



THE DISCIPLESHIP TOOL THE FIVE BEHAVIORS OF A DISCIPLE

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Introduction: Becoming Who You Were Created to Be

We live in a world obsessed with doing. Our calendars are full, our inboxes never empty, and our identities often feel tied to what we achieve or produce. Even in ministry and leadership, it's easy to default to action before reflection—to ask, “What should I do?” rather than “Who am I becoming?” But Jesus never began with the *what*; He always started with the *who*.

That's why discipleship is so essential.

Discipleship is not just a church program, a class, or a season—it's the very heartbeat of what it means to follow Jesus. It's about transformation, not just information. It's the lifelong process of becoming more like Christ in every area of life: our relationships, our leadership, our decision-making, our character, and our calling.

This tool you hold in your hands is more than a framework or an assessment. It's a mirror—meant to reflect not just what you're doing but who you're becoming. It's also a roadmap, guiding you step-by-step into deeper devotion, fuller obedience, and a life that looks increasingly like Jesus.

Too often, we complicate what it means to be a disciple. But the way of Jesus, though costly, is clear. He invites us not into shallow belief, but into radical transformation.

In Matthew 28:18–20, known as the Great Commission, Jesus gave His final marching orders to the Church:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (ESV)

This command wasn't given only to pastors or missionaries. It was given to every follower of Jesus. Making disciples begins with *being* one.

This resource is built around five behaviors that describe what a fully devoted follower of Jesus *does*—but more importantly, who they are *becoming*. These five behaviors—**Connect, Grow, Serve, Pray, and Give**—aren't random spiritual checkboxes. They are the natural outworking of a transformed life. They reflect the heart of a disciple who walks daily with Jesus, lives for His mission, and shapes the world around them through the power of the Gospel.

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As you walk through this guide, take time to reflect. Be honest. Let the Holy Spirit speak. And ask God to form in you what the world cannot: the character, humility, boldness, and joy of a fully devoted disciple.

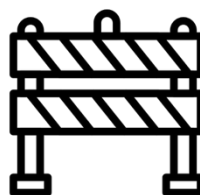
Because you weren't made to simply *believe* in Jesus—you were made to *become* like Him. Let's become that—together.

DISCIPLESHIP BARRIERS

What's Holding You Back?

- **"I don't know how."**

Sometimes discipleship feels like being dropped in the middle of a new city without a map. You're willing to go, but you're not sure where to start or which way to turn. The good news is you don't have to have it all figured out before you begin. Every disciple Jesus ever called started with one step of obedience and trusted Him to lead the rest of the way.



- **"I've never seen it modeled."**

For some, the idea of discipleship is hard to picture because no one has ever walked it out with them. Maybe you've had faithful church experiences but never had someone take you by the hand and show you what it looks like to follow Jesus daily. That's why God gives us the Church—so we can see and learn from each other's faith, up close and personal.

- **"I'm not sure I'm ready."**

We all feel that way at times. Maybe you think you're too young in the faith, too busy, or too broken to help someone else. But readiness in the Kingdom isn't about having it all together—it's about being willing. Jesus didn't call the most polished or qualified; He called fishermen, tax collectors, and ordinary people who simply said "yes."

- **"I'm afraid of what it might cost."**

Following Jesus will cost you something—your time, your comfort, maybe even some relationships. But here's the truth: it will never cost you more than it's worth. Every sacrifice we make for Christ is met with something far greater in return—His presence, His joy, and the kind of life that only comes from walking with Him.

If that's you, know this: you are not alone—and you are not disqualified. God doesn't call the already-devoted. He makes people devoted as they follow Him.

Discipleship, at its core, is a journey of becoming. And becoming always begins with surrender.

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The Goal

To become a Fully Devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

How do we know?

To the extent that the Five Behaviors of a Disciple are being lived out.

THE FIVE BEHAVIORS



Connect: We are meant to do life together! Finding the full life God intends for us happens when we build relationships with others. This provides a way for you to connect to other believers, deepen your relationships and find your place to belong.



Grow: There are always new things to discover about your relationship with God. Whether you are a just beginning your walk with the Lord or if you've been a believer for many years, we can continue to grow in our faith and learn more about our Heavenly Father.



