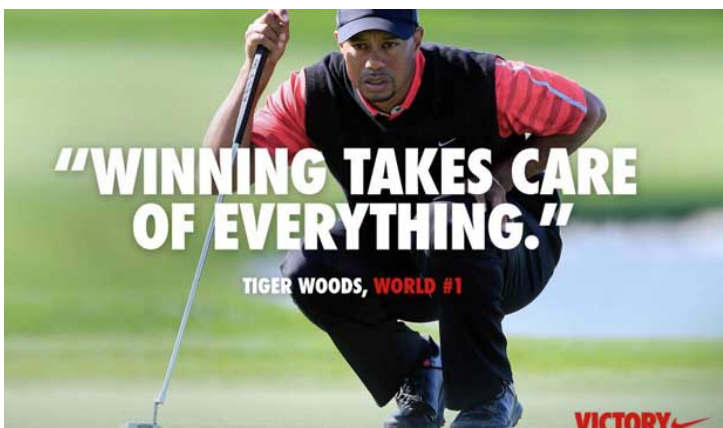




**I need this faith to keep me walkin' to keep me alive...
— From “These Days are Numbered”
by The Head and the Heart**

This packet is meant to help discipling partners work through and focus on five key practices for Christian life and faith: Prayer, Scripture reading, Generosity, Hospitality, and Blessing Others. There are many nuances to these practices, and they are not an exhaustive list of all the things that Christians do together. But they are the key practices that shape our life together at Southside as we seek to love the Lord our God with all our heart (prayer), mind (Scripture), strength (sabbath, generosity, stewardship); while learning to love our neighbour as ourselves (hospitality and sharing our faith) and learning to love one another (blessing others). While these are not exhaustive for the Christian life, we have found that when we grow in these five areas, our inner and outer lives begin to look differently, that we begin to be formed more and more in the image of Christ, who is in the image of God. And *that* is the outcome of discipleship - to be an apprentice to Jesus so that our lives begin to look more like his.

Many of us have engaged in discipleship relationships before, and this has had mixed results. While this packet may not be the perfect solution, it is meant to help give more direction and support for discipling relationships. In what follows, I will provide a brief overview of the particular type of challenge that we face in discipleship before giving a framework for how we might use these resources.



Discipleship as Christian Formation

When you look at the advertisement to the left, what is it that you see? What picture of ‘the good life’ is on display? How does Nike play on your hopes and insecurities and desire? While our answers to the above questions might be slightly different, the message of the advertisement and the way it impacts us is pretty obvious. Tiger Woods is a person that has swung from admirable athletic hero to disgraced fraud. While his personal life is still troubled, he has now reclaimed the top

position in golf. Nike has been waiting for a few years to run an ad like this. The message? No matter what kind of personal misery you might be going through, no matter what disaster your personal life might be, winning makes all that go away. Nike assumes that we are ready to fawn over Tiger Woods as long as he's a "winner." And, largely, Nike is right. We love the singular accomplishments of great men and women. We live vicariously through those that achieve some level of greatness. And we forgive these great men and women for the parts of their lives that are not so great. Winning, so it seems, takes care of everything. The good life is a life that 'wins' in that one thing that we care about.

But is it? I know most of us are probably uncomfortable with the last paragraph. Whatever success at golf *is*, and whatever fame or wealth or joy it might bring, it is not necessarily success at life. What *is* the good life? And this question of the good life is where Christian discipleship comes in. Jesus came that we might have life, and have it to the full. He makes possible life in God's Kingdom, lived under God's reign and in anticipation of God's future promise to renew and reconcile all creation. To live *in* Christ is to allow Christ to live *in us* and therefore to live whole and holy lives; to live *at peace* with ourselves, one another, creation, and God.

But this good way of life, this way of peace and wholeness - while we enter into it through repentance and belief - must also be learned, it must be practiced. Why? Because we come to Jesus *already formed* in other, counter-productive ways of life. We come to the Bible, to Christian community, to the Church, and to Jesus as those that have drunk deeply from the messages of advertisers and the blather of talk radio and the conversations at work and the hopes and fears we've inherited from our family, our city, our national history, our neighbourhood. And so while we might receive Jesus and enter into his Father's Kingdom, we must now re-learn who and whose we are. We must be re-formed in the way and hope of Jesus. And this is discipleship: learning to live again. It is *formation* in and through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Modern De-Formation(s)

For any of us who have tried our hand at discipleship, we know that it is hard. It is difficult to learn to live in new ways. It can be difficult to switch from the universe of Nike and Tiger Woods to the reign of the Son. I think that this is partially because we fail to understand the ways in which life in the modern world de-forms us, or shapes us in ways that confuse our faith and lead us to live

fragmented lives. While there may be plenty of ways that this happens, I want to draw attention to two particularly insidious modern de-formations that we carry within us: we are fragmented and dis-oriented.

