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# The Discipleship Handbook

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Where Disciples Make Disciples

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## FOREWORD: WHY DISCIPLE?

by Pastor Alvin Chan

Thank you for picking up this handbook! The act of doing so means that you are ready to take the step to invest in another life. It means that you have decided to join many others in being part of The Discipleship Journey.

When I was appointed as Pastor-in-Charge (PIC) of TMC in 2013, I was asked many times about my plans for the church. To be honest, I did not really have an answer then; I was excited and fearful at the same time. I have a simple dream: As long as I can make everyone around me a better Christian, I would have done well.

But God had begun to honour that dream from the day He placed it in my heart. God had begun to show me the way. Making people better Christians means making disciples. God does not want Christians; He wants disciples.

**“Christianity without discipleship is always  
Christianity without Christ.”**

– DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

In this handbook, you will learn about the Marks of a Disciple. You will realise the process through which we can become that disciple. You will also discover the role that you must play in the discipling process, whether as a disciple or eventually as a disciplemaker.

I want to invite you to join us as we begin the journey together. The time is right for us to embark on this dream of being a church that fulfills The Great Commission – where disciples makes disciples. To do that, we must first be disciples, following which we must play our part in helping others become disciples.

I am very excited about TMC’s journey to being a church where disciples make disciples. My desire is that as you journey alongside your disciples, your relationship with God will strengthen; that you will multiply your life by investing in others; and that you will become more like Christ.

## WHY MAKE DISCIPLES?

### FULFILLS THE COMMISSION

***"You have one business on earth – to save souls." – John Wesley***

The Great Commission is the one clear call to all Christians. If there is only one thing that the church should be doing, it is to "make disciples".

### STRENGTHENS THE CHURCH

***"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergymen or laymen, they alone will shake the gates of Hell and set up the kingdom of Heaven upon Earth." – John Wesley***

The strength of the church is dependent on the depth and character of the people. We need strong Christians who will stand up to be counted and discipleship is the way to build strong Christians.

### BUILDS THE COMMUNITY

***"I learned more about Christianity from my mother than from all the theologians in England." – John Wesley***

Our covenant community is built upon the stories of God's work in their lives, passed on from one generation to another. Discipleship is the way for us to pass on these stories and create new ones as a community.

### NURTURES OUR CHARACTER

***"Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three: That of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." – John Wesley***

The pursuit of holiness should be the quest of every Christian. Discipling relationships will give us the platform to nurture holiness.

### MODELS CHRIST

***"I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship and the whole world for my mission field." – John Wesley***

The goal of the Christian is to be Christ-like. Christ must be central in every Christian community: Discipleship makes Christ central in every relationship.

***"The church changes the world not by making converts but by making disciples."***

– JOHN WESLEY

## MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

In every group, there is a certain set of characteristics or behaviours that defines the group. For example, we can recognise an English person by the way they speak, or a pastor by the collar they wear. How will people recognise us as followers of Jesus? *What does a Disciple look like?*

### LOVES GOD

The first and most basic mark of a disciple is that we must love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind (Matthew 22:37). When asked about what it means to love God, three thoughts come to mind: purity, purpose and proactivity. To love God with a pure heart means that we must have the sole desire to seek God. It also means to purposefully put Him first in all circumstances, as well as to proactively seek God every moment of our lives.

### IMITATES CHRIST

As a disciple of Christ, we need to imitate Him and what He stands for. When we think of Jesus, three characteristics stand out. Firstly, He was sure and secure in the knowledge that He is the Son of God. Secondly, Jesus knew that He had come for a different purpose. As such, He had set Himself apart from the rest of the world, through godly intentions and holy living, in anticipation and preparation for His task. Finally, Jesus always had a servant's heart. He was humble and meek, and not afraid to do things that might be deemed "lowly". Nothing was beneath Him. If we want to imitate Christ and to be more like Him, we would do well to begin with these three characteristics.

### SPIRIT-LED

To be Spirit-led means that one has to be connected to God at all times, soaked in God's presence and Word. A Spirit-led disciple must also yield to the control of the Spirit, always sensing what God is asking them to do. By yielding to the Spirit, the disciple would be able to discern their calling and live up to their destiny, recognising that their life has a God-given commission. "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God" (Romans 8:14).

