



CANYONVIEW VINEYARD CHURCH

Growing disciples to reach the unreached

Discipleship Guidebook

Welcome!

The Bible guarantees that when you received **Jesus** as **Lord** of your life, you were **born again**, and you are part of the **family of God** (John 1:12).

Since you have made the decision to live for Christ, you will find that the direction and purpose of your life is changed. You are headed for heaven. You are a new person.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Generally, when a person accepts Christ, a strong desire is born in their heart to become a true disciple. "But how does this happen?" you may ask. The purpose of this study series is to help believers take steps of growth in their spiritual journey.

The subjects that we tackle in this guidebook will meet the basic needs of a follower of Jesus. Therefore, it's important that you consistently pursue a relationship with Jesus, and always be in discipleship. In fact, the best follow up is to see you take others through this guidebook for future years to come.

Being a follower of Jesus Christ is the best decision that we can make in life and the most wonderful thing that can happen to us. Many are the joys and great is the contentment that awaits you on the path of Christian experience.

Through the power of the **Holy Spirit**, and the support of your **cell group** and your **1x1 discipler**, you can come to a fuller understanding of the 'abundant life' Jesus talks about in John 10:10.

Therefore, set your course and stick to it. Decide, with all your heart and mind, that no matter what happens, you will always walk with Christ! Congratulations!

PRAYER REQUESTS AND ANSWERS

#	What was requested?	Date	How it was answered	Date

NOTE YOUR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS HERE

Questions and Concerns	Answers

LESSON 1

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

1. GOD LOVES US ALL, AND WANTS TO BLESS US.

God made us, and He is very good. (Psalm 100; Genesis 1:27, 28)

God loves all the people of the world. (John 3:16)

God wants to bless us and give us a fulfilled life. (Psalm 100; John 10:10)

How has He proved his love for us? __

_____ (John 15:13; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 5:2)

2. ALL HAVE SINNED, DISOBEYING GOD.

God gave us His statutes, testimonies and commandments that we may prosper and find success. (1 Kings 2:3; Psalm 1:1-3)

However, there is no one who is just—who has completely obeyed the commandments of God. (Romans 3:10-12)

Is there anyone besides Jesus who has never sinned? __

(Romans 3:23; Isaiah 64:6)

3. THE RESULT OF SIN IS SERIOUS.

What is the result of sin? _____ (Romans 6:23)

We know that everyone will die physically, but spiritual death is when a person is separated from God eternally in the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8)

Will everyone inherit the kingdom of God? _____ (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10)

After a person dies, they are judged—there is no second chance. (Hebrews 9:27)

4. GOD WANTS TO FORGIVE AND SAVE EVERYONE.

Who can have eternal life?

(John 3:16)

Who can be saved?

(Acts 2:21)

The Word of God says that Jesus will return. Why does it seem that Jesus is slow in returning?

—

(2 Peter 3:9)

5. NO ONE CAN BE SAVED BY DOING GOOD WORKS.

Salvation is an absolutely free gift from God, received by faith, and not by our own efforts. (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Romans 6:23; Titus 3:4-7)

No one will be justified or saved by obeying any law. To be justified, a person must have faith in whom? __ **(Galatians 2:16)**

6. ONLY JESUS CAN SAVE US.

What is the only name by which we can be saved? __

(Acts 4:10-12)

No one can come to the Father except by Jesus. He Himself said that He is the __, the __, and the __.

(John 14:6)

He who has the Son of God has eternal life. He who does not have the Son of God __ **(1 John 5:10-12)**

7. WE NEED TO REPENT OF OUR SINS TO BE FORGIVEN.

When John the Baptist began to preach, he preached about the importance of repentance. (Matthew 3:2). What was the first sermon that Jesus preached when He began His ministry? __

(Matthew 4:17)

Jesus came into the world to call sinners to __ **(Luke 5:32)**

What is the greatest cause of celebration in heaven? __

__

(Luke 15:7)

Repentance involves several steps:

First: Recognize your sin.

Second: Feel sadness over your sin--a deep remorse that comes from God, produced by the conviction of the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

Third: Turn your back on sin and decide with all your heart to flee from it.

Fourth: Make restitution when necessary. (Luke 19:8)

8. WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN JESUS IN ORDER TO BE SAVED.

What do we need to do to be saved?

_____ (Acts 16:30, 31)

It's not enough just to believe that God exists; even the demons believe in God and tremble (James 2:19). The Biblical word "believe" means to completely turn your life over to the Lord Jesus (John 1:12).

What is He preparing for those who believe in Him?

—

(John 14:1-3)

What will happen to those who don't believe in Jesus?

—

(John 3:18, 36)

Biblical "believing" in Jesus is not just believing that He exists. It involves receiving Him as Lord—the owner of your life. (John 1:12)

9. WE NEED TO CONFESS WITH OUR MOUTH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD.

To be saved, what do you need to confess with your mouth? _

—

_(Romans 10:9, 10)

You need to confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Son of God. (1John 4:15)

In turn, Jesus, the Son of God, will confess before the Father all those who have the courage to confess Him before other people. Whom will the Son of God deny before the Father? _

(Matthew 10:32-33)

10. THE BLOOD OF JESUS PURIFIES US FROM ALL SIN.

Jesus poured out His blood for the remission (forgiveness) of our sins. (Matthew 26:28)

Those who are justified from their sins by the blood of Jesus will be saved from the wrath of God. (Romans 5:9)

What is it that purifies us from all sin? __

—

(1 John 1:7)

11. GOD COMPLETELY FORGIVES YOUR SINS AND WILL NOT CONDEMN YOU FOR THEM.

Will Jesus remember our sins after we've been forgiven? __ **(Hebrews 8:12,**
Hebrews 10:17; Isaiah 43:25; Psalm 103:11-13)

What does the Bible say about people who are in Christ Jesus? __

—

(Romans 8:1)

12. YOU CAN BE CERTAIN ABOUT YOUR SALVATION.

He who believes in the Son of God will not be judged by Him. (John 3:18)

Do not forget that to "believe in Jesus" means to receive Him as Owner of your life, and to try to obey Him in everything. (Hebrews 5:8-9)

He who believes in the Son of God has __

(John 3:36) He has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)

Who can know if they have eternal life? __

—

(1 John 5:13)

Who is it that testifies with us that we are sons of God? __

—

(Romans 8:16)

If you sin once you're saved, you do not lose your salvation. Jesus is your advocate, because He has already paid the price of your sins. (1 John 2:1,2)

So, if you sin after you're saved, do you lose your salvation? __

(Romans 8:31-34)

When you received Jesus into your life, you became what? __

__ (John 1:12) In the natural life, when a child is rebellious, do they stop being their father's child? __ (The truth is, they could never stop being the child.) A rebellious child, however, does lose intimacy with their father.

When we sin, even though we don't lose our salvation, we put our fellowship and intimacy with God in jeopardy.

How can we restore our fellowship with God? __

When we confess our sin, can we be absolutely sure that God has forgiven us and that we are in full fellowship with Him? __ (1 John 1:9)

We were saved by grace through __ . (Ephesians 2:8) And afterwards we remain saved in the same way—by faith.

