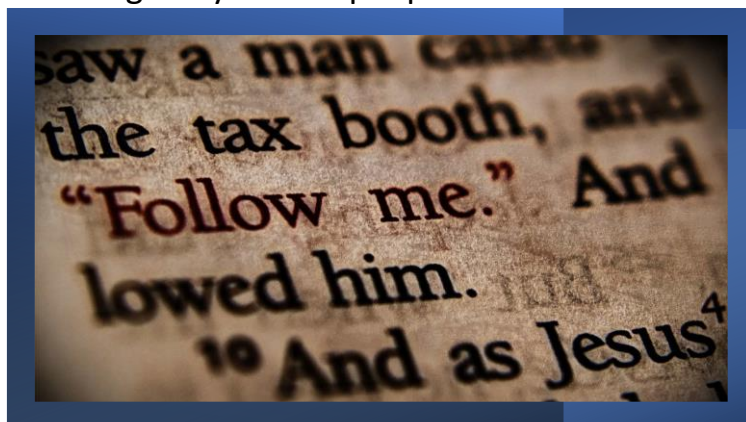
The image of the cross in broken pieces and the words – hasta que Cristo sea formado en ti struck a chord deep within me.

The words were a hope filled declaration of the power of the gospel to change a person from the inside out.

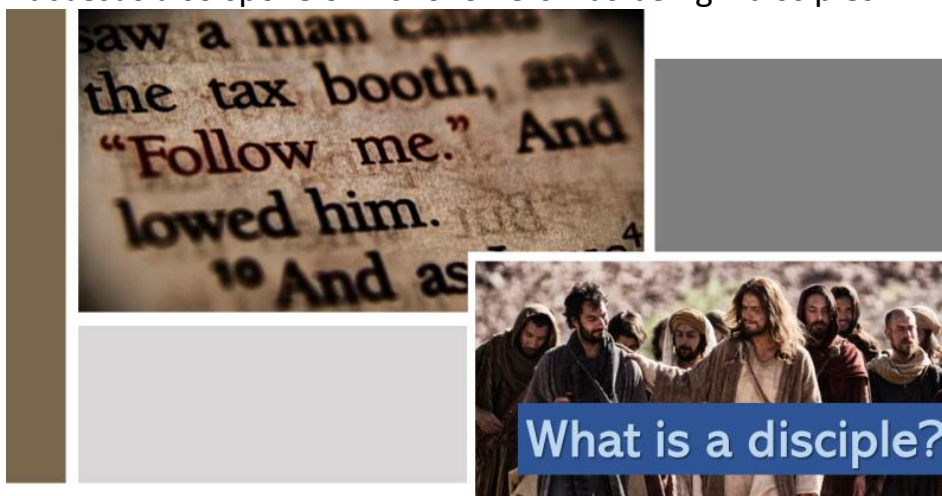


This verse.... describes for us... the destination of spiritual maturity.

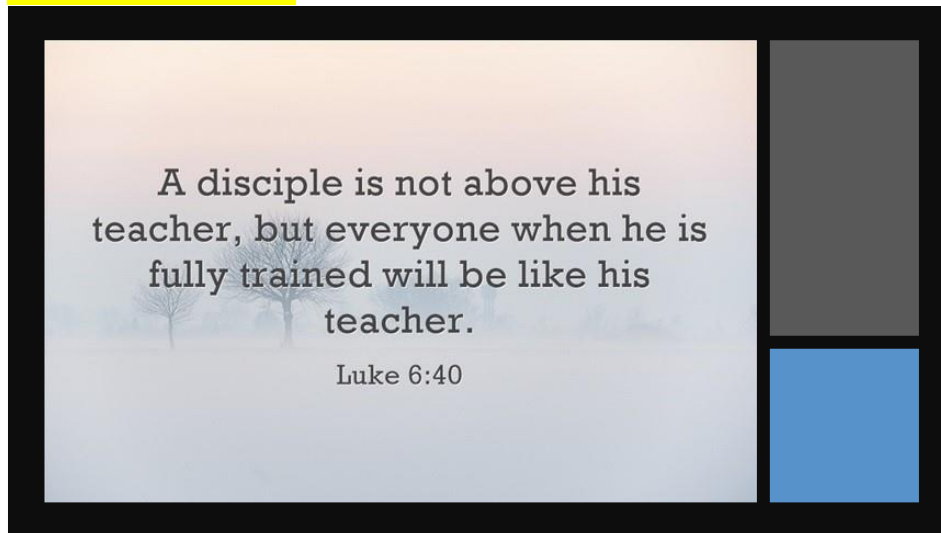
Jesus regularly invited people to follow him.



