

FOUNDATIONS

EVERYTHING YOU NEED
TO HELP A NEW BELIEVER
BECOME ESTABLISHED IN CHRIST

BRIAN LA CROIX

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6-7

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP DNA 2

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNDATIONS MATERIAL 3

MOVING FROM “DISCIPLE” TO “DISCIPLEMAKER” 3

THE BASIS OF DISCIPLESHIP 4

HOW TO USE THE FOUNDATIONS MATERIALS 6

Following Up Individual New Believers 6

When using Foundations in a group setting 10

FOUNDATIONS MATERIALS – “THE GREAT 8” 18

Session 1: Knowing For Sure You Have Heaven 19

Session 2: What’s This Confusing Book All About Anyway? 22

How to Have a Quiet Time 24

Session 3: Talking with God? Really? 27

Session 4: A New Family? You’ve Got to Be Kidding! 31

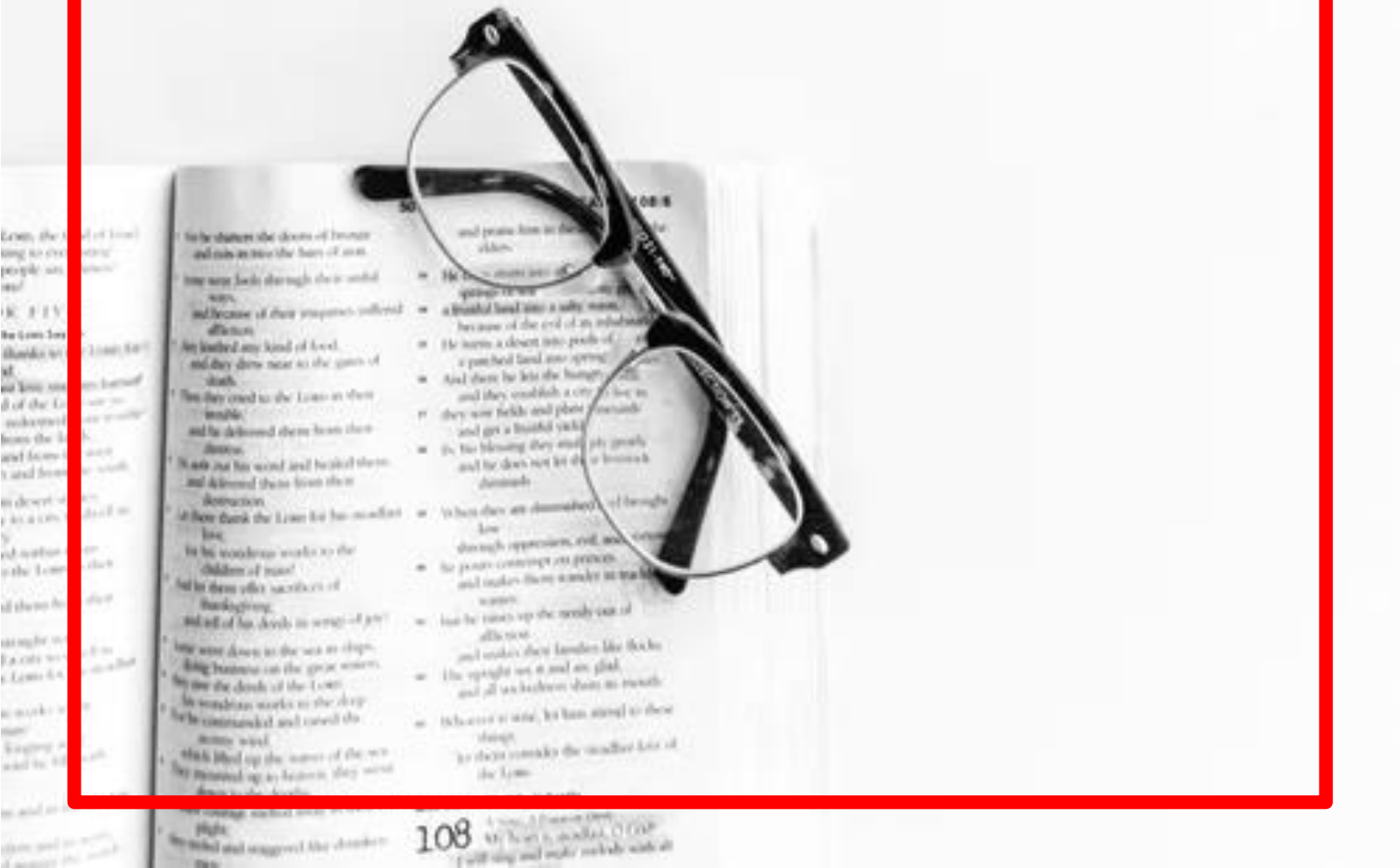
Session 5: I’m Supposed to DO Stuff as a Christian? 35

Session 6: How Can I Tell Others About Jesus? 38

Session 7: Impact Beyond Your Own Self 41

Session 8: “You Can Have It All, Lord...” 43

ABOUT THE AUTHOR 47





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INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLESHIP DNA

Throughout my life as a believer in Jesus, one of the keystones of my ministry – both as a layman and as a pastor – has been the importance of helping people find Jesus and live for Him.

Coming to Jesus through the ministry of The Navigators and being involved with them probably had a lot to do with that, and I am extremely thankful.

One of the great things I see in churches today is the proliferation of small groups. These are great arenas for growth, accountability, and service. However, what I'm NOT seeing as much of is an intentional effort to establish brand new believers in Jesus, helping them with things like knowing they have been forgiven, being assured of heaven, how to read the Bible, how to pray, etc. There are ministries and materials out there doing that, for sure. I'm just not seeing as much of that as I am "regular" small group materials.

So I felt God leading me to start a company that focuses primarily on equipping congregations to follow up and establish people who come to Christ through the ministries of the church or through individual efforts to share Christ – and give them tools to continue in personal discipling relationships if possible.

Discipleship DNA is what came of that effort to follow God's leading.

The primary piece of the ministry is a training called ***Kickstart!!*** This Foundations Material is part of the curriculum for that training. However, I also publish a blog that can be read at the main ministry website, www.DiscipleshipDNA.com, and a podcast as well (oddly enough, called "Discipleship DNA with Brian La Croix"), available on numerous platforms. You can also check us out on Facebook.

Our mission is to help you establish a culture where establishing new believer, maintaining long-term discipleship relationships, and reproducing disciples is part of the fabric of your church. It becomes part of who you ARE as church, not just something you DO as a church. We want discipleship to be part of your church's DNA. And it's because the people in the seats are at the heart of it.

If you want more information about Discipleship DNA or about the full Kickstart training, send an email to info@discipleshipdna.com.



INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNDATIONS MATERIAL

Welcome to FOUNDATIONS!

In these materials you will find everything you need to help a new believer in Jesus become established in the faith and able to become a life-long disciple of His. This is sorely needed today, and I'm thrilled you're jumping in to help with such an important ministry!

This material covers what I call "The Great 8." These are eight essentials that should be imparted to every new believer. The material covered can be used in both group settings and in one-on-settings.

These are **basic** essentials only meant to get a new believer started. So you won't find in-depth teaching about these things, and you'll find that maybe I left something out that you feel should be brought to bear. Talk with your pastor about that, and if he's cool with you adding or revising something, so am I. But I want to stress that this is for **BABY** Christians. Don't feed the baby with the fire hose. Get them started and as they learn to digest these basic things, you can give them more advanced teaching down the road.