In the same way that we received Christ Jesus by faith, we should also live (or "walk in Him"), growing spiritually in __ . (Colossians 2:6,7)

As long as you persevere, having living faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will always remain saved! (Hebrews 10:35-39) If you have received Him as your Lord and Savior, you already have __ . (John 3:36; John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 5:12,13)

Do not accept the accusations of the evil one when he says that you don't have salvation. (Revelation 12:10,11)

Do not doubt the promises of God. The Word of God guarantees that you have eternal life. (John 3:16)

LESSON 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT TRANSFORMS YOUR LIFE

1. WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. (Matthew 28:19) He is the Comforter, who is always with us and in us. (John 14:16,17)

God the Father and the Son live in us through the Holy Spirit. (John 14:23)

2. WHO HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

God gives the Holy Spirit only to those who have become His children. (Galatians 4:6,7; Romans 8:9)

Who now lives in your body? __ **(1 Corinthians 6:19)**

___ All who are led by the Spirit of God are __ **(Romans 8:14-16)**

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU TO PRAY.

Every day, you should take time to be alone with God, to talk with Him. (Matthew 6:6)

Sometimes we don't know how to pray as we should. That's why the Holy Spirit helps us with our prayers. He intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. (Romans 8:26-27). We should always pray in the __ **(Ephesians 6:18)**

We should watch and pray so that we may not enter into __ **(Matthew 26:41)**

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD.

It is very important that you take time every day to meditate on the Word of God, so that you can learn the will of God for your life. God blesses those who obey

Him. When should you meditate on the Word of God? **(Joshua 1:8)**

Why should we keep the Word of God in our hearts? __

(Psalm 119:11)

We need more than bread (food) to live. We need every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4) Heaven and earth will pass away, but the Word of God will not __ **(Luke 21:33)**

The Word of God is the truth. What does the truth do for us? __

—

(John 8:31,32)

We shouldn't be just hearers of the Word of God, but also __

(James 1:22)

Sometimes we don't understand the Word of God. Who was sent by the Father to help teach us all the things that the Son taught us? __

(John 14:26)

5. SIN GRIEVES THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We shouldn't grieve, or quench, the Spirit of God with sin in our lives. (Ephesians 4:30-32; 1Thessalonians 5:19)

Sin gets in the way of our relationship with God. (Isaiah 59:1-2)

Does God forgive the person who confesses his sin? __ **(Psalm 32:1-5)**

We should not hide our sin, but confess it in order to find __

(Proverbs 28:13)

We confess our sins to God to be forgiven. (1 John 1:9) However, sometimes in order to be *healed* of the problem, it is necessary to confess our sins to our spiritual leader (discipler, cell group leader, or another leader that our cell group leader might agree to) so that they may help us. (James 5:14-16, Hebrews 13:17)

You should have an attitude of humility in the presence of God, always asking that He purify your heart from all sin. (Psalm 139:23,24)

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US THE POWER NECESSARY TO HAVE VICTORY OVER SIN.

Without the power of the Holy Spirit, no one can be free from the power of sin. Our flesh is weak, and we do wrong things even though we don't want to.

In the same way, we don't even do the good things that we want to do. (Romans 7:18-20)

A person who is controlled by the flesh cannot please __ . **(Romans 8:8)**
A person who is controlled by the Spirit of God is free from the slavery of sin. (Romans 8:1,2,9-11)

In the Christian life, we depend on the Holy Spirit for everything, including victory over the power of sin.

We do not gain victory over sin by our own strength, but by __

__ . **(Zechariah 4:6)** So as not to satisfy the desires of your flesh, you must walk in __ . **(Galatians 5:16)**

A life controlled by the flesh results in much sin. (Galatians 5:19-21)

_____ What are the results of a life controlled by the Holy Spirit? __

_____ **(Galatians 5:22-23)**

7. YOU SHOULD BE FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT EVERY MOMENT.

We should not be spiritually asleep. Life is short, and we need to make the most of every moment, doing the will of God in our lives. The will of God is that we be full of _____ . **(Ephesians 5:14-18)**

8. YOU SHOULD BE A WITNESS OF JESUS BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We need the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses of Jesus. (Acts 1:8) We should not do anything for God without being clothed with

— . **(Luke 24:49)**

After the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they went out to proclaim the Word of God with — . **(Acts 4:31)**

The Apostle Paul didn't use his own wisdom and pretty words to convince people. He preached by the power of — . **(1 Corinthians 2:4, 5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5)**

Paul performed signs and wonders (miracles) by the power of — . **(Romans 15:18-20)**

Even Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit in order to evangelize, set people free, and preach. (Luke 4:18,19)

9. WE NEED THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ORDER TO DO THE WORK OF GOD.

We should be using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which God gives to each one of His children. Just as the human body needs all of its many parts in order to function correctly, so God gave different gifts to each one of us, who is a part of His Body. But the Spirit in each of us is the same. Each gift is necessary. (1 Corinthians 12:12-23)

Every child of God has one or more ministries, and all should use and develop their gifts for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. What are some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit? _

Romans 12:5-8) _ **(1 Corinthians 12:7-10;**

Every work should be done by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 7:21-23)

10. NOW IS THE TIME TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Our Heavenly Father knows how to give good gifts to His children. What will He give to His children if they ask Him?

(Luke 11:13)

To receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, ask the Father. We first receive the baptism by faith. (Mark 11:24) From then on, we should apply our faith in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit all the time. (Ephesians 5:18)

Say the prayer in Luke 11:13, believing that you are receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, according to His promise. If you've said this prayer, you can have confidence in God's Word, recorded in Luke 11:13, and know that you are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

As the Spirit dwells in you, you have the power within you to be a witness for Jesus (Acts 1:8), using the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Believe in this! Everything is done by faith, even using the gifts that have already been given freely to you when you received the Holy Spirit.

The first manifestation of the Spirit that was given to the disciples on the day of _____ Pentecost was _

— . (Acts 2:1-4)

In order for the gifts of the Spirit to manifest themselves in your life, you must continue to exercise your faith. You can speak in tongues and practice the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as He leads you. (Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-47)

Remember: You are filled with the Holy Spirit. He is the source of all the gifts. Never forget that God, in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, will use you with supernatural power. **(Mark 16:17,18)**

11. HOW TO SHARE JESUS WITH OTHERS IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Now that you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you have His power to speak of Jesus to others. (Acts 1:8) It's important that:

- A. You speak courageously of Jesus to others, depending entirely on the Holy Spirit.
- B. You bring your family, friends and neighbors to your small group and to church.
- C. You learn from your discipler how to bring people to Jesus.

LESSON 3

THE NEW COVENANT

The Bible is divided into two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament.

1. The Old Testament was written before Jesus came into the world, and speaks of the First Covenant that God made with His people.
2. The New Testament was written after Jesus came into the world, and presents the New Covenant between God and us.

Even though the First Covenant included many laws and commandments, the salvation of the people of the Old Testament came in the same way that we are saved today: by faith in Jesus. They looked to the future, waiting in faith for the day when the Savior would arrive. We look to the past, believing that Jesus is the Savior, who has already paid the price for our sins through His death on the cross.