This is why many of us identify ourselves as followers of Jesus. But Jesus also spoke of his followers... as being... disciples.



So then, it is important to ask... what did Jesus understand a disciple to be?
This is his answer...



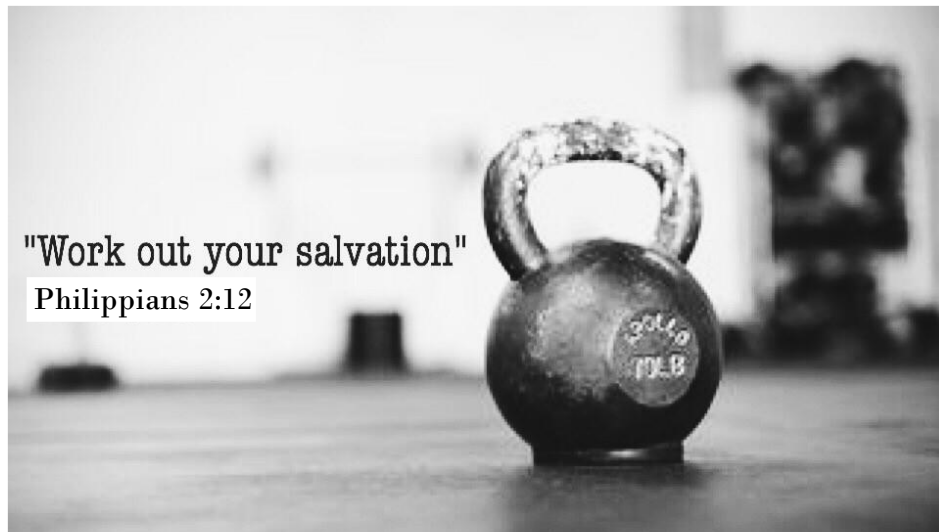
That word “fully trained” tells us that spiritual maturity is a process... that requires great intentionality.

But by whom?

God is purposefully active within the follower of Jesus to transform their character.



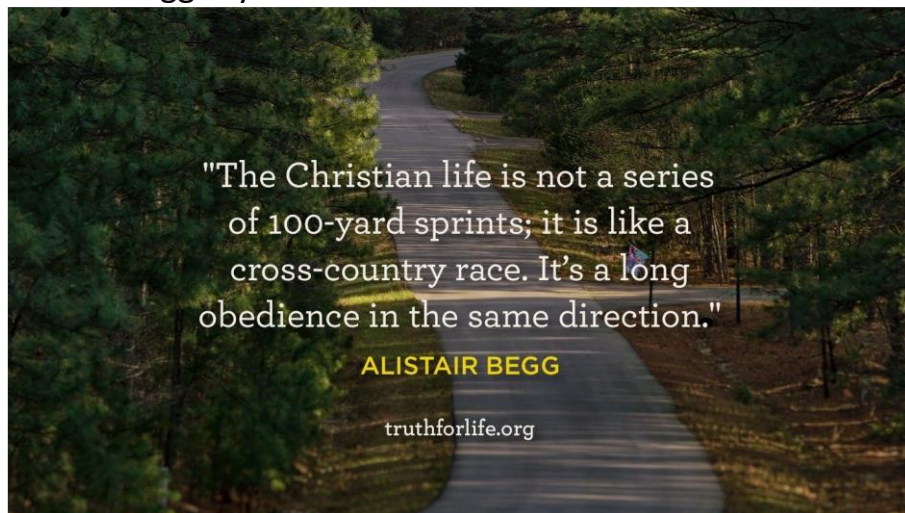
But the follower of Jesus is also tenaciously active... in putting off habits of sin and selfish values from when they lived without God in their life....
...while learning a new way of thinking and living that is informed and shaped by God's word.



"Work out your salvation"
Philippians 2:12

In Christ... we are a new creation as 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us. But the word "until" in Galatians 4:19 lets us know that being fully trained... being transformed into Jesus' likeness... working out our salvation... happens over a lifetime....