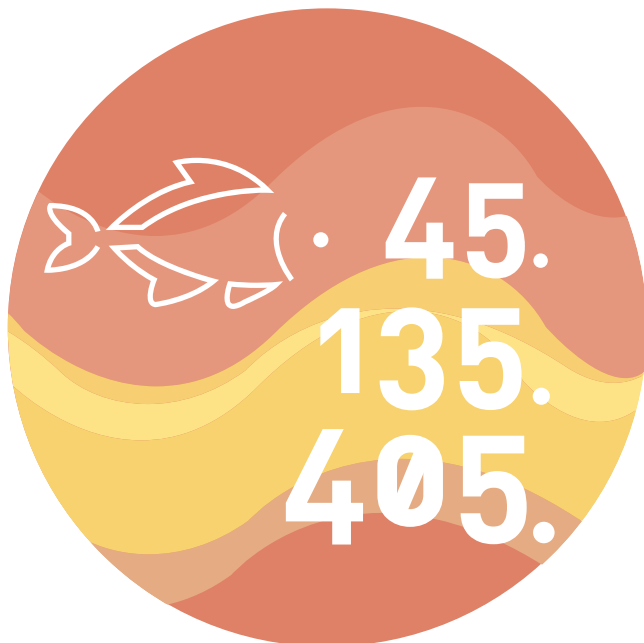
## LOVES NEIGHBOUR

This is the second commandment that was given by Jesus, that we love our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). You may ask “how can we show love to our neighbours”? We can do this by feeding the hungry. Accepting them as family and offering forgiveness as we grow together as family. This could become our most powerful witness. As Theodore Roosevelt said, “People don’t care how much we know, until they know how much we care.”

## MAKER OF OTHER DISCIPLES

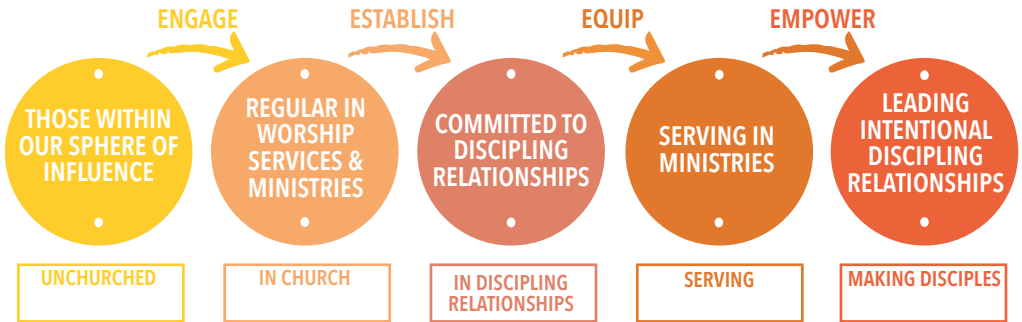
This would be the standout difference in TMC’s list of the marks of a disciple. The Great Commission is not to make leaders, it is to make disciples. Jesus spent much of His time on earth making disciples.

As such, we must all play our part in the disciple-making journey. We must continue to congregare as a body of disciples to encourage one another in this journey. As God leads, we become companions or coaches to someone else so that ultimately, they too will become disciple-makers. At TMC, we believe in making disciples who make disciples.



## THE DISCIPLESHIP JOURNEY

Discipleship is a journey, not a destination. It is an on-going process that each of us, as disciples, has to go through. To understand what we need to do to make disciples, we must first understand The Discipleship Journey. This will not only help us to understand where we/our disciples are in this journey, but also to identify the steps that we/our disciples need to take in this journey together.



### 1 ENGAGE



The first step in The Discipleship Journey requires us to **engage** with the unchurched within our sphere of influence. More commonly known as the evangelistic aspect of Christianity, this would require sharing our testimony and the gospel with our non-believing friends & family, so that they too might become believers. This would also include an introduction to a Christian community.

*TMC has many resources that can help with this stage, such as the B.L.E.S.S. campaign and the Alpha course. Our Witness & Evangelism ministry and Pastoral Care team are also available if necessary.*

## 2

## ESTABLISH

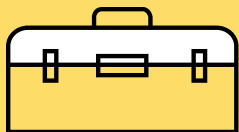


After this person has received Christ, the next step would be to **establish** this person in a Christian community and in a discipling relationship. This is where he/she starts to regularly attend TMC and worship services. In this stage, he/she should continue to establish his/herself in Christ and explore Christianity, through learning of the Word.

*As a discipler, you should also provide opportunities for he/she to be part of the wider community in TMC.*

## 3

## EQUIP

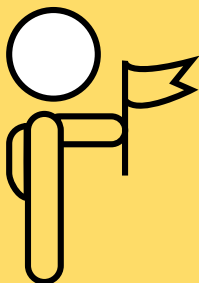


When your disciple is comfortably settled into a discipling relationship(s) in church, the third step in The Discipleship Journey is to **equip** them to serve. This stage requires growing your disciple in Christian character, calling and competency; and as a result, serve in the various ministries of TMC. In addition, the discipler is to continuously pursue the discipling relationship.