Each session has a teaching outline and a group member sheet with fill-in-the-blank areas. These are formatted to be on different sheets so they can simply be printed out as they appear here.

Please read "Following Up Individual New Believers" AND "When Using Foundations in a Group Setting." Both of these sections are important. Don't skip them to go straight to the materials, even if you are a veteran in this type of ministry. It will be good review for you and might just remind you of something you had forgotten from your past learning and experience.

Let me also encourage you to be in constant contact with your pastors and other leaders. They can answer questions, give insight and encouragement, and pray for you and the person you're helping. And can't we all use some more of that? (Hint: the answer is YES...)

MOVING FROM "DISCIPLE" TO "DISCIPLEMAKER"

You are choosing to become part of God's PLAN A for reaching the world for Jesus. (BTW, there is NO PLAN B...). That's an awesome privilege and an awesome responsibility.

You and I are followers of Jesus because men and women have been faithful to Jesus' command for the last 2000+ years. Let's be thankful for that! And let's commit to doing our part for the sake of the next generations.



THE BASIS OF DISCIPLESHIP

The reason we do this is based on Jesus' last command to His followers just before He ascended to the Father, and it is found in Matthew 28:18-20:

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

What is the command given in this passage? It's "go," right? Actually, no. The command is to "**make disciples**." In the original language of the New Testament, you'll find that the sentence is more along the lines of "As you are going, make disciples..."

Jesus, anticipating both evangelical fervor among His followers and the dispersion about to come as they were persecuted (we see this in Acts 8), wanted them to focus on the task of helping other people become lifelong followers of Him.

SOME HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

But just so we're all on the same page, let's start off by defining the important terms we'll be using:

"Discipleship" is the process of helping people become more like Jesus. That's pretty broad, but as you look at the following definitions of other terms, hopefully it will become a bit less vague.

A **"disciple"** is a follower of Jesus who strives to love and live for him above all else. A disciple is not perfect, and will stumble and sin sometimes, but his or her life is marked by growing devotion and obedience to Jesus even when it is inconvenient and countercultural.

"Disciplemaking" is the intentional interaction of a more mature follower of Jesus with a new or less-mature believer in Jesus, with the goal of helping that person become a fully devoted follower of Jesus.

"Maturity" means growing in love, devotion, and obedience to Jesus, and growing in the ability to use the Scriptures as the guide and authority for living as they also develop in wisdom and Christ-like character.

A **"disciplemaker"** or **"discipler"** is the more mature believer who works with the new or less mature believer. The task of doing this is called **"discipling."**



I'm guessing there are some really awesome dictionary definitions of all these things. But the above definitions reflect the goals and tasks involved in discipleship as envisioned in this training.

THE CONTEXT OF DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship happens best in relationship, whether it's through one-on-one personal relationships and/or small groups of no more than four people (for new believers, that is; the group can be a bit larger for more established believers). This is just as true in a large church as it is in a small to medium one, which is why many large churches are intentionally working to get new believers as well as their regular attenders into small groups. This way the church becomes "smaller" (with people developing deep relationships in small groups) while it becomes larger in terms of total attendance and influence in the community.

Being a disciplemaker means developing a relationship with that new believer. It means getting to know them and their flaws/gifts, walking with them through the ups and downs of life, guiding, teaching, praying with and for, spending time with, and even getting in their face sometimes (graciously and in love, of course), all the while letting them see *you* as you continue to grow in your own relationship with God.

Making disciples is an **investment** of time, effort, emotion, and everything else that goes into a relationship that's deeper than surface level.

So if you:

- love Jesus,
 - love people,
 - are ready to help someone become solidly established in their new faith in Jesus, and
 - would like to see your own faith mature while doing that...
- ...then this is for you!

Get ready for God to work **IN** you and **THROUGH** you to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission.

THANK YOU for stepping up. God bless you.



HOW TO USE THE FOUNDATIONS MATERIALS

FOLLOWING UP INDIVIDUAL NEW BELIEVERS

Following up people who have given their lives to Jesus is not a very complicated process. In fact, it's so simple, even a dude like me can do it – and that's saying something. My late mother-in-law would agree. And I'm not letting you talk to my sister-in-law to see what she thinks. Let's just say she would give a hearty "Amen" and we'll leave it at that.

Don't sweat this. It's really not complicated at all.

Generally the process of discipleship starts with you getting together with a new believer to follow up their decision for Jesus. This might happen when a pastor calls to inform you of someone he thinks would be a good match-up for you, or it happens when *you* have led them to Christ – and you get the awesome opportunity to see that they are established in a solid, growing relationship with Jesus.

Below are some general guidelines of what to cover initially. There is very little black and white when it comes to how to follow up someone's decision for Christ. But I would like to suggest a few things, based on what I call "The Great 8." These are 8 essential things that every new believer should be taught and is covered more in-depth in the Foundations group material. I would also suggest printing out these materials to give you a guide on what to cover each time you get together. You can use this material almost word for word if you wish or you can modify it, so it sounds more like "you."

This will not necessarily be a step-by-step tutorial on what to say when you meet with your person; rather, it's a guide. You and I are different people, so how I do or say things might be different than how you would do or say them. Totally acceptable. The issue is making sure these things are covered. Having said that, however, I have included a couple of sample outlines you can use, as well as some suggestions that may be helpful for you.

Below is a listing of The Great 8. The actual teaching materials begin on page 12.

The Great 8 – The Essentials for New Believers

1. Assurance of Salvation.
2. Introduction to the Bible.
3. How to Pray.
4. Importance of Being Part of a Church Family.
5. Service (in and through the church)
6. Sharing Christ with Others
7. Multiplication (helping others who help others while you continue to help others...)
8. Following Jesus 24/7



Sample outline of first time together:

(Use Session 1 of Foundations material to see what to cover.)

- Get to know each other. Take as much time for this as necessary!
- Ask how he began coming to this church, if that is how he came to Christ.
- Mention that since he had indicated that he had given his life to Christ, you'd like to review that with him.
- Share gospel with him to recap what was shared previously and make sure he understood what he responded to. As you are doing so, make sure he understands everything you're saying, and invite questions.
- After sharing gospel, ask, "Is this what you did last night (or whenever...)"
- If YES, go through rest of Session 1 material.
- If not, then invite him to do that NOW. "Well, is there any reason you wouldn't want to do that now?"
 - ✓ If NO, then help him to pray to receive Christ.
 - ✓ If YES, then ask what that is, and attempt to answer any objections he has. If you can't answer his concerns, tell him so, and that you would be willing to look for answers if he'd like to get back together sometime.
- If he gives his life to Jesus then, go through the rest of Session 1, but schedule another time to meet. At this second session, you'll want to review all of this as confirmation and assurance. You can move on to the actual session 2 materials the next time you meet.

Sample Outline of Following Sessions (Use whatever session you are on from the Foundations material to see what to cover)

- Conversation to catch up on life since last time together. If there is something significant going on, take all the time you need. If it seems to be droning along, especially about stuff that's not actually part of his own life, you may need to gently steer the conversation back to the purpose of the meeting.
- Ask what he's learned from his time in Scripture since you last met. Does he have any questions, or did he learn anything new from what he's read? Again, take all the time you need to discuss this. (If you don't get to the material, that's okay!! Go for it next time.)
- Cover session material, always making sure he is tracking along and understanding.
- Pray with him if he is comfortable. See if he has anything in particular to pray about for him, and share anything you'd like him to pray about for you.
- Set appointment for next session.



Although you do have material to cover, you want to try to avoid a lecture-style teaching session. Try to make your time conversational. Your disciple might prefer the lecture-style (some do), but in most cases it should be more like an actual conversation as much as possible – since that’s what it is.

