

# Profile of a



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The purpose of Discipleship Groups is to learn to be a "disciple" of Jesus. A disciple is someone who follows a teacher, learns His ways, and practices them. When you commit your life to Jesus, you begin your path of discipleship. The purpose of this curriculum is to help you walk that path by exploring the basic profiles of a disciple.

When you enter into a relationship with the person of Jesus, you also enter into a relationship with the church, the body of Christ, of whom Jesus is the head. This is part of God's plan to help you grow as a disciple. Therefore, the majority of this curriculum is intended to be done together, in the context of community where we will find Jesus at work in our lives through others. This curriculum contains six lessons but it may take more than one session to finish a lesson. That's okay, give each lesson the time that it needs.

# Rule of Life

As you learn what it means to follow Jesus, you will likely discover habits that get in the way and new habits that might help. To aid in your development, you will have an opportunity to develop a Rule of Life throughout this curriculum. Ken Shigematsu defines a rule of life in this way, "Like a trellis, a rule of life supports and guides our growth. It supports our friendship with Christ so that we bear the fruit of his character and are able to offer his nourishing life to others. The purpose of the rule, in this sense, is not to be harsh or confining. It is to cultivate fruit. It serves as a pattern for life that enables us to experience the presence of Jesus in each moment of our lives, empowering us to become people who embody his love to others." <sup>1</sup>

In order to benefit from your rule of life it must be two things: Grace-driven and helpful. First, if a rule of life is a way to earn God's favor, then the rule of life will fail you. Second, it might sound obvious but a rule of life must also be helpful to you. Don't embrace a habit just because someone else does or because it sounds fun. If a specific rule is not going to help you, don't do it. You should be asking yourself questions about your stage of life and your personality as you think about habits you want to develop. Also, what helps you today might not help you tomorrow so be flexible and change it when necessary.

# **Memorizing Scripture**

This curriculum will rely heavily on content from Romans 8. In order to maximize the impact of this powerful chapter, you are encouraged to begin memorizing it. If you've never practiced scripture memory before, see the article titled "Scripture Memory" at CATC.Church/articles by clicking the "Scripture" category in the dropdown menu.



# **CENTERED ON JESUS**

Our truest identity is who we are in Jesus We become like Jesus as we behold Jesus

When we enter into a relationship with Jesus, the Bible refers to it as becoming a disciple. A disciple is a student, which means we are students of Jesus. From Him, we learn the purpose of life and how to live rightly in His world. In other words, to be a disciple is to be centered on Jesus. In this first session, we will explore the implications of centering our life on Him.

Our truest identity is who we are in Jesus....Centering our lives on Jesus impacts the most essential aspects of our lives, including our identity. We all have different identities which help us to know who we are and what we are called to do. If you are an elementary school teacher, your responsibility is to teach children. If you are an auto mechanic, your responsibility is to fix cars. Some of our identities will stay the same, some will constantly change. Some of our identities are true, some are false and some are dreams. Whatever we understand our identity to be or hope our identity to become, will determine what we do. Therefore, nothing is more important in this life than understanding our identity and no one has a higher claim on our identity than the one who made us.

#### What are some of your identities? What identities do wish were yours?

#### Who we really are

We are a part of a story bigger than ourselves. A story that goes back to the creation of the first humans.

#### Read Genesis 1 & 3

What do these chapters teach us about ourselves, God, and our relationship to Him?

# Our story doesn't end there...

In the first three chapters of Genesis, we learn that we were created by God for a relationship with Him. He is a loving God who can provide for all our needs and He asks us to trust Him. Unfortunately, in the garden, Adam and Eve believed a lie that God was not good and could not be trusted. As a result, they were removed from His presence. All of humanity has followed suit and nothing has gone right since then. Genesis 3:15 is considered the Proto-Evangelium – the first announcement of the Gospel. Before judgement is announced and enacted, God makes a promise to rescue us from our mess and bring us back to Him.

