

# DESIGNED

## *A Women's Discipleship Cohort*

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A framework to draw near to God, grow in Christ,  
and partner with the Holy Spirit in intentional ways.



The Evangelical Covenant Church

# Dear Covenant Sisters:

In the Evangelical Covenant Church, we are deeply committed to fostering the flourishing of women in every way. This is why the Make and Deepen Disciples mission priority is thrilled to introduce this new discipleship experience.

Designed will take you on the adventure of becoming a disciple who makes disciples, going deeper in Christ and further in mission through the four major discipleship growth opportunities of Discover, Deepen, Develop, and Disciple. (By the way, this discipleship framework is certainly not limited to women—but we are excited to begin with you!)

Designed also emphasizes the reality that we cannot do discipleship alone—this is not just a resource but also an experience meant to be engaged in community, whether in your local church or through online cohorts with Covenant women across North America.

Make and Deepen Disciples is grateful for the opportunity to partner in the creation of this resource with Covenant pastor Tammy Long, author of Designed, along with stellar contributions made by a creative community of Covenant women leaders.

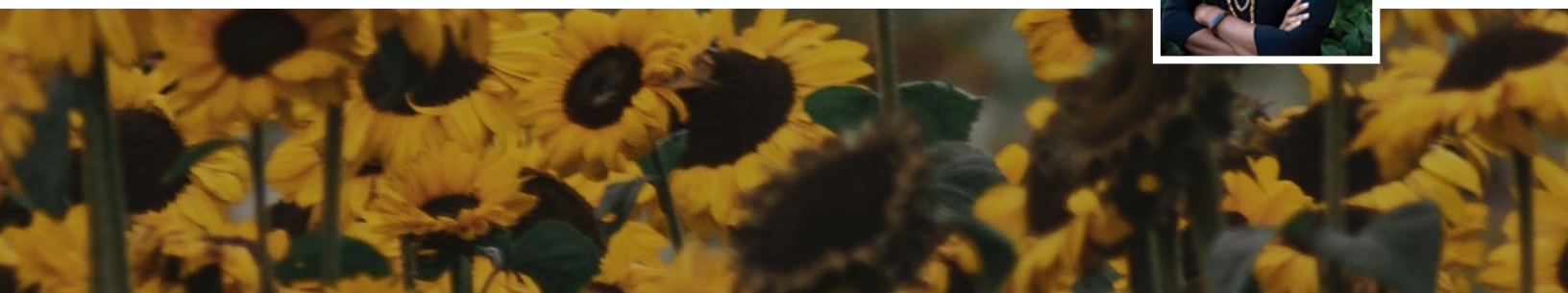
Our hope and prayer is that this resource will energize you to become all that Christ dreams you will be! Please connect with us about your experience with Designed at [mdd@covchurch.org](mailto:mdd@covchurch.org).

To learn more about what fostering the flourishing of women looks like in every mission priority of the Evangelical Covenant Church, please visit [CovChurch.org/Women](https://CovChurch.org/Women).

Making Disciples Together,

*Michelle Sanchez*

EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF MAKE AND DEEPEN DISCIPLES



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# Facilitator Notes

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*Dear Friend,*

Thank you for your commitment to facilitate a Designed Discipleship Experience! We pray you will be blessed as well as become a blessing to your cohort through this experience. As a facilitator and guide, you will participate in the 4D journey alongside your group's participants who are seeking to grow as disciples of Jesus. It is our prayer that as you create sacred space for your group to listen and reflect in each session, you will engage with the material and open yourself to all that God is saying and doing in your own life. In the next few months, you and your cohort will invite God to work in your spiritual formation and life transformation.

We are excited for you and will continue to remember you in prayer. Enjoy the sacred journey with God and your sister disciples!

## *Before Your First Session*

- ☐ We suggest that you contact your cohort participants with a welcome email:
  - Include some information about yourself.
  - Share your eagerness to journey together with the group.
  - Share instructions to prepare for the first session.
  - Send the Cohort Agreement to read before the first session.
- ☐ Pray for each member of your cohort.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the online video platform. Practice using the tool.

### *Preparing for a Session*

- ☐ Read through the material in advance to familiarize yourself with the content.
- ☐ Watch the appropriate videos for Sessions 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9.
- ☐ Engage with the material yourself for your own personal growth. Keep a journal of your own experience.
- ☐ Review the material with your group in mind, and consider questions that may arise or adjustments you may need to make in terms of time.
- ☐ Pray for your cohort and for God to work through the upcoming session.

### *During Each Session*

- ☐ Review group expectations and remind the group of the commitments you made together in the Cohort Agreement as needed.
- ☐ When introducing new content, model it first.
- ☐ Seek to keep the conversation going by asking questions versus lecturing.
- ☐ Maintain a prayerful attitude, asking God to help you hear, notice, and respond as the Spirit prompts you.
- ☐ Keep track of time to stay on schedule.

### *In Between Sessions*

- ☐ Encourage participants to connect with one another outside of the sessions via email or texts, e.g., sharing prayer requests, devotionals, music, or an encouraging word. Share this option as a way to journey together and support one another as you are moved.

### *Lessons Learned, Best Practices, and Logistics*

- ☐ Download to your computer any videos to be played before each session.
- ☐ When sharing your screen for a video or document, have the content already open on your desktop.
- ☐ Send an email reminder to the cohort 48 hours before each upcoming session. It is helpful to include any videos for the coming session as an attachment or link. This allows participants to preview and be ready for the group discussion. (In some cases, this can save time. If everyone watches the video beforehand, you may not need to show it during the session.)
- ☐ Send the homework as an attachment or link immediately following each session.



Grace and Peace,

*Tammy Long*

AUTHOR—DESIGNED DISCIPLESHIP

CO-LEAD PASTOR—SOUTH BAY COMMUNITY CHURCH

SPECIAL THANKS TO CONTRIBUTORS:

KATHERINE SCHOEN, EILEEN ZAMORA AND DAISHA MILLER





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Session 1:  
**Introduction**

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE

# Introduction

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*Watch Prior to Session:* “Designed and Fostering the Flourishing of Women” [VIDEO VIMEO](#)

*Welcome/Intros* | 5 mins

*Overview* | 12 mins

- Play “4D Discipleship Overview” video: [Vimeo](#) 7m
- Structure of Sessions, including Cohort Agreements 5m

*Sharing Our Stories* | 30 mins

**Facilitator Note:** It can be challenging to create a comfortable environment for telling stories in a group. Some group members may be eager to talk about themselves, while others will be more reluctant. Some people tend to over-share while others are more reticent. How do you create space where everyone can tell her story in a way that leads to deeper connection within the group?