To help with that, you might try having something like a 3x5 card with a checklist of things you want to cover regarding whichever of the eight core areas you want to help them in. If you are new to this process, it’s okay to have it out as you’re talking with your person – “making sure I cover everything I want you to get about reading the Bible...” or keep it handy to review just before you meet with them. Another idea is to give them a card as well. They can use it to remind them of what you’ve covered with them. (And guess what? You’ve given them a tool they can use when THEY disciple someone!!!)

Another option is to print out the “Answer Key” to each Foundations session and walk through that with them, each of you having a copy as you go through it.

Whatever tool works best for you is the best tool to use. Get creative! Again, the goal is to cover the material – what you use to do that is up to you.

I’ve mentioned that you may need to take time to talk and listen about what’s going on with the person and what they’re learning before you actually get to what you want to go over in a particular session. This is so important – because this is a **person**, not a project.

I learned this when I was in college and discipling a fellow student I had personally led to Christ. Somewhere over time, he got the impression that all I cared about was his spiritual life and didn’t care about his *life* in general. I found this out when the staff member for the student ministry I was involved with in college told me after meeting with this student. He was right. That IS all I cared about. And I was wrong. He needed me to be a FRIEND as well as a discipler. I don’t know that we had a single conversation after that. Please don’t make my mistake.

My tunnel vision sometimes spilled over to my pastoring. You can tell from the previous paragraph that I am not the sharpest lightbulb in the tool shed. I can’t tell when people are hurting unless they actually *tell* me. I can’t read body language to save my life, so I missed a lot, and it hurt people. I needed to learn to pay more attention, and I’m trying - God is still working with me on that.

So remember that this person you’re investing in has a life outside of church and meeting with you. Find out about their work, family, what they like to do for fun, and all that stuff. Some won’t want to share until they know you better. That’s okay. Some will have deep wounds and scars you’ll never be able to touch. That’s okay, too. Let them give you as much as they’re comfortable with. Don’t pry but give them the freedom to share as they are comfortable. Don’t



be afraid to open up about your life as well. Give them the opportunity to ask you questions, too. Friendship is a two-way street.

Be a **friend** who cares about their spiritual maturity. Love them unconditionally. It'll bless the both of you.

Now please allow me to give you a heads-up about something: sometimes a person will not want to be established in the faith and discipled. Some will think it is a waste of time, others will simply think it's not a big deal, and some might not have really come to Christ and don't want to have a relationship built on that.

What do you do when that happens? You wish them well, tell them you're available and that you are praying for them. And then you work with someone else, keeping the door open and the friendship intact.

Being a disciplemaker is one of the greatest adventures in the Christian life. Watching God work to illuminate someone's mind and spirit to the awesomeness of following Jesus is a blast.

So buckle up, Buttercup!!

BUILDING A LONG-TERM DISCIPLING RELATIONSHIP

What happens when you've covered all the essential materials in "The Great 8?"

That depends on the two of you. I would encourage you to keep meeting regularly and frequently, praying that he or she would find someone they could disciple down the road. Then you can release them to the joy of that ministry while you pray for someone else to impact.

But it still doesn't need to end there. You can have a relationship for as long as the both of you want it to continue.

Years ago I was discipling a graduate student at a local university. We met almost weekly. One day as we were leaving the student cafeteria, a pastor friend of mine came up to us and after a brief conversation asked us how long we'd been meeting in this discipleship relationship. I said, "I don't know – two or three years?" My student replied, "Brian, it's been **five** years!" I couldn't believe it. I would have thought he'd have gotten tired of me well before then, but he didn't. He still enjoyed getting together because we were learning together and encouraging one another. I think part of the issue was that I didn't really think of him as "my disciple," but rather as a younger friend. Our relationship had developed into a great friendship that was still spiritual in its foundation.



Understand that ideally, this is a long-term deal. Discipleship is not an 8-session class. It's helping them develop a lifestyle of living for Jesus and equipping them to help others do the same.

There are three main goals in a discipling relationship:

1. Help the other person become established in the basics of their new relationship with Jesus by helping them learn about prayer, how to read and apply the Bible, and getting involved with other people through the church, etc.
2. Help them continue to grow in maturity as they learn to “walk on their own two feet” and encourage them to deepen their relationship with Jesus so they follow Him in every area of their life.
3. Help them become equipped to do the same in another person's life.

If your relationship can be maintained long enough to cover those goals, that's awesome! I wish I could promise everyone will want to do that, but I can't. The fact is, some won't want to go even past the first session. Others might get through the essentials but want to cut out after that.

But still others may want to continue for the long-term. And that's a good thing.

The good news is that it's not our job to convince people to be disciples of Jesus and be in a discipleship relationship with anybody. Just like with a person's recognition of their need for Jesus, it's the Holy Spirit's job to do the convincing. Our job is to cooperate with Him as He works in the lives of the people we come alongside.

If we make ourselves available, He will bring people to us who want the help we can offer them. But even if someone quits after the first session, you've still been able to speak something into their lives. And that matters.

WHEN USING FOUNDATIONS IN A GROUP SETTING

Although following up and discipling a new believer is most ideal in a one-on-one setting, sometimes your church may not have enough available disciplers to do that effectively. So, you will need to have something like this ready to take on those who can't meet one-on-one or for those disciplers who have more new believers than they can handle on an individual basis.



I would suggest making these groups very small—no more than four people. This allows for better coverage of the material, more time for questions they may have, and also promotes an atmosphere of bonding as they all grow together.

Some thoughts as you bring this to a group . . .

The teaching outline is only a guide, so feel free to use what you need, adding and subtracting anything you feel would be appropriate for your group.

When meeting with your group, make it as informal as possible. Meet at a coffeehouse, café, someone's house, or wherever. I would suggest not meeting at a church, as meeting away from a church allows for a less formal atmosphere. The host should provide snacks if possible.

Try not to reference it as a “class,” but rather as a small group. Talk like you're with a group of friends, not a teacher with his or her students.

Let people ask questions. There should be enough time at the end of each session for relevant questions; but if the questions are off-topic, defer to either a different session or you can arrange to visit after class (or privately another time if it is more appropriate).

Again, keep in mind these are baby believers—so some of their responses will reflect that and may even include language you're not comfortable with. Respond graciously.

LOVE THEM! PRAY FOR THEM!

As you lead, ask God to put one or two people on your heart that He might have you personally disciple from the group. You can meet with them individually to discuss these materials and encourage them in their growth for Jesus.

Now let's turn the corner and discuss some other things that will aid you not only helping the new believer, but in multiplying your own life in the lives of others:

SHARING CHRIST WITH OTHERS

One of my favorite episodes in Scripture happens in Acts 10. A Roman centurion named Cornelius was - a soldier for the oppressive Romans - was a really good guy. He prayed, he helped people, and he was well respected even by the Jews - and that's saying something in that culture at that time.

One day while he's praying, an angel says, “Hey Cornelius. You need to send for this guy named Peter who's about a 2-day ride from here. He's got something important to tell you.”



While the centurion's guys are on their way to get him. Peter gets a vision from God basically saying that it's okay to tell the hated Romans and other non-Jews about Jesus. Peter doesn't yet know about Cornelius or the fact that people are coming to fetch him.

Long story short, Peter goes to Cornelius, tells him (and all the people Cornelius had gathered) about Jesus, and they all believe and follow Him – amazing Peter and the guys he had brought along as witnesses.

Why didn't the angel just tell Cornelius about Jesus? It would have saved a lot of time and energy, after all.

