



ROCKHARBOR

discipleship

Values of Discipleship

- ▶ A relationship with another that challenges with accountability, commitment and love.
- ▶ A well rounded understanding of the Word of God and it's role in our lives.
- ▶ A format of applicable teaching that is able to be passed on to others.
- ▶ The desire to show others **how** to do the ministry of Jesus in our every day lives.
- ▶ An understanding of the impact of discipleship and desire to reproduce. (Matthew 28:20)

Icon Legend



prepare

Leader to Prepare: Indicates those areas to be covered during this session. It highlights the learning objectives and ways to prepare for each group meeting.



memorize

Memorize: Indicates those concepts, topics, and so forth that need to be committed to memory. This may include memorizing scripture, books of the bible, or other important information.



prayer

Prayer: Indicates various ways to pray for your group through journaling, praying scripture, praying for each other both in and away from the group.



journal

Journal Entry: Indicates those materials and/or information the group may find beneficial to enter into their discipleship journals .



resource

Resources: Identifies various books, articles, or creative pictures that help illustrate or elaborate on a particular idea being presented. These resources are optional.



prepare

Objectives for today

- **Open your time in prayer.**
- **Present an overview of Discipleship-see guidelines**
- **Discuss prayer**
- **Discuss accountability**
- **Print off and assign Life Graph to complete for following week**
- **Exchange phone #'s and names of family**

Guidelines

Before we enter into this together there are a few things that we have found to be helpful to discuss and review at the first meeting of a Discipleship group. We encourage you to talk through these with your group, (without being legalistic) and come to a verbal agreement for the group's conduct. Some may seem basic or obvious, but take time to address them just the same.

- **Discipleship is growth and/or life change in relationship with Christ and others, not just an academic or classroom learning experience.** There is content that needs to be taught, however, if the relationships are not fostered and maintained no one will hear the content.
 - Leader: Consider asking the following questions:
 - *“Why do you believe that discipleship involves their relationships with others in Christ?”*
 - *The late Ray Ortlund, discipler to many has been quoted as saying, “Discipleship involves, ‘Life rubbing off on life.’ What do you think this means?”*
- **BE ON TIME!** Do a little more than just encourage your people to be on time, push them hard on this one. Wait, you mean you have trouble being on time as well?... Hmmm!... Looks like you will have

leaders' note

It is helpful to read through the entire lesson in preparation. This allows you to map out a time line for the day's lesson. Knowing where the transitions lie will help guide the group clearly from section to section and week to week.

to lead by example.

- Punctuality in group meetings is a small and significant symbol of each members' commitment to the group and to each other.
 - Discuss Luke 16:10 - "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."
 - Ask your group: "What does this have to do with discipleship?"
 - This small, physical act of being a good steward of the group's time is a message of your members' commitment and faithfulness to each other and their discipleship to Christ.
- As stated earlier, the leader will need to **LEAD BY EXAMPLE**.
- **Honesty, Vulnerability and Confidentiality.** As the leader, you will be expected to share from a place of honesty and vulnerability. Let your group see the struggles and celebrations of your life's experiences. Creating this atmosphere will hopefully and prayerfully open the door to your group members' hearts and souls. This once again involves **LEADING BY EXAMPLE**, that could result in setting the tone for the rest of your group meetings. When you hear a person you respect share from a place of vulnerability an environment of trust is built. As the group fosters a sense of vulnerability a mutual trust is created. A by-product of mutual trust is a group's desire to protect the individuals of the group and the sensitive information they have shared. The members are able to confide in one another knowing that what has been shared will remain within the group or *confidential!*
- **Denominational differences.** Steer clear from teaching "the way my church does things". Following God has many righteous and orthodox expressions. Be sensitive of the normal practice of others and their respective churches.
 - The leader should communicate to the group that denominational differences do not matter,

Breaking the Ice...

To facilitate group cohesiveness eating together has proven to be a great way to build relationships.