Serve: No matter how big, or how small the task, serving reaches people with the love of Christ. There are opportunities to serve others in the local church, ministries, your community, and even abroad. When you meet the needs of others, you reflect God's love and grow toward becoming fully devoted in Christ.



Pray: We believe in the power of prayer and the God who hears and answers. Just as you get to know another person through conversations, you also grow closer to the Lord by spending time and talking with Him.



Give: One of the ways we show our love for God is through sacrificially giving our time, our talents, and our treasure. When we trust God with our finances, we believe He will meet our needs and use our generosity to impact others with the love of Christ and the message of hope.



A Vision for Developing Fully Devoted Followers of Jesus

Becoming Fully Devoted

In every sphere of leadership—whether in ministry, business, or family—there exists a quiet, consistent tension between settling for *good enough* and pressing forward toward *wholehearted excellence*. Nowhere is this tension more critical than in spiritual leadership.

Jesus never called His disciples to mediocrity. He didn't say, "Attend when you can," or "Serve when it's convenient." He said things like:

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." — Luke 9:23 (ESV)

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." — Matthew 22:37 (ESV)

There is no halfway in the Kingdom. Discipleship is not casual. It's a call to complete surrender, full devotion, and consistent obedience. A disciple of Jesus isn't just a believer. A disciple is a *becomer*. Someone being daily formed into the image of Christ and living that transformation out loud in a broken world.

So what does *fully devoted* actually look like?

We believe it comes to life through **five essential spiritual behaviors**—practices that don't stand alone, but together form a life of godliness, influence, and impact. These are not religious checkboxes or one-time commitments.

They are lifelong patterns, spiritual habits of grace, and tangible expressions of a heart surrendered to Christ:

- **Connect** — with God, the Church, and the Community
- **Grow** — spiritually, intellectually, and relationally
- **Serve** — using your gifts for God's mission and others' good
- **Pray** — cultivating a dependent and intimate relationship with God
- **Give** — of your time, talent, and treasure with Kingdom generosity

FIVE ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL BEHAVIORS

1. CONNECT — To God, to the Church, to the Community



Big Idea:

We were created for connection—with God and with others. Isolation stifles spiritual growth, but intentional connection

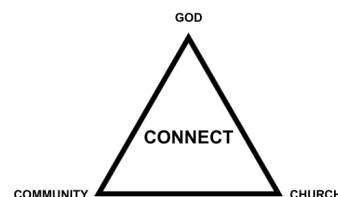


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fosters life-changing discipleship.

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together... but encouraging one another.” - Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV)

Why It Matters:

- God designed us for relationship (Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 12).
- Biblical community provides encouragement, accountability, correction, and mission.
- Loneliness, busyness, and independence are spiritual threats in today’s culture.

Strategic Emphases:

1. Connect to God – through worship, Scripture, communion, baptism, and personal devotions.
2. Connect to the Church – by joining a group, becoming a member, engaging in classes, and receiving pastoral care.
3. Connect to the Community – through neighborhood outreach, workplace witness, and gospel-driven city partnerships.

Application Questions:

- Are you consistently gathering in worship and small groups?
- Who are your spiritual encouragers and accountability partners?
- Where has God placed you to be a bridge for the gospel?

2. GROW — Spiritually, in Knowledge, and in Favor



Big Idea:

Discipleship is a lifelong journey of transformation.

We are continually shaped by God to become more like Jesus.



“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.” - Luke 2:52 (ESV)

Why It Matters:

- Spiritual growth is not automatic—it requires intention (Hebrews 5:12–14).
- Maturity comes through renewing the mind, shaping the heart, and obeying the truth (Romans 12:1–2).
- Growth fosters wisdom, influence, and Christlike character.

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Strategic Emphases:

1. Grow Spiritually – through regular practices like prayer, fasting, worship, solitude, and confession.
2. Grow in Knowledge – with intentional study: Bible overviews, theology cohorts, apologetics, and doctrine.
3. Grow in Favor – by living with integrity, building healthy relationships, and representing Christ in every sphere of influence.

