Discipleship

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.!

Amen. Thank you, Jeff. You can keep your Bibles open there at Matthew 28. We'll get to that in a moment.
This evening, I want to talk about discipleship. I don't know if this is as much a sermon as it is a lecture. But I want to take this subject of discipleship and talk about what it is. I want to give you a definition of it.
I want to talk about what it's not, some of the benefits of discipleship, where discipleship should be coming from, as well as a biblical example of discipleship. I believe discipleship is a critical part of the Christian life. However, I think that perhaps a lot of times we think of discipleship in a way that is not necessarily represented in Scripture.
And I want to give you a good biblical perspective and explanation of what discipleship is and how it's modeled for us throughout God's Word. So firstly, a definition. The word disciple in our New Testament comes from a Greek word that means to be a learner or a follower.
[1:15] And so we're asking what Christian discipleship is. We are asking what it means to follow or what it looks like to learn to follow Jesus.

And so if you are being discipled, we are essentially saying that we are being taught what it means to follow Jesus. And when we are discipling someone, we're saying that we are teaching someone else how to follow Jesus.
It's all about teaching others or being taught how to follow Christ. And I think it's something that's modeled for us all throughout Scripture. Systematically categorizing our disciplines and doctrines and theology, I think, is helpful.
However, I think sometimes we create more distinct boundaries around these subjects than what Scripture actually presents. So take evangelism and discipleship for just an example.
What's our favorite evangelism or passage about evangelism? And that would be the Great Commission, what Jeff just read. In verse 18, it says that Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples.
[2:25] So verse 19, it's all about going. And I think we're tempted to think that this passage is only about evangelism. Now it is about evangelism and it is a command to go and evangelize the world.

But it's not only about evangelism. Because in verse 20, it says, Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. So just as much as this passage is a command for believers to go and evangelize the world, It's also a command for Christians to disciple one another, to teach one another, to observe all that we have been commanded, all that God's word has to say.
I think a lot of times in churches we begin to think that certain subjects have these very strict parameters around them.
And so I kind of want to help us understand, I think, a broader definition, understanding of discipleship. And make sure that we know as believers it is our responsibility.
It has been commanded of us. We are told that we are to go and disciple people, to teach others. And I want to make sure we really understand how broad that is.
[3:35] And make sure that we really are applying that to our life. So firstly, what discipleship is not? What discipleship is not? The first thing that it's not is it's not a program.

This morning, Joey preached on the early church in Acts 2. And it was a phenomenal message. I think a really helpful message. Joey said that the church in Acts 2 had no buildings or gimmicks. And I would add no programs. But they had all they needed to be pleasing to Christ. And I think that's true for us. We can be pleasing to Christ without programs.

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Over the last 50 or more years, our churches in America have become very program-oriented. Now, there's nothing wrong with a program. They can be very helpful. But when a program begins to replace the Bible teaching or becomes the focus of the ministry that we're doing, I think that we've gotten some things out of place.
Because everything that we are doing, everything that we are working towards in the church, should be all about God's Word. But if we have classes that are looking to curriculums before they look to God's Word, or we have disciplines in place that are looking for a program before we look at God's Word, I think we're getting some things out of order.
[4:55] I think we have to return to the idea that God's Word is the primary foundation of all that we do. It's like a welfare system. A welfare system is great as long as it is supporting those who are in need when they need it.

But when it becomes the primary source of income, at that point, it doesn't work anymore. And so programs are great as long as our primary purpose is still God's Word and the teaching of God's Word.
Overly programmed discipleship can become very similar to this. If we begin to think that discipleship is only a program, that it's only at a certain time or a certain date, a certain location, we can begin to limit what I think the scope of discipleship is and the way that it should be taking place in the church and among the believers.
I believe that discipleship should permeate every part of our lives. And discipleship is not just a program in the church, but it should be the DNA of the church. It should be the natural outpouring of the church.
Discipleship should be a distinguishing mark of the Christ follower. So as you probably know, I'm a New York sports fan, and Jeff is a Boston sports fan. And so we naturally go back and forth about New York versus Boston sports.
[6:12] But that does not end as soon as New York and Boston are no longer playing one another. No, this is an all-the-time thing. Random Tuesday in the offseason, we are giving each other grief as if we're in the middle of a game right then and there.

