



DISCIPLEMAKING

LEARNING | FOLLOWING | MULTIPLYING



AUSTIN RIDGE
bible church

© 2019 Austin Ridge Bible Church

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Cover design by Tamara Dever, Interior by Monica Thomas
TLC Book Design, *TLCBookDesign.com*

PRINTED IN THE USA

A WORD ABOUT DISCIPLEMAKING

AUSTIN RIDGE exists to lead and equip life long learners and followers of Jesus to pursue God and pursue people. By committing to this discipling process you are saying, “I want to be a part of that!” We want to see a discipling movement emerge from the people who call Austin Ridge home. By developing a sense of *awe* for who God is, *gratitude* for what Jesus has done for you, and *joy* for who you are in Jesus, we believe you will be moved to *obedience* to live for him in all areas of your life and see that multiplied into the lives of others!

If you merely do the assignments and meet each week, you will complete the study, but that is not the goal. The goal is that you allow the time in God’s Word to change your heart, allow the time together with your group to stretch your understanding, expand how you think about and live out what you are learning, and allow the practice of spiritual disciplines to change how you approach your calendar and relationships. All this is to prepare you to make disciples as we are commanded to do. This is not a Bible study, though you will study the Bible. This is not a community or accountability group, though you will experience those things. This is a journey where you become a disciple who is equipped to make other disciples!

We are excited that you are beginning that journey, and we believe this is something that God has promised to bless. Making disciples is his idea, the power to do it is from him, but the work to prepare for it is ours to do. We hope you are excited to begin!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 | Starting Your Group 7

- 01 — Welcome to Your Disciplemaking Group 9
- 02 — Getting to Know Each Other 19
- 03 — Overview of the Bible 27
- 04 — How to Study the Bible 39

Section 2 | Who God Is 65

- 05 — God's Character..... 67
- 06 — How God Reveals Himself 79
- 07 — The Trinity 87
- 08 — Seeing God Clearly 103
- 09 — Trusting God 113

Section 3 | What Jesus Did for Us 123

- 10 — The Fall and Sin 125
- 11 — Sin and Temptation 135
- 12 — The Work of Jesus 157
- 13 — By Grace, Through Faith..... 167
- 14 — Freed Us..... 179
- 15 — Gave Us an Example..... 193

Section 4 | Who We Are in Jesus..... 207

- 16 — Results of Salvation..... 209
- 17 — In Christ..... 223
- 18 — Spirit-Filled..... 235
- 19 — Spirit-Led..... 251
- 20 — Spiritually Gifted 271

Section 5 | How We Live for Jesus.... 285

- 21 — Abide in Christ..... 287
- 22 — Love One Another 295
- 23 — Make a Spiritual Difference.... 303
- 24 — The Great Commission..... 319
- 25 — Make Disciples..... 331

Appendices

- A — Prayer List 341
 - B — Scripture Memory Index..... 343
 - C — Bible Reading Challenges 349
 - D — Austin Ridge Prayer Guide 353
 - E — Suggested Resources..... 357
-

STARTING YOUR GROUP

The goal of this first section is *clarity*. We want you to:

- understand the purpose of the Disciplemaking Group process
- get to know the other members of the Disciplemaking Group
- understand the importance of Scripture for your growth as a disciple.

The purpose of these first four topics is to establish a solid base by which to function throughout the life of the group. Starting with the third topic there are specific questions you will answer at the end of each topic. These are consistent throughout the entire study and will allow everyone in the group to have a role in facilitating discussion each week.



MEMORIZE
2 Timothy
2:2

WELCOME TO YOUR DISCIPLEMAKING GROUP

Welcome to Disciplemaking at The Ridge! The next year or so of your life is going to be a time of incredible learning, growing, and change as you commit yourself to the process of growing in Jesus.

During this time, you will:

- Build meaningful relationships with those in your group.
- Learn more about who you are and who you are becoming in Jesus.
- Learn from each other how to follow Jesus in your daily lives.
- Learn to study the Bible for yourself, including how to use different resources.
- Develop the habit of memorizing scripture to help you remember key truths.
- Learn to pray missionally and seek God's heart for others.

None of these things will happen accidentally. This is truly a “you get out what you put in” experience. Even though your group has a leader, you are all in the process of being discipled as well as discipling each other.