Consider doing a meal together during your first few meetings to "break the ice."

Once relationships form, you may also want to do a meal together every 4-6 meetings to reconnect on with them on things going on in their lives.

instead what should be emphasized are that the essentials of Christianity are agreed upon.

- Discuss the core beliefs of Christianity.
- **Strength in continuity.** If people begin to compromise attendance to your group meetings the strength of the group can wane considerably.
- **Stress attendance.**
 - As stated in “Be on time,” your group’s attendance is a symbolic act of their commitment to all the members of the group.
 - Inconsistent attendance compromises group intimacy.
- **Pray for each other’s needs.** Make sure that each member of the group has each others’ contact information. If you are in a group with married people, ask them for the names of their respective spouses and their children so that you can pray for them.
 - By doing this the group will be establishing a foundation of active ministry between each other in their lives.
- **Expectation of memorizing Scripture.** Let people know up front that they will be expected to memorize scripture. When given scripture to memorize each member of your group is expected to recite it out loud at the following meeting.
 - Ask your group why they think learning, internalizing, and committing God’s Word to memory is important.
- **Worship together.** Worship takes many forms: musical, service/volunteer opportunities, reading of Psalms together, etc. Ask your group what are other forms of “worshipping together” looks like.
- **Encourage contact outside of meeting times.** This will depend on whether there are wives, husbands, and children involved in our lives. Trust me, the priority needs to be family first. Consider a sim-

ple phone call, email, card, or text. Letting another group member know you have been thinking of them during the week is incredibly encouraging.

Accountability

Traditionally, accountability has carried many different expressions. Some groups like to come to a consensus on what questions they would like to ask each other on a weekly basis. Other groups prefer a straightforward style of asking the tough questions that no one else would ask in a public setting. A tool for building accountability are the questions on the **“Accountability Questions” on page 1.7** of the curricula. The questions are a good starting point for fostering accountability within your discipleship group.

Distribute the “Accountability Questions” to your group and ask them to keep them with their journals. Walk them through the questions, ask them to take a few minutes and respond to those questions in writing.

Once they have done that, ask the group if there are particular questions that they want to be asked regularly. Allow the group to share their responses. Encourage each group member to write down the responses of the others as a way of remembering what others have shared.

During the next few weeks, provide a time for group members to ask each other the questions they stated during the first week. Spend time actively listening and attentively praying for one another.

Remember, **trust is earned**. It often takes time for an individual to experience the benefits and positive outcome of this practice of accountability and prayer. As the weeks go on be attentive to the fact that the group members may have new questions arise or they may desire to change the questions they want to be asked. **Change is to be expected, encourage group members to pay close attention to those issues most current in their lives and formulate a focus for accountability based on those issues.**



journal

Life Graph

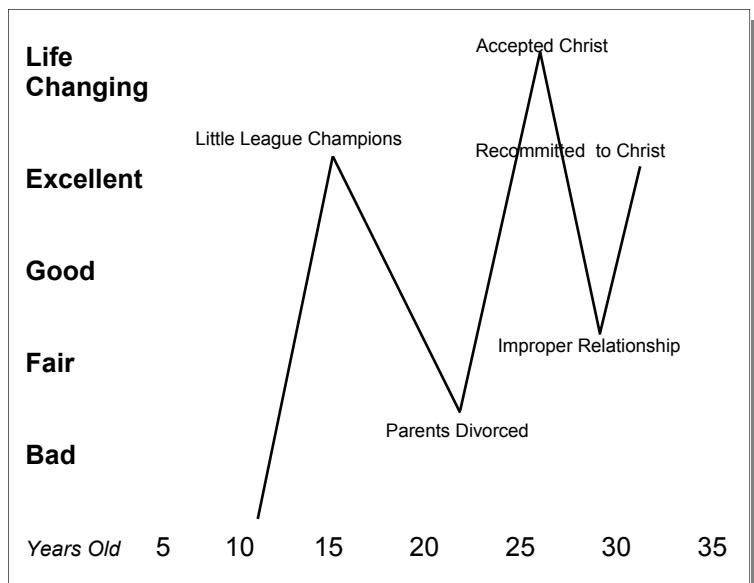
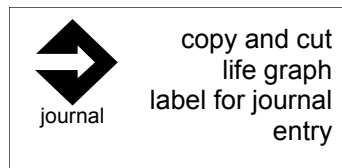
At the beginning of our time we talked about discipleship being a relationship not just a classroom. In an attempt to further foster safe and honest relationships among the group members, we have included a tool called a “Life Graph”. A Life Graph is a creative way to share your story (i.e., your testimony). Completing and sharing the Life Graph helps individuals reveal who they are now and some significant points in their life history. This exercise provides a simple snapshot, from the past to present. Keep in mind that this exercise can be an intense exercise for some. However, it can also be freeing. During the sharing of Life Graphs, make certain to practice the principles of Active Listening (see **leader’s note** in the margin). In light of the content that may be shared from a life graph, it is VERY important that confidentiality be respected and practiced within the group and among its members.