Because it's a distinguishing mark of who we are. And as believers, discipleship should be happening all the time. Not just at certain pre-planned appointed times, but just all the time.
It should be a natural outflowing of who we are. It should be a distinguishing mark of the Christ follower. Secondly, it's not a segregated ministry area.
Discipleship is not a segregated ministry area. We have some segregated ministry areas. We have some things that happen at certain times or only for certain groups of people. So take choir and children's ministry, for example.
Those are specific areas of ministry. They have specific responsibilities. They have certain criterias. And that's a good thing. Because not everybody in the church is commanded to sing in the choir.
[7:18] Now, we're all commanded to worship. We're all commanded to lift our voices and sing songs and hymns. But we're not all commanded to be on the platform in the choir.

So that is a segregated ministry area. And that's okay. Children's ministry is the same way. We're not all called to work in children's ministry. We don't all need to be working in children's ministry. Michael will often say in our new members classes, when we're doing our ministry interest forms, if you are not interested in working in children's ministry, don't mark that you're interested in working in children's ministry.
Because you will be miserable and the kids will be miserable. Don't do that. That's a segregated ministry area. And that's okay. Because we're not all commanded to work in our church's children's ministry.
However, I believe that we are all commanded to disciple people. Go back to the Great Commission. And think about the context of this. In verse 17, it says that they worshipped him. And then in verse 20, teaching them to observe all things. It's in the context of worship. And I don't think anybody would disagree that we're all commanded to worship.
[8:28] I don't think anyone would disagree with that. And in the same context, in the same place, he's telling us we should be worshipping. We should be evangelizing. We should be baptizing.

We should be teaching, discipling people. All that the Lord has told us to do. Joey said this morning that evangelism is that natural outpouring of the Christian life.

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In the same way, discipleship, a natural outpouring of the Christian life. Third thing that it's not, is it is not just a meeting in a coffee shop. Not just a meeting in a coffee shop.
Now, there are times, and I'll be honest, I've had some great discipleship meetings in coffee shops. I've also had great coffee in coffee shops. And that is a great place to go.
You can use that. Absolutely. Do that. But it's not only there. It's not only over lunch. It's not only in those times. Discipleship can happen in all sorts of places. Just a few examples.
[9:28] Timothy was discipled by Paul for years. In the book of Philemon, Paul is under house arrest. And Timothy is there with him. There's no coffee shop there. But Paul is still discipling Timothy.

Also, in 2 Timothy, Paul is facing execution by the Roman Emperor Nero. And Luke is with Paul in or around his prison cell.
And in 2 Timothy 4, verse 9, Paul asks Timothy that he would come and see him. Oh, and in verse 11, bring Mark with you also. So how's that for a Bible study place?
Right there in the prison cell. He's waiting execution. That's not a coffee shop. That's not over lunch. It's just where he's at. Paul is inviting these guys to come and be a part of where he is in life.
So he can continue to encourage and disciple one another. We see that kind of discipleship a lot in Scripture. Just people taking others with them as they go and they live and they do ministry.
[10:30] That's certainly true of Jesus and his disciples. It's something that Chelsea and I try to do. She's much better at this than I am. But it is not uncommon for her to be discipling someone and for her to take a college student or another lady with her while she grocery shops.

Or while she's at home with the kids or something like that. Because it's good for you to see that window into another person's life and to be learning from them as they are living for Christ.
Fourthly, it's not just reading a book with another person. Now don't misunderstand me. Books are great. Books are phenomenal. You should absolutely have books that you're reading with other people.
But it's not only in the pages of that book that discipleship comes about. In Mark 9, verse 2, it says, And after six days Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain by themselves.
And he was transfigured before them. Jesus wants to show Peter and James and John who he truly is. And he's going to allow him in his glorified state. He's transfigured in front of them.
[11:35] There is no book. Jesus lives this out right in front of them. Now obviously this is not what discipleship looks like for any of us. Very clearly, obviously. But the point I'm trying to make is that Jesus is not just telling them something or reciting something back to them.