Because that's **our** job, not the angel's job.

God uses people as His primary method of making disciples - through preaching, the printed word, small groups, through one-on-one interactions or whatever. Isn't that exciting? One of the greatest privileges of being a Christian is being able to tell other people about Jesus.

It is rare to hear of someone giving their life to Jesus after hearing about him through a dream or an angel or vision. It happens, sometimes, and I'm not going to tell God He can't do that. But I can probably count on one hand how many times I've heard of it happening.

ALWAYS BE READY.

Because God chooses to use people as His primary tool for spreading the gospel, disciples of Jesus and disciplemakers need to always be ready to tell someone the good news about Him.

Look at what Peter has to say about it in 1 Peter 3:15-16 –

*But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.** But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (Emphasis mine)*

There is a lot packed into these two verses, but this isn't the space to unpack it all. The point I want to make here is that we need to be ready at all times to talk to share the gospel.

The “gospel” is the good news of Jesus – of His life, death, and resurrection to pay the price of our sins. When we “share the gospel” we are telling people how they can have their sins forgiven, be guaranteed to be in heaven when they die, and have a real, personal relationship with the God here on earth. We're telling them the lengths God went to make sure that would happen to all who would take up His offer.



The bottom line of the gospel is that Jesus saves us from the penalty we deserve for our sins. We can't save ourselves. Only Jesus' death and resurrection covers our need. All we can do is respond in faith to what Jesus did on our behalf.

LEARN A PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL.

When talking with people about their need for Jesus, it's best to walk through *why* we need to be "saved" (as defined in the last two paragraphs) and *how* to be saved. It's not enough to simply tell someone they need to be saved. They probably won't understand (Indeed, **no one** understands their need for Jesus unless the Holy Spirit enables them to see their need.). They need to be shown.

A good gospel presentation should contain these main parts:

- You're a sinner, just like everybody else, separated from God and deserving of hell. (I know that seems harsh – but Jesus was very blunt about it...)
- Jesus paid the penalty for your sins by dying on a cross and He rose again, physically.
- His death and resurrection make it possible for our sins to be forgiven and to be assured of heaven.
- You must accept His offer by putting your trust in Him and Him alone (not Jesus plus good works, not Jesus plus baptism, not Jesus plus church membership, not Jesus PLUS anything) to save us from the penalty we deserve.

This is very simplified, but these are the parts that form the basis of what someone needs to know about salvation.

Use diagrams, illustrations, tracts, videos, or whatever you like. If you use tracts, use tracts from such trustworthy companies as Good News Publishers and the American Bible Society. They explain the gospel with clarity, sometimes using comic-style illustrations, and show a person how to respond to God's offer of salvation through Jesus.

My absolute favorite way to share the gospel using only one verse, Romans 6:23, and a simple diagram is from *One-Verse Evangelism*, by Randy D. Raysbrook and Steve Walker. This is what I use 99.9348576393% of the time. (You can get the booklet explaining the diagram in detail from NavPress, at <https://www.tyndale.com/p/one-verse-evangelism/9780972902366>.)

Your pastor may have a preferred method. You might consider asking him to teach you how he shares Christ with people one-on-one.



The point is to show someone their need for Jesus. The method isn't all that important. The message is.

Note: When talking with people, you want to make sure to not get distracted or bogged down by things that are NOT the gospel. Stay on the main things. You can have a conversation about other things another time.

“But I’m not an evangelist – I don’t have the gift of evangelism, so I can’t tell people about Jesus.”

So? I don’t have the gift of hospitality, but I’m still expected by God to be hospitable. Someone else may not have the gift of service, but we are all called to serve in some capacity. An evangelist is just someone who gets to see a lot of people give their lives to Christ after they share the gospel. All Christians are expected to share Christ.

“But that’s the pastor’s job!”

And just where did you find THAT in Scripture? (Hint: you didn’t.) It’s YOUR job, also.

Now for the “bad news:” Not everyone will respond positively when you share Jesus with them. Some will ignore you, some will react angrily, some will just blow you off. That’s part of ministry. Even Billy Graham got rejected at times, not to mention Jesus, Himself.

It’s not your job to convince someone of their need for Jesus. We want to be able to answer questions and objections, but ultimately, the Holy Spirit is the One who does the convincing. Our job is to inform, even with pleading. They must respond to God himself, not to us.

But even in the “bad news” there is “good news.” Statistics say that it takes a person hearing the gospel an average of seven times before they respond positively, if they ever do. If they do not respond positively to you, it could be that you are one of the previous “six.” You are still an important part of the process of that person coming to Jesus.

In any case, keep in mind that it is NEVER too late to share the gospel with someone. And it is NEVER too late for them to respond. So NEVER give up hope.

* On a personal note, I rarely use the word “saved” when talking with a non-believer about Jesus. I generally say, “be guaranteed forgiveness and a home in heaven.” I’ve heard enough non-believers misuse the word to see that it is wildly misunderstood and sometimes they will reject the conversation or even mock the word “saved.” If your experience is different and you feel like using “saved,” then by all means, go for it!



PASSING THE TORCH

Look at this foundational verse:

*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses
entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*

(2 Timothy 2:2)

The ultimate goal of this whole deal is that you are able to equip someone who can equip someone else to live for Jesus, who can then help someone else – and so on. It's a great joy to see the person you've invested in impacting other people by discipling them.

In all your interactions with the person you're discipling, you want to make sure that what you're giving them is "pass-on-able" as my Navigator friends say. Using The Great 8 will help you do that, because as you go through the materials with that person, you're showing *them* how to establish a new believer with those materials, which they can also use for someone down the road.

As you get to sessions 6 and 7 of the Foundations material, you will discuss how to share the gospel with someone else and the concept of multiplying their lives in the lives of other people. I highly suggest that you help them think of 1-2 people they would like to share Christ with someday and that they can pray for daily. As they pray, God may open opportunities for them to share Christ with them (or bring them to someone who can share Christ with them – maybe even you!!!).

You can then give them some great tools you have used over the years to share Christ with people and have them practice on you if you'd like.

As soon as they begin discipling someone, you can adjust your role to being a mentor/friend, giving guidance and instruction as they invest in the life of someone else.

When can they start discipling? Pretty much anytime. If they are interested in helping someone, and especially if they already have someone they want to help, then by all means, let them! You can guide them as they help the next person, just as you are helping the first person.

Maybe the person they are meeting with started just a week after your person. No problem! As you go through "The Great 8" materials, you can supplement your time with some guidance on how to bring that info to the person they're meeting up with.

And then you can start discipling someone else while your person is discipling their person. All of a sudden, you have doubled your impact!



That would be AWESOME!!!!

CONCLUSION

So whaddya think?

Are you ready to hop on board on the “disciple SHIP?” (I know, totally corny – but I’ve been waiting to use that for YEARS...)

Discipleship isn’t for the faint-hearted. You’re dealing with people, after all, and people are strange beings. They are wildly emotional at times, lazy, busy, stressed out, or totally chill. They are single, married, dating (with all the drama that involves – am I right?), no kids, lots of kids. Working, unemployed, overworked, underpaid, wealthy, poor, or somewhere in between.

You get the picture.

But even with all that variety, the fact remains that they are made in God’s image and Jesus died for them – just like He died for you. And you get the awesome privilege of speaking into their lives, guiding them to a deeper relationship with Jesus, and equipping them to impact others.

There have been plenty of times over my years of discipling people when I say to God, “Why do you let *me* be part of this? I love it!” Watching God work in the lives of people is indescribably wonderful. And God lets you be part of that.