Alistair Begg says...



"The Christian life is not a series of 100-yard sprints; it is like a cross-country race. It's a long obedience in the same direction."

ALISTAIR BEGG

truthforlife.org

Regarding spiritual maturity this is the goal that is always before us.

Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole purpose of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else.

-C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity



The longer we follow Jesus... the more “pieces of the faith” we will have gathered... pieces that when understood, believed and practiced... facilitate and contribute towards our spiritual maturity.



But not until the pieces of a puzzle are put together is the picture seen.



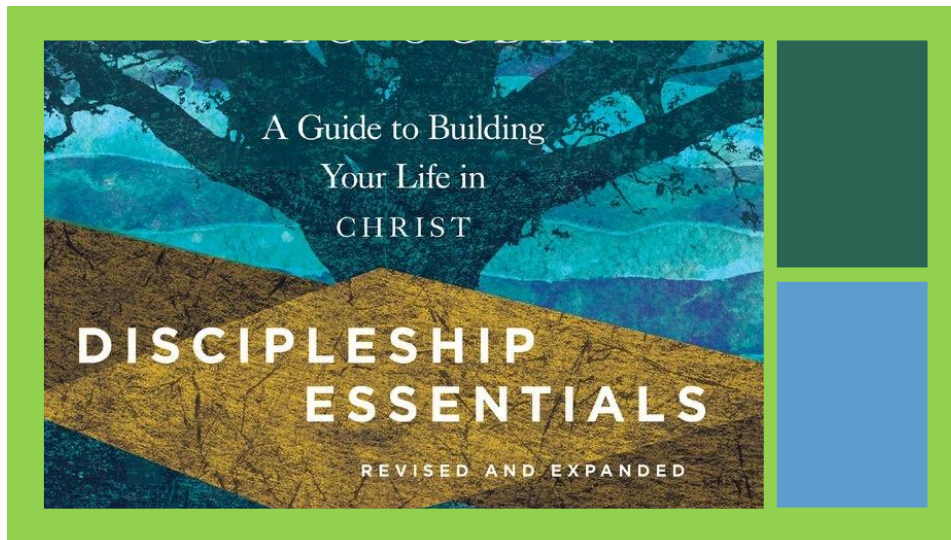
It is the same with the making of... "a little Christ."

What is surprising to so many followers of Jesus... is that the forming of Christ within us....is something we do together, and is not a solo endeavor.

Greg Ogden says...

"The making of a disciple
involves an intentional relationship
in which we walk alongside other disciples
in order to encourage, equip and challenge
one another to grow towards
maturity in Christ."

Discipleship Essentials, Greg Ogden



Discipleship Essentials is a tool...
... that puts the puzzle pieces together... to create a coherent picture of the Christian faith.

Discipleship Essentials provides...



...both Biblical content... and the context...
...for us to be made into fully trained disciples of Christ...

... who in turn make fully trained disciples of Christ who in turn make fully trained disciples of Christ, who in turn make fully trained disciples of Christ, and so on, and so on, and so on.



The genius of triads / quads

They are a group of 3-4 individuals who choose to travel together on the road towards spiritual maturity...



Discipleship Essentials

...until Christ is formed in you. Galatians 4:19

... until Christ is formed in them.

To that end... the members of a triad or a quad... commit to one another that weekly they will prepare and meet.

What characterizes DE triads/quads?

(how are they different from what we've been doing?)

- lives sharpening lives; a mutual learning together (not a teacher/student relationship)

Proverbs 27:17 – As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

- highly relational which encourages and allows for self-disclosure (it's how we learn to practice love for one another –present with; listening, encouraging)

What characterizes DE triads/quads?

- an environment to speak the truth in love and so foster wholesome accountability – see Titus 2:12
- each triad/quad learns at their pace — the emphasis is on interacting with the truth of each lesson whether that takes 1 or 2 weeks, or longer

What characterizes DE triads/quads?

- the commitment to the group, and the week by week study and interaction has been proven to result in accelerated spiritual growth

1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

What characterizes DE triads/quads?

- they function as a hot house of the Holy Spirit
- can have a range of age levels, as well as length of time exploring Christ – see Titus 2

Another important characteristic of the DE triads/quads is the covenant.