No, he is inviting some guys that he knows who he is close to to walk with him, to travel with him. And he puts himself on display in front of them. And when we invite other people into our lives to live life with us, when we are faithful in the mundane things, when we walk through a hardship in life, when somebody sees us just living out the ordinary things of life, or when we give Christ glory during special occasions, whatever it is that we're living life and how they're observing us, we are showing Christ to other people in the way that we live.
We should have people in our lives that we're bringing along just to see us live for the glory of Christ. Christ. Again, books are phenomenal.
They're helpful. I think that you should be reading books with other people. I think it's a really important thing. But it's one of those things I think we have to get outside of those pages. We have to have other conversations.
So just this last Tuesday, I had a guy that I meet with regularly. And we have a book that we're walking through. And we're supposed to be doing chapters 2 and 3 of this book.
[13:03] And we're supposed to do chapter 2 the previous week, and we never got around to it. So we're going to do 2 and 3 this last Tuesday. And right before we got started, he says, Hey, so kind of related to this, but let me ask you about this.

And so we just start talking. And next thing I know, we've been talking for 50 minutes, and we've not even addressed a single page of the book yet. Because that book was just a starting point.
It was just a place for us to get going in some of our conversations. It was just to kind of help keep us going along. And it's something for us to continually keep coming back to and keep working towards. But the point of that discipleship is not necessarily just reading that book and us giving each other our thoughts on that book.

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Because he can do that. He can take that book, read through it. It's a benefit to him. That's great. The point is that it would help us start conversations and talk about real-life issues and walk through things together so I could be a help to him, support him, and he is a help and a support to me as well.
Fifthly, it's not only one-on-one. Discipleship can and should happen in one-on-one times, but it can also involve others. It could be in groups.
[14:14] Jesus gives us multiple examples of this. There are times that he is just speaking to one person, there are times like in Mark 9 where he just has a couple of guys with him, there are times that he has all of his disciples with him. It can happen in a multitude of ways.

Sixthly, it doesn't only come from one person. Likely, you will have multiple people throughout your life disciple you and give insight to things and teach you God's word.
Chelsea and I, we are moving from New York to Hugo, Oklahoma in September 2019. And if you ever wondered what the opposite of New York is, it's Hugo, Oklahoma.
And so that was September. In February, the senior pastor of 30 years retired unexpectedly. And then in March, the pandemic hit. So here I am, fresh out of New York.
And I'm a city kid. I don't know anything about anything out in rural southeastern Oklahoma. And I am suddenly in a situation where I'm trying to fill a role that I had never filled before.
[15:18] I was with a people I didn't know in a culture I really didn't understand. There was one thing I knew. I need some guys to disciple me as I walk through this. I don't know what the Lord is up to.

I don't know what he's doing. And I was like researching, like, how do I move back to New York? This is crazy. I met the Lord, dropped two guys in my life. The first one was Michael. I called him up randomly, said, Michael, here's the situation.
Could you or someone that you know disciple me? And he said, absolutely. And I'm standing here today as a result of that ongoing discipleship, which is incredible to me.
There was another guy named Jerry. And I don't know that Jerry ever really intentionally meant to disciple me. But Jerry started coming over to our house, and he would help me with some home projects and, you know, the list of things I needed to get done and didn't know how to do.
And during those times, we would sit and talk about life. He would talk about his kids and his wife and things that he did well, things that he didn't do well, the way he wishes he would have done things differently, and just things about being a husband and a father.
[16:26] He was discipling me. All while we were sitting there changing a light switch or whatever it was. So two different guys, they were speaking into my life about different things in different ways.

They were discipling me and supporting me and helping me. And we all need that. And sometimes you'll have multiple people at one point in your life. Sometimes it'll be one after the other. There's not necessarily a set formula for that.
But we should have multiple people speaking into our life. So secondly, the benefits of discipleship. The benefits of discipleship. First benefit is that it teaches us how to live for and follow Christ. That's the obvious benefit. That should be enough to be highly engaged in discipleship. And in reality, we are all disciples of something. The question is, who or what are we a disciple of? Because we're all learning to live and follow someone or something. But who are you truly a disciple of? So often I hear people say things like, oh, I don't have time to read and pray.
[17:32] I can't fit any kind of a discipleship meeting into my schedule, any of that stuff. But we never have an issue fitting in politics or TV shows or sports or whatever else it is that we have going on in life.

It's really just a matter of making it a priority. Secondly, it creates opportunities for accountability and correction. That's the second benefit.
Accountability and correction. Mark 9 verse 33 says that they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house, Jesus asked the disciples, what were you discussing on the way?
But they kept silent. For on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the 12 and said to them, if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.
Jesus was walking through life with them. And he was able to observe some things about their life that otherwise would have gone unnoticed and unchecked. Because he was discipling them.