#### Speaking to Satan, The Lord says,

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 3:15

Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, thousands of years later, God fulfilled His promise.

# Read 2 Corinthians 5:21

"The Great Exchange" - On the cross, Jesus stood in our place by taking the punishment for our sins and credited us with His righteousness so that we may be fully reconciled back to God forever. Jesus was treated like us so that we could be treated like Jesus.

"We are not simply like Adam, beginning all over again; We are in Christ. In the sight of God we are not only innocent but as righteous as Christ is, because we are righteous with his personal righteousness!"

- Sinclair Ferguson, The Christian Life

Let's get our minds around God's story and where we fit in.

Watch 3 Circles Presentation by visiting <u>namb.net/evangelism/3circles</u>

Summarize what you heard.

Where do you fit in God's story? Take turns sharing your story with the group. After you've shared your story, see if you can identify each of the "3 Circles" in your story?

### **New Identities**

Jesus has given you a new story and with that story, new identities. These identities are more than just facts to store in our heads. They are objective truths about us that function as a road map for our lives. Who we are guides what we think, feel, and do. Remembering who Jesus is and what He has done for us has a transformative effect on our lives.... We become like Jesus as we behold Jesus.

Let's take a look at the identities we receive when we place our faith in Jesus. Read each identity and the corresponding verse.<sup>2</sup>

I am in Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:22 I am justified – Romans 8:1 I am adopted – John 1:12 I am secure – Romans 8:38-39 I am free – Romans 6:5-6 I am unfinished – Philippians 1:6

- How might these identities strengthen your confidence in Jesus' love for you?
- Do you struggle to believe any of these identities?
- What would change in your life if you were to fully embrace these identities?

**Sharing your story.** Before your group meets again, make a commitment to share your story with someone else who does not know Jesus.

# Rule of Life

There are oftentimes competing identities that get in the way of our relationship with Jesus. Have any competing identities caused you to develop habits that need to be dropped or adjusted? What habits could you embrace that would help you to be centered on Jesus? What bad habits do you need to let go of that keep you from being centered on Jesus?

# Memorize Romans 8:1-5

# Note

If you or someone in your group has been through this lesson and isn't sure whether or not they want to put their faith in Jesus for salvation, consider pausing as a group and studying the book of Mark together using the COMA method found in "One to One Bible Reading" by David Helm.







# DRIVEN BY GRACE

The Gospel not only saves us, but it also changes us. The more we "get" grace, the more we give grace.

In the previous lesson, we learned about God's story and where we fit in. We learned that we were created for a relationship with God and we begin that relationship when we place our trust in Jesus. The story doesn't end there. We are now disciples of Jesus and that means we are destined for more than forgiveness. We are learning to become like Him. As we center our lives on Jesus, God is at work to shape our hearts so that we live and love like Him. Grace started the journey and grace will carry us through.

#### Read Revelation 21:3 and Romans 8:29-30

What end is God working toward and what does it mean for you?

We will be in the presence of God and that will change everything. We will be His people and He will be our God. We will live fully as He created us to live, perfectly human. In other words, we will be like Jesus.

#### The Real Jesus

Read John 10:7-18. What do we learn about Jesus in this text? What is His heart like? What does He do? What thoughts and feelings do you have when you think about God's desire to conform you to the image of Jesus?

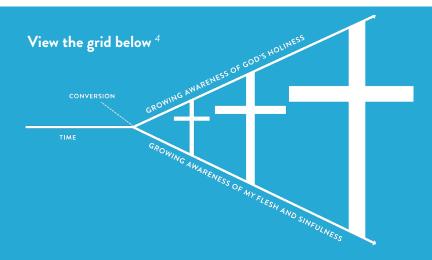
The Gospel not only saves us, but it also changes us...For most people the idea of becoming like Jesus feels overwhelming. We are fully aware that we just don't match up. There is good news. The Gospel not only saves us, it changes us...Just as we are saved by grace we are also changed by grace. We don't leave grace at the starting line of our journey.