For you and your group to progress together, you must all commit to:

- Come prepared by having done the homework for the week's topic.
- Contribute during your times together.
- Be transparent with and accountable to each other.
- Ask for help if you get stuck or if life is getting in the way.

In short: you've got to do the work! This is a commitment to the Lord and to each other.

**“DISCIPLESHIP
IS NOT A
DESTINATION,
BUT A
DIRECTION.”**

No Silver Bullets
by Daniel Im

DISCIPLEMAKING

The completion of this study together will not be an end, but a beginning. The goal is to be a disciple who makes disciples. Discipleship is not a destination, but a direction, and we want you to have the tools to move towards Jesus and become more like him for the rest of your life.

At Austin Ridge, we define a disciple as a life long learner and follower of Jesus who knows:

- Who God is.
- What Jesus has done for them.
- Who they are in Jesus.
- How to live for Jesus.

The Disciplemaking Group curriculum follows the framework of those four key areas.

Each section of your study together will include elements such as:

- Synthesizing verses and themes in your own words.
 - Inductive Bible study of key passages.
 - Scripture memory to help you remember what you are learning.
 - Challenges and encouragement to talk with others about what you are learning.
 - Discussion questions for your group to help you focus during your times together.
-

This is not just about content, and the goal is not to become experts in doctrine, theology, or Bible study methods. This is about relationships that are centered on the person and work of Jesus in your life and the lives of those in your group. It's about moving together towards lifestyles that are marked by obedience to God's Word.

OBSTACLES

There are three obstacles you will encounter over the next year, all of which will try to pull you off course in your pursuit of becoming a disciple who makes disciples: time, tiredness, and spiritual attack.

Time

In addition to all the things you are already doing, you will be challenged each week to spend time in God's Word for yourself as well as working on the curriculum, having a group meeting, and engaging in other spiritual disciplines. You will have to make choices about when you will do the work, what you will say "no" to in order to keep up, and how to keep your commitment to meeting together. Don't let this catch you by surprise! Time can be a great excuse or a great motivator. Take control of your schedule to succeed in this!

Tiredness

Nine to twelve months is a long time, and it is not uncommon to experience seasons of burnout and fatigue. Pay attention to this and don't minimize it. Chances are that others in your group will be feeling it too. Do not be afraid to take breaks together or to spread a topic out over a couple of weeks so that you have time to digest what you are learning without trying to sprint through it. Remember, the goal is not to "just get through it," but to grow together towards being more like Jesus.

Spiritual Attack

Once you've accepted Jesus' offer of salvation by grace through faith, Satan can't do anything about your eternal fate. You are secure in Jesus once and for all! BUT, our enemy can and will do things to distract or derail you from pursuing Jesus and becoming more like him. This is not a battle to fight in your own strength, so don't try! Ephesians 6:12-18 tells us:

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance...

Keep alert and stand firm! Stand in the things God has provided through Christ for you to be victorious in your pursuit of him.

THREE DISCIPLINES: DAILY PERSONAL TIME IN GOD'S WORD, SCRIPTURE MEMORY, AND PRAYING THE MISSIONAL BIG 3.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Spiritual disciplines are tangible actions that we take to organize our life, schedules, and activities around pursuing our relationship with Jesus. Part of your experience in your Disciplemaking Group will be to adopt three disciplines: daily personal time in God's Word, Scripture memory, and praying the *Missional Big 3*. As you read the next few pages that describe what these disciplines entail, take special note of any resistance you feel about any of them. Write it down and ask the Holy Spirit to help you resist the temptation to avoid these key things that will give new life to your growth as a disciple.

Discipline 1: Daily Personal Time in God's Word

We want every person involved in a Disciplemaking Group to grow in their dependence on God's Word. Learning to feed ourselves on Scripture is a discipline that is a foundational part of our spiritual growth. Bible studies with directed verses and questions are helpful, but we believe that learning to hear God's voice without the help of a guided study is vital for your growth as a Christ-follower.

A key part of your growth in this process is spending daily personal time in God's Word in addition to working through the Disciplemaking Group curriculum.

Each week, you will start your group by talking about where you have been reading and what you have been learning in your daily personal time.

Approaches You Can Take

If you don't already have an approach to reading the Bible on your own, we encourage you to start with one of the methods below. As a group, you may also decide to read together through a book or to take one of the Bible Reading Challenges together (See Appendix C).