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[18:36] He was with them in life. And he was able to correct them and provide that accountability for them. As a staff, we recognize the importance of this. Every Monday morning we spend time reading God's word together and being taught.

And then after that's over, our pastors get together and we do a thing. We call it our Pastor Zoom. And so there's a different pastor from somewhere around the U.S. that does training with us. And we have discussions about theology or the church or issues that we're facing or whatever it is. And usually that leads into our pastor lunches. And so Mondays we usually go to lunch together and we continue to have those conversations. We continue to work through issues and all of these things.

And by 1 p.m. on a Monday, we're both usually pretty tired. We're full. But we're also have been filled with scripture and teaching, accountability and correction.

And it's a really good and healthy thing. It ensures that we are not only listening to our own voice as we shepherd the church and lead the church. And we disciple people in the church ourselves.

[19:44] And that's the benefit that discipleship brings you. You don't have to walk through this parenting issue by yourself. You don't have to walk through this tough passage by yourself. You can find other people who have walked through those things, who have dealt with those things right here in our church to be discipled by.

And once you have learned those lessons, you can turn around and pass them on to someone else just behind you. Third thing that it does is it encourages both parties involved.

It encourages both parties involved. When we're discipling someone, we get to benefit from their, when we're being discipled by someone, we get to benefit from their life experiences. We get to trust that the same God that worked through their life and worked in their life is the same God that's working in our life now.

2 Timothy 4.11 says, If you know where we are in 2 Timothy at this point, these are some of the last words that Paul records for us.

So why does he want these guys there with him at the end of his life? Because the discipleship relationships that he has with them has been an encouragement to him. He wants that encouragement there in the last days of his life.

[21:00] He wants the guys that are closest to him to be with him. We see that in 1 Thessalonians. In fact, that's the whole reason that that letter is written. In chapter 3, verse 5, it says, I sent to learn about your faith for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you.

Then in verse 6, Timothy gives a good report. And in verse 7, For this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction, we have been comforted by, about you through your faith.

Paul has invested in this church. He loves this church. And it has the good report about this church that he receives that is an encouragement to him. It builds him up. It excites him. And what could be more exciting than getting to see the faith of a person you have invested in lived out?

What a cool thing. The college students know that I love the opportunity I have to work with them. Our Crossroads ministry is truly one of my very favorite things in life.

And I love to get to watch them wrestle with and grasp God's word and love God's word. And then many of them already have started to go and disciple other people younger than them.

[22:07] And pass that on to others. I also know that I can hardly talk about them without getting emotional. Because I just, I love watching this in their lives so much.

It's such an incredible thing that I get to, I get to pour into their life and love them and support them. And then to watch them turn around and do that for others is absolutely amazing.

Fourthly, discipleship builds your church community and your friendships. As Joey said this morning, there's no biblical category for a Christian who loves Jesus individually.

And that's true. Christians understand the need for deep friendships. And it is critically needed. Those that you disciple will become some of the best friends that you have.

And those who are discipling you, again, some of the closest relationships in life. Second John 1.12, though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use pen and ink.

[23:05] Instead, I hope to see you and talk face to face so that our joy may be complete. To talk face to face, that's something that we need to remember and learn today, right?

It's pretty easy to text somebody. We should be talking to people face to face. Those relationships are important. And if you're not involved in a discipleship relationship of some sort, go get plugged into a Sunday school class.

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And this is crazy, but you'll be sitting there in that class, and there's going to be some other people that walk into that class as well. And if you look over to the left or to the right, those are people that also need to be in discipleship relationships.
So you can just simply say, hey, you want to start reading a book together? Hey, you want to go grab lunch today? Hey, you want to go and do this? And just start building in these relationships into your life.
They don't have to be super thought out, these long, drawn out things. And there are times that it should be. There are times that it needs to be very precise and really thought through. And there are times that those programs and the organization of it all is really beneficial.
[24:11] But our discipleship primarily in the church should simply be believers just spending time together and loving one another, teaching one another, helping one another, encouraging one another.