Here are practical tips you can use to lead your group members to better storytelling.

- **Lead the story.** As the group facilitator, you cast the vision for why telling stories is an important part of building community, and you can model what good storytelling looks like. For your story, you may choose to focus on a mix of facts, some of which may be more superficial as well as a couple that are more honest or vulnerable, so people feel comfortable enough to begin to open up to one another.
- **Name the story.** To help ensure that everyone focuses their story, you may choose to call this exercise the “Five-Minute Story.” This also provides context for the type of sharing we are inviting. Five minutes is not enough time for in-depth storytelling.

Note: Name the story based on the size of your group and the time allotted. Divide the time equally among the group members.



- Invite participants to share their five-minute stories (including why they have chosen to participate in this cohort), beginning with facilitator.

### *Homework Overview* | 8 mins

This session's storytelling provided initial introductions among the group. Next week's storytelling framework will encourage you to dive more deeply into your stories in order to continue to create a solid relational foundation.

Choose from one of the following ideas to prepare your story for next week.

- **Key Shaping Story.** Share one key person, place, or event that has shaped who you are today.
- **Key Point Story.** Share one key point from one of the following aspects of your life: family of origin, current family, spiritual journey, or desired future.
- **The "Five Ways God Uses" Story.** Provide one example of how God has worked in each of these areas to grow your faith:
  - Practical Teaching
  - Providential Relationships
  - Private Discipline
  - Personal Ministry
  - Pivotal Circumstances

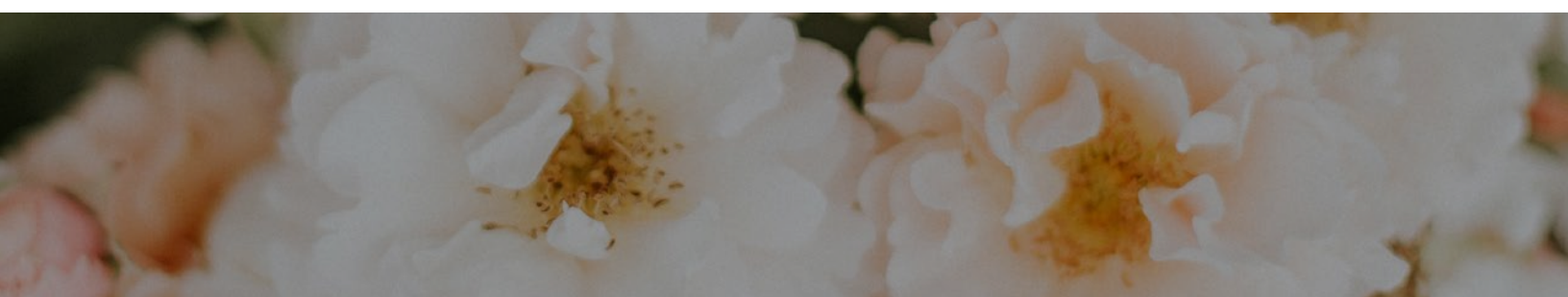
**Explain:** You will have four to five minutes to share, so you probably won't have time to talk about all of the people, places, seasons, and events that have influenced your life. Start by making a list of all of your ideas, and then use the list to begin thinking through which parts of your story are most important to you. It's your story, so you have the freedom to share whichever aspects you choose.

Above all, remember that the members of your group want to hear your story. Most of us are curious about the people around us. We are each predisposed to empathize and connect with others. Your story has the potential to draw the members of your group closer together.

## Pray for One Another | 7 min

## End Session

## Notes







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# Session 2: Introduction

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE

# Introduction

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## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture:

*"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.  
Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—  
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,  
those he gathered from the lands,  
from east and west, from north and south."* (Psalm 107:1-3)
- What stood out to you from our first session?

## *Holy Listening – Sharing Our Stories* | 30 mins

Introduce the practice of holy listening before sharing stories. **5m**

- **About Holy Listening.** Listening deeply to one another is a gift that is sorely lacking today in our culture. Too often we have determined our response before the person speaking has even finished their thought. David Oxberg has said, "Being listened to is so close to being loved that most people cannot tell the difference." Attentive and deep listening is one of the most loving things we can do for another person.

"Holy listening" adds prayerfulness to the practice of deep listening. Specifically, holy listening invites the Holy Spirit into the listening space, marking it as holy ground. The Bible reminds us wherever two or more are gathered in his name, Jesus is present (Matthew 18:20). Holy listening, then, is intentionally listening for God as we deeply listen to another.
- **How to Practice Holy Listening.** Share the following guidelines to help participants learn the art of holy listening.



- **Invite the Holy Spirit into the moment.** Ask the Spirit to help you listen well and to help you be mindful of the Spirit's presence.
  - **Focus on the speaker's story.** Attend to details, feelings, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
  - **Put aside your agenda.** Suspend related stories or suggestions/ solutions that may come to mind while you are listening.
  - **Listen actively.** Demonstrate that you are actively listening through posture, eye contact, nods, etc.
  - **Listen prayerfully.** Notice what stirs in your heart as you listen, and respond to God's presence through breath prayers of thanksgiving, comfort, peace, etc., for the speaker.
  - **Hold the space.** Allow the speaker moments for tears, pauses, etc., as needed.
  - **Express gratitude.** Thank the speaker for sharing and trusting you with her story.
- The facilitator models vulnerability by sharing her own story from last week's homework, then invites each participant to share their story with the group. **20m**
  - Remember to thank each storyteller verbally or with silent applause, and then move on to the next participant without any further comments. Divide time equally among all participants.
  - When everyone has shared their stories, invite reflections on their experience of holy listening. **5m**
    - Ask the group about their overall experience of sharing and listening without any specific feedback.
    - **Ask:** How did this experience help you begin to draw closer to the group as we prepare for our discipleship journey together?

#### Additional Questions (If time permits)

- What did you learn or relearn about yourself and/or group dynamics through this exercise?
- How might you use the practice of holy listening in your day-to-day life?