Application Questions:

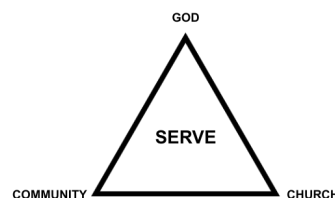
- What are you currently learning in God's Word?
- Where have you seen character development in the last season?
- Are others influenced by your growing walk with Christ?

3. SERVE — God, Church, and the Community



Big Idea:

Saved people serve people. Serving is how we live out the gospel and discover God's unique design for our lives.



“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” - 1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)

Why It Matters:

- Jesus modeled servant leadership (Mark 10:45).
- The Holy Spirit gives each believer spiritual gifts to strengthen the church (1 Corinthians 12:4–7).
- Serving refines our purpose and multiplies impact.

Strategic Emphases:

1. Serve God – through obedience, purity, worship, and a surrendered life (Romans 12:1).
2. Serve Others (Church) – using gifts in ministries such as hospitality, tech, kids, worship, and next-gen discipleship.
3. Serve the Community – locally and globally through school partnerships, outreach, justice efforts, and missions.

Application Questions:

- Where are you using your spiritual gifts?
- What needs around you is God calling you to meet?

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- Are you modeling Jesus through humble, joyful service?

4. PRAY — Cultivating a Lifestyle of Prayer

Big Idea:

Prayer is not a side ministry—it's the power behind all ministry. Prayer aligns us with God's heart and fuels our dependence on Him.



“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication... let your requests be made known to God.” - Philippians 4:6–7 (ESV)

Why It Matters:

- Jesus taught and modeled consistent, intimate prayer (Luke 5:16; Matthew 6:5–13).
- Prayer deepens dependence, builds spiritual power, and invites God's presence into our lives and ministries.

Strategic Emphases:

1. Spiritual Discipline – daily rhythms, retreats, journaling, and fasting.
2. Wisdom & Strength – intercession for leadership, discernment, and the global Church.
3. Corporate Dependence – prayer gatherings, ministry prayer teams, and prayer walking neighborhoods.

Application Questions:

- What does your current prayer life look like?
- Are you praying with and for others regularly?
- Do you rely on prayer for ministry or use it as a last resort?

5. GIVE — Time, Talent, and Treasure

Big Idea:

We are not owners—we're stewards. Generosity flows from a gospel-transformed heart and fuels the mission of God.

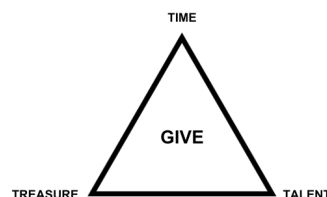


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“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart... for God loves a cheerful giver.” - 2 Corinthians 9:7 (ESV)

Why It Matters:

- Everything we have belongs to God (Psalm 24:1).
- Giving loosens the grip of materialism and expands the Kingdom (Matthew 6:19–24).
- Stewardship honors God and brings personal joy and eternal reward.

Strategic Emphases:

1. Time – managing your calendar around rest, relationships, and mission.
2. Talent – offering your skills, experience, and spiritual gifts for Kingdom use.
3. Treasure – giving regularly, sacrificially, and joyfully to the church and global missions.

Application Questions:

- How does your calendar reflect your values?
- Are you using your talents for something beyond yourself?
- What’s one step you can take toward greater generosity?

THE PITFALLS OF PARTIAL COMMITMENT

Why Engaging Only a Few Behaviors Limits True Discipleship

It’s possible to be spiritually active and yet spiritually incomplete.

In today’s church culture, many followers of Jesus are engaged in one or two areas of their spiritual life while neglecting others. The result? A lopsided discipleship that can feel busy but remain barren. You may look committed on the outside but lack the internal fruit of a life fully surrendered to Christ.

Being *partially devoted* isn’t the same as being *fully transformed*. True spiritual maturity doesn’t come from dabbling in a couple of behaviors—it comes from cultivating a lifestyle that embodies all five: Connect, Grow, Serve, Pray, and Give.

This is why we must be aware of what we call **the five limited discipleship identities**.

Each one represents someone living out *part* of their calling, but not the *whole*. These aren’t meant to shame—they’re meant to shine light. They help us assess where we might be stuck, imbalanced, or underdeveloped in our spiritual walk.

