

F O L L O W  J E S U S

B L U E V A L L E Y B A P T I S T C H U R C H

Discipleship Handbook

The Process

The mission of Blue Valley Baptist is to glorify God by helping people everywhere understand what it means to follow Jesus using the Five Habits of a Jesus Follower (Surrender, Sustain, Sacrifice, Shine, Share). The first step of this process is moving people from the pew into a Sunday school class. Through Sunday school we connect with one another, care for one another, and reach the lost. Once a person is engaged in Sunday school, we encourage them to be discipled. Discipleship groups meet weekly in groups of 3-5 people for 12-18 months. After being discipled, disciples start their own groups with their own disciples. This multiplying process leads to the lost being reached, the saved being trained up, and leaders being developed.

The questions below answer the common questions about this process and the role discipleship plays in our church's mission.

What is Sunday School?

Sunday school is how we connect people at BVBC through the study of scripture, ministry towards one another, and reaching the lost in our community.

What is Discipleship?

Discipleship is the process of following Jesus using the spiritual disciplines so that I actively engage Jesus to live my life as Jesus would live it and personally teach others to do the same.

What is a Discipleship Group (dGroup)?

A Discipleship Group is a gender-specific, closed group of 3 to 5 believers (including the leader) who meet together weekly for 12-18 months. The group meets to encourage and assess spiritual transformation and to learn how to practice the classic spiritual disciplines. Spiritual growth should be assessed according to the 5S habits in a

believer's daily life. A person joins a Discipleship Group typically by invitation.

A Discipleship Group consists of believers who desire a deeper walk with Christ. It is not evangelistic in its form or function, but in its fruit: it makes disciples who will then go on to make more disciples.

Discipleship groups can flow out of Sunday School or other platforms. As people form friendships and bonds, they may decide to take the next step and begin a discipleship group together.

Who can lead a Discipleship Group?

The first requirement for leading a Discipleship Group is that you have a relationship with Christ and are intentionally pursuing Him. You do not need to be a master in teaching and have all the answers. You simply must be able to say, "I am following Christ. Come follow me." The second requirement for leading a group is being a member of BVBC. This ensures accountability under the leadership of our church's elders. Leaders are charged with holding the doctrine of our church in sacred trust and should take time to review our doctrinal statement, The Baptist Faith and Message.

While leading a group requires commitment to those you disciple and a godly example for them to follow, Jesus did not call a special class of Christians to make disciples. He called all of us to join in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

How and who do you choose to disciple?

We choose disciples by following Jesus' example. This starts with prayer (Luke 6:12-14). Begin by asking God to send you a group of men or women that have a desire to learn and grow. Your group needs to be filled with people who are faithful, available, and teachable.

- A faithful person is dedicated, trustworthy, and committed.

(Consider his/her spiritual life, church attendance, Sunday school

involvement, service in the church.) Are they committed to spiritual things?

- An available person is willing to meet and invest in others. Does this person carve out time to listen, study, and learn from others? Availability is measured by a willingness to serve God.
- A teachable person desires to learn and apply what is taught. This person is open to correction, listens to what is taught, and applies it to his or her life.

Once you find a person who has these three qualities, prayerfully approach him or her and ask, "Would you be interested in studying the Bible, memorizing Scripture, and praying together in my dGroup?"

Men must be discipling men and women, women. You should also be discipling born-again believers seeking to grow in their faith. You can determine if someone is saved by asking them to share their testimony and asking them to explain the gospel.

What are the expectations of a Discipleship Group?

Attendance requirement: Those in the group need to be committed to meeting together each week for the next 12-18 months. A Discipleship Covenant will be signed by all members and the leader. (Discipleship Covenant is included in this Handbook and can be found on the BVBC website.)

Registration of Group: BVBC Leadership would love to help you with your group. Registering your group helps leadership know who is leading a group and allows them to give resources and additional helps as needed.

Sticking to the process: While we understand discipleship can be done in other formats and methods, we want dGroups at BVBC to follow the process laid out in this handbook. dGroups are not book studies, classes, or small groups.

What takes place during a weekly dGroup meeting?

A typical dGroup meeting consists of three "Looks."