What is a covenant? The common meaning of “covenant” is a solemn contract entered into by two or more people. It may go well beyond the scope of a legal contract. In God’s sight, as defined in the Bible, a covenant is a sacred, unbreakable promise, or pledge.

You, having accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, have entered into a covenant with Him. God is faithful, and never breaks the terms of His covenants. (Hebrews 6:17-18) That is why the New Covenant is called an “Eternal Covenant.” (Hebrews 13:20)

You now have a commitment to our wonderfully faithful God, and a responsibility to maintain the terms of the covenant. These terms will be explained in this lesson (about two ordinances) and in the next lesson, which speaks about the local church.

In the New Covenant, Jesus gave us two ordinances that are symbolic acts representing His death and resurrection.

When we participate in these ordinances, we remember with deep gratitude everything that Jesus has done for us. We proclaim publicly that we are trusting

completely in Jesus for our salvation, and that we are receiving, by faith, the benefits of His death and resurrection.

What are these two ordinances of the New Covenant that symbolize the death and resurrection of Jesus?

1. WATER BAPTISM

Jesus put a high value on water baptism. He himself insisted on being baptized. **(Matthew 3:13-15)** Jesus serves as a model for us. Was He baptized when He was a child or an adult? _

(Luke 3:21-23)

_____ Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all the nations.

We should baptize new disciples in the name of whom? __

and __ . **(Matthew 28:19)**

Water baptism represents the burial of a person who died spiritually with Jesus. When you receive Jesus, you die to the old life, and are born again to a new life. (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17)

The old self--the person within your body that likes sin--died and was buried. Therefore, being immersed in the waters of baptism represents the __ of your old self. **(Romans 6:4-8)**

Coming up out of the waters of baptism represents the resurrection of a new person—a person who hates sin and wants to please God. Just as Jesus was raised from the dead, we also are raised to a new life with __ . **(Romans 6:4-8)**

Baptism in water represents two things that happen spiritually in our lives when we receive Jesus.

Going down into the waters represents the __ of our old self, and

coming up from the waters represents our __ with Christ to a new life. **(Colossians 2:12)**

Water baptism has no power in itself to save anyone. We are saved by grace through __ . **(Ephesians 2:8, 9)**

Once a person has been saved (born again), they are qualified to be baptized. (Acts 8:36-37) Baptism is very important. Through it you can exercise your faith to receive even more of the spiritual reality that you, together with Christ, died to sin--and that with Him, you have risen as a new person. (Romans 6:1-11)

2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus had his last supper with His disciples just before His crucifixion and death on the cross. (Matthew 26:26-30)

He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples as a symbol of his body, which would be sacrificed for them. He said, "This is my ____, which is given for you; do this in ____ of me." (1 Corinthians 11:23, 24)

When we eat the bread of the Lord's Supper (communion), we are remembering that Jesus died in our place.

He also took the cup in his hand, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my _____. Do this, each time that you drink it, in _____ of me." (1 Corinthians 11:25)

We should always be remembering and proclaiming the death of the Lord until He comes again. (1 Corinthians 11:26)

We should never participate in the Lord's Supper in an unworthy or disrespectful manner. (1 Corinthians 11:27) It should never be treated as a game or empty ritual, without focusing on the death of Jesus and without thanking Him for the incredible sacrifice that He made for us. It's also important that you not hold bitterness or anger in your heart against another person. You should make sure that you have a clean conscience, with a heart open to God, before you participate. Before you begin, ask forgiveness for whatever sin the Holy Spirit brings to your conscience.

Before taking the Lord's Supper (communion), you should examine yourself and verify that you are focusing on the Body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:28, 29)

Are you believing and receiving that which He did for you? (1 Peter 2:24)

If the Holy Spirit shows you that your heart is not right before Him, you must confess your sin and receive forgiveness. What will God do for the person who confesses his sin? **1 John 1:9**

Once you have repented of your sin, you should receive God's forgiveness and participate in the Lord's Supper in gratitude for His forgiveness. Don't let sin be an excuse for not participating. Repent of your sin right away, and take the Lord's Supper.

We should take the Lord's Supper frequently in memory of Jesus, and so obey His commandment. Eating the bread and drinking the wine/juice (cup) cannot save you. We are saved by grace through . **(Ephesians 2:8, 9)**

LESSON 4

THE CHURCH

1. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

The universal church includes all of the people who have their names written in the Book of Life. These people will go to heaven. **(Hebrews 12:22-23; Revelation 20:15)**

Does one have to be a member of the Canyon View Vineyard Church to be a part of the universal church? All churches that faithfully teach the Word of God are good. But no church can save anyone.

Who are the people that belong to the universal church?

(Revelation 20:12, 15)

2. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Jesus physically went to Heaven, but He left the Holy Spirit here living in us, the universal church; we are the body of Christ here on earth. The body of Christ is one body, but it has many members—all of the people who were saved by Him. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

There is just *one* body of Christ, and Spirit, just hope; there's just Lord, just faith, just baptism, just God, and Father of all. **(Ephesians 4:1-6)**

All people who are saved by Jesus are from the same church!

Every member of the body of Christ is part of His church, and each member is important and necessary to the healthy function of the body. (Ephesians 4:7-16)

3. THE LOCAL CHURCH

The local church is a group of people who are saved by Jesus and meet in a specific place. There are many local churches around the world. Paul started many local churches. (Romans 16:3-5; 1Corinthians 16:19; Galatians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1)

The local church is very important for several reasons. It is in the local church that you live out your covenant with God. When you were born again, you made a covenant with God in which everything that is His became yours, and everything that is yours is now His. There are many promises in the Word of God for those who are in covenant with Him. Let's look at how this covenant works itself out in the context of the local church, bringing great blessings to you:

First Blessing: God's Protection

The covenant with God implies a commitment to the local church, which means faithfully attending meetings and submitting yourself voluntarily to the pastors and leaders of the small group. The true follower of Jesus will want to obey Him. His Word says: "Let us not give up _____, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and _____ as you see the Day approaching." (**Hebrews 10:25**)

See how clearly the Word of God shows that spiritual protection is intimately connected with our submission to our spiritual leaders: "Obey your leaders, and _____ to their authority. They _____ over you as, as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be _____ to you." (**Hebrews 13:17**)

Second Blessing: Flourishing in the Lord

Your covenant with God and His Church involves totally devoting yourself to Him. From now on, everything belongs to Him (Luke 14:33) and your heart should seek His Kingdom first (Matthew 6:33). In section 5 of this lesson, you will see how God's prosperity is intimately connected with our attitudes and actions toward tithes and offerings in the local church.

Third Blessing: Joy in Relationships

Your covenant with God also involves a covenant with your brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. In the cell group, with the help of your leader and discipler, you will learn to walk in the love of God, and to build healthy and long-lasting relationships.

Your covenant with God also involves great blessings for your family. (Acts 16:31) What's more, you will learn to apply your faith and cooperate with God for the salvation of your whole family. (Colossians 3:18-21)

Because the Holy Spirit lives in you now, you have the power to forgive everyone. Never permit any bitterness to be in your heart. "Bear with each other and _ whatever grievances you may have with one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." **(Colossians 3:13)**

4. CELL GROUPS

The best way to have intimacy and fellowship with one another in the local church is through cell groups. Each of us is a part of the body of Christ and we need to have ongoing fellowship with one another. The local church is subdivided into cell groups, which meet in the homes of members.

