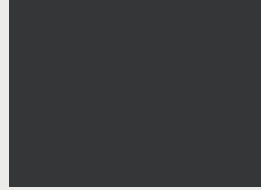


The Ordinary Guide

The Ordinary Guide
to becoming like Jesus.

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Introduction

Have you ever looked at the life of Peter and asked yourself, “When was Peter actually a disciple of Jesus?” Was when he was first called? (Matt. 4v19) Was it when he cut off a guy’s ear? (Matt. 26v51) Was it when he tried to turn away all the poor, hungry people? (Matt. 14v15) Or was it when Jesus told him to “feed my sheep?” (John 21v17)

The truth is that Peter was a disciple from the moment he was called by Jesus. This means that all of Peter’s life, the celebrating and mourning, the work and rest, the prayer and evangelism was all part of Peter’s discipleship. And if it was all part of Peter’s discipleship, then it must be part of our discipleship, too!

What is Discipleship?

Discipleship is ordinarily living like Jesus
to become like Jesus.

This booklet is designed to help you create some categories for living and discover what it might look like to follow Jesus in every area of life. Too often we like to have a boundary between our sacred life and our secular life. Most of us have robust secular lives, but struggle to really understand what it means to have the full spiritual life that Jesus promises.

MARK 1V16-17 & MATTHEW 6V33

Some of us have been raised to believe that once we get our lives together (we have money and houses) then we can start to follow Jesus. But listen to what Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and everything else will be added to you." (Matt 6v33) That's a profound and convincing command. Let's rephrase it, "seek first our spiritual lives and our secular lives will be blessed." Or "seek first God's mission and your whole life will be in His will."

We believe that Jesus wants us to live life in all our normal spaces, with a new trajectory. Your old trajectory was your kingdom, your success, your homes, your money; but now your new trajectory is God's kingdom. Success in God's kingdom is living like a local disciple-missionary who seeks first the Kingdom of God in everything they do.

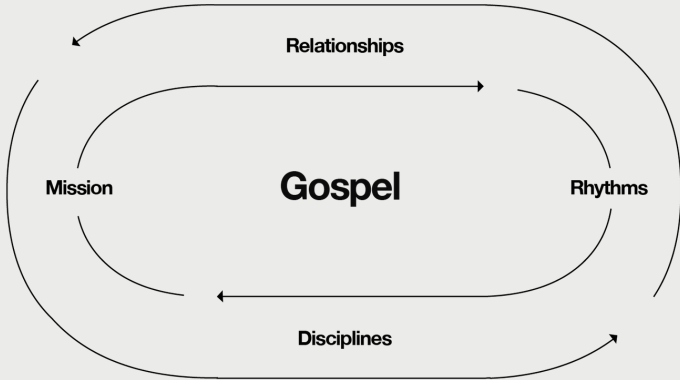
Discipleship is a life-long process. Our hope is that this model of discipleship will be with you for the rest of your life. This isn't a start and finish model, it's a visit and revisit, and revisit model; it's an ordinary guide to following Jesus.

Categories

Let's begin by introducing you to our categories for Discipleship. They're not perfect, but they're a healthy look at our whole life and being.

Our main goal here is not to compartmentalize, but to organize. When Jesus lives life with his disciples, he doesn't just meet them at the synagogue, marking a holy life. He meets them in their homes, in villages, at weddings, for funerals, and so much more. In an effort to organize we have developed these four categories: relationships, disciplines, rhythms and mission.

JOHN 2V1-12, LUKE 7V11-17, LUKE 10V38-42



The first thing to know is that these categories are not the Gospel, they're simply a means to organizing your life around the Gospel. Our hope is that this booklet gives you insight into areas of your life that have historically been off-limits to the Gospel.

Each section that you go through will have info about a category and then an inventory of sub-categories. Each category will also give you a chance to share how engaged and consider some next steps. It's impossible to be entirely engaged in every aspect of discipleship at all times. Discipleship is seasonal, meaning there will be times where you might be more engaged in a specific category and less engaged in another category; that's totally okay.

01

Relationships

The story of God has always been one about relationships. Even before the 'beginning of time', God existed in harmony with himself. And as we see the story of God move from creation, to the fall, to Jesus, to new humanity and future communion with him, we see relationships as the context by which all these movements take place and the reality they are experienced.

Jesus shows us the importance of relationships, consider all the people he walked with, ate with, laughed with, and was friends with. Jesus knew the value and the importance of relationships, in fact he came as a model of relationships. Without Jesus first pursuing us, offering us forgiveness and acceptance, and inviting us into a safe and never-ending relationship with him, we would be without hope for our own relationships. In short, we would be alone.