#### Re-cap what is the Gospel message?

Let's explore how the Gospel brings change.

To become a disciple of Jesus is to trust that He lived the life we could never live and paid the price we could never pay. Jesus bridged the gap between our sinfulness and God's holiness. Following Jesus is a journey. We are instantly forgiven and made right with God but we don't become fully like Him in that moment. As we grow, we learn more about what it means to live like Jesus and that also makes us realize how far we have to go. If we forget about the Gospel, we will forget that Jesus has bridged the gap for us. To be driven by grace is to see God's holiness, and our sinfulness, look back at the cross, and be filled with gratitude for what Jesus has done on our behalf. <sup>3</sup>

"Doctrine is grace; and ethics is gratitude" - J.I. Packer



One way to know whether or not you're operating apart from grace is to ask yourself, "How do I think God views me right now?" or "How do I think God views me when I sin?"

Do your answers to these questions minimize Jesus and His work on your behalf? Are you rejecting any new identities given to you by Jesus?

After assessing your answers to the questions above, assess the fruit produced by these answers. What actions, thoughts, and feelings are associated?

What would change if you remembered the Gospel in these moments?

Jesus not only secures a new life of freedom for us, but He also models a different way of life that is entirely driven by grace. Read the following passages and see if you can identify examples of Jesus motivating a grace-driven life.

# Philippians 2:1-8 Ephesians 5:25-30

Let's focus on a story of someone who experienced the grace of God and how it changed them.

One sure way to know whether or not we're resting in the grace of Jesus by looking to see the grace and compassion we offer to others. The more we "get" grace, the more we give grace.

#### Read Luke 7:36-50

Contrast the character of the woman and the pharisee in this passage. What do their actions seem to say about their beliefs about themselves and Jesus?

We all wish we had the kind of devotion that this woman demonstrates to Jesus. She believed that God was holy and that she was a sinner yet she was convinced that Jesus had come for sinners just like her and this prompted a response of love.

Evaluate your own life. Do you demonstrate grace and compassion to people you interact with? What about those closest to you?

Think about a recent moment when you lacked grace and compassion. What were you believing about yourself and the other individual at that moment? How would remembering the grace of Jesus have altered your interaction with them?

# Grace within Community

Take some time as a group to look over the Discipleship Questions. You can find a copy of the guide at catc.church/lifegroups. The purpose of these questions is to deepen our discipleship with Jesus, not to beat one another down. Our response to one another should be driven by grace, reminding one another to look at the cross that bridges the gap. We are not attempting to grow in order to earn God's love and acceptance. We already are loved and accepted.

# **Grace-Driven Repentance**

When we identify something in our life that needs to change, the Gospel reminds us that we are secure in Jesus and then we are able to seek to change out of gratitude and not fear. But what does it look like to practically seek change? Below is a simple four-step process of repentance to practice as a group whenever the Gospel is working to bring change into your life.

# IDENTIFY

As you identify something that needs to change, look deeper to find the heart motive. What lie were you believing about yourself, God, or others? What false hopes were you trusting in? What actions did those lies and hopes motivate you to take?

# FORSAKE

Acknowledge the lies and false hopes for what they are and correct them with true statements.

# BELIEVE

Believe in the truths of the Gospel. Remind yourself that Jesus stood in your place taking on the full weight of your sin and offering His righteousness instead.

# REJOICE

Let the full weight of the Gospel weigh on your heart and thank Him.

# MOVE

What specific actions or behaviors do you need to change? Commit to correcting these actions along with the lies and hopes that accompanied them.

# Rule of Life

What habits could you embrace that would help you to be driven by grace? What habits do you need to let go of that keep you from being driven by grace?

