

Culture of Discipleship

FAITH BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

Who is a Disciple?

A disciple is a follower of Christ. Therefore, every person that comes to Christ in repentance for the forgiveness of their sins, becomes a disciple. This then begins the lifelong process of learning and becoming more like Christ through the progressive sanctification of the whole person. The disciple, out of a growing love for what Christ has done for them, commits in increasing measure their life to Christ Jesus as their Savior and Master and is determined to follow and obey Him, no matter the cost. A faithful disciple is evidenced by their pursuit of holiness, fellowship with the body of Christ through regular attendance, sharing the gospel, discipling others, and by serving in the ministries of the church. Luke 14:25-34; Heb. 10:24-25

What is a Disciple?

Discipleship is the calling of all Christians. It is an intentional relationship in which the Holy Spirit leads others to do spiritual good for someone by initiating, teaching, correcting, modeling, and counseling for the purpose of becoming more like Christ and for the building up of the body of Christ. We joyfully enter into these relationships out of our love for Christ and one another. Eph. 4:11-16

Who is the Discipler?

A Discipler is not one who is perfect in their Christian Walk but is a maturing believer diligently striving toward Christlikeness by....

- **Knowing Doctrine** - they grow in the knowledge of God and understanding of the Bible. Prov. 9:10
- **Having Integrity** - they live a godly life because of their character which accords with sound doctrine. Titus 2:1-3
- **Exercising Discernment** - they prayerfully speak God's truth in love to others wisely and carefully. Ps. 49:3; Prov. 25:11
- **Ministering with Intention** - they impart sound doctrine for the purpose of training others to live godly lives. 2 Tim. 2:2
- **Imitation** - as they imitate Christ, they model a godly example to show the way of gospel living to those around them. 2 Tim. 3:10-11

What is A Culture Of Discipleship?

In Matthew 28:18-20, Christ commands believers to make disciples. Therefore, we believe that our mission is to honor God by making more disciples for Jesus Christ and equipping them for growth and service to build up the body of Christ. Our desire is to see the intentional discipling of one another as an obvious characteristic of our church, woven into the very fabric and culture at Faith in which all members participate. We want to encourage and develop a vibrant culture where it is simply normal for members, out of love for Christ and one another, to take initiative in building deep and meaningful relationships for the purpose of doing them spiritual good so that we all grow in maturity and Christlikeness. We recognize that people are at different stages of spiritual maturity and therefore, are committed to encouraging and helping one another grow, at every stage of life.

How Do We Build This Culture Of Discipleship?

Our discipleship approach is centered on the 5 Loves and 5 Commitments as a useful, tangible and practical metric for encouraging growth in Christlikeness, as well as, fostering love and commitment of our local church body and its members. We believe that a culture of discipleship grows from these tenets of faith and gospel living.

Love God

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Mk 12:30

Commit to Gathered Worship

...as a foundational place for us to be nourished in the faith in Christ and to grow in our understanding of God and Biblical truths.

Love God's Word and Prayer

“and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” Eph. 6:17-18

Commit to Personal Worship

...we believe an indispensable part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ is growing in the knowledge of His Word. We commit to encourage and equip one another in reading, studying, understanding and praying the Bible.

Love One Another

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35

Commit to Christian Community

...as Christians, we have been adopted into a new family comprised of others who have also experienced a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When we commit ourselves to a local church and fellowship with other believers in love, we corporately "show the world" that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has changed us.

Love Our Neighbors

"For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Gal. 5:14

Commit to Serve and Give

...by loving our neighbors. We do so in response to the mercy we have received through Christ. We commit to accomplish this through acts of kindness and compassion, meeting our neighbor's needs, building deep and meaningful relationships with them and above all, sharing the truth of the gospel with them.

Love the Gospel

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16

Commit to Share the Gospel

...as the gospel not only saves us, it also sustains us, informing and transforming us in every area of our lives. Part of following Jesus

means inviting others into a relationship with Him. We commit to do this in our families, our local communities and to the ends of the earth.

How Does Discipleship Take Place?

Discipleship encompasses the entire life and fabric of our church. Every member is included and encouraged to use their gifts for building this culture of discipleship through relationships in the way that God has gifted them in whichever area of discipleship ministry best fits them. 1 Pet. 4:10

The following explanation is how we hope to see the culture of care and discipleship grow and manifest in our church.

Pre - Discipleship - Non-Believers - The Gospel. The hope and truth of the gospel is shared through believers building relationships with them as well as the expositional preaching of the Word. (Romans 1:18; 10:14-17)

Informal Discipleship – Believers - Intentional Friendships. Serving together in the many various ministries within the Body. Conversations and relationships that are heart-targeting and deep are fostered by sharing love for one another, biblical wisdom, encouragement and care. Seeking to “do life” together in the everyday ministries of our church. Examples...nursery, Wednesday night meals, VBS, choir, worship team, etc. (Romans 12:10; 1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Pet. 4:8)

Intentional Discipleship – Disciplers - Mature Believers Disciple Others. Disciplers intentionally and deliberately help others grow and mature spiritually. This is a more formal relationship with scheduled meetings. It may be for a set length of time or ongoing with no intentional end. It is smaller in scope in the number of people in the relationship. Examples...premarital counseling, 1:1 discipling, etc. (Mt. 28:19-20; Gal. 6:2)

Directed Discipleship – Teachers - Teach on Biblical Topics and Scripture. Topics like marriage conflict, abuse, addiction, conflict resolution, anxiety and other issues are taught from a biblical perspective. Teachers seek to equip others with biblical knowledge for the purpose of helping people grow and mature. We encourage transparency and accountability in small group settings, where we learn from each other and consider how to apply God’s Word, confess our sin, share struggles and pray for one another regularly.

Examples...Faith University curriculum, Faith groups, Bible studies, book studies, etc. (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 2:1-2)

Intensive Discipleship – Counselors - Minister to Those with Life

Dominating Issues. When a person is in need of more intensive, personal help with a more complex life issue. This type of discipleship would hopefully only occur after the disciple has been ministered to in their small group or by another mature discipler. Counselors walk with the disciple who is significantly struggling to view their situation from a biblical perspective to help them learn how to glorify God through it. Examples...the formal counseling ministry, pastoral help, etc. (Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:14-15).

Crisis Discipleship – Servants - For Complex, Urgent or Long-Term Care.

This would entail a community-based approach to serve the disciple in their time of need. Community resources from within the body that may include intensive counseling with a certified counselor, pastoral help, small groups, Share team, Care Ministry, etc. (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 12)

What Resources And Opportunities Are Available

Please see the Associate Pastor of Discipleship for how to get involved in a personal discipleship relationship, ministry opportunity or for training and help. We also hope to offer an expanded Faith University curriculum to foster growth in Bible knowledge, personal sanctification and discipleship training.