- **Look Back.** The group time should begin by reciting the memory verse (it helps to get it out of the way!). Then everyone should go around the circle and share about their week, highs and lows, victories and struggles, how they did with their journaling, prayer, specific prayer requests, etc. This is also a time to use accountability questions (example questions can be found on the BVBC website). This time can last anywhere from 15-30 minutes.
- **Look Down.** The group should spend time sharing from their journals and what God taught them during the past week. The journaling method we encourage is called HEAR journaling (an example and how-to can be found on the BVBC website). Group members will journal and share about their daily Bible reading plan (we recommend the F260 New Testament plan, which is found in this Handbook and on the BVBC website). This time can last anywhere from 30-45 minutes.
- **Look Forward:** The group should talk through their plan for the upcoming week of spiritual growth. What parts of scripture will be read? What will the memory verse be? What other steps will be taken to grow in Christ? This is also the time to talk through the spiritual discipline that your class will work on (fasting, praying the Bible, meditating, serving, etc.). Lastly, the group should spend time praying for one another and the upcoming week. This time can last anywhere from 10-30 minutes.

How does a dGroup end?

Always begin with the end in mind. At the end of your 12-18 months, it will be hard to leave because of the bond that will have been created. But remember, the goal of each group is to repeat the process with others. Encourage your group to pick 3 or 4 and replicate this same process as the dGroup leader.

Can someone be asked to leave the group?

Yes, with grace. Here are some reasons where asking a group member to leave might be appropriate:

- If a person does not have a teachable spirit and is not willing to learn from others, but would rather hear themselves talk.
- If someone is not faithful in attending meetings or completing the assigned work and/or putting the kind of effort that is required.
- If someone is living a lifestyle of blatant and unrepentant sin.

As this may be a difficult decision, ultimately you cannot disciple someone who is unwilling to be disciplined.

What spiritual disciplines should be taught and practiced in a dGroup?

As stated in our discipleship definition, the spiritual disciplines are the key to our process. As you will see in the schedule below, we encourage your group to focus on one discipline a month. Our aim is to provide you with one helpful tool (these can be found on the BVBC website) and one practical challenge (listed out below) to incorporate the discipline into daily life. While there are other disciplines, we have chosen to emphasize the ones below in our dGroups.

The first 3 months should be devoted to developing the habit of daily Bible reading and HEAR journaling, along with memorizing the weekly verse. These are foundational to all the rest. Don't move past these too quickly until everyone has made them a habit!

Evangelism is a discipline we come back to frequently because it's essential to multiplication and goes hand in hand with discipleship.

Months 1-3: Bible Study, Journaling, and Scripture Memory

- Tool: HEAR Journal
- Challenge: Spend 5 days a week in your Bible reading plan, writing out a HEAR journal for each day.
- Challenge: Commit to memorizing your assigned verse each week.

Month 4: Prayer

- Tool: Praying the Bible
- Challenge: Spend each day for one week praying through the Psalm of the Day.

Month 5: Evangelism

- Tool: Oikos Map
- Challenge: Create an Oikos Map and commit to praying each day for the names on it.

Month 6: Service

- Challenge: Find a tangible way to serve your family, church, and community this month.

Month 7: Evangelism

- Tool: The 3 Circles
- Challenge: Share the 3 Circles with one person each week this month.

Month 8: Silence and Solitude/Meditation

- Tool: Emphasize different words in the text
- Challenge: Spend 10 minutes each day for a week in complete silence and solitude. Then spend 10 minutes each day for a week meditating on your memory verse.

Month 9: Evangelism

- Tool: 15 Second Testimony
- Challenge: Share your testimony with one person each week this month.

Month 10: Fasting

- Tool: Food Fast, Tech Fast
- Challenge: Commit to fasting one meal from food and one day from technology.

Month 11: Evangelism

- Tool: 3 Responses to the Gospel
- Challenge: Go out as a group for spontaneous evangelism (door to door, local park, coffee shop, etc.).

Month 12: Stewardship

- Tool: Monthly Budget
- Challenge: Create a monthly budget, praying through your current stewardship of God's resources.