Fifthly, discipleship pushes you in your personal devotion to Christ. If we know that somebody is going to be checking in with us, it pushes us to be ready for them.
If you know Coach T, if you spend any time around him, you know he is excellent at pushing you in your personal devotion with Christ. And if you ever go to get lunch with Coach T, you should absolutely do it.
But I am going to give you one word of warning. Before you walk into that restaurant, you need to just think about your life for a second before you walk in. Because you know there's going to be some hard questions coming.
I was sitting at, I think we were at McAllister's. And we're talking about something that probably didn't matter. I was probably telling him about the New York Giants or something. And he says, okay, how's your marriage?
[25:21] How's your walk with the Lord right now? How have you not been following Christ the way you should have been following Christ? Hard questions. And now when I go and I spend time with him or I'm around him, I know hard questions are coming.

And I'm prepared for those things. I'm ready for those things. And not just because I'm meeting with him, but because I know I'm going to be held accountable for this. And right now an example of that accountability is T or maybe another pastor.
But ultimately, we will give an account for the way that we lived our lives and how we were devoted to Christ as we live throughout all of our life. As we stand before God one day.
If we know that we're going to sit down with somebody else and we're going to try to disciple them, we had better have our stuff together. We had better be prepared to do that.
We need to take those things seriously. So this naturally forces us to get serious about living for Christ. So where does discipleship come from?
[26:28] Thirdly, where does discipleship come from? Well, it starts with pastors and teachers. Ephesians 4.11. He's given us shepherds and teachers. Verse 12.

Shepherds and teachers.
We should be setting this example for the church. We should be doing these things. We should have people in our homes. We should be meeting with people. Spending time with people. And then it should begin to flow all throughout the church.
Just a micro example of I think how this kind of plays out is I've got five guys that are either in college or a little older that I'm intentionally trying to disciple.
As of right now, one of them I'm not sure if he knows I'm intentionally trying to disciple him. But at least four of them know. I'm really intentionally trying to have some discipleship conversations with them. And something that Chelsea and I try to do is we try to actively parent our kids in front of the students at Crossroads.
[27:32] So we try to bring them along and include them in the ministry that we're doing. We do that for two reasons. One, we want to give a biblical example and a faithful example of parenting before these young adults who are not quite having kids yet.

But also we want our kids to see us actively engaged in ministry and how to love other people and how we give up our time for other people and all those things. And what ends up happening is we'll go to events.
And so we'll take our kids. And my son, Maverick, he's 10. And he's just at that age where I am not cool anymore. Officially. It's been posted. So everyone knows I'm not cool.

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The ripe old age of 34. I thought it would go longer, but it does not. My coolness was fleeting for sure. But who does Maverick think is really cool?
Those college students that we're hanging out with. And so we go and we do a college event. We spend time with these Crossroads students. And while I'm trying to invest in their lives and love on them, I also get to watch them.
[28:39] Love on my kids. And it's a really cool picture. I'll never forget sitting at the Staten's house. We were there one evening. We had been playing wiffle ball.

And my son had no idea at this time how to swing a bat or how to, you know, anything about baseball. I didn't understand the rules, any of that. And the game was over. We were over on his deck.
And I turn around. I see Adam Brotherton on his knee sitting there coaching Maverick on how to swing the bat. And he's just soft tossing balls to him. And it was then that Maverick fell in love with baseball.
He's been playing for several years now. Now, that's not true Christian discipleship. I get that. But that's kind of the picture of what we're looking for. That you're constantly passing down the knowledge that you have to the next generation just behind you.
Those people that are just a little bit younger than you. Second place that discipleship should be coming from are husbands to wives.
[29:41] The primary discipleship relationship in a home should be a husband discipling his wife. Ephesians 5.25, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water with the word.

In his book, Let the Men Be Men, Chris Mueller says, Ideally, a wife should not have to depend on her father or mother or others for answers. A godly husband should be the primary resource for his wife and children.
It is the husband's responsibility to meet her needs, especially as it relates to encouraging her growth in Christ. He continues, The godly man's central aim is not what he can get from his wife, but instead how he can honor her, keep her pure, and help her to mature in Christ.
His goal is to protect his wife from evil in the world, to set her apart uniquely for Christ, and be her number one encourager in her pursuit of sanctification.
Men, husbands, the primary discipleship relationship we should have in our life is the one with our wife.
[30:53] We should be discipling our wives. Naturally, this leads to the third place, parents to the kids. Parents to their children. Deuteronomy 6, Moses is saying to the people of Israel, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might.

