

North Church:  
Community Groups  
Discipleship Guide:  
7 Conversations

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## **Introduction to New Christian Discipleship**

The goal of this handbook is to lay out several conversations to have with a new Christian. Ideally this path is walked down in a Community Group as well as in a “1:1” relationship.

Jesus said, “...make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20a)

At North Church our mission is to see lives transformed by Jesus. By God’s grace North Church sees people become disciples of Jesus all the time. The Christian life begins with God’s invitation to save us from sin, death, and Satan through Jesus’ perfect life, death, and resurrection. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, we cannot help but want to know Him more, walk in His ways, and see other people transformed by the Gospel.

The Gospel of Jesus found in the Bible changes our life, and the truth and implications of the Gospel will give us much to repent of and provoke hundreds of questions.

### **The Journey**

Think about when you first believed in the Gospel, or when you first “got the Gospel” and dedicated your life to Jesus. What’s the first thing you remember about being a disciple of Jesus?

We were thankful to Jesus: that He saved us from sin, ourselves, gave us life with Him now and eternity to come, and we wanted to repent of our sin. In fact this is the essence of the Christian life. God saves us and we respond with our whole life as worshipful thanks to God. (Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 3:18)

Discipline someone is as simple and glorious as leading them in and to the Gospel all the time, and repenting all the time, becoming more and more like Jesus. We are disciples for life. Discipleship is the Christian life, discipling and being disciplined.

### **How to Do It**

Discipleship can be described as doing life together. A disciple is a learner, and what a disciple needs is someone to follow and learn from. Discipleship can look like a weekly meeting, one on one, but it should be more than just that. Ultimately we hope that discipleship takes place in the life of a community with someone taking point to mentor a new Christian, having some essential conversations about the Christian life.

Before we can begin to make disciples we need to know what a disciple is. We have four categories that are a “Description of a Disciples life.”

## A DESCRIPTION OF A DISCIPLE'S LIFE

- 1. Identity:** A disciple of Jesus finds their identity in Jesus and His work on our behalf. All of the Christian life flows out of who we are. Finding our identity in His story changes everything.
- 2. Worship:** A disciple of Jesus worships God in and with all of their life. All of life is worship. We either worship God or idols, but we never stop worshipping. Idolatry is the root of all our sin.
- 3. Community:** A disciple of Jesus lives in community just as God lives in community as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 4. Mission:** A disciple of Jesus is sent on mission to see people transformed by the Gospel just as Jesus was sent by the Father.

We have put together seven conversations that coincide with the “Description of a Disciples Life.” These conversations can be held on a weekly basis with the person you are discipling.

More than likely, the person you are discipling is going to have a ton of questions. Feel free to say, “I don’t know, that’s a really good question. Let me get back to you on that.” You don’t need to be a Pastor to disciple someone, as long as you’re willing to track down some answers to help them.

### Identity

The first thing we need in the Christian life is to know who we are.

Every person has the same “base line” identity. We all bear the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). But because of sin this image has been distorted. When we are saved from our sin we are given a new identity. We are no longer just image bearers of God; we become children of God. “But to all who did receive Him (Jesus), who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God...” (John 1:12)

All the Christian life flows out of our identity in Jesus. Here are some conversations to help someone understand their identity in Christ.

## Conversation 1: Testimony

Our testimonies are one of the most powerful witnesses to the truth of the Gospel.

### Task:

The first thing you should do as you begin to disciple someone is to hear the story of how they became a Christian, what Jesus has saved them from, and what He has put on their heart to do.

Each of you write down your stories, answering these questions:

1. When and how did you become a Christian?
2. What did God save you from?
3. What do you want Him to do in your life and where do you need to grow?

Then meet up and share your stories.

Be listening for key elements of the Gospel.

- We are created for God and by God.
- We fall short and sin.
- We need forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Jesus is God and forgives sin through his death on the cross.
- We need to repent of sin and trust in Jesus through faith.
- Jesus gives new life with new desires.

Be sure to ask questions about their understanding of the Gospel, especially if any of these elements are missing. We don't expect theological precision from a new Christian but these elements need to be understood clearly.

Questions to ask:

1. When you think about who you are, what pops in your head? (Point the new believer to their identity in Christ)
2. What is the most exciting part about being a Christian to you right now?
3. Have you shared your testimony with any friends or family yet?
4. Do you have any fears about giving your testimony?

### **Conversation 2: Bible**

Christian identity comes from finding our place in God's story. History really is His story. God's story is revealed to us in the Bible and therefore we want to get to know the Bible.

As we start walking with Jesus, we start reading the Bible more. God most clearly speaks to us through scripture. Understanding the Bible is a process that will take the rest of our lives, but studying in community is very helpful. It is in Scripture that we find out who God is and who we are.

