

## IDENTIFYING AND INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Sometimes it requires a little discerning to determine who you invite into a discipleship relationship. Every now and then God in His grace will bless you to lead someone to know Him for the first time through evangelism. Other times He will connect you in relationship with someone who has been a believer for a while, but needs to learn and grow more as a follower of Jesus. With the direction of the Holy Spirit, we can identify the people God has placed in our lives so that we might invest in them through discipleship.

*Read Mark 3:13-16.*

Discuss: How Jesus chose His disciples.

## Identifying people

### Out of relationship

Discipleship is sharing truth and your life in relationship with others. It is impossible to disciple someone without proximity and love. Begin by asking God, "Who in my life could I help to follow you more faithfully?" Places to consider: Community group, corporate worship, someone you lead to trust Jesus, or someone who asks you to teach or mentor them.

*Read 1 Thess. 2:8*

Discuss: The affections seen in discipleship.

## F.A.T

We want to invest in people who are "F.A.T" Faithful, Available, and Teachable. Identify the people who want to grow, who

were willing to learn, and be trained. It doesn't matter how smart they are, it matters how hungry they are. People to consider: Those who ask a lot of questions, those who show up to things when invited, those who complete assignments when given, or those who show fire to learn and change.

*Read Acts 4:13, 2 Tim. 2:2*

Discuss: Traits of people who are best to invest in.

## Inviting people

### Invite them to grow and follow Jesus together

Discipleship is not a program to sign up for, it's a relationship to be invited into. Once you have prayed and identified someone or a few others to disciple, begin by simply inviting them to spend time with you growing in Christ. At this point, you don't need to even use the term disciple or discipleship. A way to ask could be, "Hey would you like to start meeting regularly to pray and read scripture together?" Next, at some point before moving forward, you will want to ensure that they are committed to what is expected in the relationship. Share things like expectations, goals, and plans.

*Read Matt. 4:18-22*

Discuss: What stands out about Jesus' invitation to disciples.

Be sure to plan a consistent day, time, and location for formal discipleship meetings.

## Investing in people

### Formal meetings

It is most helpful to meet with the group or person you are discipling once every week for 12-18 months. During this meeting time, you are imparting truth from scripture that will help them grow in one of the elements of discipleship.

## **Informal meetings**

Since discipleship is also about life-on-life sharpening, you also want to plan times of informal meeting. During this time, you are opening your life up to them knowing you, watching you, and experiencing you following Jesus practically. This could be as simple as inviting them to hang out with you or your family doing regular activities.

Be sure to plan how you will have both formal meetings and informal meetings for discipleship.

While investing in people, remember the commitments of discipleship. It will require you to love, be patient, be flexible, be stern (at times), be encouraging, and be consistent.

*Read Gal. 6:1-3, Eph. 4:15*

## **Personal Application**

Why is it important to choose people who are faithful, available, and teachable?

Do you have any relationships with people who have shown hunger for God in these ways?

Begin making a list of a few people that you have relationships with that you could disciple.

Think of how you would invite them into a discipleship relationship.

**When is the best day and time you could plan for formal and informal meetings?**