And these words I command that you shall be on your heart. Verse 7, you shall teach them diligently to your children. So he's commanding the Israelites to teach the things of the Lord to their kids.
Not sending them to the temple, or to a service, or to a program, or reading a book, but that the parents are teaching their children. Then he says, so he says, diligently teach your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
So whatever you have going on, whatever the situation is, you need to be discipling your children. As you sit at the dinner table, while you're driving around in the car, when you're sitting around the house on a Saturday, take those opportunities as intentional times to be discipling your children. When something comes up on the TV, don't just flip the channel, because it's a hard subject. Flip the channel, and then have a conversation with your kids. And talk about what it is that honors the Lord, or dishonors the Lord, or whatever it is.
[32:24] Disciple your kids. Fourthly, discipleship comes from church members. From church members. If you return to Ephesians 4, in verses 15 and 16, rather speaking truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, and to Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint in which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

We are to be working together to build one another up in love. Joey said this morning that love should mark the church.

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A love for Christ, a love for the church, and a love for others. Evangelism is the outpouring of love for others. Discipleship is the outpouring of love for the church, and others in the church.
The face time that we have with one another shouldn't be limited to just this building. We should be spending time outside of this place with people in our church, loving them, encouraging them, building them up in love.
So, fourthly, I want to give you a biblical example of discipleship. So, just one example that we see in Scripture.
[33:44] Throughout the New Testament, Paul is constantly referring to Timothy, his true child of the faith, because Paul is actively discipling Timothy. So, the example of Paul and Timothy.

We see that Paul refers to him as this in 1 Corinthians 4.17, 1 Timothy 1.2, and 2 Timothy 1.2. It's even possible that Paul led Timothy to Christ during his visit to Lystra in Acts 14, further just emphasizing the fact that Timothy is his true child of the faith.
But in their relationship, we see firstly that discipleship involves instruction. We have two entire books of the New Testament that are basically just instructions for Timothy from Paul.
Discipleship involves instruction. This isn't the only time that Paul gives instruction to people that he's trying to lead and set an example for. In 1 Corinthians 11.1, he says, Be imitators of me as I am of Christ.
In the middle of giving this church instructions on how to live and how to operate, he tells them to look to him because he is leading the way. Secondly, we see in this relationship between Paul and Timothy that discipleship requires time and includes living life together.
[35:00] Paul and Timothy weren't just pen pals. Timothy didn't just read things from Paul. They spent a lot of time together. Paul invites Timothy to come and live life with him, to do ministry with him. See that in Acts 17, 18, 19, and 20.

See that in Romans 16 and 1 Corinthians 16, 2 Corinthians 1 and 1 Thessalonians 3. They spend a lot of time together. That's who we should want to spend time with, our other believers.
Thirdly, we see that sometimes discipleship leads to replacement. In 1 Corinthians 4.17, Timothy goes on a mission in Paul's place. There are times that we are going to disciple someone and raise them up so they are taking our place.
And essentially, that's what we're doing with our kids because eventually we won't be around anymore. So we're passing things on to them, our churches and our world and all of those things.
Fourth thing that we see is that discipleship isn't only from one person, but it does have one source. It's always focused on the Bible. Timothy is, or Paul is always reminding Timothy of the things of the gospel, of who Christ is, the early teachings of the church, and even hymns of the church.
[36:09] He's reciting lyrics that remind us of who Christ is. The fifth thing, we see that that discipleship starts in the home.

Paul brings attention to this. In 2 Timothy 1.5 and 3.15, it tells us that his mother and grandmother taught him the Bible. Parents, you never know the opportunities that you may have to impact the world by discipling your kids.
Grandparents, the same is true. You never know the opportunities that you may have by discipling your grandkids. So you can disciple them, fill them full of the gospel, and fill them full of sugar, and send them back to their parents' house.
On 5 of the gospel and full of sugar, someone's going to get saved, you know? Sixthly, we see that discipleship does not have an age requirement. This breaks my heart, but Timothy is a young man, probably in his early 30s, which means he's probably younger than me.
It's rough. But in 1 Timothy 4.12 and 13, it says, Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.
[37:23] I've heard Michael say before that in order to disciple somebody, you just got to know one more thing than they do. Just pass that one thing on, then you go learn some stuff, go read some books, and start passing those things on.

There's not an age requirement to this. There's not a certificate you have to get. You don't have to be ordained to disciple someone. You just need to be a follower of Christ and know one more thing than the person behind you, and you can start discipling and sharing what you know about our Lord.