In the time of Paul, described in the Bible, a group of believers met in the house of Aquila and Priscilla. (1 Corinthians 16:19) In Jerusalem, the followers of Christ met frequently to hear the teachings of the apostles and to pray, but they also ate together and had intimate fellowship among themselves. (Acts 2:42)

The local church in Jerusalem would meet:

- A. In the temple (large meetings), and
- B. In homes (small meetings) (Acts 2:46)

This Biblical description of the local church in Jerusalem is interesting. We believe it is very important that every follower of Jesus be faithful to:

- A. Attend the Sunday celebrations, wherein the whole local church meets to worship the Lord, hear from Him, and celebrate what He is doing.
- B. Attend the cell group, which is the true family of God meeting in the intimate setting of a home. **(Acts 2:44)**

As members of the same body, we are all brothers and sisters. As Christ gave His life for us, we must give our life for the __ . **(1John 3:16-18)**

If a person is suffering from need, what should the person with greater material resources do? __

We should not love just with words, but in truth and with __ .

5. TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Everything that exists was made by God, and is His. Everything that we have was lent to us by God, and nothing belongs to us. What we have was just put in our hands to manage.

God commanded His people to separate the first tenth part of everything that they received (the tithe) to finance the work of God (Deuteronomy 14:28, 29).

To take care of their own necessities, the people could use the _
that were left.

What is a tithe? “Tithe” means a tenth. For example, if you earn ten dollars, your tithe would be one dollar. The tithe on \$20 would be \$2, and so forth. If you earn 10 portions from your income, give one and save one, and learn to live on the remaining 8 – what a great challenge!

The tithe already belongs to the work of God, and is not for our use. How is it that we rob God? _

(Malachi 3:10-12)

When we bring our tithe to God, what does He promise to do for us?

—

The tithe should be given in an attitude of faith, joy and worship. (**Proverbs 3:4-10**; Malachi 3:13-18; Deuteronomy 26)

Many Old Testament laws are not repeated in the New Testament, but we can see that Jesus and the author of Hebrews still taught that the tithe should not be neglected. (**Matthew 23:23**; Luke 11:42; Hebrews 7:8)

An offering is something apart from the tithe. We take our offering from the 90 percent that's left over. It's not a specific quantity; we can give whatever amount God shows us. In 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9, Paul asks the Macedonian churches to make a generous offering for the people of Judea.

God promises to abundantly bless the person who gives generously. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

An offering should be given with great joy. The amount should be whatever your heart desires, without reluctance and without feeling forced to give.

God loves a __ . (**2 Corinthians 9:6-7**)

LESSON 5

GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

The purpose of this lesson is to offer some orientation that will help you to:

- A) Understand that we were called to be witnesses of Jesus.
- B) Understand that evangelism should be a way of life.
- C) Reach your “oikós” (circle of influence) for Jesus.
- D) Use your personal testimony to share the gospel with others.
- E) Explain how a person can receive Jesus in his life.
- F) Lead a person by prayer to give their life to Jesus.

2. CALLED TO BE WITNESSES

Jesus delegated the work of witnessing and making disciples to all those who have been born again and made Him the absolute King of their lives, and this certainly includes you. Our primary mission is to bring new people into the Kingdom, and train them to do the same with others.

The text of **Matthew 28:18-20** is called “*The Great Commission.*” What is the basic commandment that Jesus gives us in verse 19? _

_

Jesus said that we would receive power to be what? _

_

(Acts 1:8)

This passage of Acts is one of the most important in the New Testament about our calling to be witnesses of Jesus. It is a commandment with a promise.

3. TELLING OTHERS ABOUT JESUS AS A WAY OF LIFE

Sharing the gospel should become a way of life for all of God’s children. One characteristic that we frequently find in Jesus’ first followers is that they were always involved in the work of sharing their faith in Jesus Christ with others. And this had a great impact on the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding area where they lived. It is said, in fact, that more than half of the city [thousands, including many leaders], converted to Jesus.

The normal Christian life includes sharing our faith with others. That's why we believe that evangelizing and making disciples is a style of life that God desires for every Christian.

4. REACHING YOUR “OIKÓS” FOR JESUS.

The Bible says that the fields are white unto harvest. (John 4:35) Therefore, it's a fact that there are many people who are ready to hear the gospel and receive Jesus.

A huge lie that the devil tries to spread is that people don't want God. On the contrary, the reality is that there are thousands of people that hunger for God, and that the Holy Spirit is working tirelessly in people's lives preparing them for our arrival with the message of the gospel.

The Greek word “oikós” is mentioned several times in the New Testament, and has been translated into the English word “house.” This word refers to that group of people that are part of our sphere of direct relationships--in other words, those with whom you are in frequent contact. They could be family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, the butcher, the baker, etc.

The Bible teaches that we should preach the Gospel, in season, __
__, and to all people. (2 Timothy 4:2, Matthew 28:19-20).

And that we should take advantage of every __ . (Colossians 4:5)

One of the most effective methods of evangelism is through relationship. We need to learn to influence the people we already know—those with whom we already share a bond of friendship or family. It's much easier for a person to accept a message when they have already “accepted” the messenger; that is, if they already feel a bond of friendship with the messenger. That's why the secret is to cultivate old friendships with the purpose of reaching them for Jesus, and to go out of your way to make new friendships. That way, you'll have a huge “oikós” to reach.

5. DON'T LEAVE YOUR OLD FRIENDS BEHIND

Unfortunately, some people, upon converting, abandon their old friends. After a time of following Jesus, they don't have any friendships left with unbelievers. Pay close attention: it's one thing to abandon the sinful practices that you and your friends used to participate in; it's another thing to abandon your friends. If we separate ourselves from sinners, whom are we going to lead to Christ?

6. THE PRAYER-FOR-THREE PACT

The Prayer-For-Three pact is a strategic plan to win people from within your

circle of friends. You want to see the people that you love saved, knowing God, and walking in intimate relationship with Him. Here is a practical way for every Christian to win people to Christ. Each believer makes a pact with God and with two other Christians that s/he will pray and fast for one month for three people who have not converted, but who are mature and open to the gospel. Then s/he invites and accompanies them to the cell group and/or to the celebration service.

How do you choose the people for whom you will pray?

Look around you, and see from among your friends and acquaintances which are the most “white unto harvest,” and choose three names. Your mission field is the place where you live, work, or study. Then pray and fast. Prayer and fasting changes people. Pray daily for the three people, and also once a week with other members with whom you’ve made this pact. Ask God for opportunities to show your friends His love.

Look for ways to cultivate deeper friendship with these people and earn their trust. A simple invitation to dinner or lunch, or for a walk, could break down barriers and open the way for Christ. Then invite and bring them to the Sunday celebration service and cell group.

7. YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY—A POWERFUL TOOL

Every person who has had a genuine personal encounter with Jesus has a valuable and powerful experience to tell to the world! Without a doubt, God will use your personal testimony to reach the hearts of others.