### **Task:**

- First, make sure that the person you are discipling has a good Bible. We highly recommend the New Revised Standard Version. The NSRV Study Bible is a great gift to someone starting to read the Bible.
- Second, pick out one of the Gospels. Begin to read through it together and meet to discuss it. Reading and discussing the Bible should be a fluid part of walking together and become a mainstay throughout your time together.
- A New Testament guide is very helpful for someone starting to read the Bible and answers many common questions.

## Conversation 2: Bible (Continued)

Questions to ask:

1. How are you doing believing the Bible is God's word?
2. What questions about the Bible can I try and help you with?

### Worship

Worship is much more than what we do on Sundays; it is why we were created. Sin is not ceasing to worship, but the worship of idols instead of Jesus, the true God. (Romans 1:20-28)

### Conversation 3: Continuous Worship

Worship is much more than what we do on Sundays; it is why we were created. Sin is not ceasing to worship, but the worship of idols instead of Jesus, the true God. (Romans 1:20-28)

When we become Christians we want to worship Jesus because He is holy and has saved us from Satan, sin, and death.

All of life is worship. We may worship God, things, people, experiences, or ourselves, but we never stop worshipping. This is why Paul says, "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

But worshipping God is not just what we rightly do as we walk with Him; it is also how we are transformed to be more like Jesus.

"And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Read these verses together to discuss:

- Read Romans 1:20-28
- Read Jeremiah 2:11-13
- Read Romans 12:1-2

### Conversation 3: Continuous Worship (Continued)

Questions to ask:

- How does the idea that we never stop worshipping change the way you view your life?
- What does idolatry look like in your life?
- How do you deal with your sin / idolatry?

### Conversation 4: Prayer

God talks to us primarily through His word, the Bible; we talk to God through prayer. Scripture is full of promises and truth about prayer. The key to understanding prayer is to pray like Jesus. Jesus talks to the Father as a son talks to his dad; this is the key to not over spiritualizing prayer and to having humble confidence in prayer.

**Task:**

1. Be sure to pray with the person you are discipling on a regular basis. Opening and closing
2. your times together in prayer is something to consider.
3. Read these verses together to discuss prayer.
  - Matthew 6:5-15
  - John 14:13-14
  - James 1:5

Questions to ask:

- What does prayer look like in your life?
- Do you find it hard to pray? If so why do you think that is?
- How can I pray for you this week?

## **Community**

As image bearers of God (Genesis 1:26), we are made to be in community just as God is in community. Note the “us” in Genesis 1:26. Even in the perfect world Adam was created in, the one thing that was not good was for man to be alone. (Genesis 2:18)

### **Conversation 5: Walking in Community**

When we become Christians we get a new identity individually, as children of God, and we get a new identity corporately, as we are brought into God’s family-the church.

#### **Task:**

1. Read and discuss Acts 2:37-47.
2. Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. (There are no “lone ranger” Christians. We are all part of the body and when one part is missing the whole body suffers.)
3. Explain how North Church Community Groups seek to embody these texts.

#### Questions to ask:

- What does it look like for you to be in community?
- Can I help you get into a Community Group? (If they aren’t in one already.)

### **Conversation 6: Walking in the Light**

We need the Gospel all the time because we sin. Learning what to do with sin as a new Christian is really important.

One of the first conversations a new Christian needs to have is about how God forgives past sin before we were Christians and future sin we commit after we become Christians.

**Task:**

1. Read 1 John 1:5-10 and prepare to explain what it looks like to “walk in the light as He is in the light” and how “if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
2. True fellowship with God and with one another comes from “walking in light”—being honest about where we are at in our walk with God, knowing that we are forgiven and that we can be cleansed from our sin.
3. Meet up to read through 1 John 1:5-10 and to discuss this concept.

**Questions to ask:**

- (Be sure to give examples and answers from your life. How confessing sin to others helped bring freedom and cleansing. Walking in the light yourself is the best way to teach this concept.)
- How are you doing with believing that God forgives you? What do you do after you are convicted of sin?
- What does it look like for you to walk in the light in community?

**Mission**

As image bearers of God we are sent on a mission-just like God. The Father sent the Son on a rescue mission for us, and the Father sent the Holy Spirit to help us and glorify Him.

The woman at the well in John 4:1-26 can't help but tell her friends, family, and neighbors about Jesus after meeting and talking to Him. In the same way, we get to share the good news about Jesus with everyone in hope that they too will give Him their sin and experience new life in Him.

## Conversation 7: Evangelism

“Many Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’” (John 5: 39)

One of the very first things that will happen after someone becomes a Christian will be evangelism. Just like the woman at the well after someone encounters Jesus they will want to go back to his or her friends, telling them the good news about Jesus.

### Task:

1. Share some examples of how you have shared your faith with friends and family.
2. Explain: Successful evangelism is taking the initiative to share the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results up to God.

### Questions to ask:

- Do you have friends or family that don’t know Jesus yet?
- What do you think it will look like to talk to them about what He has done in your life?
- What are some of your fears about sharing your faith?