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Seventhly, we see that discipleship is a way of life. Timothy spent a lot of time with Paul and is named in six of the greetings of Paul's epistles.
But Paul doesn't want Timothy to just stop there with knowing him. He doesn't want him to just pastor a church in Ephesus. He doesn't want him to just stay stagnant. He wants these things to continue on, to be passed on.
In 2 Timothy 2, 1 and 2, it says, You then, my child, will be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses and trust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
[38:27] If you look at those two verses, you see five generations of people being discipled and passing on things of Christ. It says in the first verse, grace that is in Christ Jesus.

So Jesus, obviously, is the first one. And he passes that on to Paul, the things that you have heard from me. So that's your second generation, Jesus, then on to Paul.
And then he says, You then, my child, in the first verse. That's the second, or that's the third generation. That would be Timothy. And then the fourth generation, he's supposed to entrust to faithful men.
That's the fourth generation there. And then those men, they don't keep it to themselves. But then a fifth generation, they're able to teach others also. Five generations right there, just in those two verses, of people who are passing on the truth of Scripture to the next generation of people.
This cycle of discipleship is shown throughout the Old Testament and New Testament. We see this as a pattern of Jesus' life. We see it as a pattern of Paul's life. And it should be the pattern of our lives.
[39:30] It should be the DNA of our church that we are constantly discipling other people. Don't wait around for an event or look for someone to start, you know, something official.

Just look for someone to start discipleship with. There's somebody that you respect and think, man, they know more than me. I'd love to learn more from them. Ask them.
It may seem awkward, but it's not. Most of the discipleship relationships, I mean, like 95% of them that I've been a part of is me going to somebody else and asking them if they want to start some discipleship meetings or if they want to start talking through things or they want to read a book together or if they want to attend something together or if they want to do something, they want to start that relationship.
So if you want to get started, here's my recommendation. If you look around you right now, there's a bunch of believers around you right now. They all need to be in discipleship relationships as well as you need to be in a discipleship relationship if you're not already.
So ask somebody to go to lunch sometime. Go grab somebody, walk into the bookstore, pick out a book you're going to start reading together. It's really that simple. If you were to do this in your Sunday school class and you are intentionally finding opportunities to get together with other people in your class, outside of class, your Sunday school teacher will probably start greeting you with a holy kiss because I'm constantly reminding them that they need to be fellowshipping with others, they need to be encouraging some of our small groups and things like that.
[41:07] Simply look around and find somebody that maybe you've talked to them before, maybe you haven't, that's okay. We're all getting ready to be done here.

I'm going to pray for us. We're getting ready to leave. Take advantage of this time. Look around and say, hey, you want to start doing something together? I don't have a relationship like that in my life. I would love to have that in my life.
Can we start doing something together? Chelsea and I, we've moved several times and all through the years, every time we move, it's always very difficult to find groups of friends in New York and Hugo, moving back to Mustang, it's hard at first.
But I don't know that we've ever had a time where we walked up to somebody and said, hey, that's not true. There was one time. One time someone told us no. But other than that, every other time, if you ask someone to go get lunch, or hey, could we start hanging out and spend time together?
It's going to happen. They're going to say yes. And on that rare occasion to say no, you're in the same situation you were when you began with. So nothing to lose. So I'll leave you with the question that Joey left us with this morning.
[42:18] Do you love Christ? Do you love others? Let us be devoted to his word by discipling other people in the church, being discipled by others as well.

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Let's pray. Father, we come before you in the name of Jesus, and Lord, we're so grateful for your word, the example that it sets for us in our lives, that it gives us direction on how we are to live our lives.
Lord, I pray that discipleship would not be simply a program or simply a set time, although that is beneficial. Lord, I pray that discipleship would truly just be a natural outpouring of the people in our church, loving one another and caring about one another.
Lord, I pray that you'd use the people in this room to go and impact the people that aren't here this evening and start bringing them into those discipleship relationships as well.
Lord, we ask that you would bring our pastor back to us safely. We thank you that he's able to go and minister in Dallas and support those believers there. We lift that church up to you and ask that you would bless Trinity Bible.
[43:32] Lord, I thank you for this time that we've had together. Lord, we love you so much. We pray this in Jesus' name, in Jesus' name, amen.

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