

## Introduction to Biblical Discipleship

Sometimes people think about the Christian life in the same way they buy a car. What model do I like? What optional equipment best fits my lifestyle? Do I need a rugged vehicle or something that primarily looks good? The Bible calls every believer to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). We call that "discipleship," a Holy Spirit-driven and non-optional process that is the subject of both warm encouragement and strong warnings in the book of Hebrews, our text for this opening session.

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Getting Started:

- We have a great week ahead in this network! We will be thinking together about discipleship and looking at it from different angles, kind of like a master jeweler looks at a diamond, watching the light reflect from it in different ways.
  - My goal in this session is to lay the groundwork by reminding us of THREE important truths about discipleship.
- I. God Calls All Believers to a Life of Discipleship. Life as a disciple is not an “advanced track” for extra spiritual Christians; rather, it is the life God intends for all of us.
- A. Hebrews 5:11-14
1. Spiritual progress for all believers is assumed, and in this text, it is shocking in its absence.
  2. Spiritual progress as defined in this text is not about Bible knowledge alone, but about spiritual discernment, the ability to see the difference between good and evil, and to choose the good.
- B. Hebrews 12:1-4
1. This text captures several key discipleship elements: the witness of God’s people, the importance of focusing on Christ regardless of the “topic of the day,” and the role of struggles in our faith journey.

2. A life truly focused on Christ is at the heart of discipleship; indeed, the glory of Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King is the main point of the entire book of Hebrews.

II. God Himself Is the Key Disciple Maker! Ultimately, this work of disciple-making is His work, not ours, and His tools should be our main tools.

Example: Proximity: Habits of a lifetime ([www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org))

A. Use the Bible! Hebrews 4:12-13 and II Timothy 3:14-17

B. Teach people to pray! Luke 11:1

C. Foster redemptive relationships! Acts 2:42-47

III. God Uses ALL of Life to Disciple Us. Every aspect of life is part of the process, just as every part of church life should be. Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry, Youth Ministry – all should be accomplished with a discipleship mindset.

Let's Talk!

- What questions about discipleship are you bringing to the Forum this year?
- What ONE THING are you excited about in the discipling ministry you're currently involved with?
- What is currently the biggest challenge in your discipling ministry?

***Suggested Reading: Each of these books brings something helpful – and there are many others:***

- *Discipleshift* by Jim Putman, Bobby Harrington, and Robert Coleman
- *Discipleship that Fits*, by Bobby Harrington and Alex Absalom
- *Contagious Disciple Making* by David & Paul Watson
- *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*, by Win & Charles Arn
- *The Disciple Making Church*, by Bill Hull
- *The Trellis and the Vine*, by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne