



Harvest Discipleship Strategy

At Harvest we want to reach people for Jesus Christ, but we do not want to just make converts; we want to produce radical, mature disciples of Jesus. We have two phases to our discipleship strategy:



Phase 1

Relational Discipleship Real People, Real God, Real Relationships, Real Change

This is the essence and the goal of relational

discipleship. Relational discipleship: We want to make disciples of Jesus who have a heart for God, a mind for truth and a love for the lost and hurting world by connecting people in life transforming relationships.

The biblical structure that facilitates this goal best is the Cell Church model. The Cell Church model embraces the two-winged approach where everyone in the church participates in the large worship service and the small Life Group (Acts 5:42; 20:20).

In order to accomplish our goal of Real People, Real God, Real Relationships, Real Change through relational discipleship we ask every member to be involved in five things that require two meetings each week:

1. Sunday morning worship service where we experience inspiring worship and dynamic, biblical preaching. Here we see and experience the majesty of God.

2. Life Groups are where deep relationships are formed. Here we see the closeness of God. The Sunday morning worship service and the Life Group in homes during the week are the two essential meetings. We want to keep it simple so every member is encouraged to say “no thank you” to any other weekly commitment.

3. Discover and use our spiritual gifts. As a part of our Growing in Christ Ministry we offer training on how to discover your spiritual gifts, passion and personality style and help each individual find out how he or she can minister in such a way that he or she will be both fruitful and fulfilled. Every Christian is called to serve, and we ask and equip each member to serve in one or more of three areas: the worship service, Life Group, or on a ministry team.

4. Make friends with unbelievers in order to share Christ with them.

5. Have a regular devotional time each day – a quiet time in prayer and reading the Bible. At Harvest Fellowship we want to keep it simple and make sure everyone is disciplined without being burned out. We don’t want to stagnate so we continually seek to grow in our love for God, each other and the world. The Cell Church model of relational discipleship helps us “keep life simple!”



What is a Harvest Life Group? A

Life Group is a group of 4 to 15 people who meet regularly for the purpose of encouraging each other to live a life that pleases God and to share the good news about Jesus Christ with others. Furthermore, the group is committed to participating in the larger church worship time.

Agenda of a Life Group

Every Life Group has one primary agenda - to provide a safe place where lives can be transformed by the living God; *A real God working through real relationships with real people to accomplish real change.*

Dimensions of a Life Group

A life group has five dimensions (Acts 2:42, 47):



1. Bible Study – Helping each other live a life that pleases God as defined in His Word, the Bible

2. Fellowship – A safe place to share life

3. Worship – Calling attention to the greatness of God

4. Prayer – Talking to God in behalf of each other and ministering to each other

5. Outreach - Sharing with others the good news of Jesus Christ

What About the Sunday Morning Worship?

Gathering together on Sunday to worship in a large group is important (Hebrews 10:25). Here we see the majesty of God - Jesus as our king. It also helps us see that we are part of a bigger community of believers. We gather together primarily to worship God and hear His Word preached. But the worship service by itself is incomplete. Being in a Life Group is *just as important!!* Here we see the closeness of God - Jesus as our brother. The goal of the Life Group is to help us experience Jesus up close and personal.



Phase 2 Growing In Christ Ministry Simple But Deep

We believe that a Christian should be intentional about his or her walk with God. If we just “go with the flow” we will end up downstream. God has called us to be life-long disciples. Here at Harvest Fellowship we have a plan to help Christians “go against the flow” and

experience serious growth in their walk with God. We encourage each believer in our church to go through several classes that will help him or her grow in Christ. After all the classes have been completed the believer will receive a certificate in “Growing in Christ.” Receiving this certificate does not mean the believer is finished in his or her discipleship – growth is a life-long process – but it does mean that person will have some serious tools now to live out his or her walk with God.

1. *What is Christianity?* This is a course for new believers and those who haven’t decided to be a follower of Christ yet. It is a course in basic Christianity that starts with “Why should I believe?” and continues discussing “What is salvation?” “What is baptism?” “What if I have doubts?” “How do I take care of my soul?” and “How should I obey God?”