### Memorize Romans 8:6-11



# SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE

The Bible is a necessity for intimacy with God We align our lives with the Bible, not the other way around

As we continue in our discipleship with Jesus we remember that He has granted us new life and placed us in a new story with new identities. We enter into a relationship with God and begin to know Him more and trust His ways. As with any relationship, the way we begin to know someone better is by hearing them speak. God has given us His Word through the Bible so that we might know His heart and desires. Building a life with the Bible as our foundation is vital to truly knowing God and enjoying our relationship with Him. In this session, we aim to learn what the Bible is and how to embrace it.

# What the Bible says about itself? Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

What do we learn about the Bible from this passage?

#### Attributes of the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16-17 reveals four important attributes of the Bible. Read the attributes below and see if you can identify where each attribute is listed in the passage.  $^{5}$ 

God's Word Is Sufficient God's Word is Clear God's Word is Authoritative God's Word is Necessary

What implications do these attributes have for how we treat the Bible?

The Bible is a necessity for intimacy with God....AW Tozer said, "The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men [and women] to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself is the core and center of their hearts."  $^{6}$ 

What have you learned about God from reading the Bible? How has this impacted your relationship with Him?

#### What motivates you to read God's Word?

We align our lives to the Bible, not the other way around – To know God through His Word is also to let Him shape us through it. We must allow our beliefs, loves, and actions to be challenged by God as we grow in our understanding of Him.

Can you share a recent time when the Bible challenged your beliefs, loves, or actions? How did you respond?

What might it look like to be driven by grace as we are challenged by the Bible?

Let's look at an example of someone who had a high view of God's Word.

#### **Read Psalm 1**

What does the author of Psalm 1 do with God's Word?

Psalm 1 emphasizes the value of meditating on the Bible. Meditation has many different connotations in today's world, but the mediation of Psalm 1 refers to spending time with God's Word, letting it take up residence in our heart and mind, ultimately leading to life change.

Do you have a habit of meditating on God's Word? If so, what practices have you found helpful?

# **Suggested Practices**

Here are a few practices to help us meditate on the Bible. Remember, the goal is to know God better, not to accomplish a task.

**Read it Daily** - One way to make sure the Bible is taking root in our lives is to build a habit of daily interaction with the Bible.

#### Three tips for reading the Bible daily:

 Choose a specific time and place to read the Bible
Choose a Bible reading plan. Consider the CATC plan found at *catc.church/dailyreadings* Choose a method. The COMA method is a great tool. Visit

gatheringone2one.com/thecomamethodofbiblereading

**Memorize it** - Memorizing scripture is a great way to meditate on God's Word. When we memorize it, we hide it in our hearts, so that we can easily recall it in times of need. For helpful tips on memorizing scripture, read the article titled "Scripture Memory" by visiting catc.church/articles

**Pray it** - To pray God's Word is to think about portions of the text that stood out to us and then pray what comes to mind. We might thank Him for a specific truth or ask Him to help us live according to that truth.

**Journal it** - Journaling the Bible is similar to praying the Bible. We write down what stood out in the Bible and how it impacts us.

#### Reading the Bible in Community

One powerful way to experience the Word of God and a key piece of a Discipleship Group is to read the Bible in community. In community, we have the benefit of hearing different perspectives and insights.

#### How to Read the Bible in a Discipleship Group

Choose a book of the Bible you would like to go through. Each week select a short portion from that book, usually 6-10 verses. Walk through each question using the COMA method. (*Reference the websites listed at the top of this page.*)

# Rule of Life What Bible reading habits would you like to commit to?

#### Memorize Romans 8:12-17



# **RENEWED AS COMMUNITY**

Spiritual formation is a community project Our life together is an evangelistic event

Our world is full of broken relationships. Whether it's with family, nations, or neighbors, relationships often break down. When sin entered the world, it broke not only our relationship with God but also our relationship with others. Instead of loving and serving people, we turn inwards and elevate our desires above theirs. Now, because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, not only is our relationship with God restored but our relationships with others are being restored as well. This is seen most clearly in our relationship with the people of Jesus. When we become disciples of Jesus, we enter a relationship with all of His disciples. Together we are being made into a beautiful community of people who love with the same love that Jesus loves us. Like Bible reading, community is another tool that God has given us to experience power and growth in the Christian life. When we embrace this, we flourish. Let's take some time to look at what a Christian community is and how to enjoy it.