(1) We are Fragmented

The sit-com *Seinfeld* is famously about nothing. The show proclaims itself to be (according to George) "just like life. Nothing. You eat, you go to work, you eat, you read... *nothing happens.*" And that is really the content of the show. It is about the silly everyday things that we do and the way that we stretch to make them meaningful or significant. This makes for funny TV, but it draws attention to one of the crises for our age: our lives are fragmented and directionless. Like *Seinfeld*, our lives are often experienced as one thing after another, where we jump from relationship to relationship and world to world without any over-riding sense of how it all fits together. When we are at church, our lives are oriented by spiritual things. When we are at home, we are concerned with home things. When we are at work, we are concerned with the bottom line of our corporation. Modern life is fragmented into all these little pieces, and we live in all of them - going to one thing after another - but we only rarely sense what it is all about. This is why we can separate Tiger Wood's personal life from his golf expertise. We accept that life is fragmented. But when its fragmented its also meaningless. It is difficult to know what connects our life together. We are distracted and unfocused.

The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard famously said that "purity of heart is to will just one thing." While Kierkegaard lived at the beginning of the modern era, he is responding to the same problem we notice here. How can our lives be made whole? How can we "seek *only* the Kingdom of God" and so entrust all these other realms - work, church, school, family, neighbourhood - to God? We do at least two things. To start, we must work to reflect on our lives and to talk about them in light of God and God's kingdom. How can we begin to work as though we are working for the Lord? How can we approach our resources from the perspective that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it? Second, we do this work of reflecting in community and with those among whom we live. We de-fragment our lives by committing our lives to those among whom we live and worship. This is why we need discipleship partners and Mission Groups. In these ways, discipleship addresses our fragmentation: in discipleship we sit together and ask each other questions so that we might re-form our world around the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is the work of being made whole.

SHARING THE WAY: DISCIPLESHIP

(2) We are Dis-Oriented

Besides underscoring our sense of fragmentation, *Seinfeld* points toward another problem: dis-orientation. It is not just that we live and work and play in multiple worlds that don't necessarily meet or make sense, but we also struggle to keep ourselves focused on the things that matter. Our hearts are distracted and fickle because the fragmentation of our lives gives us a Twitter-sized attention span. One minute, we want to learn to devote our heart to God in prayer and then the next minute we are giving our heart to the Canucks or our child's soccer team. Advertising and consumerism play a big role in this. If the structure of our lives - being pushed and pulled between neighbourhood, church, job, shopping - makes our lives fragmented, it is our relationships and habitual behaviours that make us dis-oriented. Almost all advertising in our consumer age promises gain with no pain, that we can "expect more, pay less." And because we buy and sell things everyday, we tend to become formed in the habits of consumerism - expecting the world at our fingertips, imagining that we can experience gain without pain. The result is that we are driven by our own fickle desires. We are like the man in the book of James who is "tossed about like a wave on the sea."

So What is Discipleship?

We must realize that our discipleship takes place in something like the above context. We bring to discipleship some kind of modern de-formation. We have been shaped, we have learned habits, we have learned to engage the world in a way that makes orienting our lives by the gospel and integrating our lives in the story of God difficult. But this is something that Jesus has promised to help us with, *and* just as we have been formed one way by our relationships and culture, we can be *transformed* by the Holy Spirit as we practice Christian life together.