The DE Covenant

1. I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis.
2. I will meet weekly with my triad/quad for approximately 1 ½ hours to dialogue over the content of the assignments.

Practical Points

- the DE covenant helps to make the triad/quad a centerpiece of our week, along with our Sunday gatherings
- the DE covenant teaches us to make choices regarding our time – 20 minutes a day in order to make myself ready for our group interaction – what else do we spend 20 minutes a day on?

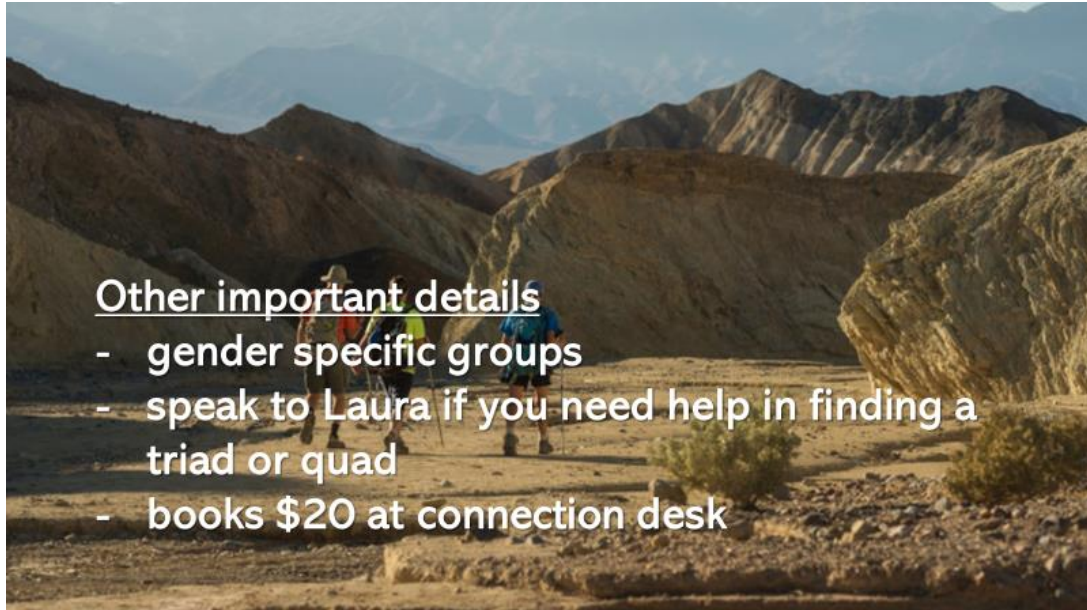
The DE Covenant

3. I will offer myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering into a time of accelerated growth.
4. I will contribute to a climate of honesty and personal vulnerability in a spirit of mutual up-building, and maintain strict confidentiality in order to foster trust.
5. I will give serious consideration to continuing the discipleship chain.

How to form a triad/quad

- pray about who
- pray about when to start
- location to meet – in a home or at church (speak with Erica re. church availability;) via Zoom (speak with Laura for account info.)
- speak to Laura if you need help in finding a triad or quad





If you can't afford the book, please speak to myself or to Laura as to what you can afford

Conclusion

DE has been used for 23 years

Out of the study there has developed a network called the Global Discipleship Initiative and as a church we will tap into their resources where possible

Global Discipleship Initiative



globaldi.org

Greg Ogden says...

**“When the truth of God’s Word
is at the heart of self-revealing, intimate relationships
rooted in life-change accountability
you have the ingredients
for Spirit motivated transformation.”**

Discipleship Essentials, Greg Ogden

Testimony of Ralph Rittenhouse

p.233.

This is the kind of church and people we desire to be.

The board members also did a four-week test drive of Discipleship Essentials. This was Laura's conclusion...

USER COMMENTS - LAURA FERGUSON

"I am excited to recommend Discipleship Essentials to our church. This curriculum takes the mystery out of the disciple-making process and is easy to use. The weekly questions and readings focus on a core truth of our faith and provide an excellent launch for engaging conversation. Using this book to intentionally enter into the discipline of a discipleship process will create a context for the Holy Spirit to do his refining work in our lives no matter how long we have been followers of Christ."

