

Discipleship Of The Heart Phase II



*But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart
and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

Blue Ridge Bible Church: Discipleship of the Heart II

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Overview Of Ministry

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:1-2)

Discipleship Goals:

To equip and train people to live in the grace of Jesus Christ. *“Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”*

To use the Biblical strategy of life-on-life discipleship (no more than three) to accomplish the first goal. *“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things which you have heard from me...”*

To have these people become equippers and train others who will then do the same thing, so that the Kingdom of God will grow through the multiplication of disciples. *“...these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”*

What Makes Discipleship Of The Heart Unique:

Most discipleship books, curriculums and programs can be boiled down in the following sentence. *If you do _____ then you are a growing disciple of Jesus.*

The blank may be filled in with Bible study, evangelism, prayer, memory, church, ministry....or some other basic discipline. The idea communicated in these discipleship programs is that discipleship is something that you *do*. The problem is that without meaning to, we can become modern day Pharisees or self-deceived hypocrites...like Jesus talked about when He said, *“This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”* When you study the religious people in the Bible, you will discover that they were highly motivated, deeply moral, sincerely seeking to live out their faith. Yet, Jesus reserved His most scathing rebukes for them. In spite of this, most modern day discipling programs still appeal to doing the right stuff, the formulas, or the disciplines and believing that faithful adherence to these activities will make you a growing disciple.

We believe that this presupposition is incorrect. You *are* a disciple. And as a disciple, it is up to your Master, Jesus Christ, to disciple you. You belong to Him. We believe that true discipleship occurs as people allow the Holy Spirit to work in their heart and lives. As we walk in faith and in total trust to the transforming power of God, then He will mold us into the image of His Son. For the journey outlined here, the focus will be your heart.

The goal of **Discipleship of the Heart II** is to build on the foundation of **Discipleship of the Heart I**. It is designed to help emerging leaders grow more deeply in their faith and in the alignment of their heart to the heart of God—first in love for God, then each other and our world. From a foundation of love for God and others, emerging leaders should develop a deep and sound practice of the faith to which we are called.

This approach assumes that those being disciplined know the scriptures that relate to who a disciple is and what he or she does. Though some of those scriptures may be revisited for refreshing and renewal, the purpose of this effort is not to re-teach something already taught. Rather, the purpose is for a mentor to help someone *explore how he or she is doing* at aligning their heart with God's in the key disciplines of a disciple. In exploring their own life compared to scripture's requirements, the goal is that the person will discover areas that need strengthening—or perhaps areas in which they are in disobedience to God's will—and go about correcting and strengthening their walk in a way that will conform them better with God's heart. At the end of the time together, people who walk this road should be encouraged to take others through the same journey into deeper conformity to God's heart and will.

Expectations Of Participants

- To set aside one hour a month for ten months for life-on-life meeting with the mentor.
- To be adequately prepared, both spiritually and intellectually, for the meeting time.
- To have spent time meditating in God's word and assessing your own walk prior to the meeting.
- To implement specific changes based on what God shows you and be willing to talk though how those changes are working.
- To pray daily for the person discipling you.
- To be available for personal ministry as opportunities present themselves.
- To multiply and continue the discipleship process.

Discipleship Of The Heart is the basic discipleship material of Blue Ridge Bible Church. It is our goal that key emerging leaders—both men and women—have an opportunity to work life-on-life with another church leader. It is our method for raising the next generation of church leaders.

Session 1—The Love Of God

Introduction: A maturing disciple has a healthy view of God’s profound love for us, the cost of that love, and the scope of that love. A maturing disciple will be overflowing with love for God.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. How has God revealed His love to you?
2. When was the last time you pondered God’s love for you? What difference did it make in your life?
3. When did God start loving you? How does that impact your view of His love?
4. What did God’s love cost Him? How does that play into your life?
5. In what areas of your life and experience do you have difficulty believing God loves you? Where are you vulnerable to the lie that “God doesn’t love you because...?”
6. How does your answer to #4 square with Romans 8:31-39?
7. How do you show your love to God?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- I John 4:7-12
- Romans 5:8
- Luke 7:36-50
- John 15:9-17
- Isaiah 43:1-7
- Mark 12:28-31
- Ephesians 1:3-10
- Ephesians 3:14-19
- Romans 8:31-39

Spiritually responding to God’s love for you:

- Where is your faith tested on God’s love for you? What can you do to reject the lie that God’s love is based on something you *do*, and not on who you *are*: a precious and loved child of God?
- How can you improve the depth of the love you show God?