#### Read Genesis 3:1-12

Describe Adam and Eve's interactions with one another after they disobeyed God. What does this tell us about the effect of sin on human relationships?

Are there certain situations in your life that make it difficult for you to love and serve others? Can you think of a relationship that has helped you become a better version of yourself?

#### Read Ephesians 2:19-22

How does Jesus restore our relationships? What new identities do we see given to those who put their trust in Jesus? What responsibilities come with these identities? What benefits come with these identities?

#### Read Ephesians 4:11-16

What will be the defining characteristic of the new community that God is building? What connection exists between an individual's Christian maturity and the maturity of the whole community? When will the church reach full maturity? How should this answer affect the way we approach community?

#### Spiritual formation is a community project...

The New Testament is filled with different ways we are called to love one another. Together, read through the list of "one anothers" (listed at the end of this lesson).

# Of the "one anothers" listed on page 28-30, which ones do you find most difficult to practice?

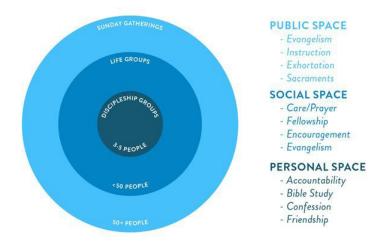
Jesus desires for all who trust in Him to be unified as one family. This is the church. Until we are all together in eternity, the church faces geographical boundaries and must express itself through smaller local churches. But one day we will all be together as one united people from every tribe tongue and nation. Until then the church will struggle to get it right. Sometimes you will be a part of that struggle and sometimes you will be hurt in that struggle. In these moments it's important to remember that the church is an unfished project but the head of the church is Jesus and He is perfectly able to care for us even when His people fail.

After this, looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the lamb

**Revelation 7:9** 

# Spaces of Community

Different elements of spiritual formation happen in different community spaces. At Church at the Cross, we have created 3 spaces to help community have maximum impact on our lives.



#### **Sunday Gatherings**

In these spaces, the whole church is brought together on a Sunday morning to be encouraged through preaching, singing, and communion.

#### Life Groups

Here we can know one another better and care for physical and spiritual needs. We can also invite our unbelieving friends and neighbors in to experience what it looks like to be redeemed by Jesus.

#### **Discipleship Groups**

This space meets needs that can only be accomplished in smaller groups. In Discipleship Groups, people can talk more in-depth about a portion of scripture, share their joys and struggles, confess sin, and encourage and pray for one another more deeply. Take some time to talk as a Discipleship Group about building a schedule that will help you experience the power and presence of God through community.

Our life together is an evangelistic event... When we love one another as Jesus loved us, what might the world think about Jesus?

Christian community is a proclamation that God's love is powerful, transformative, and available to the worst of us. For others to see this, we must take the initiative to invite them in.

"The kingdom is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. O you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing who would ever have been spared?" – Martin Luther

What would it look like for you to invite an unbelieving friend or neighbor to experience the power of Christian community?

# **Rule of Life**

What are your habits of Christian community? Are there things that keep you from prioritizing community? What new habits do you want to commit to?

#### Memorize Romans 8:18-25

# **One Anothers**

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. John 13:14

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34,1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 3:11 (etc.)