Allow yourself to be continually awed and humbled by God’s working in and through you in the life of another person. Never let yourself become prideful over the fact that God is using you. Be thankful that He has allowed you to be part of HIS plan for reaching the world for Jesus.

Before we finish this section, look at these words from Jesus just before He was arrested:

“My prayer is not for them alone. ***I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message***, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John 17:20-21, emphasis mine)

Pray for those you disciple. Pray for those *they* disciple. Pray that God would raise even more disciplemakers around you.

A day is coming when “every knee (will) bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:10-11) And...“a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation,



tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” (Revelation 5:9)

How exciting is it to think that YOU have a part to play in that – by helping people find, love, and serve Jesus!

Pray that His will would be done – on Earth as it is in Heaven. Pray that His kingdom would come, and that in the meantime, He would mold you to be more like His Son, reflecting Jesus to the people you disciple and others around you.

May God be honored in all you do for the sake of Jesus and His kingdom. Amen.



FOUNDATIONS MATERIALS – “THE GREAT 8”

On the following pages you will find the session guides you will use in meeting with a new believer or leading a small Foundations group.

Remember, these are GUIDES, not straight-jackets. The information is important. How you communicate the information is entirely up to you and the other person.

Feel free to modify the content, but please consult your pastor before doing so. This will give the pastor the chance to give you even more guidance as you go through these materials.

If you have questions about any of this, please email us at info@discipleshipdna.com and we'll try to get back with you within 1 business day.

Also, if you want us to pray with you about your new adventure as a disciplemaker, shoot us an email at the same address and we'll be glad to do that!

Thanks again for being part of this incredibly important ministry. You will have impact for the Kingdom of God, and that impact may be felt through generations until Jesus returns.

God bless.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 1 (ANSWER KEY)

KNOWING FOR SURE YOU HAVE HEAVEN (AND ALL THE OTHER STUFF!)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GIVE OUR LIVES TO CHRIST?

- We are forgiven.
- We are adopted.
- We become part of a bigger family who will love and support us (universal and local church).
- We are given the Holy Spirit to help us:
 - Deepen our love for God
 - Understand the Scriptures
 - Desire to obey Him—and actually do it
 - Serve Him in and through His Church
 - Reflect the love of God to others
 - Help others find Christ.

RECAP OF THE GOSPEL

- Bridge illustration (or another simple gospel presentation) (Note – this is not on the student form)
- Faith is like a parachute (Trust in Jesus)
- 1 John 5:11–13 (We know we are saved, not just hoping it works out in the end)
- John 5:24, Romans 8:1
- Invitation to follow Christ (for those who may have come to class and not come to Christ yet).

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11–13, ESV)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” (John 5:24, ESV)

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)



THE MAIN NEXT STEP IS BAPTISM

We believe the Bible teaches that baptism is something that occurs after a person has given his life to Christ. It's a public act symbolizing that a person has "died" to themselves and is now "living" for Jesus, just as Jesus died and rose from the grave. (Insert information about when baptisms are done at your church.)



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 1

KNOWING FOR SURE YOU HAVE HEAVEN (AND ALL THE OTHER STUFF!)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GIVE OUR LIVES TO CHRIST?

- We are _____.
- We are _____.
- We become part of a bigger _____ who will love and support us.
(_____ and _____ church)
- We are given the _____ to help us:
 - Deepen our _____ for God
 - _____ the Scriptures
 - Desire to _____ and actually do it.
 - _____ Him in and through His Church.
 - _____ the love of God to others.
 - _____ find Christ.

RECAP OF WHAT IT MEANS TO GIVE YOUR LIFE TO CHRIST

Faith is like a _____.

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11–13, ESV)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” (John 5:24, ESV)

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

NEXT STEP: BAPTISM (if you haven’t done so already).

Baptism is a public declaration that you have put your trust in Jesus and will live for him. Please visit with your group leader about when baptisms are scheduled at your church.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 2 (ANSWER KEY)

WHAT'S THIS CONFUSING BOOK ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

LEARNING TO READ AND UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

The Bible is the Christian collection of holy writings. It was written by God through people over a period of about 1500 years using about 40 different authors. We also call this the “Scriptures.”

Some key things to note:

The Bible isn't a **book**—it's a **library**.

The Old Testament covers God's **choosing of Israel** and **His interactions** with His people until about four hundred years before Jesus was born.

The New Testament covers **the earthly life of Jesus** through **the prophecies of his birth** through His death and resurrection, history of the **early Church**, and **letters** of apostles such as Peter, Paul, and James.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE BIBLE: BOOK, CHAPTER, VERSE

Each book of the Bible has a title, multiple “chapters” (with rare exceptions for smaller books), and “verses.” Much like a regular book, books of the Bible are broken up by chapters, which in this case are numbered. The very small numbers are the “verses,” which are portions of chapters – sometimes just a few words, sometimes entire sentences, and sometimes more than one sentence.

These chapter and verse numbers are simply there to help people locate passages and were not there originally. They are extremely helpful, and as you gain familiarity with the Bible, you will find yourself locating various passages of Scripture quite quickly.

When first starting to read the Bible, it is best to begin with the historical biographies of Jesus that are from eyewitness accounts and interviews of eyewitnesses. These are the first four books of the New Testament, called the “**Gospels**.”

God's Holy Spirit helps us to **understand** and **apply** the Scriptures to our lives.

Most of it is pretty black and white—easy to understand. We learn to understand the rest as we mature in our relationship with God. It's like learning a foreign language. The more you are exposed to it, the more you understand it.

FIVE WAYS TO TAKE IN THE BIBLE:

- **Hear** it (sermons, etc.; but generally, people forget very quickly what they've only heard).
- **Read** it (pretty obvious, right?).



- **Study** it (small groups, personal study).
- **Memorize** it (small portions or large passages).
- **Meditate** on it (thinking deeply about how the passage applies to you personally, asking God to show you how to make it real in your own life).

The goal of reading/studying the Bible isn't just head knowledge—it's **life transformation**. To follow Jesus is to learn **about Him**, learn **His teachings**, and **apply them** in our lives so we can be more like Him and have a positive impact on the world around us.

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” (James 1:22-25)

HOW TO GET STARTED

1. Find a Bible in easy-to-understand **English** or your **primary language**. (Jesus didn't speak like Shakespeare!)
2. Start in the **Gospels**. (The Book of Mark is a great place to begin!)
3. Read a **chapter** or two at a time, asking God to help you learn and understand.
4. Write down any **questions** you have as you read—and **ask them** to someone who's been reading it a while longer.
5. See if there is a **command** or **principle** to obey and ask God for how to make that part of your life. Ask someone if you aren't sure how to do that or need other ideas.
6. Try to develop a **regular habit** of Bible reading and prayer. (More about prayer next session!)

Here's good news: you don't have to be a Bible scholar to hear God speaking to you through the Bible. Reading with an open mind, asking for God's help in understanding, will start you on the path of enjoyment of God's Word.

(Distribute How to Have a Quiet Time handout.)



HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME

HANDOUT FOR SESSION 2

A Quiet Time is a dedicated time to spend reading the Bible and praying. Others call it a Devotional Time, Time with God, or any number of other names. What it's called isn't important. Doing it is.

A regular—daily, if possible—Quiet Time is one of the best habits you can build into your life. It builds a foundation of time with God where you listen to Him through the Scriptures and talk to Him through prayer.

There are two main components:

1. Bible reading
2. Prayer

BIBLE READING

Start with the Gospels—Mark is a great one to start with. Begin by reading a chapter or two per day, working your way through the book to the end before starting another. Avoid simply opening your Bible to a random place and reading.