## *Spiritual Practice – Home Practice | 7 mins*

**Reimagining the Ignatian Examen**, by Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ

"In the Examen, we review our recent past to find God and God's blessings in life. We also look back to find moments in the day when things didn't go so well—when we were hurt by something that happened to us, or when we sinned or made a mistake. We give praise and thanksgiving for the blessed moments. We ask forgiveness and healing for the difficult and painful moments.

"Having reflected on this past day, we then turn to the day yet to come and ask God to show us the potential challenges and opportunities of tomorrow. We try to anticipate which moments might go one way or the other for us: toward God's plan or away from it. We ask for insight into what graces we might need to live this next day well; patience, wisdom, fortitude, self-knowledge, peace, optimism. We ask God for that grace, and we trust that he wants us to succeed in our day even more than we do.

"That's the basic idea behind the Ignatian Examen. St. Ignatius Loyola would tell us this should be the most important moment of our day. Why? Because this moment affects every other moment."

For further details about how to practice the daily examen, go to "[Try the Daily Examen](#)," by Mark E. Thibodeaux

## *Pray for One Another | 8 min*

## *End Session*

## *Notes*

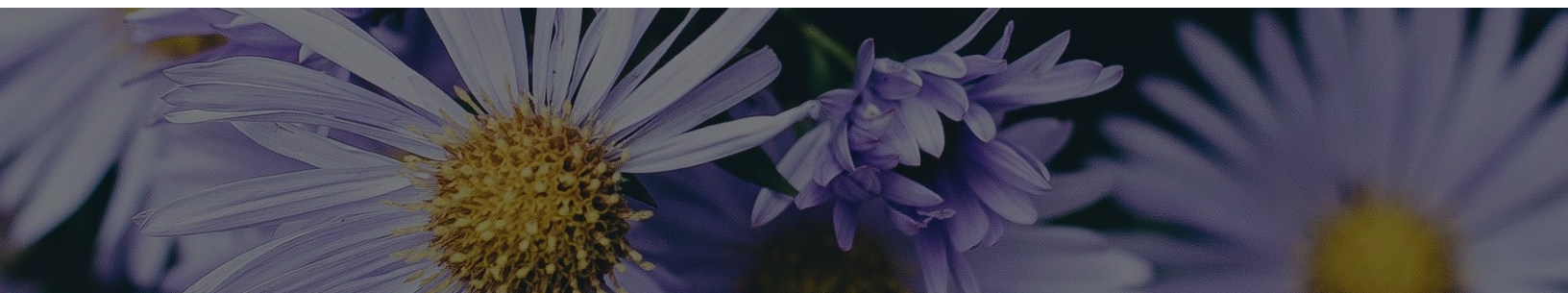
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# Session 3: Discover

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE



# Discover

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**Watch Prior to Session:** "Discover with Katherine Schoen" [VIDEO VIMEO](#)

## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture:

*"Praise the LORD, my soul.  
LORD my God, you are very great;  
you are clothed with splendor and majesty.  
The LORD wraps himself in light as with a  
garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent  
and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.  
He makes the clouds his chariot  
and rides on the wings of the wind.  
He makes winds his messengers,  
flames of fire his servants.  
He sets the earth on its foundations;  
It can never be moved." (Psalm 104:1-5)*

- Invite reflections on participants' experience with the spiritual practice of the daily examen.
  - Which aspects of this type of prayer did you find rewarding? Which were challenging?
  - How did praying the prayer of examen help you see God at work in your life?
  - Did your perspective on your daily life change by praying this way? If so, how?

## *Overview of Discover* | 17 mins

- Explain that we are moving to the first D of the Designed Discipleship framework. **1m**

- Discussion **9m**
  - Ask if there are any questions about Discover.
  - In two to three sentences, share your own process of Discover:
    - o How you discovered/are discovering God
    - o How you discovered/are discovering yourself
  - Invite participants to share an experience of discovery with the group.

### *Homework Overview* | **7 mins**

In the next week, watch at least ONE of these videos, or examine the list of some of God's attributes by Charles Spurgeon.

- ["Crazy Love."](#) by Francis Chan
- ["Our God Is Indescribable."](#) by Louie Giglio
- ["That's My King."](#) by Dr. S.M. Lockridge
- ["Indescribable."](#) by Chris Tomlin
- ["The Attributes of God."](#) by Charles Spurgeon

Then take 15-30 minutes to respond to these questions in your journal:

- What questions came to mind while you were watching or reading?
- What is one new aspect of God that you learned about through this video or reading?
- What is something you already knew but saw in a different light, or was a good reminder?
- How does this insight impact the way you worship God?

Be prepared to share your discoveries with your group during the next session.

### *Spiritual Practice – Experiential* | **15 mins**

#### **Lectio Divina**

- Read a portion of Psalm 103 out loud slowly. Select 5-8 verses as you feel led for your group.



- Ask the group to listen for a word, phrase, or idea that jumps out at you or touches your heart.
- Read selected passage a second time.
- Invite group members to turn a word, phrase, or idea that stirs them into prayer.
- Read selected passage a third time.
- Sit as a group in silence, being attentive to God's presence. **2m**

Explain that part of their homework is to practice lectio divina at least twice in the next two weeks.

- Share that noticing God's stirring through Scripture is a powerful way to discover more about God and ourselves as we attend to God's presence and prompting.

### *Psalm 103*

<sup>1</sup>*Praise the LORD, my soul;  
all my inmost being, praise his holy  
name.*

<sup>2</sup>*Praise the LORD, my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits—*

<sup>3</sup>*who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases,*

<sup>4</sup>*who redeems your life from the pit  
and crowns you with love and  
compassion,*

<sup>5</sup>*who satisfies your desires with good  
things  
so that your youth is renewed like  
the eagle's.*

<sup>6</sup>*The LORD works righteousness  
and justice for all the oppressed.*

<sup>7</sup>*He made known his ways to Moses,  
his deeds to the people of Israel:*

<sup>8</sup>*The LORD is compassionate and  
gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.*

<sup>9</sup>*He will not always accuse,  
nor will he harbor his anger forever;*

<sup>10</sup>*he does not treat us as our sins deserve  
or repay us according to our iniquities.*

<sup>11</sup>*For as high as the heavens are above the  
earth,  
so great is his love for those who fear  
him;*

<sup>12</sup>*as far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he removed our  
transgressions from us.*

<sup>13</sup>*As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the LORD has compassion on those  
who fear him;*

<sup>14</sup>*for he knows how we are formed,  
he remembers that we are dust.*

<sup>15</sup>The life of mortals is like grass,  
they flourish like a flower of the field;  
<sup>16</sup>the wind blows over it and it is gone,  
and its place remembers it no more.  
<sup>17</sup>But from everlasting to everlasting  
the LORD's love is with those who  
fear him,  
and his righteousness with their  
children's children—  
<sup>18</sup>with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.