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Romans 12:10

Live in harmony with one another. Romans 12:16

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. **Romans 13:8** 

Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. **Romans 14:13** 

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Romans 15:7

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. **Romans 15:14** 

Greet one another with a holy kiss. Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Peter 5:14

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. **1 Corinthians 1:10, Philippians 4:2** 

Serve one another in love. Galatians 5:13

Bearing with one another in love. Ephesians 4:2

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. **Ephesians 4:32** 

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Ephesians 5:19

#### Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **Colossians 3:13** 

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. **Colossians 3:16** 

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. **1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:25** 

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. **Hebrews 3:13** 

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24

Brothers, do not slander one another. James 4:11

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. **1 Peter 3:8** 

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 1 Peter 4:9

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. **1 Peter 5:5** 

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. **1 John 1:7** 

Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other. Mark 9:50

So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. **1 Corinthians 12:25** 

Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. Galatians 5:26

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. **1 Thessalonians 3:12** 

Therefore encourage each other with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:18

Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. **1 Thessalonians 5:13** 

Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. **1 Thessalonians 5:15** 

Keep on loving each other as brothers. Hebrews 13:1

Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door. James 5:9

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

# **Extra Notes**







Missions exist because worship doesn't.

The question is not if I'm called but to whom and to where.

Hopefully, it's become clear through this curriculum that becoming a disciple of Jesus changes everything in our lives. As we follow Jesus, we become what God created us to be. But those who trust in Jesus don't just sit around and wait for the end of it all. We are sent out in partnership with God to tell the good news of what we've experienced, inviting others in to join us. In this sessio, we will see that disciples make disciples.

#### Read Genesis 3:1-9

What does Adam and Eve's decision communicate about their view of God?

Missions exist because worship doesn't...Worship is not only about singing songs on a Sunday morning. To worship God is to acknowledge that He is our creator and that life doesn't work without Him. The main issue with Adam and Eve's sin in the garden was that they denied God His due worship. Since that time, we have all followed suit and as a result, we experience the brokenness that comes with that decision. God is now on a mission to make all things right. He is on a mission to create worshipers who thrive as they trust in His loving care. All of history is moving toward the end where people from all nations will worship God.

#### Read Genesis 3:14-21

What consequences are given as a result of Adam and Eve's decision? What promises does God make? What expectations do you think Adam and Eve had when they heard these promises?

Verse 23 is a devastating statement. Humanity is removed from the presence of God, their creator and the source of all their needs and truest desires. But God does not send them out before offering a promise of restoration.

### Read Genesis 12:1-3

How does this verse expand on Genesis 3:14-15? What expectations do you think Abraham would have had after hearing these promises? Based on the verses we've discussed, what end is God working towards? What does this mean for your purpose in life?

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" - Revelation 7:9-10

The question is not if I'm called but to whom and to where...The promise of redemption was fulfilled in the coming of God's Son, Jesus. He was the long-awaited one who crushed the serpent's head and made it possible for people from every tribe, tongue, and nation to become worshipers of God again. When you enter into life with Jesus, you are also sent out, just as He was to call people back home.

#### Read Matthew 28:16-20

What connection do you see between this passage and the earlier passages in Genesis? What does Jesus reveal about how God intends to accomplish His mission? What are the specifics of the mission?

Let's revisit the content of the message Watch 3 circles video at namb.net/evangelism/3circles

#### Read 2 Corinthians 5:21

How might we be better suited for missions by remembering our own story?

# Read Acts 17:26

What does this verse teach us about where we live? Who has God sovereignly placed in your life to influence? What would it look like for you to be intentional about influencing the people in your circles?

# Rule of Life

What habits could you initiate that would help you be more intentional with the people God has placed in your life?

# Memorize Romans 8:26-30



# **EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT**

God's power is for God's purposes Prayer precedes power

God is writing the ultimate redemption story. He rescues people and places them into the body of Christ, the church. Together, we are learning to live and love like Jesus, inviting others to join us in the process. When Jesus' disciples heard that Jesus was leaving this earth, they were in despair. They knew they couldn't possibly become more like Him if He were not there. Now that we are Jesus' disciples, most of us feel overwhelmed by the Christian life and wonder silently how we could ever be anything close to what we're called to be. Jesus addresses their fears and ours by announcing that He would be sending His Spirit as a helper. But Jesus would have to go to the cross in order to send the Spirit. The Spirit is so vital to our Christian life that Jesus died to give Him to you. In this final section, we will spend some time understanding who the Spirit is and how He empowers your discipleship.