Before Next Session:

- Evaluate how a healthy understanding of God’s love will help you love your family better...or your co-workers, neighbors or other acquaintances.
- Read and meditate on John 15:9-17

Session 2—Loving Others

Introduction: A maturing disciple understands that God’s love obliges him or her to love others. The mark of our relationship with God is our love for others: God’s love flowing through us to others. It is the most fundamental discipline of a disciple.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. John 13:35 says everyone will know that we are disciples if we love one another. How do others see God’s love in the way you live your life every day?
2. How would your wife or husband describe your love for others? How about your children?
3. Think of your co-workers, neighbors, or others with whom you spend a significant amount of time but who don’t know God. How would they describe your love?
4. For men: God gives us special admonishment to love our wives as Christ loves us and loves the church. How did (and does) Christ love the church? How do you use that example as a way to love your wife?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- John 13:34-35
- Mark 12:28-31
- John 15:9-17
- I John 3:11-24
- I John 4:7-21
- Leviticus 19:16-18
- Luke 10:25-37
- Ephesians 5:1-2; 18-33

Spiritually responding to God’s requirement that you love others:

- How are you thriving in love for others?
- Where do you need to strengthen your love?
- What specific things can you do this week—to better love your wife as Christ loves you?

Before Next Session:

- Assess how you have changed since you came to Christ. What things were made new? What things from your old identity do you have a hard time laying off?
- Read and meditate on 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Session 3—My Identity In Christ

Introduction: A maturing disciple understands that, because of God’s love, he or she is a new creature. Our identity is “in Christ.” We have been made righteous. This new identity should be at the core of how a disciple lives and acts every day.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. What are the most important elements of who you are in Christ? How has it made you a new creation from the person you were before Christ?
2. Because we remain believers in a fallen world, all of us struggle with laying off our old self and becoming fully reconciled to God. In what areas of your life do you have the most difficulty laying off the old man or woman and becoming a new creation?
3. What things, other than Christ, do you tend to trust for your identity as a person? How important to your identity is your job, your family, your home, your possessions, or other things that typically identify our uniqueness as people? Which ones tend to interfere with your true identity in Christ?
4. If you had seen God face-to-face this week, how would He have evaluated your righteousness before Him? Why?
5. In Christ, we are fully righteous before God forever. (Reread 2 Corinthians 5:17-21) Do you believe that? When is it hardest for you to believe and accept that?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Ephesians 1:3-2:22
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-21
- *On my identity in Christ:* Matt. 5:13-14; John 1:12; John 15:1,5; John 15:15-16; Romans 8:14-15; Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 3:16,6:19; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Galatians 3:26; Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 2:6; Ephesians 2:19; Ephesians 4:24; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:2; Colossians 3:3-4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 1 John 3:1-2; 1 John 5:18
- *On what has happened to me in Christ:* Romans 5:1; Romans 6:1-6; Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 1:3-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 2:5-6; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 1:13-14; Colossians 1:27; Colossians 2:10-13; 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 4:16; 2 Peter 1:4

Spiritually responding to your identity in Christ:

- What will you do to strengthen the areas in which you struggle laying off your old self?
- How will you begin to release the false things in which you seek your identity?
- How will knowledge of your righteousness before God change the way you pray?

Before Next Session:

- Assess your own life and its production of spiritual fruit.
- Read and meditate on Galatians 5:16-26 and I Peter 5:1-11

Session 4—Spiritual Fruit

Introduction: A maturing disciple is bearing spiritual fruit. He or she understands what spiritual fruit is and where it comes from.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. Jesus reminded us several times in His teaching that the fruit in our life would identify us as belonging to Him. What fruit in your life identifies you? In what areas of your life might your fruit be growing less than it should?
2. Where does the fruit come from? What is its source? If the fruit in your life is not good in some area, what might be the cause?
3. Galatians 5 lists the “works of the flesh” and the “fruit of the Spirit.” In those lists, what one or two “works of the flesh” do you most exhibit? Which one or two “fruits of the Spirit” define you? Which fruits are dry and shriveled? What should you do?
4. A very clear requirement of leaders in the church is humility (reread I Peter 5:1-11). What does true humility look like? How is it worked out in your life? Where might you struggle being humble?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- John 15:1-17
- Luke 6:43-45
- Matthew 7:15-21
- Galatians 5:16-26
- I Peter 5:1-11

Spiritually responding to God’s desire for spiritual fruit:

- What two or three things can you do, starting now, to lay off areas where “works of the flesh” might be displayed in your life?
- What two or three things can you do, starting now, to be better plugged into the source of fruit in your life?
- What can you do to be a more thriving, fruit-bearing Christ-follower?
- What can you do to better practice humility in your life and leadership?