2. *Becoming a Contagious Christian:* This is a course that helps non-evangelists discover the style of evangelism they would be most comfortable and effective in. God made us unique. Six styles of evangelism can be discerned from Scripture. The believer will also learn how to present the gospel in a way that our culture will understand it. He or she will also learn how to answer some of the tough questions people ask.

3. *Network:* This is a course that helps the believer discover what ministry he or she would be the most fruitful and fulfilled in. The believer will discover his or her God-given passion, Spiritual gifts and personality – the way God specially made

him or her – in order to be effective in the Kingdom of God.

4. *Old Testament Survey:* This course is an intermediate treatment of each major section of the Old Testament. The Believer will learn how to interpret the Bible so that he or she can get as much out of it as God wants them to. Difficult passages as well as important passages will be handled in detail.

5. *New Testament Survey:* This course is an intermediate treatment of each major section of the New Testament. The believer is taught how to read the Bible in such a way that he or she sees Jesus in the pages of Scripture. Doctrine and life are both brought out so that the believer’s heart and mind are stirred toward God.

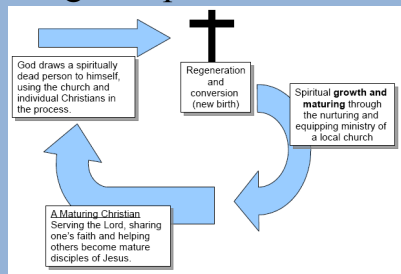
6. *Theology 101:* This course teaches the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. Differing points of view will be discussed in hopes that we can learn from each other as we seek the truth. We believe that the closer we get to the truth the freer we will be (John 8:31-32).

7. *Church History 101:* This course gives a general overview of the history of Christianity. Most cults are started due to a lack of connection with our past. We can learn from both the good and bad of our heritage. We will focus on major events and beliefs in the major sections of time from Jesus to the present with a special focus on the Reformation.

When the believer has completed the seven basic courses he or she will be awarded a certificate of “Growing in Christ.”

Harvest Philosophy

Our philosophy at Harvest Fellowship is to primarily grow the church by reaching the lost and introducing them to Christ. Evangelism is central to our focus. But we don’t want to leave the new believers as babies for the rest of their lives. We encourage every believer to be intentional about his or her growth in Christ, seeking to become radical, mature disciples of Jesus. Our certificate program is one part of our Two Phase Strategy of discipleship: 1. Relational Discipleship, which includes the large group Sunday morning worship service and the small Life Groups in homes during the week. 2. “Growing in Christ” ministry where we take courses to further our walk with the Lord. Phase 2 is important as a supplement to Phase 1, but not as a substitute. We want to keep it simple but go deep into God’s truth and plan.



What Does a Mature Christian Look Like?

At Harvest Fellowship we seek to make radical, mature

disciples of Christ who advance the kingdom of God together. But what does a radical, mature disciple look like?

Radical in the dictionary means extreme, an advocate of revolution. We speak a lot about

balance in Christianity, but we do not mean less extreme – we mean to be extreme about what God is extreme about, without leaving anything out! We are to extremely love God with our minds and we are to extremely love God with our hearts: these two areas of love should produce extreme love for God in our actions. By radical we also mean to be advocates of revolution. The church today, has become anemic because it has become a mirror of the world (i.e. individualistic, consumerist oriented, no conviction on beliefs), rather than a transformer of society. Jesus started a revolution – a total change in lifestyle, commitments, priorities and beliefs (Luke 9:23-26; 57-62; 14:25-34; 18:18-30; Matthew 10:34-39; 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-38).

Mature in the dictionary means fully developed (The Greek word is *teleios* which means complete, perfect, and mature). By this we do not mean a person can arrive at a place spiritually where there is no more room for growth (Philippians 3:12-16), but we do mean that the Christian has developed to such an extent that he or she is proficient in a number of areas:

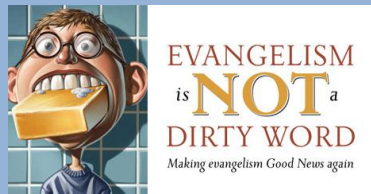


1. Ethically a mature believer is a person of character where sin is the exception to the rule in his or her life. This does not mean that the Christian never sins, but it does mean that there are no blatant, ongoing areas of deviation to God’s moral standards in his or her

life (i.e. greed, pride, sexual misbehavior, anger, etc. see Galatians 5:19-21). It also means that the fruits of the Spirit are evident in the believer’s life (i.e. love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, see Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:12-14; Proverbs 6:16-19; 8:13; Ephesians 4:22-32; 2 Peter 1:3-11).