How to prepare your testimony

It’s really important to have our personal testimony organized and well prepared, because of the many opportunities that come up to share the love of God. The best way to do this is to write the story of your conversion and memorize it; that way you will be prepared to use it when opportunities arise.

1. Ask the Lord for wisdom in doing this.
2. Follow a specific theme—one that best characterizes your situation.

For example: “Religious, but without God,” “Imprisoned with no escape,” “I had everything, but I didn’t have peace,” “At the brink of death, I found life.”

3. Divide your testimony into three parts:

A. Before knowing Jesus

In this first part, tell about your past without Jesus. Recount some of your sinful experiences with which the people listening can identify. You may talk about the problems you had, for example: with cigarettes, with drinking, with lying, with immorality, with greed for money, with sadness, dishonesty, depression, lack of peace--whatever may be your case. But be careful!! Don't talk as if you're proud of what you did wrong; speak instead with an attitude of profound sadness, but gratitude that God has cleansed you and forgiven you. Be careful not to condemn the person you're sharing with. Also, avoid unnecessary details and long-winded accounts. Never use religious language that the unbeliever is not accustomed to. Don't spend a lot of time talking about the past.

B. How I met Jesus.

In this second part you will emphasize what your encounter with Jesus was like, how it happened, who spoke to you for the first time about Jesus, and where you were. Include in your testimony the plan of salvation, and explain that:

- You recognized that you were a sinner. (Romans 3:23)
- You needed to repent and decided to abandon sin and please God .(Acts 3:19)
- You invited Jesus to come into your life. He doesn't break down anybody's door. (Revelation 3:19-20)
- Jesus died on the cross in your place, and only His blood can wash and purify us from our sins. (1 John 1:9)
- Good works cannot save us, because we are saved by __ through faith. **(Ephesians 2:8-9)**
- Only Jesus is the __ , the __ , and the __ , and no one can come to the Father but by Him. **(John 14:6)**
- Always speak with lots of enthusiasm and joy; after all, it was the best encounter of your life. But don't forget: keep the story concise.

C. After I gave my life to Jesus

In this last part you will relate how your life changed after your decision—how you were transformed by the power of Jesus. Speak of the victory over that sin that you had, and of the certainty of eternal life that you now have (1 John 5:11-13).

Explain that now Jesus is not just your Savior, but also the Lord of your life, and that your new life with Jesus is incomparably better than the old one.

After giving your testimony, you need to present Jesus in a simple but attractive manner. Remember--we are the salt of the earth, and we need to leave people with a thirst for God.

8. INVITE THE PERSON TO MAKE A DECISION FOR JESUS

Evangelizing is just one part of the work; the other is inviting the person to make a decision to accept Jesus—and guiding them through a prayer of devotion and repentance. When the conversation gets to this point, many don't know what to do, thus missing a great opportunity to bring someone to Christ. Don't let this happen to you. After giving your testimony or presenting the Gospel to someone, ask them if they would like to invite Jesus to come into their life. If the answer is "yes," don't say as some do: "Very good, then come to church next Sunday, and you can invite Jesus to come into your heart there in church." Don't do this!! Instead, explain to them that they can receive Jesus right there where they are, as Jesus promised to be present wherever there are people gathered in His Name. **(Matthew 18:20)**

9. GUIDE THE PERSON IN PRAYER

The following is a sample prayer that your friend might repeat in order to give his life to Jesus. With an attitude of faith, ask the person to concentrate on Jesus and repeat phrase by phrase the following prayer:

God, I recognize that I am a sinner and that I cannot save myself. I repent of all my sins and for having lived independently of You. Right now I open my heart and give You my life. I receive forgiveness for my sins through the blood of Jesus on the cross. I receive you now as my Savior and Lord of my life. From now on, I turn my back to the world, to sin, and to the devil. I renounce everything I've done that goes against your Word. Thank you so much for accepting me as I am, and for the gift of eternal life. In the Name of Jesus, Amen!

10. AFTER THE PRAYER, ENCOURAGE THE NEW BELIEVER TO PERSEVERE IN HIS DECISION

After this prayer of decision, in order to ground this person in their faith, show them the following:

Explain that the Holy Bible guarantees that the instant a person sincerely repents of their sins and places their faith in **Jesus Christ**, giving Him total control over their life, making Him **Lord** and **Savior** of their life—in that instant—they are **born again**, and many other wonderful things happened instantaneously:

1. Christ entered into their life. The life of God is at work within them now. (Revelation 3:20).
2. They became a child of God, and are now part of the true family of God. (John 1:12)
3. God forgave all their sins and their debt was canceled. (Colossians 1:14)

4. They became perfect in his spirit. The righteousness of God was imputed within them.
5. Their name was written in the Book of Life.
6. They received a new nature.
7. They freely received the right to live eternally with God.
8. They were sealed with the Holy Spirit, and now belong to God forever.

Encourage each person to confirm their decision publicly wherever appropriate.

Some good scriptures to read to someone who has just made this decision are:

Romans 10:9-10
1 John 5:11-13
Hebrews 13:5
Philippians 1:6

11. SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU BECOME A SUCCESSFUL WITNESS:

- Love people.
- Don't criticize them.
- Don't speak of religion. Speak of Jesus.
- Don't judge people.
- Don't enter into debates or discussions.
- Speak with God about the person before speaking of God to the person.

PRE-BAPTISM INTERVIEW AND PERSONAL COUNSEL

Before being baptized or becoming a member of the church, every person should receive personal counsel from his/her cell group leader or discipler (if they are authorized by the cell group leader). This interview should be made by a person of the same sex.

Purpose:

1. To receive counsel on how to resolve problems rooted in the past: **Proverbs 19:20** says, "Listen to __ and accept instruction, and in the end you will be __ ."
2. To bring to light any sin that is bothering your conscience: **1 John 1:7** says, "If we walk in the __ , as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." In order to receive forgiveness, it is necessary to __ the sin to God. (1 John 1:9)

At times it's necessary to "unload" and seek help from a more mature brother or sister who has more experience. Confessing sins before men is a Biblical principle. See **Matthew 3:6**.