*As a discipler, you should equip your disciple to serve by building their character, calling and competency.*

## 4

## EMPOWER



The final stage in The Discipleship Journey is to **empower** your disciple to make disciples by providing opportunities to co-lead. Your disciple is also challenged to engage with (new) members/Christians, and to walk with him/her in The Discipleship Journey. Such an intentional discipling relationship with a newer member/Christian will allow the Church to continue the disciple-making process, as commissioned by Christ.

*8 As a discipler, you should challenge your disciple to disciple someone else.*



## THE DISCIPLING RELATIONSHIP

### WHAT IS A DISCIPLING RELATIONSHIP?

Just as Jesus walked with the two men on the road to Emmaus, we too are on a journey, in a community, to discover and encounter Christ.

A Discipling Relationship is a relationship between two or more individuals, where intentional discipleship and growth in character, calling and competency is pursued in the context of community and accountability.

A Discipling Relationship could be a peer-to-peer relationship, or where there is a disciple-maker involved. Whichever it may be, there must be a mutual accountability to spiritual growth in the group. Ultimately, there should be one person in the group who is competent in handling the Bible, and who takes responsibility of the spiritual growth of the group and facilitates each session.

As a basic model and standard, a Discipling Relationship should see two or more individuals, meeting two hours, at least once a month.

The destination of this journey is to see disciples become disciple-makers.

### WHAT HAPPENS IN A DISCIPLING RELATIONSHIP?

**“Discipleship is not about knowledge transfer, but life transformation. It is a long term, character building relationship that challenges people to take what they have been given by our Lord and share it with others.”**

- JIM BURNS

In order to build your disciple's character, calling and competency, we practise the L3 DNA of Loving, Learning and Leading. Whenever groups, committees or ministries meet, it is an opportunity for transformation and growth. The Discipling Relationship, while fluid, flexible and creative in its flow and structure, should include the L3 DNA.

## THE L3 DNA



### LOVE

Take time to love and listen to one another, as well as hold one another accountable. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "The first service that one owes to others in fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them." This includes checking in and praying for your disciple.

#### Guiding Questions:

- How has your past week been?
- Are there issues you are currently struggling with?
- Sharing of testimonies, thanksgiving and prayer requests
- What is the condition of your inner being? Are you at peace within your soul? Is there anything you are wrestling with God for? Do you feel that your life is purpose-driven?



### LEARN

Take time to learn and grow in God's Word. Your disciple must be able to read, understand, interpret and apply the Word of God on their own.

#### Guiding Questions:

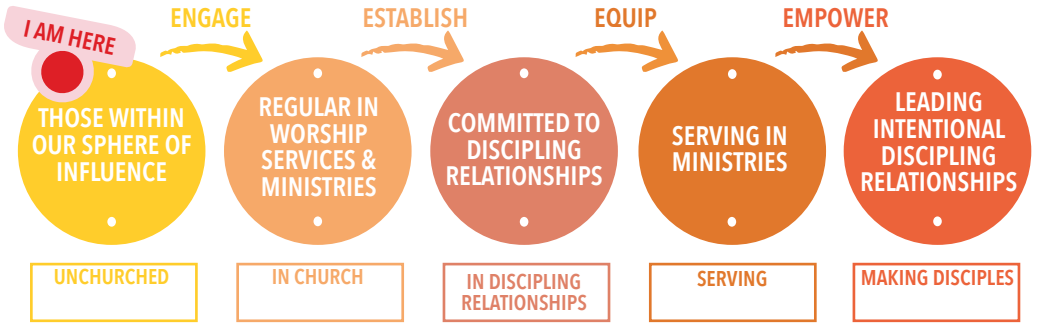
- Have you been reading God's Word?
- Are you growing in deeper understanding of God's Word?
- How has God been speaking to you through the Word?
- How would you apply the Word of God to the issues you or the society are facing today?



## LEAD

Take time to lead your disciple to the next stage of his/her discipleship journey. This involves taking stock of your disciple's growth:

### Which stage of The Discipleship Journey is your disciple at?



### Where does your disciple want to go next?

Challenge your disciple to step up and serve as he/she is and wherever he/she is, whether in church, at home or in the workplace.

Take stock of where your disciple is on the discipleship journey, assess if he/she is ready to move to the next level.

### How can your disciple get there?

Identify what skills or resources are needed for your disciple to take the next step.

Are there skills you can help equip him/her with? Who are the right people you can link him/her up with? What is a timeline of milestones he can work towards?

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”