<sup>19</sup>The LORD has established his throne in  
heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.  
<sup>20</sup>Praise the LORD, you his angels,  
you mighty ones who do his bidding,  
who obey his word.  
<sup>21</sup>Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts,  
you his servants who do his will.  
<sup>22</sup>Praise the LORD, all his works  
everywhere in his dominion.  
<sup>23</sup>Praise the LORD, my soul.

*Pray for One Another* | **8 min**

*End Session*

*Notes*

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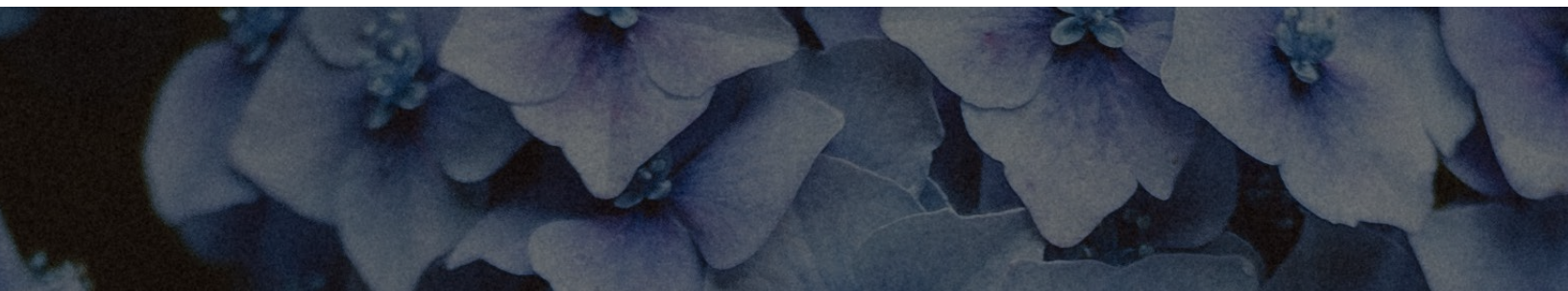
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# Session 4: Discover

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE

# Discover

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## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture (consider reading this passage as lectio divina):

*"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure."* (1 John 3:1-3)
- If the above passage was read as a lectio divina, invite cohort participants to share the word or phrase that stirred them. **OR**
- Did anything surprise you as you practiced lectio divina in the last two weeks?

## *Discussion on Discover* | 15 mins

Facilitate a discussion using the questions below. You may not have time to address every question, so decide in advance which will be the most important to your group. At the same time, allow the discussion to unfold around Discover as the Spirit leads.

- Which videos or readings did you watch or read?
- What questions came to mind while you were doing the homework this week?
- What is one new aspect of God you learned about?
- What is something you already knew but saw in a different light?
- How does this insight impact the way you worship God?

- How does Scripture change your perspective of yourself?
- Why is it important to live into the truth of our identity in Christ?

### *Personal Action Step for Discover* | **15 mins**

Through the past several weeks, we have examined who God is and who we are. These revelations cannot all be incorporated into our discipleship journey in a few weeks. Write down one action step you plan to take going forward. For example:

- In the next six months I will read *The Attributes of God*, by A.W. Tozer.
- I will memorize Psalm 139:13-16 by writing it on three note cards and placing them \_\_\_\_\_. I will read these verses every day to remind myself that I am precious in God's sight and "fearfully and wonderfully made."

### *Spiritual Practice – Home Practice* | **7 mins**

#### **Journaling**

A journal is not a diary or a recording of facts. Rather, it is a dialogue with God, such as a written prayer or response to a Scripture passage or devotional. The practice of journaling is a time for honest reflection, for a unique conversation with God that only you can have. Do not worry about grammar or spelling, just write what comes to your heart and mind. Over time, your journal will reflect your spiritual journey.

Journaling works best when it is a two-way conversation. Write down your reflections, sit quietly to listen to the Holy Spirit. It is not an audible voice, but often God speaks to our hearts, reminding us of his love, leading us to a passage, or reminding us that he is near.

At a later date, take time to look back at your journal to see how God has worked in your life. If you have kept a journal for many years, you can look back to see how God has moved in your life to transform you and how God has been faithful in your life. It is comforting to witness God's presence with us through whatever we have faced.

To begin:

- Purchase a journal or notebook.



- Find a quiet place to sit in silence before God.
- Write the date at the top of the entry.
- Begin to write. You may choose to begin with one the following:
  - A prayer to God
  - A response to a passage of Scripture
  - Be honest, write without analyzing, and don't censor

Prompt suggestions

- Genesis 1:26-28
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Psalm 139
- 1 John 3:1-3
- Galatians 3:26-27
- Ephesians 1:4-6

*Pray for One Another* | **8 min**

*End Session*

*Notes*

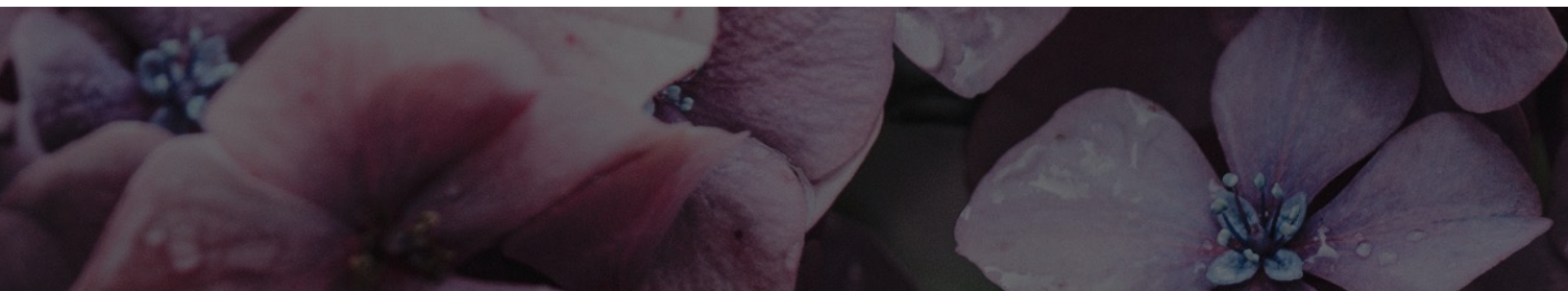
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# Session 5: Deepen

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE



# Deepen

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*Watch Prior to Session:* "Deepen with Juana Nesta" [VIDEO VIMEO](#)

## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture:

*"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." (John 15:4)*
- Invite the group to share reflections on their experience with the spiritual practice of journaling. Ask participants to select the answer to one question that stood out to you from your journaling practice last session to share with the group.
  - Why was that question particularly meaningful?
  - In what way(s) did journaling in response to this question deepen your relationship with God and/or your understanding of yourself?

