

Intro: Today we are going to be talking about how to train up disciples in both prayer and Bible study .

Our working definition for discipleship is: *Personal discipling means intentionally helping others follow Jesus by providing them with personal instruction from God's Word and being a person for them to imitate.*

(Illustration) Considering this theme of discipleship, I want you to imagine a young child learning how to communicate...what will his brothers, sisters, and parents do as that child grows up. At the early ages they will repeat things...over and over and over. They will model what it looks like to talk. As the child grows in maturity they will begin to correct mistakes. Alongside this they may choose to give the child practical tools to continue to help their learning. All along encouraging and rooting for them to succeed.

In summary: The family models the behavior, provides accountability, gives tools, and encourages.

Discipleship in prayer and Bible study is quite similar: You as the discipler model prayer & bible study, you provide accountability & correction, you provide practical tools, and intentionally encourage your disciples.

With that in mind the plan for today is simple: Two scriptures...discipling in prayer practically, discipling in Bible study practically.

1. Two Texts from the SOM Why do we(ourselves & our disciples) struggle to pray? Why do we struggle to study God's word?

Matthew 7:7-11 **7** "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. **9** Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? **11** If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

- We don't pray because...we are out of sync with our need, we are also out of sync with God's fatherly care for us. Lack of Faith too.

To my friend here who has heard God say no so many times it seems like. Begin to track your prayers to see when God says yes!

- (Illustration: Our very own Pastor Prentice who is with the Lord now made the practice of recording the prayers our Church would pray and take out that binder to tell us of all God had done each year at the Wednesday night thanksgiving service.) He believed God answered yes.
- Why pray if God is sovereign? Ez 36:37 "Thus says the Lord God: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock.
- Jeff Smith - "Our prayers are the strings woven into the fabric of the will of God"
- Prayer is essential because it is a MEANS OF GRACE that God uses to supply our needs, connect us to Him, and grow our Faith.

**Matt 7:24** "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26** And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

- How are we tempted to neglect the word?

You and I as well as anyone we disciple are going to be tempted on a daily basis to build our houses on another word. Whether it's what the world is telling us, or what our family or friends are saying, politicians, celebrities, Christian celebrities, etc.

- In our text it's not the one person built no foundation, but rather built on the wrong foundation.
- Who is Jesus calling out in these verses? Primarily, people who hear God's word and do nothing with it. **THIS IS ESPECIALLY EASY** to do in a Church context. God's word will do you no lasting good if you will not do it.
- What is your foundation built on? Decide before the storm.

Now let's get into how to practically disciple in these areas...

- The type of discipleship I'll be referring to the majority of the time is a structured meeting time. However, discipleship can be done while you are running errands, getting a haircut, or going to Walmart.

## 2. Training Prayer

Remember our illustration from the beginning...model, accountability, give tools, and encourage.

### **Model**

You may or may not be familiar with the term...**Life on life discipleship.**

“Discipleship means vulnerably showing someone what it REALLY looks like to follow Christ”

Life on life discipleship happens by taking them along with someone into your day to day life. These are some of the most important moments to model prayer.

(Illustrate: This could look like stopping in the middle of a conversation to pray for something they mentioned. Or asking them for prayer requests regularly. Or praying prayers that are intentionally short & direct)

- In a regular discipleship meeting time consider following the ACTS prayer model in your meeting. Begin your time by having someone pray a prayer of adoration. When you have a time of accountability where sin is confessed...pray a prayer of confession after. At the end of your Bible study time pray a prayer of thanksgiving as well as supplication.

### **Regular accountability**

In the discipleship group I lead with 3 college aged guys, we weekly have a 5 minute slot for accountability that covers 4 major buckets (Bible intake, prayer life, battle with sin, ministry) ...for Bible and prayer I mainly check in on consistency and depth. This brings the opportunity to encourage and sometimes rebuke. “Do you love your disciples enough to correct them”

## Give tools

- I printed out a day by day prayer sheet that has been tremendously helpful to me and handed it to my guys. My hope is that the ACTS model will prove helpful to them as well. Tools should be used to serve our relationship with God. If things get reversed and our relationship with God serves the tools we have gotten out of balance. They are helpful in the right place...a tool might be helpful for your whole life or maybe just a few years. This is why the more you can give the merrier!

## Encourage

Especially in regard to prayer, it's important to encourage them. Remind them that the goal of prayer is NOT to impress others or to impress God.