2. Relationally the radical disciple has a deep intimacy with God and a close, open relationship with those in his or her local fellowship as well as a dynamic, growing family life. The believer’s knowledge of God and His ways and his or her experience of God are not shallow, but rather rich. This would include, though is not limited to, a good understanding of God’s word and a regular and consistent prayer life. The relationship with the people in his or her local fellowship is more than surface level. Fellowship, community life, and accountability would be a regular part of the mature believer’s life. The disciple’s relationships in his or her family are healthy. If the person is married and has children he or she does not have serious marital problems or a distant or adverse relationship with the children as far as the mature believer’s part is concerned. (See Mark 12:28-34; Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21; John 10:27-30; 1 John 1:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-4:4; Psalm 119; 1 Corinthians 13; Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

3. Vocationally the mature believer knows his or her spiritual gifts and passions and is actively being used by God to advance the kingdom of God in a ministry in his or her local church. (See Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:7-11).



4. Missionally the radical disciple is regularly involved in reaching out to the lost and the poor. The believer is active in sharing his or her faith – purposely making friends with people who do not know Christ in hopes of sharing Christ with them. The believer is open to and listening for God’s voice for opportunities to present the gospel (what we call divine appointments). He or she has a deep concern for the lost in other parts of the world (missions oriented). The disciple has God’s heart for the poor, reaching out to help those in need (i.e. sponsoring a child through Compassion, feeding the poor, etc.). (See Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 2:11-12; 3:15; Colossians 4:2-6; Proverbs 19:17; Isaiah 25:4; Leviticus 23:22; Deuteronomy 15:17; Amos 4:1; James 1:27).



5. Overall the mature believer has a servant’s heart. The Christian is not more concerned about his or her own comfort than God’s plan for his or her life. The mature believer does not seek

prestige and recognition, but rather follows Jesus wherever He leads, only seeking His glory. (See John 13:1-17; Luke 14:7-11; Matthew 20:20-28). God does desire for all believers to become radical, mature disciples who advance the kingdom of God together. (See Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 4:12; Hebrews 5:11-14; James 1:2-8; 1 Peter 2:2-3; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3). This is what it means to look like Jesus, to be conformed to His image, to be Christ-like.

How do we become mature? How is the image of God renewed in us? Many think it simply takes sheer grit; I just try real hard. Those that have attempted this method will tell you it doesn’t work. Others think it is “me and Jesus.” I do my part and He does His. The problem with this method is that if it works it takes away some of the glory from Jesus, but, as most that have tried it will tell you, it doesn’t work any better than the first method. It has to be all Jesus! John 15:5 gives us the answer: “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me and I in him, bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.” We become mature by abiding in Christ and allowing Him to mold us into His image. We are to be transformed by God, rather than initiate some self-transformation process. But what does it mean to abide? Does the branch try real hard to produce fruit? No, it simply remains connected to the vine allowing the sap to flow from the vine into its inner core, which produces the fruit. The sap is the Holy Spirit. To abide entails two things: 1) Close

proximity and intimacy, communication and communion, in other words, contact with God; 2) Agreement with God, in other words, faith. To encourage faith and experience contact, God has provided several means for us, which Christians throughout the centuries have called *Spiritual Disciplines*; I like to call them avenues of grace because spiritual disciplines sounds too much like work. Avenues of grace are not works to gain God’s favor, but rather opportunities or paths God has provided for us to commune with Him. The classic spiritual disciplines are: Bible intake, prayer, fellowship, worship, meditation, the Lord’s Supper, fasting, solitude, service and witnessing. The wise follower of Christ will take advantage of these means of grace often, seeking God with all of his or her heart, both corporately and individually. As we seek God using His provided means for experiencing His presence, He fills us with His Holy Spirit and transforms us from the inside out. God does all the work (Philippians 2:13) as we allow Him to change us and so He gets all the glory and we get all the benefit!



Real people, Real God, Real relationships, Real Change