## *Overview of Deepen* | 17 mins

- Explain that this session we are moving to the second D of the Designed discipleship framework.
  - Review Discover. **1m**
- Discussion **9m**
  - Ask if there are any initial questions about Deepen.
  - Invite each cohort member to share an experience of deepening, or drawing closer to God and others, in two to three sentences. Make sure to share your own experience.

## *Homework Overview* | 7 mins

### **Spiritual Disciplines/Sacred Pathways**

- Spiritual disciplines can help us grow deeper in our relationship with God and others. We may be involved with prayer, Bible study, and/or quiet devotional times. Yet do you ever find yourself longing to walk more closely with God.

In his book *Sacred Pathways*, Gary Thomas writes that God has designed various paths we can take to connect with God. He strips away the frustration of a one-size-fits-all spirituality and guides us toward a style of relating to God that frees each of us to be who we are.

- **Step 1:** Take the [Sacred Pathways Assessment](#)
- **Step 2:** Learn more about your preferred pathways, as well as those of others by reading ONE of the articles or watching one of the videos listed below (or both!):
  - [“Sacred Pathways” resource](#), based on the *Sacred Pathways* book. Includes summaries of nine spiritual pathways plus a written assessment tool.
  - [“Spiritual Styles: The Nine Sacred Pathways,”](#) a resource from Grace Church that includes summaries and suggestions of practices.
  - Gary Thomas, author of “Sacred Pathways” [video](#)
  - [“Soul Pathways, Part 1: What’s Your Pathway?” video](#) from Liquid Church

Be prepared to share your discoveries with your group during the next session.

## *Spiritual Practice – Experiential* | 15 mins

### **Breath Prayer**

- Prepare for the spiritual exercise by reading [“Breath Prayers,”](#) by Bill Gaultieret.



- One beautiful form of meditation is to simply follow your breath. Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Let yourself become aware of the physical sensation of the breath, feeling the shape, texture, and duration of the inhale and the exhale. Do not change your breathing, do not strain or push in any way. Simply watch the breath breathe itself. Feel the rhythm of the breath, its timing, the end of the exhale, the readiness to inhale.

When your mind wanders—as it will—do not worry. Simply return your awareness to the breath. Silently note each inhale or exhale, mentally noting in, out or rising, falling. Do this for five minutes. What do you notice about the rhythm of rest in your breathing? What do you notice about the rhythm of breath in your body?

- Walk through the following breath prayer example with your group. One example of a breath prayer is to pray, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,” inhaling with the first half of the phrase and exhaling with the second. For more detailed instructions, see the article link at the beginning of this section.

***Share reflections:*** What is your experience of this practice? What other passages come to mind that you could pray as breath prayers?

***Individual application:*** Practice breath prayer at least twice in the next two weeks. Find a Scripture passage that especially speaks to you.

Be prepared to share briefly in our next session.

*Pray for One Another* | **8 min**

*End Session*





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# Session 6: Deepen

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE



# Deepen

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## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture (consider reading this passage as lectio divina):  
    *"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths."* (Psalm 25:4)
- Invite participants to share their experience with the breath prayer practice from previous session:
  - Which Scripture passage did you use?
  - In what ways can breath prayers deepen your relationship with God?

## *Discussion on Discover* | 15 mins

- Where and when do you feel closest to God?
- Which sacred pathway(s) do you most identify with?
- What is worship like for you when you are worshiping in your sacred pathway(s)?
- What is worship like when you are worshiping in a pathway that may be more challenging for you?
- How can knowing and practicing your unique sacred pathway(s) deepen your relationship with God?

## *Personal Action Step for Deepen* | 15 mins

- Based on what you have learned about your sacred pathway(s), what could you do and where could you go that could help you worship more deeply on a regular basis?



- As you move forward in your journey, select/design a worship activity based on your sacred pathway(s) for your next personal action step to deepen your relationship with God.

Share with group.

### *Spiritual Practice – Home Practice | 7 mins*

#### **Sabbath Walk**

Walk slowly and silently for 30 minutes—preferably outside in nature if possible, without trying to get anywhere. Let your senses guide your walk. If you are drawn to a leaf, a stone, a color, a crack in the concrete, a shape in the floor, or the fragrance of the grass, simply stop and linger. Make space to allow the moment to be, to smell or touch or observe whatever is available for you. Listen to what it says, see what it looks like, feel what it has to say or teach you. Do not hurry. There is no place to go. Take all the time you need to receive what God has for you in this moment. Then, when it is time, when the rhythm of being present gives way to the rhythm of moving along, simply move on. Follow your own timing and curiosity. When you are called to stop, stop and investigate. When you are called to begin again, move on. At the end of 30 minutes, notice what has happened to your body, your mind, your sense of time, and your awareness of God's presence. (Adapted from *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives*, by Wayne Mueller [New York: Bantam Books, 1999], p. 70.)