### **Be real...don't feel the need to act perfect**

Remind them regularly that God loves to hear His children talk...

## 3. Training Biblical Depth

### **Model**

A love for the Bible is best caught & taught. Your disciples will see and catch your love for the Bible.

The best thing you can do for your disciples is to cultivate your own genuine love for the scriptures. There are no shortcuts here.

Some quick ways you can model a love for the study of the Bible are: sharing what you are learning from the word regularly, open up the Bible in everyday conversation.

- Biggest thing is to actually study the Bible with them in your meetings.

### **Regular accountability**

In our meetings we check in on our Bible reading times. Remind them regularly about the importance of time in the word.

Practically: I have often encouraged my guys that quantity can often be the enemy of consistency. The focus should be on building the habit.

- Referring back to Jesus' words in Matthew...we must have our foundation settled before the storm comes.

## **Give tools**

OIA, Blue letter Bible

## **Encourage**

Illustrate: It's important to encourage by sharing not just your successes, but your failures. One meeting I shared my struggles in the past to be consistent and how doing even just 5 minutes helped me finally maintain the habit. **Being REAL helps more than pretending to be PERFECT.**

In closing, aren't you thankful for those who taught you to communicate?

What a privilege it is to be able to do the same for someone spiritually. Seeing that type of growth in someone is one of the most rewarding things I have experienced in my Christian life.

- In closing, remember that discipleship is important for your faith as well. **It's easy to forget the basics!** We never move on from Christianity 101.

## ***Discipling in Prayer and Bible Study Handout***

“Discipleship means vulnerably showing someone what it really looks like to follow Christ”

### **ACTS prayer model**

- Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication

**Prayer sheet example** (email me at [joebyrd15jeb@gmail.com](mailto:joebyrd15jeb@gmail.com) if you would like the template)

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
Adoration: Love	Adoration: Purity	Adoration: Justice	Adoration: Beauty	Adoration: Power/Sovereignty	Adoration: Wisdom	Adoration: Pray through a Psalm
Confession: Pride	Confession: Sexual Sin	Confession: Hypocrisy	Confession: Laziness	Confession: Selfish	Confession: Ungrateful	Confession: Not resting in Christ
Thanksgiving: Bible	Thanksgiving: Prayer	Thanksgiving: The Church	Thanksgiving: Hope/Heaven	Thanksgiving: Family	Thanksgiving: Holy Spirit	Thanksgiving: That Christ is risen from the dead
Supplication: Mom & Dad, Joy, Faithfulness, Work, Country #1	Supplication: Love, Gentleness, GRBC, Person #1	Supplication: Henry, Peace, Self-control, Purity, Extended Family	Supplication: Patience, Gospel Opportunities, Person #2	Supplication: Kindness, My Future, Unsaved, Thing #1	Supplication: Humility, Purity, Knowing Christ, Thing #2	Supplication: Church services
Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel, Applications from devos	Daily: Gospel (Focus on Resurrection), Applications from Sermons

Hebrews 4:16 --- "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

### **Accountability Questions**

- In structured discipleship groups the buckets we would cover were (Bible, Prayer life, Battle with sin, Ministry[evangelism, service, etc])
- Questions you could leverage in more informal discipleship...
- How has your time in the word been? Are you happy with the consistency you've had? Where would you like to see growth?
  - What truths has God been encouraging you with/convicting you with?
  - How has your time in prayer been this week? Where would you like to see growth? Have you found chances to pray throughout the day?
  - What do you feel has hindered your praying?

## **OIA**

- **Observe**: Examine the context of the passage you are studying, Write down any words or phrases that stand out and why.
- **Interpret**: Write down questions about the passage. Use cross references and definitions to answer those...use commentaries at the end if you can't find the answer. (Leverage "Blue Letter Bible" app)
- **Apply**: The acronym PINGA can be helpful. **P**: Something to PRAISE God for **I**: An IDOL in my life **N**: A spiritual NEED **G**: A truth about GOD **A**: A practical application (Answer the question: what would change in my life if I took this passage seriously?)

## **Discussion Questions**

- Thinking back to the example of training a child to communicate, why is it essential for young believers to be disciplined in Bible study and prayer?
- Who is someone in your life who modeled Bible study or prayer well?
- What stood out to you about training in Bible study?
- What stood out to you about training in Prayer?
- Why is it important for a discipler to be vulnerable and provide a realistic view for their disciples?