Discipleship Covenant

I will commit to the following expectations:

- I pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated spiritual transformation.
- I will meet with my D-Group for approximately one and a half hours every week, unless providentially hindered.
- I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis before my D-Group meeting, in order to contribute to the discussion.
- I will contribute to an atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency for the edification of others in the group as well as my own spiritual growth.
- I will pray every week for the other men/women who are on the discipleship journey with me.
- I will begin praying about multiplying the discipleship process upon completion of this group.

Start date_____ Finish date_____

Sign Leader_____

Sign Disciple_____

Date_____

FOUNDATIONS NEW TESTAMENT

A 260-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN FOR BUSY BELIEVERS

WEEK 43

- ☐ Revelation 1
- ☐ Revelation 2
- ☐ Revelation 3
- ☐ Revelation 4
- ☐ Revelation 5

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:9-10

WEEK 47

- ☐ Revelation 21
- ☐ Revelation 22
- ☐ Matthew 1
- ☐ Matthew 2
- ☐ Matthew 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:17-18

WEEK 51

- ☐ Matthew 19
- ☐ Matthew 20
- ☐ Matthew 21
- ☐ Matthew 22
- ☐ Matthew 23

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:26-27

WEEK 44

- ☐ Revelation 6
- ☐ Revelation 7
- ☐ Revelation 8
- ☐ Revelation 9
- ☐ Revelation 10

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:11-12

WEEK 48

- ☐ Matthew 4
- ☐ Matthew 5
- ☐ Matthew 6
- ☐ Matthew 7
- ☐ Matthew 8

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:19-20

WEEK 52

- ☐ Matthew 24
- ☐ Matthew 25
- ☐ Matthew 26
- ☐ Matthew 27
- ☐ Matthew 28

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:28-29

WEEK 45

- ☐ Revelation 11
- ☐ Revelation 12
- ☐ Revelation 13
- ☐ Revelation 14
- ☐ Revelation 15

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:13-14

WEEK 49

- ☐ Matthew 9
- ☐ Matthew 10
- ☐ Matthew 11
- ☐ Matthew 12
- ☐ Matthew 13

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:21-23

WEEK 46

- ☐ Revelation 16
- ☐ Revelation 17
- ☐ Revelation 18
- ☐ Revelation 19
- ☐ Revelation 20

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:15-16

WEEK 50

- ☐ Matthew 14
- ☐ Matthew 15
- ☐ Matthew 16
- ☐ Matthew 17
- ☐ Matthew 18

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:24-25

WEEK 1

- ☐ Luke 1
- ☐ Luke 2
- ☐ Luke 3
- ☐ Luke 4
- ☐ Luke 5

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:1-2

WEEK 5

- ☐ Luke 21
- ☐ Luke 22
- ☐ Luke 23
- ☐ Luke 24
- ☐ Acts 1

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:9-10

WEEK 9

- ☐ James 3
- ☐ James 4
- ☐ James 5
- ☐ Acts 15
- ☐ Acts 16

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:17-18

WEEK 2

- ☐ Luke 6
- ☐ Luke 7
- ☐ Luke 8
- ☐ Luke 9
- ☐ Luke 10

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:3-4

WEEK 6

- ☐ Acts 2
- ☐ Acts 3
- ☐ Acts 4
- ☐ Acts 5
- ☐ Acts 6

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:11-12

WEEK 10

- ☐ Galatians 1
- ☐ Galatians 2
- ☐ Galatians 3
- ☐ Galatians 4
- ☐ Galatians 5

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:19-20

WEEK 3

- ☐ Luke 11
- ☐ Luke 12
- ☐ Luke 13
- ☐ Luke 14
- ☐ Luke 15

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:5-6

WEEK 7

- ☐ Acts 7
- ☐ Acts 8
- ☐ Acts 9
- ☐ Acts 10
- ☐ Acts 11

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:13-14

WEEK 11

- ☐ Galatians 6
- ☐ Acts 17
- ☐ Acts 18
- ☐ 1 Thessalonians 1
- ☐ 1 Thessalonians 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:21-22

WEEK 4

- ☐ Luke 16
- ☐ Luke 17
- ☐ Luke 18
- ☐ Luke 19
- ☐ Luke 20

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:7-8

WEEK 8

- ☐ Acts 12
- ☐ Acts 13
- ☐ Acts 14
- ☐ James 1
- ☐ James 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:15-16