Choose a Book of the Bible

- Example: John—read the associated introduction from a good Study Bible (we recommend the English Standard Version, or ESV).
- Read small sections of Scripture each day (5–10 verses per day, or 1 chapter a week), or
- Read one chapter a day through a book of the Bible.

In a few weeks, we will look at Bible study methods as well as getting an overview of the biblical story. For now, just begin reading somewhere and allow the Lord to speak to you from his Word!

Bible Reading Challenges

To reiterate: there is no substitute for being in the Bible for yourself. Some of us have read or studied certain chapters or even entire books. Others have heard the stories and may know all the names associated with them but have never read them in the context of the whole Bible. We want to challenge you and your group to read the Bible together.

There are two options for your group to pursue in Appendix C:

- The entire Bible in 100 days, or
- The New Testament in 90 days.

Both plans can be completed in approximately 20-30 minutes a day in addition to the time you are spending in your Disciplemaking Group meeting preparation.

When you read the Bible this way, you are not studying. You can't take the time to look up all the words, check all the cross-references, or research everything that comes to your mind. The purpose is to experience the

Bible as one true story given to us by God through human authors to reveal who he is, what Christ did for us, who we are in Christ, and how we live for him.

Both plans follow a general outline of Scripture. You will cover large sections that will have a start and end point.

One thing to consider is getting a new, unmarked Bible so that you can mark up places to go back and study later. Also consider keeping a journal or file on your computer so you can record thoughts and questions you have along the way. Here are a few questions to ask as you read:

- What things stand out to you?
- Who were the main characters?
- What happened?
- What excites or encourages you?

Mark or write those things down and return to them later. (Just a few short sentences that can help you keep track of what you read.)

We hope you will take one of these challenges! A reading plan is a worthy investment alongside your Disciplemaking Group curriculum to help you grow in your love and understanding of God's Word.

Discipline 2: Scripture Memory

At the top of each new section, you will see a verse or verses to memorize that will help you remember a key truth you are learning, as well as a complete Scripture Memory Index in Appendix B. Please don't skip this important part of this process!

Why Memorize Scripture?

Scripture memorization is a spiritual discipline that is greatly beneficial yet often neglected. When we hide God's Word in our hearts, we equip ourselves to grow spiritually and to share his Word with others. Memorizing Scripture:

- Allows us to meditate on God's Word.
 - Helps us become more like Christ.
-

- Helps guard us against sin.
- Equips us to encourage other believers.
- Prepares us to witness to unbelievers.

How to Memorize Scripture

Work on saying the verse aloud as much as possible.

- Learn the topic and reference first.
- After learning the topic and reference, learn the first phrase of the verse.
- Once you have learned the topic, reference, and the first phrase and have repeated them several times, continue adding more phrases after you can correctly quote what you have already learned.
- Think about how the verse applies to you and your daily circumstances.
- Always include the topic and reference as part of the verse as you learn and review it.

These steps adapted from Navigators Topical Memory System.

“I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture... No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”⁽¹⁾ —Chuck Swindoll

Discipline 3: Praying the Missional Big 3

The *Missional Big 3* is a phrase we use here at The Ridge to remind us how to pray for the work of making disciples not only in our relationships, but also cross-culturally. The first step is praying for people in your life who don’t know Jesus and looking for opportunities to have spiritual conversations with them. Your Disciplemaking Group will begin every meeting by praying for these people and holding each other accountable for looking for and acting on opportunities to have spiritual conversations with them. These are people that you know, come in contact and interact with, and with whom you are actively seeking to share the gospel with. These are people in your life, and you are in theirs in some way.

(1) Chuck Swindoll, *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], p. 61.

Examples could include:

- family
- friends
- a regular barista or waiter you see often
- neighbors
- co-workers

These are not random people; these are people you know by name and encounter regularly.

Pro tip: if you don't already know someone's name, ask them! It's a great way to start building a relationship that could lead to getting to share Jesus with them.

Here are some ways you can pray for these folks each week:

The “3-Open” Prayer

Open doors—“God, create opportunities for me or others to have spiritual conversations with Mike and Maria.”

Open hearts—“Holy Spirit, prepare Mike and Maria’s hearts to be open to your message.”

Open mouths—“God, turn our conversation to you and to spiritual things.”

The “3-G” Prayer

Goodness—“Heavenly Father, be good to Mike and Maria, provide a job/home/needs, etc.”