# Who is the Holy Spirit? Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-13

What does this passage teach us about the Spirit's relation to God?

"With the Father and the Son, Christians praise the Holy Spirit; and for good reason. The Spirit of the Father and the Son is one God with the Father and the Son, the third person of the Trinity, and the crowning agent of God's undivided purpose and power." – Scott Swain

The Holy Spirit is the answer to a long-awaited promise.

#### Read Ezekiel 36:25-27

What does this passage teach us that the Holy Spirit will do when He comes?

No wonder Jesus tells us in John 16:7, "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the helper will not come to you." The book of Acts is ordered immediately after Jesus' resurrection and true to His word, Jesus sends the Holy Spirit. For those who trust in Jesus, the stain of sin has been removed and we have been credited with His righteousness. We now live in a new age where the Spirit dwells not around or next to us as if He were afraid to

get too close but within us. God has made His home with us just as He promised He would.

# Read Acts 2:37-39

God's power is for God's purposes... As one would expect, the life of God dwelling within us comes with great power and alters our lives. We have been meditating on Romans 8 from the beginning. Let's spend some time recalling what we've read and see How God uses the Spirit to bring about change in our lives for His purposes.

# Look at Romans 8 and note every time you see the word "Spirit"

What descriptions of the "Spirit" do you find? What do you see the Spirit doing in these verses? What do you see the Spirit empowering the Christian to do?

We can sum up everything we learn about the Spirit with 3 truths. Read the truths below and their corresponding scripture.

- 1. Through the Spirit we experience a new dimension of life Romans 8:6-10
- 2. The Spirit empowers us for holy living Romans 8:13-15
- 3. The Spirit gives us the felt experience of God's fatherly love Romans 8:15-17

Prayer precedes power...God is eager to give you a greater measure of the Holy Spirit but we often don't ask.

What resources are you tempted to turn to instead of prayer? Why do you think that is?

# Prayer in Community

God puts us in a community so that we can build one another up. Spend time in every Discipleship Group praying over the struggles that are shared, asking God for the power of His Spirit to work in one another's lives.

# Rule of Life

What habits of prayer would you like to implement in your life? The disciplines of solitude and prayer can be helpful practices to aid your prayer life. Find articles on these topics by visiting CATC. Church/articles and click the "solitude" and "fasting" categories in the dropdown menu. Consider how you might implement these disciplines into your rhythm.

#### Memorize Romans 8:31-39





A decision to follow Jesus is a decision to become a disciple and learn from Him how to live in this His world. Throughout this series, we have looked at 6 profiles of a Christian that will help guide your discipleship. With the conclusion of these lessons, you are equipped to enter into long-term discipling relationships with others who God has placed in your life. Together you will have ups and downs but the goal is to help one another stay focused on Jesus so that over time you all grow. The Discipleship Group Guide will help you with this process.

Throughout this curriculum, you have been developing a "Rule of Life". You have thought through different habits that can help you in your discipleship. Take some time now to recall these habits and consider writing them down in a journal. Share with the group the habits you want to commit to. As a reminder, these habits are not a law to follow. These habits are intended to help you keep your eyes focused on Jesus. They will likely need to be adjusted as you go.

# NOTES:

- 1. Ken Shigematsu, God in my Everything (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), p. 21.
- 2. Tim Challies, Visual Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), p. 31.
- 3. Robert H. Thune & Will Walker, The Gospel-Centered Life (Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2009), p.13
- 4. Robert H. Thune & Will Walker, The Gospel-Centered Life (Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2009), p.13
- 5. Kevin DeYoung, Taking God at His Word (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014, p.44
- 6. Ken Shigematsu, God in my Everything (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 71.

Extra Notes	
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