leader’s note

active listening

1. desire to be other-directed, rather than to project one's own feelings and ideas onto the other.
2. desire to be non-defensive, rather than to protect the self. when the self is being protected, it is difficult to focus on another person.
3. desire to imagine the roles, perspectives, or experiences of the other, rather than assuming they are the same as one's own.
4. desire to listen as a receiver, not as a critic, and desire to understand the other person rather than to achieve either agreement from or change in that person.

A Life Graph is easy to complete. Think about particularly important events you have experienced in life. Plot the events on the graph by aligning the age (located on the bottom of the graph) at which the event occurred with the emotional impact (located on the left side of the graph) the event had on your life. Pencil in on the graph a short description of the particular life events being included on your Life Graph. Draw a line graph connecting the listed events.



Conclusion:

- Remind your group to be on time for next week.
- Remind your people that the group will begin to share their life graphs next week. Work out a schedule before leaving so each member knows which week they will be sharing. **As the discipler you need to lead the way and do your Life Graph first. This is to model to them how it is to be done.**
- Remind the group to set aside some time this week to consider the topics or principles discussed today and to pray for each member of the group.
- Close in prayer.

The Way of the Heart by Henri Nouwen
The Cost of Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
The Divine Conspiracy:
Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God
 By Dallas Willard, Richard J. Foster



resource

Important

The duration of the time that you will spend on the Life Graphs depends on how many people are in your discipleship group.

You should set aside one session of the group per Life Graph i.e., if there are 4 people in your group including yourself it should take you 4 weeks to get through it. Give yourself plenty of room to listen and ask questions.

If the discussion of the Life Graph each week does not take the entire time ask the accountability questions discussed earlier in this session.

Accountability Questions

Discipler to distribute to group

All members of your discipleship group should be asking these types of questions of each other periodically. This list is not all-inclusive, but rather provides some of the more frequent questions that need to be asked.