Before Next Session:

- Assess your own knowledge of grace. What does it mean? How well do you accept God’s grace in your life? Assess your own walk in faith. Where is your faith strong? Where does it tend to be weaker?
- Read and meditate on Ephesians 2:1-10

Session 5—Walking in Purity by Grace through Faith

Introduction: A maturing disciple understands the Grace of God. He or she lives under God's grace through faith and helps others to live the same way. The result is a pure heart before God. A good definition of grace in this context is: "God freely meeting my needs through Himself and His power for His glory."

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. Read through the above definition of grace a few times until you understand it fully. Do you think that it adequately defines grace? How would you change it?
2. How does God's grace exhibit itself in your life? In what ways do you struggle with accepting God's grace?
3. Galatians 3 warns against slipping into trusting the works of the flesh for our righteousness. Does this happen to you? Do you know other believers who struggle with this? What do you do to help them?
4. Your faith saved you. How has it developed and deepened since then? Where can your faith be weak? In what areas is it strong?
5. I John 1 reminds us that all of us remain sinners while in this world. How do you handle sin in your life?
6. Five disciplines of purity are: asking the Holy Spirit to reveal sin; confessing sin to God; by faith, accepting His forgiveness; repenting of the sin; and making restitution if that is required. Are there any issues in your life requiring additional progress toward purity?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Ephesians 2:1-10
- Galatians 3:1-13
- Hebrews 11
- Hebrews 10:19-25
- I John 1:5-10

Spiritually responding to purity by God's grace through faith:

- What do you need to do in order to make God's grace more real in the areas of your life where you struggle accepting it? What scripture can help you?
- Do you struggle with faith for your acceptability before God? If not, in what things do you tend to have difficulty in responding to God by faith? What can you do this week to begin building your faith? What scripture will help?
- Are you falling short of Biblical purity in some area or in a relationship with some person? What do you need to do?

Before Next Session:

- Four important practices of a disciplined heart are the study of God's word, prayer, fasting and giving. Assess your own health in these disciplines.
- Read and meditate on I Timothy 3:10-17 and Matthew 6

Session 6—Spiritual Responses Of A Disciplined Heart

Introduction: A maturing disciple develops spiritual habits. These habits have no effect on his or her position as a child of God. They flow from a thankful heart, a desire to know Him better and a desire to please Him. Key disciplines are allowing Him to speak through time in His word; prayer, fasting and giving.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 indicates the huge value of God's word to a believer. How do you interact with God's word? What have you learned from it this month that has helped you advance in your knowledge of and love for God and others?
2. In Matthew 6, Jesus discusses three disciplines of a disciple and warns against hypocrisy in practicing the disciplines. What are the three disciplines?
3. How have you determined to give back to God a portion of what He has given you? How do you interact with your wife / husband and family in this discipline?
4. How do you interact with God in prayer? What things draw you to prayer and make it richer? What things interfere with and hinder your prayer? Do you pray with your wife or husband?
5. Do you practice the discipline of fasting? If not, why not? If so, how does it draw you to God in a special way that you cannot experience in other ways?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- 2 Timothy 3:10-17
- Matthew 6:1-34

Spiritually responding to the practices of a disciplined heart:

- What changes do you need in digging into God's word? What will you do this week to start?
- What changes do you need in giving? What will you do this week to start?
- What changes do you need in prayer? What will you do this week to start?
- What changes do you need in fasting? What will you do this week to start?

Before Next Session:

- Assess your own spiritual gifts. How are you gifted? How do you use them in service to the church? How would you be serving in a perfect world?
- Read and meditate on Ephesians 4:1-11

Session 7— Spiritually Gifted Ministry

Introduction: A maturing disciple knows how God has uniquely gifted him or her for service in His body. He or she regularly exercises that gift to the benefit of others in the church.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. (The following set of exploratory questions assumes the person knows and understands his or her spiritual gift. It may be necessary to explore a person's own gifting. If so, the first phase of Disciplines of the Heart has a good discussion of gifts and helps in assessing them.)
2. Ephesians 4 describes the church as a body. Using this metaphor, what part of the body would you say describes the part you play in the church?
3. What spiritual gifts has God given you?
4. How are you exercising these gifts within the church now?
5. In a perfect world, how and where would you be serving in Blue Ridge Bible Church as we are currently organized?
6. How have you—or can you—help others discover and exercise their gifts?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Ephesians 4:1-11
- Romans 12:1-21
- I Corinthians 1:1-31
- I Peter 4:8-11

Spiritually responding to your spiritual gifts:

- Do you need additional evaluation to understand the spiritual gifts God has given you? If so, what will you do?
- Where are you currently using your gift? Are you satisfied with your current place of service? How would you change it?
- What can you do to help others in the church develop their gifts?