So what *is* discipleship? It is apprenticeship to Jesus in life. It is learning what it means to live *in* Christ and with Christ *in us*. Because modern life is so fragmented and dis-orienting, discipleship to Jesus is about *integration* and *orientation*. By regularly engaging the practices that help us to love God with our whole selves - heart, mind, and strength - and by allowing ourselves to learn the habits and practices of loving our neighbour and one another, we begin to see and experience our life as complete, as integrated, as lived within and for God's coming Kingdom. Learning spiritual practices in obedience to Jesus helps us to integrate our lives according to the one thing that matters. But we also need to gain a sense of *orientation* for our lives, and so discipleship is also about being able to tell the story of our lives as one lived in and for Jesus by learning to see, reflect, and talk about the ways in which God is present and at work. Like a compass in the woods, the gospel gives us a sense of 'true north' and helps us focus our activities and our lives on the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. We learn to follow Jesus by *practicing* the Christian life so that we might integrate all the various things that we do according to the gospel. And, we learn to follow Jesus by *reflecting on God's presence and activity* so that we might find our orientation in the world. This means that there are two elements to every discipleship meeting: storytelling and apprenticeship. In storytelling, we practice noticing God at work in our lives. Where have you seen God? What is he teaching you? In apprenticeship, we work on engaging Christian practices with intentionality. We learn from one another and hold one another accountable.



SHARING THE WAY: DISCIPLESHIP

How Can I Use This Guide?

Because we come to discipleship already de-formed, learning to follow Jesus can be messy and indirect. As a church, we have committed to helping one another learn to live whole and holy lives in Jesus. And so we focus on learning to give the whole of our lives - our heart, mind, strength, and relationships - to God. Our five core shared practices work together to integrate and orient our lives. But we also recognize that we can learn how to do these better, that we have seasons of growth in various areas. Therefore, we have created this packet, along with some resources online, so that discipling partners can work through all five practices throughout the year. Each discipleship meeting should have a period of time where each person reflects on the ways that God has been present or prodding: where have you seen God at work in the past couple weeks? What is God teaching you or challenging you to do? But then the second part of the meeting should focus on apprenticeship: which practice is God inviting you to 'go deeper' in? What do you need to learn? This is where the packet comes in. Use the resources in the packet as well as the resources online to think about, grow in, and learn about our five practices. Use the questions in the packet to assess how you are doing in that area, and then decide on an experiment, or a way in which you will engage the practice in the next couple weeks. At the next meeting, discipling partners should hold one another accountable to the practice. What have you learned? What will you do about it? What is God saying?

Every one or two months, discipling partners should change to a new practice so that we work through all five practices every single year. In summary, here are some questions to direct your discipleship time together:

Storytelling

1. Where have you seen God at work in the past week? Where has he given you life?
2. Where have you struggled to see or experience God?

Apprenticeship

1. What was your experiment from last time? How did it go? What did you learn?
2. What value(s) or practice(s) is God calling you to grow in? Express your intentions - I think God wants me to grow in:
3. Look at the resources in the packet according to that value. Do the assessments or read the texts.
4. Declare an experiment: In light of what I am hearing, I will do _____ over the next month. Be as specific as possible
5. Ask for help: I will need my discipling partner to help me in this practice in the following way.
6. Write these down and then pray for one another.

There are lots of different ways to do this, but this format can be a helpful way to engage discipleship in a consistent manner that attends to our need to integrate and orient our lives in the kingdom of God.

www.southside.ca/discipleship
resources - equipping - experiments - direction



**“Because God has made us for Himself, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him.”
— Augustine of Hippo**

We read in Proverbs 4:23 that we are to guard our hearts for everything we do flows from it. If this is true we had better pay attention to our hearts. The heart in biblical times is not simply the place of emotion and passion but of action and will. The heart is this inner place where we commune with God and live out life.

In HEART, we will seek to answer the following questions:

- What is our treasure, for there our heart will be also?
- How do we bring the desires and dreams of our heart in line with the kingdom?
- How do practices of abstinence and engagement cultivate a heart for God?
- Why are shared spiritual disciples crucial for our hearts and our spiritual life?



In scripture the heart is a place of passion and of action. It is the place where life is felt and life is lived from. We see early in scripture that God's heart is deeply troubled when he sees the darkness in human hearts. We are then led into the story of the flood and then an act of worship by Noah. As Noah worships God smells the pleasing aroma in His heart, and makes a promise to never act upon the earth in such a destructive way. In fact God blesses Noah and his family to be fruitful and multiply.

*“Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.
- Jesus*

HEART: PRACTICES

Practices of Heart

Worship

To worship something is simply to deem something or someone worthy enough for your attention or investment. Worship essentially acknowledges 'Worth-ship'. The bible primarily refers to two kinds of worship:

1. the Worship of the one true God
2. the Worship of Idols or other gods

The scriptures continually invite us to worship in ways that revere God and cause us to humble ourselves. John the baptist expressed worship is a wonderful way that is worth us considering that, "He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less" (John 3:30.)