### *Pray for One Another | 8 min*

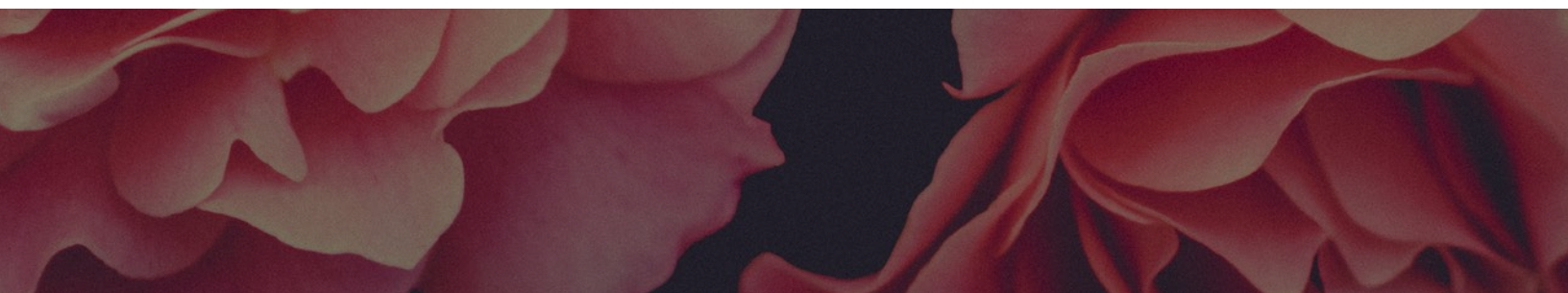
#### *End Session*

#### *Notes*

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DESIGNED

Session 7:  
**Develop**  
*& Develop Your S.H.A.P.E.*

A WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COHORT | FACILITATOR GUIDE



# Develop

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*Watch Prior to Session:* "Develop with Mary March" [VIDEO VIMEO](#)

## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | **15 mins**

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture: Psalms 139:1-18
- Invite participants to share their experience with the Sabbath walk practice from homework:
  - What was the experience like for you?
  - What did you sense, notice, or hear during your walk?
  - How did/might this practice help you connect with God?

## *Overview of Develop* | **15 mins**

- Explain that we are moving to the third D of the Designed Discipleship Framework.
  - Review Discover and Deepen. **1m**
- Discussion **10m**
  - What resonated for you during the video?
  - What questions came to mind?
  - What has been your personal experience with Develop?

## *Homework Overview* | **7 mins**

Develop is about partnering with God to grow in the ways and areas he has called us to serve him. Develop is about living into our God-given purpose. The homework for this session guides participants to explore their purpose so they can consider how God may be inviting them to Develop.



- **Step 1:** Watch the video "[What Is Your S.H.A.P.E.?](#)" **7m**
- **Step 2:** Complete the S.H.A.P.E. questionnaire and complete the reflections.
- **Step 3:** Select at least ONE additional video and answer the questions below in your journal.
  - "[How to Find Your Passion and Fulfill God's Purpose,](#)" by Kris Reece (to time stamp 4:26)
  - "[3 Secrets to Uncovering the Person God Created You to Be,](#)" by Kris Reece **3:35m**
  - "[Discovering Your God-Designed Destiny,](#)" by T.D. Jakes (to time stamp 7:12)
  - "[Finding My Purpose,](#)" by John Maxwell **46:38m**
- **Step 4:** Journal
  - What resonated most from this week's homework?
  - What was confirmed or affirmed for you? What questions do you have?
  - In what ways might God be inviting you to Develop?

Be prepared to share some of your discoveries with the group next week.

**Facilitator Note:** Share with participants that this week's homework may take a little longer, and require more reflection and prayer time than previous weeks.

- To get the most from the experience, if at all possible, this would be a good time to set aside an afternoon or a few hours to be with God in a personal retreat.
- In addition to the homework for this session, participants may wish to incorporate prior practices such as lectio divina, breath prayer, a Sabbath walk, or an examen as part of their time with God as they listen for how he may be inviting them to Develop.

## *Spiritual Practice – Experiential* | 15 mins

Remind participants that part of our time together is to “BE” with God in corporate spiritual practice. Since Develop is about partnering with God in his mission, our spiritual practice is creating space to listen for God’s voice through music as it relates to aligning with God’s heart in serving others.

- As participants listen to the song, invite them to allow God to bring people, situations, experiences to their mind that reflect how God may be affirming or calling them to contribute to his Kingdom.
- In Lectio Divina style, encourage them to listen to the lyrics for any words that resonate or “shimmer” for them.

### Practice

- Open with prayer, asking God to meet each participant through this experience.
- Play ONE of the songs below, selecting one you feel best fits the group
  - Britt Nichole – [“Set the World on Fire”](#) 3:44m
  - Chris Rice – [“Go Light Your World”](#) 4:51m
  - Newsboys – [“That’s How You Change the World”](#) 3:57m
  - Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir – [“Use Me”](#) 5:34m
- When the song has finished, hold silence for 20-30 seconds.
- Say amen to close the time and invite reflections.
- Possible Prompts:
  - What stirred or came to you as you listened for God through the song?
  - Was there a word, phrase, image, Scripture, or situation that came to you as you listened?
  - What might God be saying to you?

## *Pray for One Another* | 8 min

### *End Session*



# Develop Your S.H.A.P.E.

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God has uniquely shaped you for a purpose and mission in the kingdom of God. One of the ways to discern your purpose is by looking at five key areas, which together, reflect and reveal how God has already been at work in your life. And he's not through with you yet! Explore your S.H.A.P.E. and then consider how you may continue to develop into the person God has designed you to be.

## *Spiritual Gifts*

The spiritual gifts I believe I have are:

*"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others" (1 Peter 4:10).*

**Not sure?**

[Take this spiritual gift survey.](#)

## *Heart*

What I have a heart for, what motivates me most, what brings me joy include:

The type of people I love to work with most are:



Issues, ministries, community needs that excite or concern me most include:

If I knew I couldn't fail, what I would attempt to do for God with my life is:

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,  
as working for the Lord" (Colossians 3:23).*

### *Abilities*

Some of my natural abilities include:

Vocational, educational, or other training I have enjoyed:

Subject areas where I have excelled:

I feel my most valuable assets to offer others include:

People have said I'm really good at:

*"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well" (Psalm 139:14).*

## ***Personality***

If I were to describe my personality, I'd say:

If others were to describe my personality, they would say:

*"You have searched me, LORD, and  
you know me" (Psalm 139:1).*

***Want to explore your personality?***

[Consider this survey.](#)

## *Experiences*

Aspects of my life journey that have shaped me the most include the following:

Joys -

Pains -

Ministry or community areas where I have served that have given me a great deal of joy:

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).*

### *Reflection Questions*

Discovering one's S.H.A.P.E. can take time. These are just starter questions, but they may have confirmed or given you new ideas about your purpose. Prayerfully answer the questions below as you listen for what God may be saying to you.

1. What questions arose for you? What surprised you?
2. What seems to be bubbling related to your purpose?
3. How might God be inviting you to Develop?