Before Next Session:

- Assess how well you are loving your wife or husband. Ask him or her to give you an assessment as well.
- Assess how well your spouse and you are making disciples of your children.
- Be prepared to discuss how you operate in community with other believers.
- Read and meditate on Ephesians 5:18-33 and Deuteronomy 6:1-13

Session 8—The Environments of Disciples: Family and Community

Introduction: A maturing disciple operates in environments from which he or she is able to both grow as a disciple and help others grow. The family is the most basic institution for building disciples. The next level is living in a larger community of believers. Sometimes this is a self-contained small church. At other times, it is a smaller community within a larger church. At Blue Ridge, we want all maturing disciples to be in community through a Life Group.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. Our families are the first level unit of building disciples. The best way for children—and others—to understand God’s love is through a husband who loves his wife as Christ loves the church.
2. For husbands: In what areas do you love your wife well? What are some areas where you might have difficulty showing love to your wife?
3. For wives: How do you show respect to your husband? In what areas do you find it easy to submit to him? In what areas is it difficult for you?
4. Parents—particularly fathers—are commanded by God to teach the faith to their children. What, specifically, do you do to make disciples of your family?
5. The clear Biblical pattern in Acts was believers in fellowship with each other as the church grew. In addition, the “one another” verses in scripture command us to serve, honor, greet, forgive, accept, encourage, carry the burdens of, love, be devoted to, stimulate to good deeds, and confess sins to each other. What are you and your family doing to live in community with other believers? What other family activities and requirements tend to get in the way of being in community with other believers?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Ephesians 5:18-33
- Deuteronomy 6:1-13
- Acts 2:42-47
- *“One Another” references:* John 15:12; Romans 12:10; Romans 15:7; Romans 16:16; Galatians 5:13; Galatians 6:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24; James 5:16

Spiritually responding to family and community:

- What can you change today to show better love to your wife or husband?
- In what ways are you strong in bringing up your children as disciples? What areas of weakness do you need to work on?
- How healthy is the fellowship you have with other believers? How can it be improved?

Before Next Session:

- Assess how you view the lost people with whom you are in contact daily. Do a personal assessment of your readiness and ability to share the good news of the gospel with someone who does not know Christ.
- Read and meditate on Matthew 28:16-20

Session 9—God’s Heart For The Lost: Sharing the Gospel

Introduction: A maturing disciple understands and participates in the Biblical command to share the good news of the Messiah to those who don’t know Him. He or she shares the love and heart of God for those who are lost.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. Chances are, your neighbors and the people you work with are headed for an eternity of suffering and judgment. How does that affect your view of and relationship with them?
2. How does God’s love for the lost translate to your love for the lost people you know? What might need to be strengthened?
3. Jesus reached the lost as he lived his life—ministering to and sharing the gospel with people he met in the ordinary circumstances of his daily life. What are some of the arenas of your life where you have access to those who don’t know Christ?
4. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being “not at all,” how confident are you in being able to share the gospel with someone who does not know the Lord? What would you need to move up one point on your scale?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Matthew 28:16-20
- Acts 1:6-8
- Matthew 9:35-38
- Romans 10:6-17
- 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Spiritually responding to God’s heart for the lost:

- What can you do today to change your depth of passion for the lost?
- What can you do, right now, to engage at a deeper level with the lost that God has brought into your life?
- How can you increase your knowledge and confidence in sharing the gospel?
- Who is one person that you need to pray daily that God would use you to bring to Him?

Before Next Session:

- Assess your involvement in and effectiveness at helping disciple others.
- Read and meditate on Matthew 28:16-20 and I Timothy 2:1-2

Session 10—Discipling Others: Sharing Your Story

Introduction: A maturing disciple is about the work of making other disciples. This is not complicated work for which an advanced degree is required. It consists only of teaching others what we have been taught. It is enhanced by being able to share stories of how God has worked in your life to conform you to His image and encouraging / spurring on others to follow Christ.

Suggested questions for exploration:

1. How are disciples made?
2. Are you qualified to make disciples? What qualifies you? If you feel less than qualified, what change would make you feel more able?
3. Can you, in a simple 3-5 minute story, tell how God brought you into His family through Christ? If not, what would help you be able to tell that story?
4. Can you, in simple 3-5 minute episodes, tell a couple of stories on how God has changed you in some significant way to make you more like Christ?

Suggested scripture for background / exploration:

- Matthew 28:16-20
- I Timothy 2:1-2
- Acts 26:1-32

Spiritually responding to God's heart for making disciples:

- Who are you in a position to help make into a more mature disciple? What can you do to get started?
- How can you create or improve on a few stories from your life that will encourage and spur others on to increased maturity in Christ?

A One-Year Critique:

- How useful was time with someone else to assess and further deepen your walk with God in the key areas of discipleship?
- How prepared do you feel to help someone else in the same way?