In **James 5:16** the Bible says, "Confess, therefore, your sins

__ and pray for each other, so that you may be healed."

1. Often it's a good idea to confess sins to receive help in straightening out the past and taking possession of God's complete forgiveness. (**Matthew 3:5-8**)
2. This is *not* a Catholic confession. No priest, no pastor, no one in and of Himself has the power to cleanse us from sin. Only God purifies us from all our sins. (**1 John 1:9**)
3. If you have confessed your sins to God, He has forgiven you. However, if you still have something that's bothering you, or if you'd like to unload about something, you may share it now with your leader (with me). Some sins of the past, such as murder, adultery, prostitution, masturbation, robbery, homosexuality, sex with animals, abortion, fighting, etc., may leave deep scars. If you have suffered from any of these sins and are still feeling the weight, and would like to receive counsel, prayer, or other help to be healed, you have the liberty to speak now.
4. If you have had children outside of marriage that are not living with you, it's necessary to give them financial and spiritual assistance, because you are responsible. (1 Timothy 5:8)
5. **Romans 12:18** says, "If it is possible, as far as ____, live at peace with everyone. Are you at peace with everyone? You should ask forgiveness of any person against whom you have held resentment, bitterness, who has offended you, or with whom you are not speaking, don't get along, or have enmity. Once you are forgiven, it's a good idea to use this opportunity to explain to the person how Jesus has transformed your life. If it's not possible to ask forgiveness face to face, you may choose to write a letter or call the person and ask forgiveness.
6. How is your family life?
If you have committed a sin against your spouse or parents-in-law that has not been confessed and for which you've not asked for forgiveness, do this as soon as possible. (See some examples listed in item 3.) Humbly confessing and asking forgiveness gives you an opportunity to testify about your new life in Jesus.
7. As a demonstration of sincere repentance, you should make restitution for any item or money that was stolen. Even if you don't have the object or the money, or for some other reason it's impossible to return it immediately, find the person you've offended, confess your mistake, ask forgiveness, and come to some agreement about how and when you can make complete restitution.

8. Are you being honest in your business, your school, with the government, etc.? It's important to have integrity in everything. Is your marriage legalized?
9. Do you have some addiction that is damaging your body (for example: drugs, drinking, smoking, gluttony, pornography, soap operas, etc.)? God wants to set you free. (**John 8:36**; 1 Corinthians 10:13).

LESSON 6

BECOMING A DISCIPLER

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

- A. To discuss the responsibility you have to make disciples
- B. To explain what it means to make disciples
- C. To clarify how you can become a discipler

2. THE COMMANDMENT TO MAKE DISCIPLES (Matthew 28: 19-20)

After we receive Jesus as Lord of our lives, we have the responsibility and privilege to make disciples. In the last lesson we taught you how to lead a person to Christ. Perhaps you think that after a person has said this prayer, your job is

done and you have complied with the commandment to make disciples. But that's not true. There's still the rest of the commandment to fulfill: "*Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*"

What should you do after you win someone to Christ? Just as a good mother cares for and protects her new baby, you also need to take responsibility and take care of your spiritual baby. First, begin to integrate him/her into your cell group, and then see to it that he or she receives all the care necessary to grow and become a healthy follower of Jesus, mature in faith.

So that the new believer might grow to become a strong follower of Jesus, you need to be his/her discipler and accompany them. (Or, should you be a person of the opposite sex, provide them with a good discipler.) In so doing, you will be glorifying God and being responsible for those that the Lord has put into your hands. The discipler's manual will give you more details on how to accompany the new believer.

In the Great Commission, Jesus didn't command us to make converts, but to "**make disciples,**" and this includes much more than just conversion. The normal Christian always makes disciples. It's important that you be discipling at least one person, and preferably more. This is not just a *holy duty* for every Christian, but an *immense privilege*.

3. WHAT IS A DISCIPLE? Matthew 4:19

The word disciple means *follower*; that is, one who practices the master's teaching, or a student who is submissive to his master. According to this definition, we can be sure that a disciple of Jesus is one who believes in all that Jesus does and all that Jesus commands. There are some terms that are commonly used in the churches to identify a disciple of Jesus, but these terms define just one aspect of the life of a disciple. For example:

- a) **Saved:** Someone who has been set free from the condemnation of hell and from the power of sin and of the devil.
- b) **Convert:** Someone who has gone through the process of transformation of his mind and values.
- c) **Believer:** Someone who believes in something or someone.
- d) **Gospel Oriented:** Someone who takes part in an evangelical church.

None of these terms is wrong, but the word disciple is more far-reaching and clearly defines a position as well as a condition. It is the term that Jesus, the apostles, and the first Christians used.

The word “*disciple*” is mentioned 260 times in the New Testament, while the word “*believer*” appears only 15 times, and the word “*evangelical*” is never used.

Being a disciple of Jesus entails more than just believing and being saved, or just being a member of an evangelical church.

Living as a disciple of Jesus implies making disciples.

4. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MAKE DISCIPLES, OR TO DISCIPLE?

Discipleship is a systematic journey of relationship involving two people of the same sex. It is developed through frequent meetings and through a close, strong, and natural bond of friendship, with a goal of:

- a) Transference of life: by modeling, being an example, demonstrating
- b) Transference of knowledge: teaching the Commandments and the will of Jesus for the disciple
- c) Accountability and healthy, caring companionship in the disciple’s decisions and style of life
- d) Training the new believer to live out the ministerial calling of making disciples.

5. WHAT DISCIPLESHIP ISN’T

Discipleship *isn’t* maintaining control over the life of others. As the discipler, you need to understand that you are neither the boss nor the owner of your disciples.

Your responsibility is not to manipulate, or rein people in, controlling everything down to the color of the shoes they buy. It’s just caring for them and giving them orientation in their spiritual life.

Your primary goal is not to make your disciple look like you (for example: root for the same team, like the same movies, speak as you speak, pray as you pray, have the same experiences you’ve had), *but to make them become more like Jesus.*

We shouldn’t reproduce ourselves in the person; we should reproduce the character of Jesus. Jesus didn’t command us to make disciples for ourselves—but disciples for Him and of Him.

Your disciples should continue being who they are, with their own personality. Their preferences, tastes and opinions should be respected, as long as *they are not contrary to the Word of God*, and are not sinful. At the same time, it’s natural

that in spending time together, the disciple might begin to become more like his discipler, even in some of the areas mentioned above. This is not necessarily wrong, especially when it happens in a very natural way, and when his life is really reflecting Jesus more and more.

6. MAKING DISCIPLES IS THE “BUSINESS” OF OUR CHURCH

In reality, making disciples is the true “business” of our church and each true Christian should be involved in this work. That is, a person who is not making disciples is not a normal Christian.

Without a doubt, you should grow to the point of being a discipler, because just as you are being disciplined and someone is investing time in your life, you should do the same for others. Don't be afraid of taking on this new challenge, because as you accompany this new follower of Jesus, Jesus Himself will be teaching you how you should do it.

7. YOU CAN BEGIN SOON

It's not necessary for you to wait until we come to the end of this book to begin to disciple a new believer. You can already talk with your cell group leader to see if there is anyone in your group that you could start discipling. If you are not yet a discipler, and your cell group leader hasn't contacted you about it, ask them what you should do to become a discipler.

8. HOW TO BEGIN TO DISCIPLE

After you have gotten direction from your group leader to begin to disciple, you should prepare to take another through the Guidebook for Discipleship. The main secret is to trust in the ability that the Holy Spirit will give you, and follow the Biblical principles presented in this guidebook. Don't force a person to begin discipleship with you. However, do motivate them. Whet their appetite for the good things of God, show them the discipleship guidebook and encourage their interest.

Explain the benefits that discipleship will bring into his own life, and how pleasing and edifying these meetings will be. Give them the student book and ask them to study the first lesson with you and answer the questions in preparation for their first meeting with you.