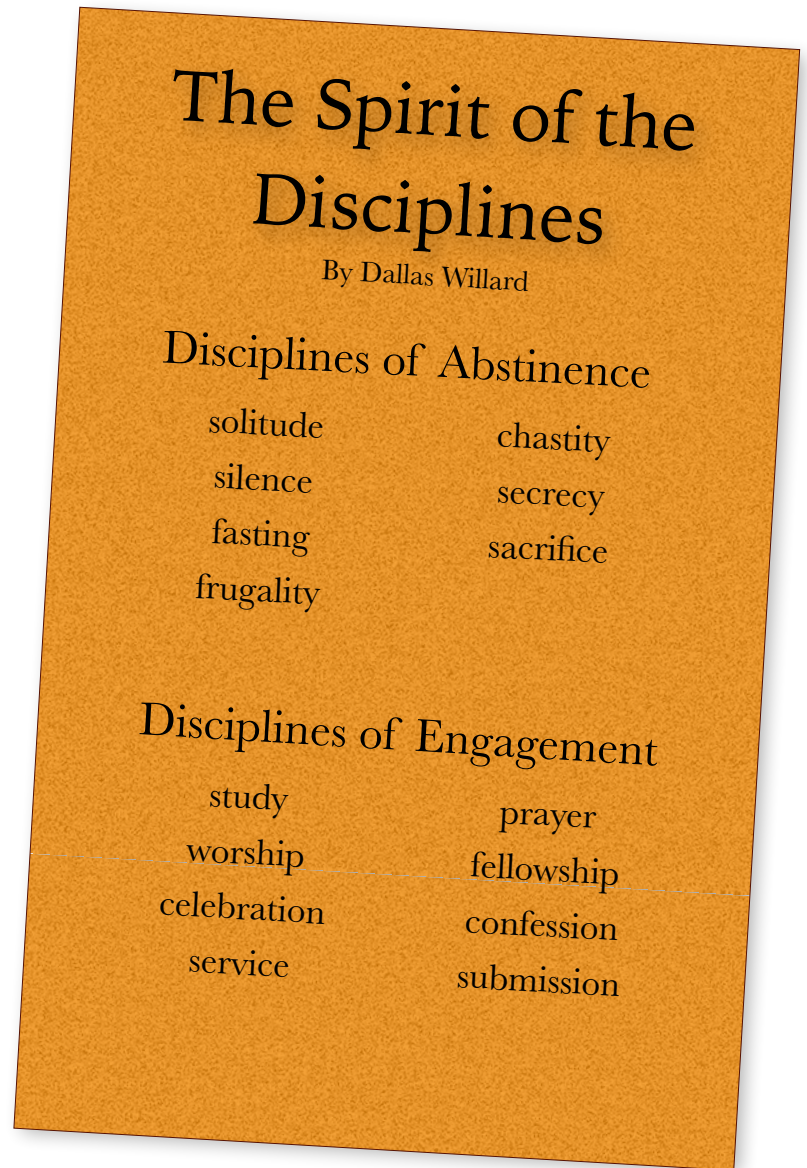
Prayer

To pray is to communicate with God. I like to think of prayer as keeping company with Jesus. The purpose of prayer is not to get something from God but rather simply

When we pray we enter the world of Jesus and the world of Jesus enters ours.

to be with God. If we do get anything from God through prayer that is simply called blessing. When we pray we enter the world of Jesus and the world of Jesus enters ours. It is a beautiful place of communion with God. It is a

wonder that it is hard to pray, but it is. It is a practice that when practiced we do grow in. Richard Foster encourages us to begin praying where we can, not where we can't.



Practices of Abstinence and Engagement

In *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, Dallas Willard classifies the disciplines of the spiritual life into two groups: disciplines of abstinence and disciplines of engagement.

Disciplines of Abstinence are those in which, as you might expect, we abstain from certain things, namely, "the satisfaction of what we generally regard as normal and legitimate desires" (159). St. Peter is thinking of these sorts of activities when he writes: "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). Disciplines of abstinence are helpful in that they help us bring our normal human desires into right order, when often they grow inordinately important in our lives.

Disciplines of Engagement are the healthy counterbalance to and partner of the disciplines of abstinence. When we take something out of our lives, we must put something new and healthy in its place. We must not only stop doing some things, but choose to do the right sorts of things in their place. We abstain from our wrong engagements, and then move forward with new disciplines so that our souls are properly engaged with God.