Begin by asking God to open your heart and mind to understand what you read.

As you are reading, write down things that seem to jump out at you, that you find interesting, or that you have questions about. You can bring these up when meeting with your discipler or class leader of the Foundations class.

Underline, highlight, circle, write notes in the margins, do whatever you like to mark something that sticks out or is particularly encouraging or whatever. What you mark, how you mark it, and why you mark it are all entirely up to you. This is your time with God.

(A note about questions: questions are good! It's perfectly normal to have questions about what you read. Don't be afraid to bring them up. Your discipler or class leader will try to answer them for you. If they don't know the answer, they will try to find one for you.)

PRAYER

Prayer is just talking to God. Pray about what you've read, asking God to help you put it into your life. Then pray for yourself, family, work, whatever you need to talk with God about. He loves to hear from you!

More on prayer in the next session!



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 2

WHAT'S THIS CONFUSING BOOK ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

LEARNING TO READ AND UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

The Bible is the Christian collection of holy writings. It was written by God through people over a period of about 1500 years using about 40 different authors. We also call this the “Scriptures.”

Some key things to note:

The Bible isn't a _____—it's a _____.

The Old Testament covers God's _____ and _____ with His people until about four hundred years before Jesus was born.

The New Testament covers _____ through _____ through His death and resurrection, history of the _____, and _____ of apostles such as Peter, Paul, and James.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE BIBLE: BOOK, CHAPTER, VERSE

Each book of the Bible has a title, multiple “chapters” (with rare exceptions for smaller books), and “verses.” Much like a regular book, books of the Bible are broken up by chapters, which in this case are numbered. The very small numbers are the “verses,” which are portions of chapters – sometimes just a few words, sometimes entire sentences, and sometimes more than one sentence.

These chapter and verse numbers are simply there to help people locate passages, and were not there originally. They are extremely helpful, and as you gain familiarity with the Bible, you will find yourself locating these quite quickly.

When first starting to read the Bible, it is best to begin with the historical biographies of Jesus that are from eyewitness accounts and interviews of eyewitnesses. These are the first four books of the New Testament, called the “_____.”

God's Holy Spirit helps us to _____ and _____ the Scriptures to our lives.



Most of it is pretty black and white—easy to understand. We learn to understand the rest as we mature in our relationship with God. It’s like learning a foreign language. The more you are exposed to it, the more you understand it.

FIVE WAYS TO TAKE IN THE BIBLE:

- _____ it.
- _____ it.
- _____ it.
- _____ it.
- _____ on it.

The goal of reading/studying the Bible isn’t just head knowledge—it’s _____ . To follow Jesus is to learn _____ , learn _____ , and _____ in our lives so we can be more like Him and have a positive impact on the world around us.

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” (James 1:22-25)

HOW TO GET STARTED

1. Find a Bible in easy-to-understand _____ (or your _____).
2. Start in the _____.
3. Read a _____ or two at a time, asking God to help you learn and understand.
4. Write down any _____ you have as you read—and _____ to someone who’s been reading it a while longer.
5. See if there is a _____ or _____ to obey and ask God for how to make that part of your life. Ask someone if you aren’t sure how to do that or need other ideas.
6. Try to develop a _____ of Bible reading and prayer.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 3 (ANSWER KEY)

TALKING WITH GOD? REALLY? (THE BASICS OF PRAYER)

God speaks to us primarily through the Bible. We speak to God through prayer.

What is prayer? At its most basic level, prayer is simply talking with God.

- Prayer can be spoken.
- Prayer can be done with our minds (thinking our prayers instead of verbalizing them).
- Prayers can be written or put into song.
- Sometimes prayer is just the cry of a heart that can't be put into words.

God knows what we pray for even before we ask. (Matthew 6:7–8) So why pray?

Prayer is much more than just asking for things. It helps to develop the relationship between you and God. You are conversing, just like any people who are close to each other. It helps us to unburden ourselves with God by telling Him of our needs. It gives us a chance to verbalize our reliance, our thanks, and our recognition of who He is as God (Creator, Sustainer, Provider, Helper, etc.).

THREE WAYS GOD ANSWERS PRAYER:

1. Yes—He grants what you're requesting.
2. No—He denies your request. (He knows it would be bad for you, or hindering His plans, etc.) This is hard, but we also need to understand that HE has a greater perspective than we do. He knows everything and only wants the best for us. And the fact of the matter is that He knows better than we do what is best for us.
3. Wait—He grants your request but at a time that is better.

HINDRANCES TO “YES” ANSWERS:

- Unconfessed sin in your life.
- Unforgiveness toward others.
- Selfish motives.

There is really no “wrong” way to pray, but here are two models for prayer you can use right away:

ACTS:

Adoration (intentionally telling God how awesome and wonderful He is)



Confession (telling Him we agree with Him regarding our sinful thoughts, words, and actions and are asking for His forgiveness)

Thanksgiving (thanking Him for His blessings and provisions—it's really great to be specific about things that God has done for you, whether recently or in the distant past)

Supplication (a fancy word meaning “ask Him for something”—this is the time to ask Him for whatever it is you need Him to do in your life or in the life of someone else)

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

“Our Father in Heaven”—recognition of His place as head of our lives.

“Hallowed (honored) be Your name”—same as adoration above.

“Your will be done”—I pray for (these things, concerns, people, etc.), but want Your purposes and Your will to be done most of all.

“Give us this day our daily bread”—Please provide for our needs, specifically _____.

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”—Help us live for You instead of ourselves, help us to live holy lives, keep us safe as we live for You, etc.

SOME TIPS:

- Be humble—remember, God doesn't owe anything to anybody. He cannot be manipulated or ordered around.
- Ask BIG! Don't be afraid to ask for the miraculous. God is capable of doing more than you can possibly ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3:20-21)
- Pray for others as much as you pray for yourself.
- Write down what you're praying for, and as God answers (Yes, No, Wait), record that and the date He answered, and even HOW He answered.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 3

TALKING WITH GOD? REALLY? (THE BASICS OF PRAYER)

God speaks to us primarily through the _____. We speak to God through _____.

What is prayer? At its most basic level, prayer is simply talking with God.

- Prayer can be _____.
- Prayer can be done with our _____.
- Prayers can be _____ or _____.
- Sometimes prayer is just the _____ of a _____ that can't be put into words.

God _____ what we pray for even _____. (Matthew 6:7-8) So why pray?

Prayer is much more than just _____. It helps to develop the _____ between you and God. You are conversing, just like any people who are close to each other. It helps us to unburden ourselves with God by telling Him of our needs. It gives us a chance to verbalize our reliance, our thanks, and our recognition of who He is as God (Creator, Sustainer, Provider, Helper, etc.).

THREE WAYS GOD ANSWERS PRAYER:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HINDRANCES TO "YES" ANSWERS:

- _____ in your life.
- _____ toward others.
- Selfish _____.

There is really no "wrong" way to pray, but here are two models for prayer you can use right away:

ACTS:

A _____



C _____

T _____

S _____

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

“Our Father in Heaven”—

“Hallowed (honored) be Your name”—

“Your will be done”—

“Give us this day our daily bread”—

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”—

SOME TIPS:

- Be _____.
- Ask _____!
- Pray for _____ as much as you pray for _____.
- _____ what you're praying for, and as God answers (Yes, No, Wait), record that and the date He answered, and even **how** He answered.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 4 (ANSWER KEY)

A NEW FAMILY? YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! (THE CHURCH—THE FAMILY OF GOD)

When you put your faith in Christ, you were adopted by God into His family. This makes God your Father, with Jesus as your Brother. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside you to give you understanding of the Scriptures, help you apply them, and guide you as you develop in your relationship with Jesus.

