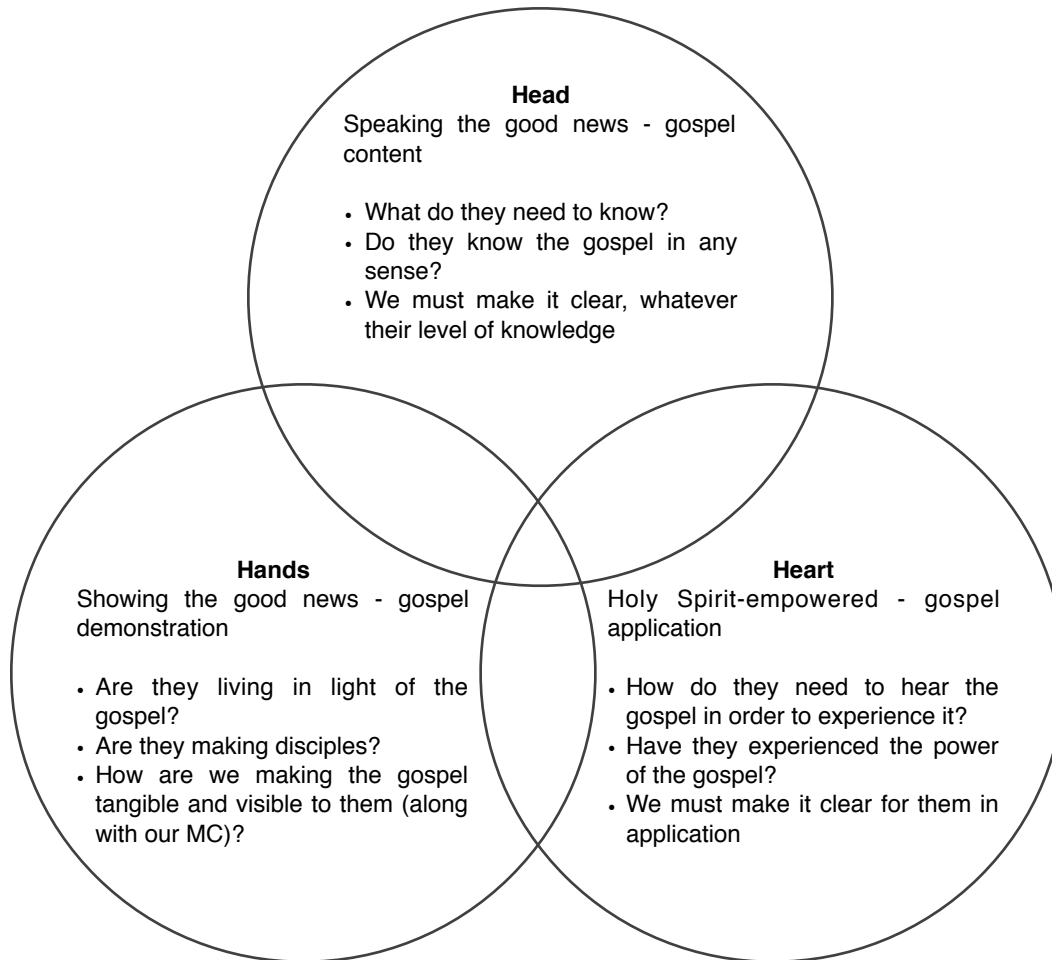




Disciple Check-In

A Resource for Missional Communities
at Sacred City Church

Disciple Check-In



Mark 12:30

And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Who are you discipling?

Are they a Christian or non-Christian?

What is their story?

What is their next step in discipleship?

The story of the gospel tells us that God sent Jesus as a missionary to a culture that was not his own to save us from our sins and bring us back to God. It was a mission of reconciliation. But in saving us, Jesus also changed our identities. He changes us into a family of missionary servants learning to live all of our life under the Lordship of Jesus by making disciples in community and on mission filled with His Spirit.

So, long story short. If you are a Christian, you are a missionary. Your mission is to make disciples in whatever context you find yourself in. Following the example of Jesus means that we are to make disciples of unbelievers and believers leading them both to submit all of their life to Jesus by embracing him in faith and joining His church on mission. This means we need growing relationships with both those inside and outside of the church.

So who are you discipling? What are their names? Can you name those inside the church and outside? Are you discipling both believers and unbelievers? I hope you are, but for those of us who need help growing in our identities as Missionaries I wanted to give us a few steps to help make the process a little simpler.

First Step: Engaging with outsiders.