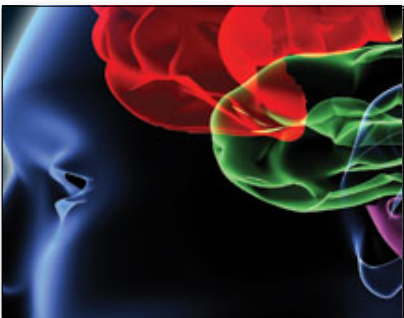


loving God with all of our
MIND

“Man is a storytelling animal, and that in stories are his identity, his meaning, and his lifeblood.”
— Salman Rushdie

We largely live by the stories we tell. We have origins stories (how we met our spouse, when our family immigrated to Canada, when our kids were born, how we got a certain job), we have stories of a fall, stories of redemption, and stories of hope. Any meaning or purpose or hope that we experience in our daily life is found in these stories we tell - in how we understand *where* we are and *where* we are going. For Christians, the Bible is our *master-story*. It is our epic, the story about *the way things are and the way things will be*. It is the authoritative story of our lives and our world. It is meant to shape the whole of our imagination and our experience of the world. But we often neglect to engage the Bible in this way. Here are some questions meant to help us engage it differently:

- What Bible character or story best describes your life right now? Why?
- Tell the story of the Bible in 3 minutes or less.
- Read Luke 24:1-35. What is the relationship between life, Jesus, Scripture, and Community in this story?
- What is the relationship between events of life, Jesus, Scripture, and Community in your experience?



Loving God with our Mind means allowing the story of Scripture to shape our imagination - the lens or lenses through which we interpret and make sense of the world. This means - at the least - that we *read* the Scriptures, *dwell* in the Word, and *reflect* on what we read and hear in and with God's people.

“Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.”
(Luke 24:25 NRSV)

MIND:

Practices of Mind

Read

Past generations of Christians had an amazing sense of biblical literacy. They knew the Bible well - the ins and outs of the story. This was because they sat down and read it from cover to cover repeatedly. This is a practice we should recover - to read and learn the story again and again.

1. When was the last time you read all the way through the Bible?
2. How well do you know the story of the Bible? How can you be helped to learn it better? Do you need a guide or some helps to read through it?

Dwell

It is tempting to think of the Bible as information - even if that information is largely in the form of a story. When it is information, we tend to treat it as something to be 'mastered,' something we 'stand over.' But this is a false way to relate to Scripture. When Jesus prayed, he often prays in the language of the Psalms. When Mary prays after the angel appears to her, she strings together a bunch of Psalms and prophecies. Same with Zechariah. Do we think and pray and understand the world in the language of the Bible? This is because we don't dwell, meditate, soak in, and memorize these words, prayers, and stories. We dwell in the Word by staying in a small passage for a long period of time, meditating on it, reflecting on it, 'chewing' on it, praying through it.

1. When was the last time you memorized Scripture?
2. How often do you use Scripture to help pray?
3. Is it easy or hard for you to tell your life story as it relates to the stories of characters in the Bible?
4. When was the last time Jesus talked to you like the disciples on the road to Emmaus?

Next Steps

I wonder if God is asking me to seek him or grow in this way:

My discipling partner can help me by:

Discerning God's Word Together

Study Guide

SS Study Guides are one way that we engage the Scriptures together as a community so that we might read, study, and listen to one another. Study Guides are like a walk to Emmaus - we read, reflect, and listen with one another

MG Conversation

Mission Group is another place where we read, reflect, and listen to God's Word together. But our MG conversation is hindered when we do not read, dwell, and study throughout the week

STRENGTH

Time Talent Treasure Terra

If God were to ask you today about how generously you had been a steward of His resources so far in your life, what would you say?

We need to think about money and generosity in light of God's Kingdom. We need to look at the environment and our part in caring for it in light of God's view of creation. We need to evaluate our spiritual gifts in light of the body of Christ. We need to think about time in light of both urgency and eternity.

In STRENGTH, we will seek to answer the following questions:

- **WHAT IS 'TIME' AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO GOD'S PROVISION?**
- **HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR OPERATION IN COMMUNITY AND MISSION?**
- **WHAT'S THE WAY TO BEST HANDLE THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES WE'VE BEEN GIVEN?**
- **WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THE EARTH? HOW CAN WE LIVE RESPONSIBLY?**

Almost everything we read, hear and watch is derived from a materialistic, individualistic, capitalistic approach to time, talent, treasure and terra.