Grace—“Gracious Lord, show them grace, mercy, and peace, and that they would look to you.”

Gospel—“Holy Spirit, give them an opportunity to hear the gospel, and open their ears and hearts to believe.”

One other excellent way of praying for people is to pray Scripture. For example, 1 Corinthians 8:6—

“God, help Maria know that there is one God and that you have provided her with all things; and help her know and trust in Jesus as her one Lord; and help her to know him as her provider of all things, not only for this life but for the life to come; help her to trust Jesus for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.”

As you read your Bible or spend time in the curriculum each day, be attentive to verses that stand out as something to pray for someone. Practice praying over people this way in your group each week.

Begin your list of names on the page provided in Appendix A. Keep track of this over the time your Disciplemaking Group meets, and expect God to open doors for you to share the gospel with them!

The other 2 prayers in *The Missional Big 3* are (1) for the nations, and (2) for workers for the harvest. Here are some examples of how to pray in those key areas:

Praying for the nations (Revelation 5:9; 7:9)

- missionaries you know
- a country you are drawn to
- an unreached people group

Praying for workers for the harvest (Matthew 9:36-38)

- disciples to go and make disciples cross-culturally
- your own heart to be awakened to the needs of those around you
- opportunities to help others go

BECOMING A DISCIPLE

Over the months ahead you have the chance to integrate these spiritual disciplines into your life. You have an opportunity to move towards Christ and build habits that can help you grow for the rest of your life. Commit to this process and let your fellow group members support, challenge, and encourage you as you seek to grow as a disciple who will make other disciples.

Make the decision to commit to allowing God to change you this next year. Commit to doing the work and finishing strong. Commit to starting your own group a year from now where you will teach others what you have been learning. Commit to following Jesus with more discipline and focus than you ever have before.

Commit to becoming a disciple who makes disciples!

If you need help to know who or what to pray for, we can provide you a list of missionaries we support, countries we are involved in, and people groups we are actively working with. Email dgroups@austinridge.org and we'll provide you with whatever you need! Also check out joshuaproject.net to learn about unreached people groups and nations.

MEETING NOTES

Here are a few specifics to accomplish in this first meeting:

- ☐ Spend time talking about the spiritual disciplines that are explained.
- ☐ Decide how your group wants to approach personal daily time in the Bible.
- ☐ Do you want to read a book of the Bible together?
- ☐ Do you want to do one of the reading challenges?
- ☐ Emphasize the importance of Scripture memory.
- ☐ Begin building your list of people to pray for who don't know Jesus.
- ☐ Practice praying the *Missional Big 3* together.

If these disciplines are not already a part of your routine, you are in good company! Don't be afraid to be honest with your group about areas that are new and are going to stretch you as well.

Next week, you will each begin to share more about yourself. It may take more than one meeting to get through everyone's Lifeline, Tombstone, and Eulogy exercises.



MEMORIZE
Hebrews
10:24

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Disciplemaking is a life-on-life process that helps you move towards Jesus. As you take part, you are becoming more like him. It never ends until this life is over, and this transformation happens best in community.

There are three exercises we will use to help you get to know each other: the Lifeline, the Tombstone, and the Eulogy. Each helps you unpack the journey you have been on up to now and look ahead to where you want to go. Follow the instructions for each exercise and prepare to share with each other in your next group meeting.

EXERCISE 1: Lifeline

The Lifeline Exercise is designed to help your group get to know each other. It allows you to give each other a brief look at the events, relationships, hobbies, and other key ingredients that make you a unique contributor to this group. A key part of this exercise is integrating your faith story—how you came to know and follow Jesus—into key events and the people who helped shape you.

Overall Structure of Your Story

My life before Jesus

For some, this section may be short if you put your trust in Christ for the forgiveness of your sin as a child; for others, it will be much longer. Don't try to impress your group. Tell YOUR story!

Questions to think about:

- How did you come to realize that your sin separated you from Christ and that you needed a Savior?
- What influences (church, people, experiences) shaped you during this time?

How I met Jesus

This may be matter-of-fact for some, while for others it may be a long and winding tale. Tell YOUR story!

Questions to think about:

- Who did Jesus use to teach you the truth of the gospel?
- Can you point to a specific time that you put your trust in Christ, or is your story more of a process of coming to know him during a season of your life?