9. TO BE A DISCIPLER IS TO BE A MODEL

The purpose of discipleship is to help a new convert understand the fundamental truths for their new life. Discipleship also helps in the process of transformation of one's soul, as well as in changing habits and wrong tendencies, and in the defining of new life values. Besides the Holy Spirit, you will also be a big influence in the life of this brother or sister. People usually change more quickly when they have a model to follow. As the discipler, you will serve as the model for your disciple. Don't worry about the fact that you aren't perfect in all your actions; no one is. You don't have to pretend to be someone you're not. In fact, the Holy Spirit will frequently use your transparency and honesty to encourage your disciple to continue to follow Jesus. The most important thing is that you walk in the light that you already have, and God will use you.

Without a doubt, this experience of meeting weekly with your disciple will benefit you, too, for to the extent that you help someone to grow in faith, you will grow with them.

10. BECOMING A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.

When we are born again, we are born into the family of God. Our goal now is to grow, not just in the knowledge of the Word of God and in things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, but also in our commitment and responsibility to our spiritual family. We cannot continue being mere spectators who attend church. You are now a valuable part of an intimate church family. It is not "their church." It is *my* church. We are each of us a part of this vital team.

You certainly don't want to remain a little child forever (always demanding attention and special care). You need to grow and begin to assume responsibilities in the church. This is vital to healthy spirituality. Taking care of your new little brother or sister in the faith is the best way to become a responsible member of the family. Of course, it's not just winning someone to Christ and discipling them that makes you a responsible member of the family, but it is a good start, and you'll get there soon.

LESSON 7

UNDERSTANDING THE VISION OF OUR CHURCH

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

In this lesson we want to study and better understand the vision that God has given us as the local church. In Lesson Four we explained the difference between the universal Church of Jesus Christ and the Local Church. Now we're going to see the importance of the local church in our lives, and how we should be committed to the vision of our church. In this lesson we also want to clarify what we expect from you as a new member of this family, and show you how and where you can fit in and serve God as a faithful and responsible member of the family of God.

1. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS THE HEART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Without the local church, there would be no universal church, as the universal church is made up of each local church—that's why we give such importance to this precious and inspirational spiritual family.

If the local churches in a city are strong and blessed, the Kingdom of God will be strong and blessed in that city. But for this to happen, it's necessary that you and I participate wholeheartedly in our local church, seeking to understand its vision, and putting ourselves right in the thick of it without reservation, contributing in a significant way to its growth. We don't claim to be the only "correct" or "right" church in the world, but we believe that God has given us a vision, and we want to be faithful in taking that vision seriously.

2. THE OBJECTIVES OF OUR CHURCH (5 Vineyard Values)

(1) The Theology and Practice of the Kingdom of God

Vineyard is committed to the theology and practice of the kingdom of God, rooted in the vision of the Hebrew prophets and fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. We have been commissioned to proclaim the good news of the kingdom bearing witness to the already and not yet of the kingdom in words and deeds. Vineyard is a movement distinctively centered in a renewed understanding of the

centrality of the kingdom of God in biblical thought. We view the kingdom of God as the overarching and integrating theme of the Bible.

From our beginnings Vineyard has been committed to the proclamation of the kingdom of God and to bearing witness to the deeds of the kingdom through healing (physical, emotional, and social), doing justice, and delivering those held captive by evil. Since the kingdom of God is the future reign of God breaking into the present through the life and ministry of Jesus, we are a forward-leaning movement emphasizing the ever-reforming nature of the church engaging the world in love.

(2) Experiencing God

The kingdom of God is not a geo-political territory, nor is it the people of God. Rather, the kingdom of God is a dynamic realm. When one enters the kingdom she/he experiences the dynamic reality which exists within the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This means that the experience of the kingdom of God (and thus, the experience of God's presence) is central to our faith and Christian life.

God is eager to be known and experienced by all. We believe that God is searching for lost humanity in order to draw us into intimate relationship with Himself. In response to God's initiative, we value the life-changing power of the experience of His presence.

The primary place where that relationship is nurtured and developed is in the act of worship—both private and corporate. So, experience-based worship is the central activity of all that we do in the Vineyard. It is worship that causes all else that we do to become an act of worship. We experience God's presence as a palpable reality when we worship. As we worship we become increasingly sensitive and responsive to the Spirit's presence so that we can do as Jesus did: "See what the Father is doing," (John 5:19) and support His work with our lives.

The experience of God flowing out of a life of worship affects all aspects of our life so that all division between the secular and the sacred vanish. We believe that the Spirit distributes His gifts to us resulting in prophecy, prayer languages, healing, miracles and many other gifts as we joyfully experience His presence.

We value an approach to God's presence that is respectful both of God and of those we are with. We eschew hype and other efforts to manipulate either God's presence or the response of others to His presence. We distinguish between the Holy Spirit and the human response which shares in all the beauty and brokenness of our humanity. We also believe that as we experience His presence through Christ by the Spirit we will be made more fully human and better reflections of the God-image that we were created to be.

(3) Culturally Relevant Mission

The church exists for the sake of those who are exiled from God. We are called to

bring the gospel of the kingdom to every nook and cranny of creation, faithfully translating the message of Jesus into language and forms that are relevant to diverse peoples and cultures.

We seek to plant churches that are culturally relevant in a wide variety of settings locally and internationally. Each Vineyard church is encouraged to reach those in its community not already reached by existing churches. To this end, we promote a creative, entrepreneurial and innovative approach to ministry that is faithful to Jesus and expressive of His heart to reach those who are far away from God.

(4) Reconciling Community

Jesus is reconciling humans to God, to each other, and to the entire creation, breaking down divisions between Jew & Gentile, slave & free, male and female. Therefore, we are committed to becoming healing communities engaged in the work of reconciliation wherever sin and evil hold sway.

We seek to be diverse communities of hope that realize the power of the cross to reconcile what has been separated by sin. This requires us to move beyond our personal preferences to engage those who are perceived to be unlike us and to actively break down barriers of race, culture, gender, social class and ethnicity.

We are convinced that the church, locally, nationally and globally, is meant to be a diverse community precisely because Jesus is Lord over every nation, tribe and tongue. We are not satisfied with the status quo when it doesn't reflect this kingdom reality, but are eager to pray for the coming of God's kingdom here and now and to realize this mark of the kingdom in our midst.

(5) Compassionate Ministry

We lean toward the lost, the poor, the outcast, and the outsider with the compassion of Jesus as sinners whose only standing before God is utterly dependent on the mercy of God. This mercy can only be truly received inasmuch as we are willing to give it away.

We believe that ministry in Jesus' name should be expressed in concrete ways through the local church. The poor are to be served as though serving Jesus Himself. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a church expressing the love of Christ in a local community.

In all forms of ministry, compassion is a hallmark of the one who was moved with compassion Himself in the face of human need. This being the age of grace and "the year of the Lord's favor," compassion should constitute the leading edge of our service to God, each other and a broken world. As such, we seek to avoid unauthorized judgments of others, realizing that we are all fellow sufferers and strugglers with the rest of humanity.

3. THE VISION OF OUR CHURCH

Growing Disciples to Reach the Unreached

4. CELL GROUPS BRING BIG RESULTS

You might ask why groups are so important, as they deal with something so small. The reason is simple. Besides being a biblical model that was practiced by the first Christians, cell groups bring big results and benefits to the Local Church. As we studied in Lesson Four, it's in the cell group that you will begin to discover your gifts, and how to do the work of God. It's there that we learn to grow in fellowship with God and with our brothers. It's there that we develop strong bonds of friendship and camaraderie. It's there that we will be cared for, pastored, and encouraged. It's there that we learn to discover our gifts and talents, and begin to serve God and the church.