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# Session 8: Develop

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# Develop

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## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture:  
*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)*
- Invite participants to share their experience with instrumental listening practice from the homework.
  - What was the experience like for you?
  - What did you sense, notice, or hear differently through the listening practice?
  - How could this practice help you connect with God and your purpose?

## *Discussion on Develop* | 20 mins

Invite participants to share highlights/key points from their experience of watching the homework videos.

- Which video did you watch, and what were your key takeaways?
- Were there any surprises, insights, or confirmations regarding your S.H.A.P.E. assessment?
- What connections do you see between your S.H.A.P.E. and your purpose?
- In what ways do you see your S.H.A.P.E. and purpose informing your path to Develop?
- What questions still remain for you about Develop?

### *Personal Action Step for Develop* | 15 mins

As with Discover and Deepen, the next steps for Develop are personal and may be customized for each person on the journey. Some participants may find they need to spend more time exploring their S.H.A.P.E., others may have a clear purpose and are feeling called to develop a specific skill or spiritual gift to better serve where God has called them.

Invite participants to consider how God has been speaking to them during these sessions and write down one goal as an action step for Develop. For example:

- In the next three months I will take a workshop on spiritual gifts to better understand my gifts and how I can develop them.
- I will attend our church's mission trip this summer to develop my experience and passion for global missions.
- I will meet with a coach monthly who can help me develop my leadership skills so I may better serve my ministry team.

### *Spiritual Practice - Home Practice* | 7 mins

**Option 1:** Heart Art (Materials: magazines, scissors, glue sticks, large sheet of paper)

- Explain that this session's spiritual practice incorporates hands-on visual arts as another way to sense, hear, and connect with God. Affirm that while this practice may seem like an arts and craft project, the Spirit meets us in many different ways. Encourage those for whom this may be new or feel unusual to enter in with expectancy and anticipation that God will meet and guide them.

Specifically, they will be looking through magazines for images that move their hearts as possible insights as to their purpose. It's simply creating space for God to share his heart with our heart.

- Practice—Begin with prayer. Ask God to lead you to images he wants to share with you regarding what moves the heart of God and how God may be inviting you to serve through what moves your heart.
  - Look through magazines and notice what stirs/moves your heart to serve.

- Cut and glue the images that speak to you on your paper to create a collage.
- Reflect on your art – what story, message, or meaning do the images suggest to you?
- Journal
  - o What moves your heart? What moves God's heart?
  - o What might God be saying or inviting you to Develop?

## **Option 2:** Luke 4 Clusters

- An alternate option based on Luke 4:18-19 involves meditating on the passage and creating word clusters around words that move God's heart and your heart according to what God may be inviting you to Develop.
- Practice—Begin with prayer.
  - Read Luke 4:18-19 and hold the text in silence for a few moments  
*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*
  - Read the passage again, noticing which words stir you.
  - Circle the words you sense moving God's heart.
  - On a separate sheet of paper, write the words you circled across the page, leaving open space between and around each word.
  - For each word on your page, create a cluster or web of related words, events, people, situations, as they come to you. For example, if you circled the word "blind", who are the blind? What does blindness make you think of? What types of blindness are there?
  - When you've filled the paper, review your clusters.
    - o What do you notice stirring in your heart?
    - o Which words stand out or capture your attention?
    - o How might God be inviting you to develop in any of these areas?
  - Journal about your reflections and what God may be saying to you.



Pray for One Another | 8 min

*End Session*

## Notes





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# Session 9: Disciple

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# Disciple

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*Watch Prior to Session:* "Disciple with Michelle Sanchez" [VIDEO VIMEO](#)

## *Spiritual Practice Check-in* | 10 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Opening Prayer/Centering (prayer, poem, music, Scripture, or silence) **3m**
- Optional Scripture:

*"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)*

- Invite reflections on participants' experience with the spiritual practice of heart art or Luke 4 clusters.
  - What resonated most for you about God's heart?
  - What did you notice about movement in your heart?
  - How did you sense God inviting you to develop?

## *Overview of Disciple* | 30 mins

- Explain that we are moving to the fourth D of the Designed discipleship framework.
  - Review Discover, Deepen, and Develop. **1m**
- Discussion **15m**
  - In one to two sentences, how did you come to Christ?
    - o Did someone influence you or share the gospel with you?
    - o What memories do you have around your first encounter with Christ?
    - o In what ways did others influence or shape your spiritual journey with God?

- BLESS is an initiative that offers a new way of thinking about evangelism.
  - o Play "[What Is BLESS?](#)" video **2m**
- Review the elements of BLESS **8m**
  - o Begin with Prayer
  - o Listen with Care
  - o Eat Together
  - o Serve with Love
  - o Share the Story
- In what ways have you experienced blessings from others as part of your own journey with God?
- Who might God be calling you to BLESS in your life?

### *Homework Overview* | **7 mins**

- Watch the [BLESS video](#).
- Spend time asking God who you might be called to BLESS in your life.
  - Sometimes we can miss who God has placed within our sphere of influence.
  - Ask God for spiritual eyes and an open heart to see who God has placed around you.
  - In your journal, write the names of two to three people God has placed in your life whom you might BLESS.
- Begin praying for these individuals and ask God to open a conversation with them.
- Consider opportunities you might create in the next two weeks to listen with care or eat together with one of those people. For example, invite one of them for coffee or to lunch. Invite one to go walking with you, etc.
- Listen for opportunities to serve with love, and ask God to help you recognize moments to share your story.
- Record in your journal any moments or movements of God as you seek to BLESS those God has placed in your life.
- Be prepared to share how God is moving with the group next session.



## *Spiritual Practice – Experiential* | **15 mins**

Listen and pray:

- Beginning with the facilitator, go around the group and ask each person to share a need related to being a disciple who makes disciples. For example, you might ask for courage or the words to say to a friend or acquaintance. Or, you may pray for sensitivity or the opportunity to eat with one of the names on your BLESS list.
- The second person will share a need and then pray for the facilitator, and so on.
- After the last person shares a need and prays for the previous person, the facilitator will close by praying for the need that person has expressed.

This is an opportunity to practice “begin with prayer and listen with care” as we focus on blessing others and interceding for one another.