Loving God with all our strength is about our generosity and treatment of someone else's stuff. It's about the account we will be called to in these areas. It's about the kind of people we are and the principles by which we distribute the resources entrusted to our care by God. We want our lives to count. We want to come to the end and have God say to us, "Well done!"

LIFE

*is not a journey
to the grave
with the
intention of
arriving safely
in a pretty and
well preserved
body, but
rather to skid in
sideways,
thoroughly
used up, totally
worn out and
loudly
proclaiming,
"Wow - what a
ride!"*

Peter Sage

STRENGTH

The Four 'T's

Time, Talent, Treasure, Terra

God as Creator not only created the universe initially from nothing, but, as Sustainer, is continually willing the universe to be in existence.

Science knows it but can't explain it: *The nucleus of an atom consists of protons and neutrons (two types of baryons) bound by the nuclear force. These baryons are further composed of sub-atomic fundamental particles known as quarks bound by the strong interaction. (Wikipedia)*

- Each moment of time is precious - a gift from God.
- Every dollar God provides is a valuable resource.
- Each opportunity for ministry is precious and God equips us to take advantage of it.
- All creation is valuable to God as He is keeping it in existence - we align ourselves with His creative and sustaining impulses when we care for it.

The fact that it all holds together can be attributed to the fact that God *wants* it to stay together. Loving God with all our strength is our response to His generosity.

THE WAR ON STEWARDSHIP OF STRENGTH

4 CULTURAL FACTORS

1. MATERIALISM (VS. BEING KINGDOM-MINDED)

Greed, envy, pride, pursuits, no ambition

2. INDIVIDUALISM (VS. BEING COMMUNITY-MINDED)

More interested in
personal gain than generosity
personal use of time than giving of your time to others
personal comfort than care for the earth
personal entertainment than building the body

3. SECULAR HUMANISM (VS. WE ARE GOD'S CREATION)

No reason for being vs. having purpose in Christ

4. NOMINALISM IN THE CHURCH (VS. A RADICAL APPROACH)

Middle American evangelicalism vs. biblical approach - Making more money, upward status, power with position, are all applauded by a society that sees these things as not just enviable goals and legitimate pursuits, but ultimate goals and pursuits.





“What if there really are ‘angels’ out there – not the wings-and-halos type, but the flesh-and-blood, laughter-and-tears type – people who are literally sent by God to intervene, to help those of us who have mucked up our lives, to give us a taste of grace, a rumour of glory?”

— Brian McLaren, More Ready Than You Realize

Why is it important to share our faith? Why do we? We cannot be disciples of Jesus unless we make disciples of Jesus. Isn't part of the journey of becoming more like Jesus mean we love those he loved and spend time with those he spent time with?

Matt 28:19 - Jesus' Great Commission is for us to make disciples as we go. God desires the good life for us and our neighbours which takes practice & intentionality. You can't become a mechanic, without ever working on an engine, even if you've memorized the textbooks. Faith meets life with real experiences that challenge what we believe about God and whom He loves.

A Double Conversion



In Acts 10, God gives Peter a vision, challenging his assumptions about whom is acceptable and then sends him to Cornelius, a Roman and Gentile (not one of God's chosen people). Peter needs to be converted first. He is surprised to discover that Cornelius loves God and the Holy Spirit comes. As we open ourselves to the presence of Jesus we may discover that He sends us to those we avoid because we need to be converted – we need to know God's love more deeply and part of our conversion will be sharing his love with those we assume are beyond it. As we cultivate spiritual friendships and recognize the depths

of God's love for those He treasures, our attitudes will change from “You need me (to tell you about Jesus)” to “I need you!”.

*“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment . And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’
- Jesus*

NEIGHBOUR

How to be a Safe Spiritual Friend

Evangelism is a beautiful word but has some baggage that may trigger images of soap box preachers shouting at or arguing with people about the truth. McLaren suggests that discussing spiritual matters should look like a dance between friends rather than an argument to be won or lost. Only Jesus can draw people to himself. Our job is to be safe people with whom our friends feel they can discuss spiritual matters.

