



**STAGES OF DISCIPLE MAKING**  
**STAGE 2: COME AND FOLLOW ME**  
**Leadership Group Guide - February 2021**

The calling for every Christ-follower is to make disciples. Throughout His life, Jesus displayed that discipleship is an ongoing process that is done relationally. We are continuing our discussion of the article, *"The Stages of Disciple Making"* by Bobby Harrington with the goal of us all becoming better disciple-makers. Last month, we went over Stage One: "Come and See", which focused on the importance of building genuine relationships and friendships with those far from God. This month, we will focus on Stage 2: "Come and Follow Me".

**2. "Come and follow Me" Phase: Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:16–18**

The next phase in Jesus' strategy to develop disciple makers occurred when He moved from Nazareth to Capernaum. This town became the home base of His public ministry. It was a town of two to three thousand people in the first century, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (and the ruins of the town, including the synagogue, Peter's mother-in-law's house, and other sites from Jesus time are still in existence to this day).

Note Matthew's description of the turning point into this phase (4:12–17):

*Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali ... From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

This phase is punctuated by Jesus' invitation for those who have been in a casual relationship with Him and have been watching Him from a distance to now come and follow Him. He asked them to make a decision. Matthew 4:18–19 describes it succinctly.

*While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

Verse 19 is a key verse by which we can define a disciple. The definition is contained in the invitation. A disciple is someone who is following Jesus (follow me), being changed by Jesus (and I will make you), and committed to the mission of Jesus (fishers of men).

Once this phase started, those who had now made the decision to follow Jesus are led more and more deeply into the life of a disciple. They continued to see what Jesus was all about up close and personal. They watched and listened as Jesus healed the demoniac (Luke 4: 31–37), healed Peter's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29–34), went about teaching throughout Galilee (Luke 4:42–44; Mark 1:35–39), cleansed the leper (Mark 1:40–45) and the like.

During this phase, Jesus exposed His disciples to a broader and deeper understanding of His teachings and the implications of His kingdom. They also learned by watching the reactions of people to Jesus and their questions to Him. They are in a relationship with Jesus and with each other. Bill Hull estimates that there were 70 to 120 people involved with Jesus in this phase.

The broader community following Jesus is key. It takes a broader relational community around which new beliefs can be explored, expressed, practiced, and nurtured. In this phase, Jesus is discipling His followers, with the help of a new community.

**How do we apply the principles from this phase today?**

The key turning point in this phase is commitment. The disciples have responded to Jesus' invitation to follow Him. They were prepared for this decision because of the relationship and trust established in phase one. Likewise, people enter this phase today when they turn to Jesus as followers and involve themselves in the community of a disciple maker(s). They still do not understand what it really means to

trust and follow Jesus, but they are on the journey and in a relational community of disciples.

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***Remember to actively engage those who are making the decision to follow Jesus in further relationships—not just with you the disciple maker, but with others who collectively form a discipling community (a church).***

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Continue to expose them to true kingdom living and the fullness of Jesus' teachings and especially the real-life struggles involved in following Jesus. Conflicts will surface and that should be expected. Relational conflicts are necessary to a disciple's development.

Do not call people (into ministry) while in this phase of disciple making. They are not yet ready, and they have not proven the genuine nature of their commitment to following Jesus. We do not yet know if they will be Faithful, Available, Teachable, Sendable, and Obedient (the acronym FATSO). This is an area where many of us make mistakes. We meet people who say the right things, they look good early on, seeming to get it and we decide to invest in them as small group leaders or disciple makers or youth leaders. Slow down: Jesus shows us by his example how to pick such people. This is also likely the reason why Paul told Timothy, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands" (1 Timothy 5:22).

**Key points in the second phase:**

- Start with people who have made the commitment to be disciples.
- Expose them to continued relationships, more teaching, and a broader discipling community.
- Let them see what it is to be a disciple in "real life," with conflicts, tensions, etc.
- Resist the temptation to invite people from this phase into being disciple makers.
- Spiritual infants and spiritual children are most common in this phase.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Last month we discussed who God is calling you to invite into your life so they can witness "the goodness of God". Share how building relationships and friendships with them has been going for you. Has there been any praise reports and/or challenges?
2. After reading Stage Two: Come and Follow Me, was there anything new you realized about relational discipleship? Why do you think it's important for those you reach to actually witness firsthand how you live as a disciple of Christ in the good *and* difficult moments of life?
3. Is the person you are reaching ready to learn more about what a personal relationship with Jesus looks like? If so, what are the next steps you can encourage them to take (i.e. reading the Purpose Driven Life book together, and/or inviting them to your Small Group or to service)?

**Prayer Points:**

1. Pray that the person you have been inviting into your life would desire to be a disciple of Jesus, and for the boldness to invite them to Small Group, to service, or to begin the Purpose Driven Life book with them.
2. Pray for one another's current prayer requests; for themselves or others in their relational circles.
3. Pray that the COVID-19 virus would be crushed and for unity in our country.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Zoom Reimbursement**

We will continue to reimburse Zoom "Pro Package" subscriptions until further notice. This will enable you to keep hosting virtual Zoom meetings and not neglecting to meet as a small group.

- If you would like to participate in utilizing Zoom Pro for your small group meeting, please email [info@pearlside.org](mailto:info@pearlside.org). We will then send you reimbursement instructions for the cost of your subscription.
- If you already have your February or previous months of Zoom Pro receipts (beginning of May 2020), kindly email them directly to [info@pearlside.org](mailto:info@pearlside.org).