But that's not all! Because this is true of everyone who has put their faith in Jesus, you are part of a family with billions of members since Jesus walked the earth. Every fellow believer and follower of Jesus is your brother or sister.

The family of God is also called “the Church.” The Church has two main parts: the local church (an individual congregation) and the universal Church (consisting of every believer around the world through time).

MAIN BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF A LOCAL CHURCH:

- Support/encouragement from the family.
- Biblical teaching.
- Worship.
- Fellowship (Christians hanging out together to encourage each other).
- Accountability.

SOME MORE REASONS TO BE PART OF A LOCAL CHURCH (EXPANDED FROM THE LIST ABOVE):

1. Encouragement in your relationship with Jesus. It's easy to drift spiritually if we are not connected with others.
2. Support during the ups and downs of life. (Others have probably been in your situation and can walk with you through that.)
3. A place where you can ask your questions and get answers without fear of people looking down on you as you learn.
4. People who will pray with and for you.
5. We learn what the Scriptures say and how to apply them to our lives. Being part of this kind of fellowship helps us avoid error.
6. We find opportunities to serve within the church and through the church.



7. Our gifts, talents, and resources help the church **function** the way Jesus wants it to. These are given to us for the sake of **helping** the whole church, not just the individual.
8. We **need** each other. God made us to need other people. The family of God should function in many ways like a **healthy natural family**—encouraging, supporting, meeting needs, and even occasionally getting in our faces about stuff they feel is **harmful** to us in some way.
9. The mission that Jesus gave to the Church depends on the family of God **worshipping** and **working** together.
10. Worshiping with other believers is of tremendous value to us and **honors God**.
11. You can see your **giving** being used to tangibly impact the lives of others through the programs and ministries of the church.

Bottom line: God designed the Christian life to be lived in community. We need each other as we grow in our relationship with Jesus. None of us is perfect—we all have hang-ups, hurts, faults, and areas where we miss the mark in living for Jesus. But that’s the beauty of it. We can encourage each other as fellow strugglers.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23–25)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Do we really need to belong to a local church if we are part of the universal Church?

Yes, for the reasons stated above (review any that are unclear)

- Can’t I worship and serve by myself? Can’t church be alone in the forest or on a hike or at a baseball game?

Private worship as you read the Scriptures and pray is wonderful—and prepares your heart for corporate worship with the rest of the congregation. However, the Christian life was never intended by Jesus to be lived alone. It was intended to be lived out in community.

- What if I work on Sundays and can’t make it to worship at church?

We understand that. And while we wish everyone could attend every service, the fact of the matter is that that’s simply not gonna happen, because, well . . . life. Make the effort to be at what services you can. Maybe your church offers Saturday night or Sunday night services, or mid-week gatherings.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 4

A NEW FAMILY? YOU’VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! (THE CHURCH—THE FAMILY OF GOD)

When you put your faith in Christ, you were adopted by God into His family. This makes God your Father, with Jesus as your Brother. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside you to give you understanding of the Scriptures, help you apply them, and guide you as you develop in your relationship with Jesus.

But that’s not all! Because this is true of everyone who has put their faith in Jesus, you are part of a family with billions of members since Jesus walked the earth. Every fellow believer and follower of Jesus is your brother or sister.

The family of God is also called “the Church.” The Church has two main parts: the local church (an individual congregation) and the universal Church (consisting of every believer around the world through time).

MAIN BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF A LOCAL CHURCH:

- _____ from the family.
- _____ teaching.
- _____.
- _____.
- _____.

SOME MORE REASONS TO BE PART OF A LOCAL CHURCH (EXPANDED FROM THE LIST ABOVE):

1. _____ in your relationship with Jesus. It’s easy to drift spiritually if we are not connected with others.
2. Support during the _____ of life. (Others have probably been in your situation and can walk with you through that.)
3. A place where you can ask your questions and get answers without _____ people _____.
4. People who will pray _____ and _____ you.
5. We learn what the Scriptures _____ and how to _____ to our lives. Being part of this kind of fellowship helps us _____.
6. We find opportunities to _____ within the church and through the church.



7. Our gifts, talents, and resources help the church _____ the way Jesus wants it to. These are given to us for the sake of _____ the whole church, not just the individual.
8. We _____ each other. God made us to need other people. The family of God should function in many ways like a _____—encouraging, supporting, meeting needs, and even occasionally getting in our faces about stuff they feel is _____ to us in some way.
9. The mission that Jesus gave to the Church depends on the family of God _____ and _____ together.
10. Worshiping with other believers is of tremendous value to us and _____.
11. You can see your _____ being used to tangibly impact the lives of others through the programs and ministries of the church.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23–25)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Do we really need to belong to a local church if we are part of the universal Church?
- Can't I worship and serve by myself? Can't church be alone in the forest or on a hike or at a baseball game?
- What if I work on Sundays and can't make it to worship at church?



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 5 (ANSWER KEY)

I'M SUPPOSED TO DO STUFF AS A CHRISTIAN? (SERVING IN AND THROUGH THE CHURCH)

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10, NLT)

When we put our faith in Christ, we are given the best opportunities to use the gifts, talents, and abilities that God has given each of us in service to others around us. God expects us to use those gifts in and through the church. We want to give you every opportunity to do that.

Serving requires a major **mind-shift**, because serving, is above all, CHRIST-like. Look at Philippians 2:5-7 –

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Servants think “**others first**.” It’s not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less. They see serving as an opportunity rather than an obligation.

The good news is that God, Himself, will give us that mind-shift as we allow Him to shape us to be more like Jesus. He does that as we continually submit ourselves to Him. He uses the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and others to help us become the best servants possible.

THREE MAIN AREAS OF SERVICE:

1. The **Church**

For example, the nursery, kids’/youth ministry, hospitality (such as greeting, ushering, coffee/donut ministry), AV, mentoring, music, etc. If you have an area of interest, gifting, or talent, contact one of the pastoral staff and they can discuss with you where you would enjoy serving.

2. The **Community**

As within the church, there are lots of opportunities in the community where your talents, gifts, and abilities can be used for the blessing of others. Look for great organizations that share your heart for people. For example: volunteering at a nursing home, volunteering at a hospital, volunteering with a youth organization, at your kids’ schools, volunteering with a police/fire dept.



3. The World

Since we are part of a universal family of believers, it is good for us to be involved in serving our brothers and sisters who are laboring for Jesus around the world. This could include reading their newsletters and praying for needs, financial support, or writing letters to encourage them.

These are just the “Big 3” areas of service. But please don’t feel limited by these. Be creative—ask God to show you if there is something you can do to bless and serve others. Feel free to contact the pastoral staff or any of the leadership team to visit about what God might be leading you to do.

And a last note: the blessings you will receive by serving others will be more than you can imagine. Knowing you are using your gifts, talents, and abilities in service to God, His people, and those around you brings joy to you and those you are serving.

Don’t hold these gifts in. Allow God to use them and you to bless others in service.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 5

I'M SUPPOSED TO DO STUFF AS A CHRISTIAN? (SERVING IN AND THROUGH THE CHURCH)

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10, NLT)

When we put our faith in Christ, we are given the best opportunities to use the gifts, talents, and abilities that God has given each of us in service to others around us. God expects us to use those gifts in and through the church. We want to give you every opportunity to do that.

Serving requires a major _____, because serving, is above all, CHRIST-like. Look at Philippians 2:5-7 -

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Servants think “_____.” It’s not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less. They see serving as an opportunity rather than an obligation.