Our relationship with Jesus is the context by which we experience salvation, and our connection with Jesus informs our other relationships.

These become intentional connections with others based on the initiative and posture of Jesus. Living like Jesus means we recognize creating and maintaining healthy relationships as essential to our lives. Even more beautiful is that these relationships are the avenue by which salvation is experienced and the gospel is fulfilled.

We've provided an inventory to help you reflect on your current experience of connections. Are they intentional? Are you taking initiative to connect with others in love? Are you taking on the posture of Jesus through differences or disagreements? Use the measures below to engage with these important questions about your current experience of healthy relationships

Inventory

Let's begin our Relationships Survey by first taking inventory of our engagement. Take a few moments to complete the Engagement Inventory below. Read through each of the sub-categories and answer this question: How engaged am I in each of this category of discipleship? Fill in the circles below to indicate your engagement levels.

Forgiveness

Intentionally releasing feelings developed by hurt.

Honesty

Sharing your authentic self with others.

Mutuality

Equally sharing the weight of relationships.

Initiative

Mindful to take the first step towards someone.

Commitment

Being who you said you would at all cost.

Proximity

Physically being present with others.

How did it feel to take that inventory? Remember, this is a life-long process, it's okay if there are some space that you're more invested in and less invested in. The real joy in this inventory is to pause, thank God, and ask for Spirit to help you take one step.

Reflection & Notes

What does your inventory say to you?

What is Jesus saying to you?

What's one step you can take to grow in relationships?

02

Mission

What is the Mission of God?

The mission of God is a global expansion of the Kingdom of God in the hearts and the lived experience of all people, starting in our communities. Did you know that you're supposed to be an active participant in God's mission? Since the beginning, God has wanted to partner with his image-bearers, like you and I, to bless others (friends and enemies) and expand the Kingdom of God.

We believe that your role as a disciple-missionary of Jesus is vital to the whole world hearing the Gospel and it starts with you being an intentional neighbor, friend, co-worker or classmate. As an intentional neighbor you're encouraged to ask questions, listen to stories, invite others into your home, and share the hope of the Gospel with them.

But the intentionality doesn't stop there- God actually calls us to deeply care for our cities because He deeply cares for our cities. It's actually our mission to make sure that justice is present in our neighborhoods and cities.

While you work to be an intentional presence, you should also work to pursue justice in your neighborhoods and cities (Jer. 29v4-7). We know this can be overwhelming; where would you even start? God gives us his Spirit to help us by providing words to say when we need them, comfort when we need it, and even initiative when we lack it.

We've provided an inventory with some brief ways you can consider being active in as a local missionary. It can be overwhelming to consider all these ways so remember that you have the rest of your life to do this. Consider praying as you go through this inventory and asking God's Spirit to give you a focus in this season of life as you live on God's mission.

Inventory

Let's begin by first taking inventory of our engagement in mission. Take a few moments to complete the Engagement Inventory below. Read through each of the sub-categories and answer this question: How engaged am I in each of these categories of discipleship? Fill in the circles below to indicate your engagement levels.

Non-Christian Friends

Neighbors, co workers, others who don't follow Jesus

Local Living

Shop or eat at local spaces as a regular

Telling God's Story

Sharing the Gospel story as bridge building

Serving the City

Volunteering and meeting needs at local events

Hospitality

Joyously welcoming others into your space

How did it feel to take that inventory? Remember, this is a life-long process, it's okay if there are some space that you're more invested in and less invested in. The real joy in this inventory is to pause, thank God, and ask for Spirit to help you take one step.



Reflection & Notes

What does your inventory say to you?

What is Jesus saying to you?

What's one step you can take to grow in mission?

03

Rhythms

Many of us were taught that our obedience as a Christian is directly connected to our time praying, reading Scripture, or doing other disciplines. Sadly, we ended up with these beliefs because no one ever taught us how to approach the regular, routine rhythms of our lives.

In a pursuit to become more like Jesus, we were taught to assess our lives for 'holiness' and avoid the bad things as 'unholy.' But in the process, we've ended up merely dividing our lives between what is 'pleasing to God' versus what is routine or even 'merely human.' But what if they were never meant to be separate? For Jesus, there was no division between sacred and secular. The same was true of his disciples; as they rested with Jesus, as they listened and shared stories, as they celebrated and mourned - all of their lives were a part of following Jesus and his kingdom work. Their lives show us an important reality as disciples - holiness is being like Jesus in the ordinary.

We identify these normal, day to day habits as rhythms. They are regular commitments - like working or eating - that we do in common, communal spaces. That we do them doesn't set us apart, but how we do them has a potential to give them beautiful meaning. Where we used to do rhythms that only served ourselves, our advancement, or our kingdom, now rhythms are integral aspects of our discipleship and serving others.