FIVE LIMITED DISCIPLESHIP IDENTITIES

Consider these five limited discipleship identities:

1. Consumer (*Connect + Grow*)

Enjoys learning and relationships but avoids contributing. Their impact is limited by inactivity.

This person loves being around others. They show up regularly, listen to sermons, attend classes, and even engage in small groups. But they stop short of stepping into service or sacrifice. They're growing in knowledge, but not in obedience.

Their danger lies in becoming a passive recipient rather than an active participant. Over time, they risk becoming spiritually bloated—full of knowledge but lacking movement.

“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” – James 1:22 (ESV)

2. Worker (*Grow + Serve*)

Productive and helpful, but disconnected from deeper community, prayer, and giving. Risks burnout.

Workers are often the first to say “yes.” They love helping, leading teams, and executing plans. But they often substitute activity for intimacy. Their devotion is seen in what they *do*, not who they *are becoming*. Without spiritual rest, deep connection, and prayerful dependence, they can burn out or serve with resentment. Their calendar is full, but their soul is dry.

“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” – Psalm 127:1 (ESV)

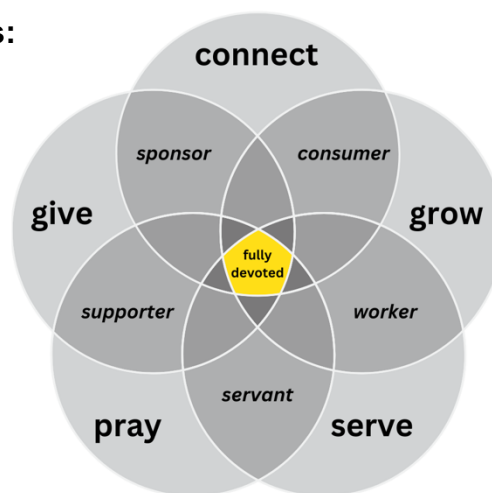


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3. **Servant (Serve + Pray)**

Faithful and prayerful but lacks spiritual growth or outward generosity. Impact may remain hidden.

This person has a humble heart and a quiet spirit. They may pray fervently and serve sacrificially. But without intentional growth in God's Word and an outward flow of generosity, their impact stays small or even unnoticed.

They're inwardly strong but lack external movement. Their life is rich in spirit but may miss opportunities to extend their influence or equip others.

"The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." – 2 Corinthians 9:6 (ESV)

4. **Supporter (Pray + Give)**

Sacrificial behind the scenes, but without serving or deep connection, may feel detached from real ministry.

Supporters are often generous—both financially and in prayer. They believe deeply in the mission and want to see the church flourish. But without hands-on engagement or relational connection, they can feel like observers instead of owners.

They're invested, but not integrated. Their giving and prayer make a difference, but they miss the joy and growth that come from walking closely with others in mission.

"Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." – 1 John 3:18 (ESV)

5. **Sponsor (Give + Connect)**

Resourceful and networked, but without spiritual growth and prayer, contributions may feel transactional.

Sponsors are connectors. They bring resources, relationships, and strategy to the table. They may fund ministry, open doors, and help mobilize others—but if they neglect prayer and spiritual growth, their impact is limited to the natural, not the supernatural.

Their support is valuable, but without spiritual depth, they risk turning discipleship into a partnership, rather than a personal journey of surrender.

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“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” – Mark 8:36 (ESV)

THE INVITATION BACK TO FULL DEVOTION

Each of these partial profiles reflects some level of spiritual maturity, but none of them alone leads to full transformation. Jesus modeled all five behaviors, and He invites us to do the same—not as a burden, but as the pathway to abundant life.

True spiritual leadership is not partial; it is *wholehearted*. It seeks:

- Connection — with God, the Church, and others
- Growth — through personal and spiritual formation
- Service — for the good of others and the glory of God
- Prayer — as a daily rhythm and power source
- Generosity — with everything God has entrusted to us

You were made to be more than a consumer, worker, servant, supporter, or sponsor. You were made to be **fully devoted**.

When these five behaviors converge, we become fully devoted disciples—the kind who transform communities, shape future leaders, and reflect Jesus to a watching world.