## *Pray for One Another* | **8 min**

## *End Session*

## *Notes*

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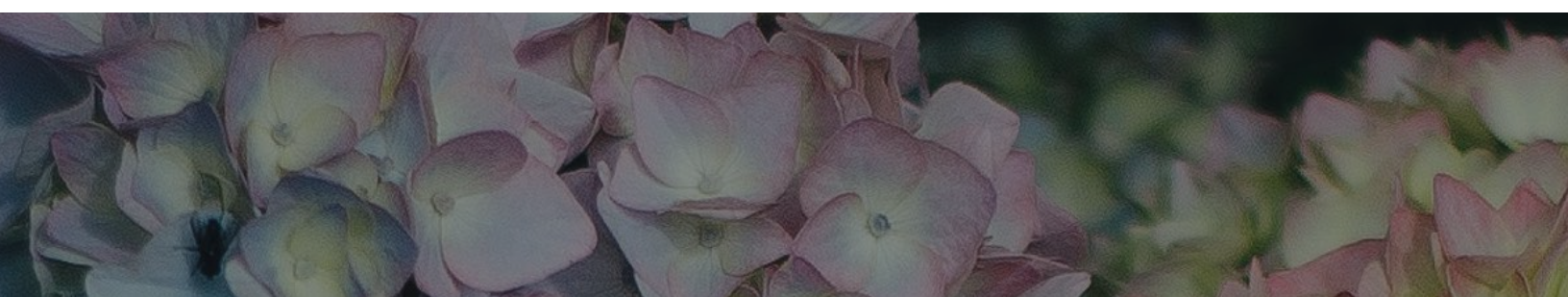
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# Session 10: Disciple

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# Disciple

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## *Check-in* | 15 mins

- Light a candle to help us remember God's presence with us.
- Open in prayer.
- Optional Scripture:

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)*
- Review BLESS.
  - Have any opportunities presented themselves for you to Listen with Care, Eat Together, Serve with Love or Share your Story? What happened?

## *Discussion on Duplicate* | 15 mins

While we celebrate when we have the opportunity to introduce someone to Christ, Duplicate doesn't end there. Duplicate embodies the entire process of a disciple who makes disciples. Duplicate is about intentionally pouring into someone's life as they become more like Christ, and intentionally pouring into us as we become more like Christ. Duplicate is about walking with another as we Discover, Deepen, Develop, and Duplicate ourselves. The discipleship journey continues and is ongoing.

The reading homework for this week presented six things that are essential to share with people we are discipling. These are core reminders for wherever we are on our discipleship journey.

- Begin with the end in mind.
- Teach them to love Scripture.
- Teach them why spiritual disciplines are important.



- Teach them to walk in the Spirit.
- Teach them to discern good teaching from bad.
- Teach them to do what the Lord requires.

Ask:

- How were these important disciple-making concepts taught to you?
- How might you teach these concepts to the person(s) you are pouring into?

### *Concluding the Cohort* | **20 mins**

- Thank you for traveling this journey together with us.
- We will send a 4D map to help you remember what we've done and how you can use this framework when discipling others.
- For the remainder of our time, we'd like to provide space for you to share how have you seen God work through this experience and close with a time for prayer together.
  - Give 3 minutes for each person to share.
- Ask each person as they share, how can we pray for you?

### *Pray for One Another* | **10 min**

- Close by either praying for the requests that were mentioned during the sharing above, or close with a prayer of blessing for each person.

### *End Session*

### *Notes*

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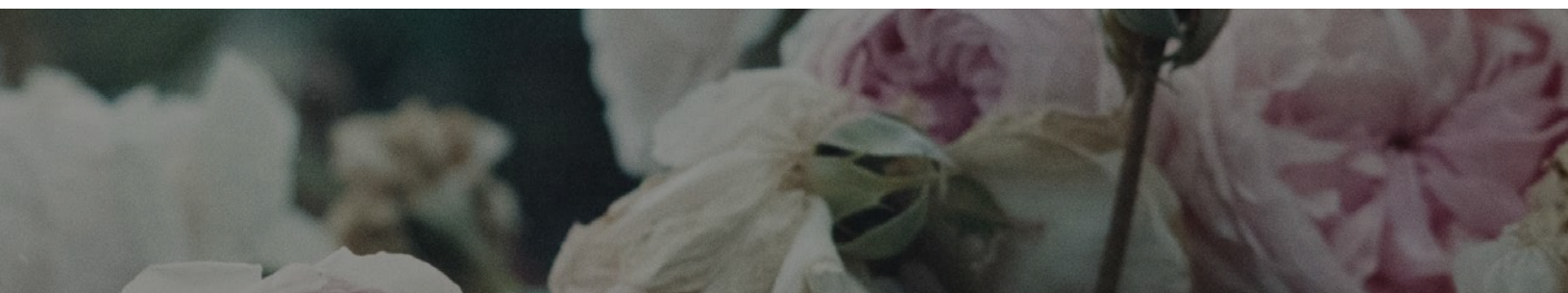
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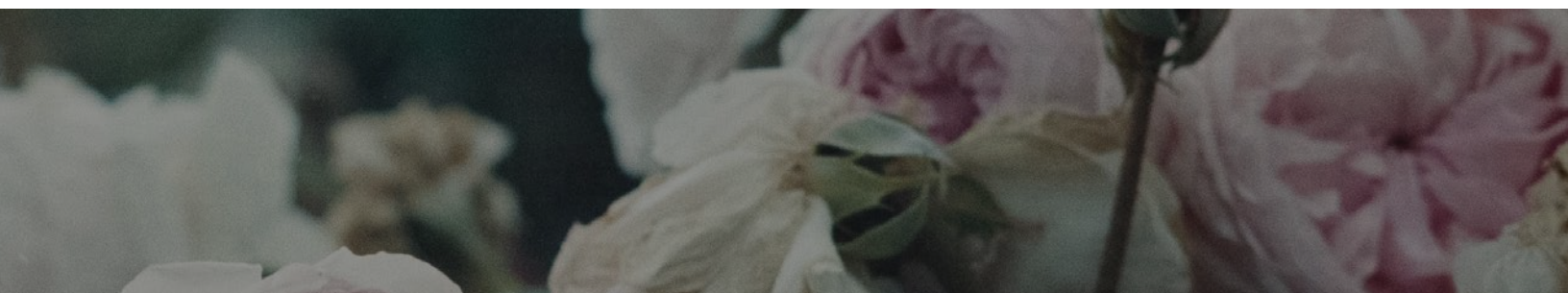


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