5. ONE-ON-ONE DISCIPLESHIP IS THE HEART OF OUR CELL GROUPS

You must remember the emphasis given in Lesson Six, that every follower of Jesus should obey the commandment to make disciples. In the cell group, each person should have a discipler and also should have one to *three* disciples. This is one of the secrets, as we really believe in the principle of one- on-one discipleship, and not just discipleship in groups. We should always have someone to whom we're accountable for our life, and we should also always be accompanying someone else in his or her walk. Every believer should have someone that they're teaching, and every believer should have someone in authority over them. We cannot walk alone. That would be very dangerous. You already have a companion! Glory to God for this! Now you should be giving someone else support too. And that's how it all works.

Discipleship is not an option—it's a commandment!

LESSON 8

DISCOVERING YOUR MINISTERIAL GIFTS

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

The purpose of this lesson is to clarify the importance of the role of every member of the body of Christ:

- Help each brother or sister discover their calling and spiritual / ministerial gifts, and
- Teach how to use them in the context of the local church

In this lesson we will study:

- What is a ministerial calling
- What are spiritual / ministerial gifts
- How we receive these gifts
- Why we receive them

2. YOU ARE IMPORTANT IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Local Church needs you. You are an important part of the body of Christ. Never let the devil fool you by saying that you aren't worth anything and aren't good for anything.

You have a very significant part to play in the church and in God's Kingdom work. When you make this personal contribution, you help fulfill the dreams and the purpose of God in your church and make a huge difference in the Kingdom of God.

3. EACH ONE DOING HIS PART

If one member of the church fails to fulfill his part, or stops using his gifts, the whole body suffers. You were called to serve and not just to congregate, as there is no spiritual gift exercised in congregating.

The best way for the church to function well as a body is by putting the right people in the right places. This means positioning each member of the church in a place where they can fulfill their ministerial calling (passion or burden) and exercise his ministerial gifts. We must always keep in view the following: serving one another, the development of the saints, and the growth of the church. It's a fact that the members of the churches grow and bear fruit more in the service of God when they serve and act in the areas related to their gifts and ministerial callings.

4. DISCOVERING YOUR CALLING

God made us each a unique person, and put within each of us an interest and a desire for a certain task or activity. That is what we define as a "calling" or "ministerial role." The calling is given by God to each disciple, in order to define where we should serve in the body. The calling is already within you. You only need to discover what it is. Your calling usually has to do with what most interests you and is most naturally attractive to you. It's the subject you would want to talk about until late at night.

In general, your calling is centered around helping some group of people, such as children, couples, young people, college students, or prisoners, or is related to activities and experiences that bring you a sense of personal fulfillment and usefulness. As you serve the body, over time, your calling will become clearer and more defined within you, and also evident to those around. It's important to identify your calling; otherwise, even a good follower of Jesus can end up in the wrong place doing something that produces undesirable results.

5. DISCOVERING YOUR GIFT

Just as we receive a calling and we should discover what it is, so also we receive gifts from the Lord and we need to discover what our gifts are. Our gifts are intimately connected with our calling.

So exactly what is a gift? Gifts are special capacities or abilities distributed by the Holy Spirit to each disciple of Jesus, according to the sovereignty and grace of God, with a view to a useful purpose in the body of Christ, which is the Church. (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:5-8; Ephesians 4)

All of the gifts are given by our sovereign God, just as He pleases, the Word says. But the Bible also encourages us to ask for and seek the gifts. (1 Corinthians 12:11, 18 & 31)

Every follower of Jesus receives at least one spiritual / ministerial gift and has at least one duty to fulfill in the body. (Matthew 25:15) We believe that every disciple is a minister, and therefore, has a ministry. (1 Peter 4:10)

Your gift is generally identified by the ease with which you carry out certain activities, and by the results and fruits of your work. Begin, for example, to try to find the results of your prayers for the sick. Notice the ease and pleasure with which you carry out certain activities.

6. THE GIFTS ARE DIVERSE

God carefully selected the gift and place of service in His Body where you will serve Him. It was He who prepared you; it's not our choice. The gifts are given by the design of God, and this is what makes us special and unique.

The difference between you and other brothers and sisters is the purpose of God. That's why no one is more important than anyone else by virtue of their gift. All the gifts are necessary and important. There is no difference in the value and importance between one who has the gift of healing and one who has the gift of teaching. The gifts are diverse, but they are all given for the same final purpose: to serve and edify the church to the glory of God.

Let's look at some of the gifts mentioned in the Bible.

A) 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

Word of wisdom / Word of knowledge / Faith / Gifts of healing /
Miraculous powers / Prophecy / Ability to distinguish between spirits /
Ability to speak in different kinds of tongues / Interpretation of tongues.

B) 1 Corinthians 12:28

Apostles / Prophets / Teachers / Workers of miracles / Gifts of
healing / Those who help others / Administration / Different kinds of
tongues

C) Romans 12:6-8

Prophecy / Service / Teaching / Encouragement / Giving /
Leadership / Mercy

D) Ephesians 4:11

Apostles / Prophets / Evangelists / Pastors / Teachers

E) 1 Peter 4:9-10

Hospitality

7. WHY WE RECEIVE THE GIFTS

God gives us gifts with a wonderful and singular purpose in mind: To glorify God by better serving the Body of Christ in the calling that we have received. Not looking to our own benefit, not for our personal advancement, and not for our personal glory.

The reason the gifts exist is for **service**. Therefore, never refuse to serve in the area in which God has equipped you.

8. TAKE A TEST

Go to Spiritualgiftstest.com.

Take the on-line Gift Test, review your results.

Speak to your Cell leader or discipler for greater understanding of how God has 'shaped' and gifted you.

9. WHERE YOU CAN SERVE

The local church offers many options for service. There are many ministries that are extremely important to the proper functioning of the Body. You should be very faithfully and successfully involved in your group before taking part in one of the church's ministries.

The principle ministries are the following:

Atrium Campus	Nursery
Biblical guidance for finances	Outreach – in your community
Children's ministries	Palisade Campus
Communications	Prayer/Deliverance ministry
Connections Volunteers	Ushering
Kaleo	Visitation ministry
Marriage & Family Life ministry	Women's ministry
Missions – local and abroad	Worship

Speak to your cell group leader to find out how to become a worker in one of these ministries.

CONCLUSION

You have succeeded in a most important step in your walk with Jesus. Congratulations! Now, get ready to take someone else through this guidebook. This is how making disciples who make disciples works. Seek to honor this life giving process. If you haven't begun to disciple anyone, you should begin as soon as possible. There is also a deeper discipleship in the Christian life that you are invited to begin. Don't stop growing!

"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." Colossians 2: 6, 7

God bless you!

Thank you to Project Amazon (PAZ) (www.projectamazon.org) for creating this booklet and allowing CVVC to use, modify and share it with our disciples and disciplers.