“Most people want to talk about things that really matter – their sense of God, their experiences of meaning or transcendence, their attempts to cope with their own mortality, their struggles with guilt and goodness, their dreams and hopes and deepest longings.” (Brian McLaren)

You are a priest of God Almighty! You can interpret people’s spiritual experiences, recognize His work in their lives and point out his love for them. We must be safe people of whom our friends can ask deep, personal and spiritual questions. And don’t worry about not having answers! It’s better to let people wrestle with questions and seek God than to give a trite answer. The search is what is valuable, not removing all obstacles to faith. Clever answers alone will never lead someone to Jesus - He is so much bigger than our answers.

Practices

Practice 1: Being Good Neighbours

At Southside, we are an incarnational people. We move into and live in our neighbourhoods as missionaries. We’re here for the long haul and the friendships we develop with those who don’t know Jesus are precious and enduring. Out of these relationships we want to be safe people to journey with. If you don’t know your neighbours, it’s time to say hello! Bring over baking, shovel their snow, invite for a meal or open house. Find a way to connect each week - get creative!

Practice 2: Expecting the Unexpected

Practice being open and available to the presence of Jesus in your everyday interactions. Start your day by offering Him, your appointments, the people you may run into and ask Him to use you. Prepare to be surprised at how He answers your prayers!

Practice 3: Asking Questions

Notice throughout the Gospels how Jesus usually answers questions with another question or a story. Learn to ask good questions. For practice, the next time someone asks you a question, try to answer with a question (try with kids!).

Resources

- More Ready Than You Realize (Brian McLaren)
- God Space (Doug Pollock)
- <http://www.godsgps.com>

Questionnaire

1. When was the last time you shared your faith with someone?
2. How do you feel about sharing your faith?
3. When you think of sharing your faith, what do you picture?
4. How do you see those who don’t know Jesus?
5. Do you like people who are far from God? How do you react when you find out about the messy parts of people’s lives?
6. What are you afraid of when it comes to sharing your faith?



“extra Ecclesiam nulla salus”
- St. Cyprian of Carthage (3rd C.)

It's all Latin to me... The statement above means “outside the church, no salvation.” It is a controversial statement in some quarters, but it has largely been accepted throughout Christian history as a core part of our belief. It is one way of acknowledging the fact that we are not saved as individuals only, but as a part of a people: we each receive, encounter, and know Jesus in and through the body of Christ, the Church. If this is true, then our love for *one another* as members of the Body of Christ (Church) is an important part of our walk with Christ.

In fact, our ‘one another’ practice has both *personal* and *public* implications for us:

- **Personal:** See 1 John 4:7-21. What does this say about God? About us? Why do we need community to know God?
- **Personal:** See Galatians 5:1, 5-6, 13-6:2. What does this say about life in the Spirit? Where is this life in the Spirit lived out? (Hint: how should our freedom in Christ be expressed?)
- **Public:** See John 13:34-35. What command does Jesus give? Why?



Because God *is* Love, and we are creatures created in God's image and for relationship with God, we come to know God and grow into maturity in our faith in the context of relationships. Outside the church, no salvation. The Church becomes the context where we learn to live in obedience and faithfulness. It is the testing ground for our faith, where we learn to become free *for* service to one another. *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*. When we learn to live in this love, our lives together give testimony to the God who is love - the world will know we belong to Jesus by our love.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you... (Rom. 15:7)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph. 5:21)

Bear with one another...forgive each other just as the Lord has forgiven you (Col. 3:13)

...you have been taught by God to love one another (1 Thess. 4:9)

ONE ANOTHER

Practicing 'One Another'

Serve

Love one another in your strength; use your freedom to serve one another in love (Gal.5:13)

1. What are your gifts?
2. How can these gifts be used to bless others?
3. What opportunities do you have to bless others?

Bear

Love one another through your presence; bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)

1. Begin where you are: who has God placed you among?
2. What does *solidarity* or *standing with* look like?
3. What does it look like to dwell with, among, and for the people in your life?
4. What most often gets in the way of standing with those God has given you?

Share

Love one another through sharing the table (Acts 2:46, 11:1-3)

1. Who have you shared a meal with in the past three weeks?
2. What does this list show about your relationships?
3. Are you surprised by this list? Why or why not?
4. Who is missing, or should be there more often?
5. What holds you up from sharing meals with people more often?

Next Steps

What intentions or hopes do I have for the upcoming year in this practice?

How can my discipling partner help me practice this in the next year?

Gatherings

"Do not neglect meeting together"
(Heb. 10:25)

How do we practice serving one another in our gatherings?

How do we practice bearing one another's burdens in and through our gatherings?

How do we share table together in and through our gatherings?