Step one is sometimes the hardest. This oftentimes means leaving the comfort of our churches, homes, and offices to go to places that might make us uncomfortable. Take a look at your schedule, how often are you rubbing shoulders with those outside of the church? I know this can sometimes be really difficult, especially for stay at home moms, but if you rarely come in contact with unbelievers it is highly unlikely you will ever experience the joy of leading someone to Christ. So if you evaluate your current weekly rhythms and find that you aren't engaging with outsiders step one is to make some changes in your weekly rhythms. Pick up a hobby, go to the gym, talk to the barista, meet your neighbors, join the PTA, start eating out at the local pub more often, walk across the office and start eating lunch with your co-workers. Step one, Engage with outsiders.

Second Step: Invite them deeper into our lives.

Step two is scary and time consuming. Many of us hope that Jesus will call people to himself without it costing us much. He can surely do that, but most of the time the people in our lives need to hear about our weaknesses, failures, and fears over a period of time where they can see our genuineness. You can't make disciples with surface level friendships. Paul says in Acts 20, "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;" Paul's disciples knew his story. They had a front row seat to his suffering and struggles and this gave them a real life testimony to the power of the gospel in a persons life. After we engage with outsiders, and build relationships with them we need to take them into deep water. Have them over for dinner. Take them out to lunch. Ask them out to coffee or to grab an adult beverage and then ask them to tell their story to you. Listen well. Speak Grace. Weep with them. Rejoice with them. Point out the evidences of Grace. Then Invite them into your story sharing your big mistakes, weaknesses and fears and how the gospel has freed you and is freeing you from them. This takes a lot of patience and grace as you build the relationship with them and invite them deeper into your life but this is the place where the gospel does it's best work.

Step Three: Take an active role in their discipleship.

When I was a new believer I had a passion for evangelism. And by that I mean inviting people to church. Many people came, accepted Christ as their savior. What happened after that, however, was much different. For some, they stuck around got involved in the church and followed Jesus. Others, would show up occasionally at church but didn't really engage with Jesus or the church much more than that. Still others, didn't change at all. They "accepted Christ as Savior" and went right back to life as usual. What was the same with all of these people was that I thought this was someone else's problem. I brought them to church and it was someone else's problem to disciple them. After they came to faith, I was on to the next one. I never even thought that it was my responsibility to take an active role in their discipleship. But Jesus didn't say for us to make converts but to make disciples and discipleship is the process of taking a person from where they are in relation to Jesus and walking with them to where God wants them to be. So, evangelism is actually a part of the discipleship process. You take a person who is far from Jesus and introduce them to the Savior King who can change their life, forgive their sin, and fill them with an unsurpassed and eternal happiness. But once that person embraces Jesus we continue to walk with them to the best of our ability and help lead them to take the next step in the discipleship process as we follow Jesus together. Some discipleship steps could include coming to the Sunday gathering, joining a Missional Community, learning to read their bible and pray, joining a fight club, pursuing church membership and beginning to make disciples themselves. So we need to ask ourselves often, What is the next step in discipleship for those that I am in relationship with? How can I help them and encourage them to take that step with me?

Step Four: Make the Ask.

Sometimes we get so bogged down with the details and difficulties of reaching people far from Jesus that we forget to do the really simple thing. Ask them to come to church with you. Invite them to Missional Community. Invite them to the Missional Event your MC is doing in the city. When you are sharing your story at MC ask them to be there for you. Ask them to come to our Resurrection Sunday gathering. Ask. Ask. Ask. They will say no sometimes. They will be too busy. But if you keep asking, in a non annoying or creepy way, eventually they will usually show up. And it is much more likely that God will change their heart through an experience at a gathering or MC than anywhere else. And that leads me to step five, which should really be step 1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B.

Step Five: Pray, Pray, Pray.

No amount of "strategery" can bring a person to Christ or make a disciple of Jesus. This takes the power of the gospel, the leading of the Spirit, and the blessing of the Father. We really can do nothing without Jesus and this realization should cause us to soak every step in this process in prayer. Pray for those you are on mission to. Pray for them by name at MC every week. Pray for them at the dinner table in front of your kids. Pray for them when you see them. Pray for them before you meet with them or have them over for dinner. Bring their names before the Father in the name of Jesus and ask him to regenerate their hearts and lead them to become disciples of Jesus. And as you are doing this know that I am praying for you. I am praying that you would make disciples who make disciples and your joy would overflow as you see God enter into peoples stories and change them from the inside out. So, What is your next step in discipleship as a missionary to our cities?