The good news is that God, Himself, will give us that mind-shift as we allow Him to shape us to be more like Jesus. He does that as we continually submit ourselves to Him. He uses the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and others to help us become the best servants possible.

THREE MAIN AREAS OF SERVICE:

1. The _____
2. The _____
3. The _____

A last note: the blessings _____ will _____ by serving others will be more than you can imagine. Knowing you are using your gifts, talents, and abilities in service to God, His people, and those around you brings _____ to you and those you are serving.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 6 (ANSWER KEY)

HOW CAN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS? (SHARING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS)

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” (1 Peter 3:15–16)

When you put your trust in Christ, you received such things as forgiveness of all your sins, the guarantee of Heaven when you die, access to God through prayer, God’s Holy Spirit living in you to help you understand the Bible, and countless other blessings.

God expects His people to help other people obtain these things through Jesus as well. And He has given us tools to do just that.

The foundation from 1 Peter 3:15–16 has a few parts to it:

1. Be surrendered in your own heart and life to Jesus.

Can you say you are sold out to Jesus? If not, give your life to him completely. If you’re not sure exactly what that means, see me after the class or talk to one of the pastors. Any of us would be glad to discuss that with you.

2. Be prepared to give the reasons for your trust in Christ.

Why did you give your life to Christ? Who and what did God use to convince you of your need for Him? How has your life changed since giving your life to Jesus? How would you explain to someone that he/she can have a relationship with Jesus for themselves? (More on this in a bit . . .)

3. Be NICE about it!

There are lots of tools you can use to share the good news of Jesus with people you know and love. Here are a few:

- **Share videos** of your pastors sharing Christ during a service.
- **Invite** them to **church**.
- **Give a tract** (small booklets/pamphlets that explain the good news of Jesus)—be careful, as some are better than others.
- Learn to share a simple **diagram** like “The Bridge to Life.”
- **Introduce** them to someone who is comfortable telling others about Jesus.

Prayer is key! Pray for those you want to share Jesus with, that God would open their hearts to hear and receive the message, and that they would respond to God’s offer of love and



salvation. Suggestion: Pray for two or three people specifically, asking God to give you an opportunity to share Jesus with them or introduce them to church or a pastor.



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2. Be _____ to give the reasons for your trust in Christ.
3. Be _____!

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- _____ of your pastors sharing Christ during a service.
- _____ them to _____.
- _____ (small booklets/pamphlets that explain the good news of Jesus)—be careful, as some are better than others.
- Learn to share a simple _____ like “The Bridge to Life.”
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FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 7 (ANSWER KEY)

IMPACT BEYOND YOUR OWN SELF (MULTIPLYING YOUR LIFE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS)

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

One of the greatest joys of the Christian life is that we get to interact with all sorts of people with all sorts of stories and backgrounds, including people who are new to the faith.

You can step into someone’s life and help them live for Jesus as they learn many of the same things you’ve been learning in these sessions. It’s a great blessing to be able to mentor someone as they grow in their relationship with Jesus. This process of coming alongside and mentoring someone in the faith is called “discipling,” because we are helping them become disciples of Jesus.

- Sometimes it starts with helping someone **come to Jesus**.

Invite someone to church, introduce them to people in your small group, or share how they can have what Jesus offers to those who put their faith in him—and rejoice when they respond by giving their lives to Jesus.

- Other times it might be someone who is **still new** to the faith and needs **guidance** in the basics (The Great 8).

They have given their lives to Jesus previously—or recently—and need someone to come alongside them, even if you weren’t the one to lead that person to Jesus.

- Investing in someone’s life is a **blessing** to both of you.

The disciple gains essential grounding in the faith; you get the blessing of seeing someone grow and flourish in it.

- You do not need to be **an expert** in anything.

You just need a heart for people and a willingness to take time to be with someone who wants to follow Jesus. If you get a question you don’t know the answer to, you say, “I don’t know! Let me find an answer for you!”

- There are people ready to **come alongside** you as you **come alongside** someone else.

It’s a team effort!

Pray that God would bring you someone you can disciple!



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FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 8 (ANSWER KEY)

“YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL, LORD . . .” (LIVING FOR JESUS WITH YOUR WHOLE LIFE)

The Christian life is more than a one-time decision putting your faith in Jesus for forgiveness and a home in Heaven. It’s a lifestyle of following Jesus as we listen and obey him. Jesus wants your whole life, not just an hour on Sundays or a few hours in church and small groups.

Let’s look at a few passages from the Bible that outline this for us.

- *“Then he said to them all: ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’”(Luke 9:23)*

1. Following Jesus means saying “Yes” to him and “No” to ourselves when our desires conflict with him and his teachings. Jesus wants to be LORD of your life. This means he is the boss over every area, such as:

- Time
- Relationships
- Finances
- Leisure
- Work

Scripture is the final authority for life. Culture, society, and opinion polls don’t count! So even if “everybody else” is doing it, supporting it, or condoning it, if Scripture (God’s Word) says it’s wrong, it’s wrong. We need to obey God instead of people, even if it makes us unpopular with friends and family.

- *“Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than human beings!’”(Acts 5:29)*

2. Following Jesus means understanding that it will be hard at times as we love and obey Jesus.

For instance, sometimes friends and family won’t understand your decision to live for Jesus above all else. It may mean taking a stand at work regarding unfair practices or bad treatment of employees, customers, vendors, etc. It might mean saying no to a family activity that includes things the Bible says are wrong. It might mean befriending someone who has been mistreated by others, or who is “unlovely” in some way. It might even mean forfeiting money because it would have been through dishonest gain.



- *“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:21)*

3. Jesus expects full obedience. “Warm fuzzies” for Jesus don’t cut it. He says we show our love through our obedience.

4. Our loving obedience brings a deeper relationship and knowledge of God. What happens if we don’t obey Jesus perfectly? We come to him for forgiveness!

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.” (1 John 1:8–10)

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)

5. The great news is that Jesus wants you to have a great and full life!

6. Living for Jesus doesn’t mean losing all enjoyment in life. In fact, it opens you up to a whole new level of awesomeness as you receive the blessings God has for His children.

7. We’ve been lied to by Satan into believing that living for Jesus means no fun or enjoyment. But Jesus promised just the opposite. And He died to bring it to us.

Bottom line: listen and obey—this is what it means to love and follow Jesus (John 14:21), and He promises to bless us abundantly as we do this, with the help of the Holy Spirit.



FOUNDATIONS—SESSION 8

“YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL, LORD . . .” (LIVING FOR JESUS WITH YOUR WHOLE LIFE)

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- R _____
- F _____
- L _____
- W _____

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Brian La Croix is an ordained minister (The Wesleyan Church) and former second-career, bi-vocational pastor. He was active in local church ministry, including personal discipleship relationships before becoming a pastor from 2000 to 2012. He has continued to be active as a layman at the church he currently attends and discipling new believers. Brian also serves as a Police Chaplain and Reserve Police Officer.

He married Debra in February 1988, and they have twelve children, seven of whom were adopted from foster care. He and his family make their home in Aberdeen, SD. The air hurts their faces during the winter, but they don't have 347-foot snakes trying to eat them in their sleep or spiders the size of tractors.



Our Mission

We want to help you establish a culture where establishing new believers, maintaining long-term discipleship relationships, and reproducing disciples is part of the fabric of your church. It becomes part of who you ARE as a church, not just something you DO as a church. We want discipleship to be part of your church's DNA. And it's because the people in the seats are at the heart of it.

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