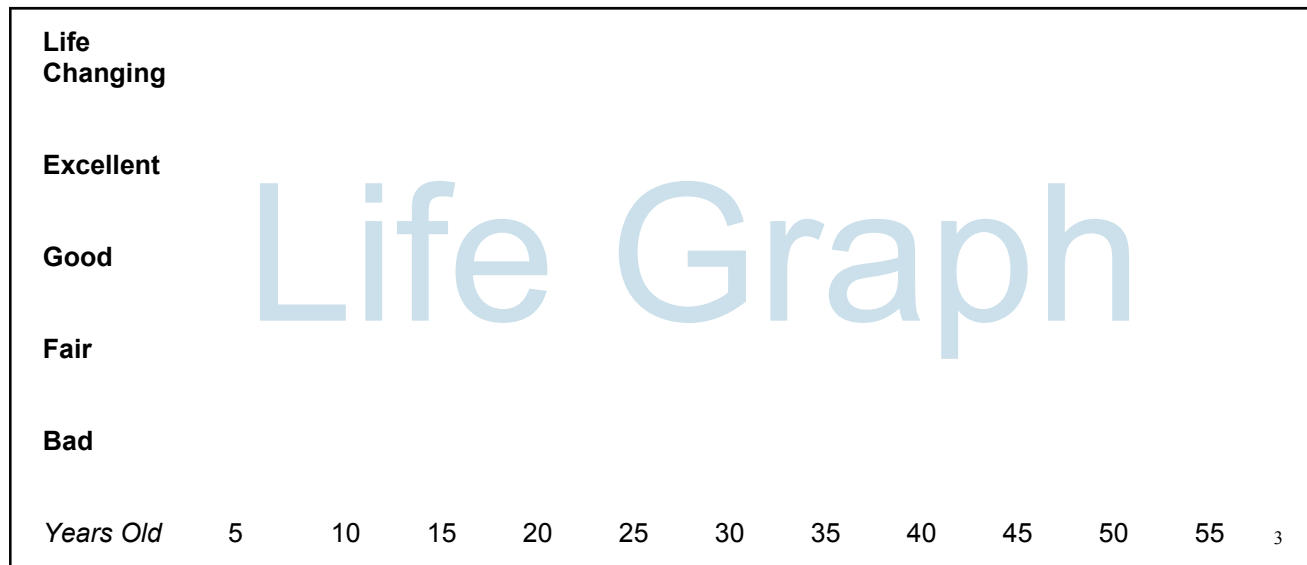
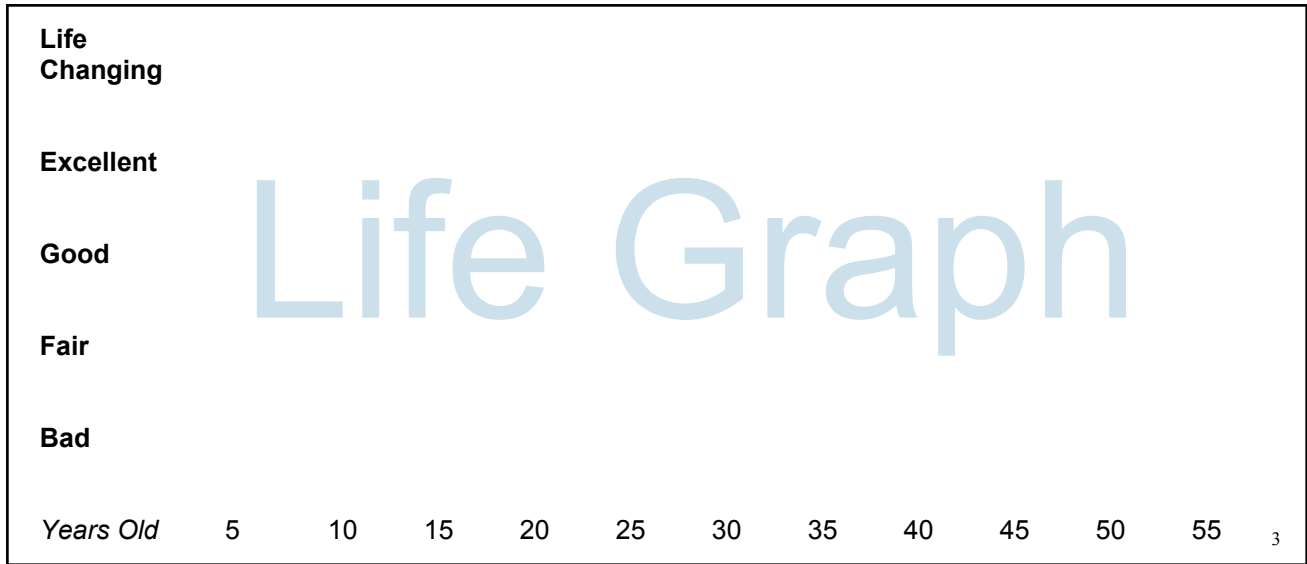
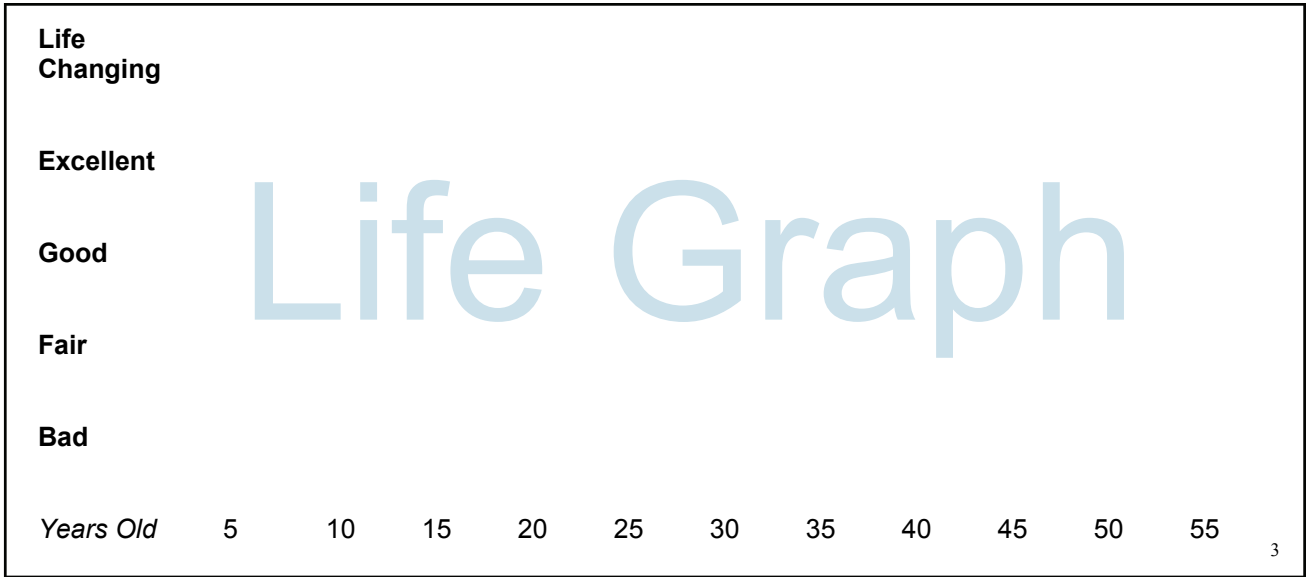
1. Have I been with a person of the opposite sex that could be viewed as compromising?
2. Have I read or looked at any sexually explicit material?
3. Have I expressed myself sexually in any inappropriate way?
4. Is there any sexual sin I committed?
5. Have I used course language or made inappropriate jokes?
6. Have I lost my temper and sinned with my anger?
7. Have I been intimate with my spouse and given priority to them?
8. Have I given quality and quantity time to my family?
9. Have I fulfilled the mandates of my vocation?
10. Have I lied or cheated in any way?
11. Have all of my financial dealings been filled with integrity?
12. Have I drank too much alcohol or consumed any illegal drugs?
 - a. How much have I used?
 - b. How often?
13. Have I spent time in the Word of God and prayer daily?
14. Have I achieved the goals I set in Bible study and prayer? What do I feel God has been saying to me, or has impressed upon me during this time?
15. Is there anything that might cause someone to think I was doing something sinful or unethical? (avoiding even the appearance of evil).
16. Are there any other areas I have been tempted in?
17. Are there any questions I don't want you to ask me? (If so, what are they?)
18. Is there any question above that I have lied to you about?
19. How is my heart with God?

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*Discipler may want to photocopy and distribute to disciples