Jesus teaches us that even the most ordinary aspects of our lives have meaning and purpose in his kingdom. Rhythms are the everyday habits, commitments, and experiences we already do, but now under the direction and care of Jesus. We've provided the inventory below to help you identify the rhythms of your lives as well as some ways of assessing their health in your discipleship. Use the questions below to guide you as you reflect on rhythms as an integral reality in following Jesus.

Inventory

Let's begin by first taking inventory of our engagement in rhythms. Take a few moments to complete the Engagement Inventory below. Read through each of the sub-categories and answer this question: How engaged am I in each of these categories of discipleship? Fill in the circles below to indicate your engagement levels.

Celebrating

Seasons of joy and happiness with others

Mourning

Seasons of sadness and lament with others

Work

Vocational roles within a community

Rest

Leisure and reflections on the past season

Eating/Drinking

Daily mealtimes as intentional spaces

Listening

Actively paying attention to understand

How did it feel to take that inventory? Remember, this is a life-long process, it's okay if there are some space that you're more invested in and less invested in. The real joy in this inventory is to pause, thank God, and ask for Spirit to help you take one step.

Reflection & Notes

What does your inventory say to you?

What is Jesus saying to you?

What's one step you can take to grow in rhythms?

04

Disciplines

What are spiritual disciplines?

Have you ever wondered what “read your Bible during quiet time” means? Or why are we supposed to pray “without ceasing?” Spiritual disciplines are supposed to be beautiful spaces of meeting with God, but sadly they’ve become directly shrouded in shame and guilt because they come more naturally to some than others.

But what if Jesus invited us to freely do them as practice and not be obliged to do them because of shame? There’s good news, he has done just that! Through the life and ministry of Jesus we see him engage in the public reading of scripture, in the practice of private and communal prayer, in being generous, and even in silence and solitude. Jesus joyfully invites his disciples to these practices—free of the guilt and shame associated with religion that was brought on by the culture.

We believe that Spiritual disciplines are uncomfortable practices that force us to face our limits, ask God for help, and become more like Jesus. As Disciples, we're encouraged to do these practices as a means to being formed into the image of God. But remember that God doesn't love you more the more you read or the more you pray. God loves you because of what he's accomplished through his Son, and spiritual disciplines help us stay reliant on that truth.

You weren't saved because of your perceived holiness in spiritual disciplines, and you won't be considered more holy than a friend because you pray more. The invitation is to participate in spiritual disciplines with freedom, knowing that Jesus life, death, resurrection, and ascension is sufficient for your salvation. Different seasons in life will bring different engagement in disciplines. We're sure you've caught on, we've provided a simple inventory for you to become aware of your engagement in these practices. We hope they free you up to enjoy what's been done for you, not what you can do.

Inventory

Let's begin by first taking inventory of our engagement in disciplines. Take a few moments to complete the Engagement Inventory below. Read through each of the sub-categories and answer this question: How engaged am I in each of these categories of discipleship? Fill in the circles below to indicate your engagement levels.

Read Scripture

Opening your bible to read a part of God's story

Fasting

Physical hunger leading to hearing God

Silence/Solitude

Intentionally curated space to hear God

Prayer

Asking and praising the Father in words

Generosity

Giving your resources for the good of others

Sabbath

Reflecting on God's work in a past season

How did it feel to take that inventory? Remember, this is a life-long process, it's okay if there are some space that you're more invested in and less invested in. The real joy in this inventory is to pause, thank God, and ask for Spirit to help you take one step.

Reflection & Notes

What does your inventory say to you?

What is Jesus saying to you?

What's one step you can take to grow in disciplines?

Next Steps

At the beginning of this guide, we shared that it's near impossible to be fully engaged in every aspect of discipleship at all times. We believe this is good news! There will be times when you're connecting fully with God through prayer, there will be seasons where being hospitable will be more spirit-filled than ever, there might even be times when silence is a powerful tool to connect with God.

In it all, the goal is to simply be aware that God is present in every specific part of your life; that all of life is discipleship. We want to end our guide with a simple question: What might Jesus, our Good Shepherd, be saying to you right now? We want to encourage you to close your eyes and consider what you know to be true about the work of Jesus. What is Jesus saying to you right now?

Finally, This guide is meant to be revisited again, and again, and again. We believe that discipleship is not linear, it's circular. Our invitation to you is to make a regular rhythm or discipline of going through this guide on your own and with others. Our hope is that you will follow Jesus for the rest of your life through The Ordinary Guide.

Reflection & Notes

What is Jesus saying about Relationships?

What is Jesus saying about Mission?

What is Jesus saying about Rhythms?

What is Jesus saying about Disciplines?



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