My life since I trusted Jesus

Faithfulness, obedience, trying, and failing are a part of the story of every Christ-follower. Try to highlight the high and low points to show how Jesus is continuing to shape who you are.

- What current struggles are you entrusting to Jesus?
- How have you seen Jesus use you in your everyday life (work, home, hobbies, etc.)?
- What dreams and goals do you have that are only possible if Jesus “shows up”?

Key parts of your story

Throughout all three sections think about:

Who were the key people (good/bad, positive/negative, family/friends) in your life who made an impact during each section?

What were you involved in—hobbies, career(s), education, etc.—that helped shape you during each section?

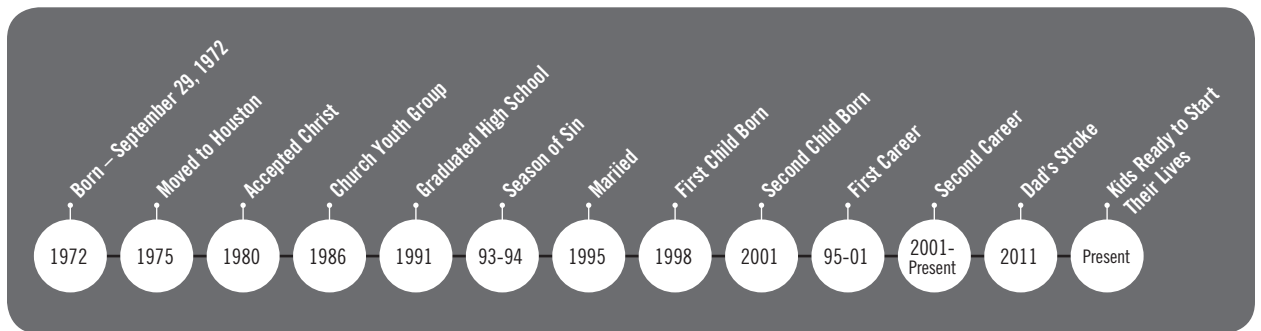
As it relates to both the “who” and the “what,” think about and highlight the high points and low points. Remember, God uses it all, and all of it has brought you to where you are now in life and in faith.

The goal of this exercise is not to impress your group. The goal is to tell the story of what God has done in your life. No two stories are the same, and all reveal the glory of God.

Visual of your story

There is no right or wrong way to represent your lifeline visually. Charts, timelines, paragraphs, and pictures are all great ways to do it. Just as the story is your story, let the lifeline be a reflection of your personality.

Here is an example of a Lifeline to help you get started.



Use the space below to create your Lifeline and/or add notes for telling the group your story.

EXERCISE 2: Tombstone

Tombstones are often interesting and revealing markers about a person's life. Usually, what's written on a tombstone is a summary thought that someone has of the deceased and how the life was lived. Unfortunately, for the deceased, many times they do not have a choice in what is written upon the tombstone. Sometimes what is written is very positive, while other times it can be downright insulting.

To complete this exercise:

- Imagine that you have died.
- Think of three friends who know you well and write their names on a piece of paper.
- Write out what you think your three friends would put on your tombstone.

The purpose of this exercise is to think about where your life is right now. This will naturally lead you to the eulogy, which helps you decide where you want to be.

Use the space below to write out what each friend would say.

Friend 1:

Friend 2:

Friend 3:

EXERCISE 3: Eulogy

A eulogy is a speech at a funeral or memorial service. Most of the time it is given by someone who was close to the deceased and has many positive things to say about his or her life and accomplishments. Also, eulogies give people an idea of what kind of person the deceased was and the positive qualities he or she showed to others.

The purpose of this exercise is to get you to see where you want to be in the future. Write what you want someone to say about you when your life is done.

Use the space below to write out what you hope would be read at your funeral.

MEETING PREP

Once you have completed all three exercises, think about where you have been, where you are, and where you want to go. What things do you need to do or change to get there? Come to your group meeting this week prepared to share these exercises and the things you want to do and change.

MEETING NOTES

Starting Your Time

1. Where did you read in your personal time in the Word this week? What did you learn? If you're doing the reading challenge, share your notes from the week.
2. Pray the *Missional Big 3*. Be sure to share any stories of interactions with people on your list this past week.

Discussion

Share your Lifeline, Tombstone, and Eulogy with each other.

Application and Accountability

1. What are one or two things the group can hold you accountable for this week?
 2. How can you pray for each other this week?
-