And the world needs more fully devoted followers—disciples who embody the full character of Christ and live with clarity, conviction, and purpose.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” – Matthew 22:37 (ESV)

Let this serve as a mirror—not to shame you, but to awaken you. Ask God where He is inviting you to grow. The journey of discipleship is one of progress, not perfection.

Wherever you are, the call is the same:

Come. Follow Jesus. Become like Him in every way.

Let’s lead the way. Let’s raise the bar. Let’s become fully devoted followers of Jesus—together.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Guided Conversations Toward “Fully Devoted”

CONNECT – To God, the Church, and the Community

1. **In what ways have you personally experienced the transforming power of biblical community?**
(Share a story where connection to others deepened your walk with Jesus.)
2. **What hinders you most from consistently engaging in worship or small group gatherings?**
(Is it time, fear, past wounds, or a sense of disconnection?)
3. **Who in your life encourages you spiritually—and who are you intentionally encouraging?**
(Discipleship flows both ways: we need both Pauls and Timothys.)
4. **How can your group become more intentional in helping each other “stir up love and good works” (Hebrews 10:24)?**
(Think practically: accountability, prayer partners, shared mission.)
5. **What would change in your life if you saw your neighborhood, workplace, or school as your mission field?**
(How is God calling you to be a relational bridge for the gospel?)

GROW – Spiritually, in Knowledge, and in Favor

1. **How would you describe the current health of your spiritual growth? Stagnant, surviving, or thriving? Why?**
(Be honest—growth requires awareness.)
2. **What’s one spiritual discipline you’ve neglected that God may be calling you to rediscover?**
(Bible study, fasting, memorization, Sabbath, etc.)
3. **What truths from God’s Word have most shaped your life in the past year?**
(Share a verse, concept, or doctrine that marked you.)
4. **In what ways do you feel equipped—or unequipped—to represent Christ in your daily environments?**
(Knowledge must translate to confidence in witness.)
5. **How do you know if you’re growing spiritually? What markers are most helpful for you?**
(Talk about fruit of the Spirit, character, humility, hunger for truth, etc.)

SERVE – God, Church, and the Community

1. **How are you currently using your gifts to serve others—and how do you feel about it?**
(Fulfilled, overwhelmed, unsure?)

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2. **What's one area in the church or community where you sense God nudging you to step in and help?**
(It may be something you've ignored or avoided.)
3. **How do you balance serving with being spiritually replenished?**
(Talk about rhythms of rest, margin, and boundaries.)
4. **What does Jesus' model of servant leadership (John 13, Mark 10:45) teach you about how you serve?**
(What mindset or motive needs to shift?)
5. **How can this group help one another discover, develop, and deploy our spiritual gifts for Kingdom impact?**
(Explore next steps like assessments, mentorship, or service days.)

PRAY – Cultivating a Lifestyle of Prayer

1. **What does your current prayer life reveal about your relationship with God?**
(Is it honest? Consistent? Routine? Desperate?)
2. **When have you most clearly experienced the power or peace of prayer?**
(Tell a story of answered prayer—or sustaining prayer.)
3. **What keeps you from praying more regularly or deeply?**
(Distractions, doubts, discipline?)
4. **How can we become a group that truly prays with and for one another?**
(Move beyond the “I’ll pray for you” and into “Let’s pray right now.”)
5. **If prayer is the engine of all ministry, how are we fueling our lives and leadership through it?**
(Where do we need to depend more and strategize less?)

GIVE – Time, Talent, and Treasure

1. **What comes to mind when you hear the word “generosity”?**
(Is it inspiring, intimidating, joyful, fearful?)
2. **In what ways are you stewarding your time for Kingdom impact? What needs to change?**
(Look at your calendar. Does it reflect your calling?)
3. **What's a skill, passion, or resource you have that you could give more intentionally for God's work?**
(Generosity isn't just financial—it's holistic.)
4. **How has giving shaped your faith journey personally?**
(Was there a season where giving stretched or transformed you?)
5. **What holds you back from giving more freely—of your money, margin, or ministry?**
(Fear, control, lack of trust, scarcity mindset?)