WEEK 12

- ☐ 1 Thessalonians 3
- ☐ 1 Thessalonians 4
- ☐ 1 Thessalonians 5
- ☐ 2 Thessalonians 1
- ☐ 2 Thessalonians 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:23-24

WEEK 13

- ☐ 2 Thessalonians 3
- ☐ Acts 19
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 1
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 2
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:25-26

WEEK 18

- ☐ 2 Corinthians 8
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 9
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 10
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 11
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 12

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:36-37

WEEK 23

- ☐ Romans 4
- ☐ Romans 5
- ☐ Romans 6
- ☐ Romans 7
- ☐ Romans 8

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:47-48

WEEK 28

- ☐ Colossians 4
- ☐ Ephesians 1
- ☐ Ephesians 2
- ☐ Ephesians 3
- ☐ Ephesians 4

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:9-11

WEEK 33

- ☐ 1 Timothy 1
- ☐ 1 Timothy 2
- ☐ 1 Timothy 3
- ☐ 1 Timothy 4
- ☐ 1 Timothy 5

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:22-24

WEEK 38

- ☐ John 5
- ☐ John 6
- ☐ John 7
- ☐ John 8
- ☐ John 9

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:33-34

WEEK 14

- ☐ 1 Corinthians 4
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 5
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 6
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 7
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 8

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:27-28

WEEK 19

- ☐ 2 Corinthians 13
- ☐ Mark 1
- ☐ Mark 2
- ☐ Mark 3
- ☐ Mark 4

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:38-39

WEEK 24

- ☐ Romans 9
- ☐ Romans 10
- ☐ Romans 11
- ☐ Romans 12
- ☐ Romans 13

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:1-2

WEEK 29

- ☐ Ephesians 5
- ☐ Ephesians 6
- ☐ Philippians 1
- ☐ Philippians 2
- ☐ Philippians 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:12-13

WEEK 34

- ☐ 1 Timothy 6
- ☐ 2 Timothy 1
- ☐ 2 Timothy 2
- ☐ 2 Timothy 3
- ☐ 2 Timothy 4

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:25-26

WEEK 39

- ☐ John 10
- ☐ John 11
- ☐ John 12
- ☐ John 13
- ☐ John 14

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:1-2

WEEK 15

- ☐ 1 Corinthians 9
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 10
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 11
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 12
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 13

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:29-30

WEEK 20

- ☐ Mark 5
- ☐ Mark 6
- ☐ Mark 7
- ☐ Mark 8
- ☐ Mark 9

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:40-42

WEEK 25

- ☐ Romans 14
- ☐ Romans 15
- ☐ Romans 16
- ☐ Acts 20
- ☐ Acts 21

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:3-4

WEEK 30

- ☐ Philippians 4
- ☐ Philemon
- ☐ Hebrews 1
- ☐ Hebrews 2
- ☐ Hebrews 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:14-15

WEEK 35

- ☐ Titus 1
- ☐ Titus 2
- ☐ Titus 3
- ☐ 1 Peter 1
- ☐ 1 Peter 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:27-28

WEEK 40

- ☐ John 15
- ☐ John 16
- ☐ John 17
- ☐ John 18
- ☐ John 19

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:3-4

WEEK 16

- ☐ 1 Corinthians 14
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 15
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 16
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 1
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:31-32

WEEK 21

- ☐ Mark 10
- ☐ Mark 11
- ☐ Mark 12
- ☐ Mark 13
- ☐ Mark 14

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:43-44

WEEK 26

- ☐ Acts 22
- ☐ Acts 23
- ☐ Acts 24
- ☐ Acts 25
- ☐ Acts 26

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:5-6

WEEK 31

- ☐ Hebrews 4
- ☐ Hebrews 5
- ☐ Hebrews 6
- ☐ Hebrews 7
- ☐ Hebrews 8

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:16-18

WEEK 36

- ☐ 1 Peter 3
- ☐ 1 Peter 4
- ☐ 1 Peter 5
- ☐ 2 Peter 1
- ☐ 2 Peter 2

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:29-30

WEEK 41

- ☐ John 20
- ☐ John 21
- ☐ 1 John 1
- ☐ 1 John 2
- ☐ 1 John 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:5-6

WEEK 17

- ☐ 2 Corinthians 3
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 4
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 5
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 6
- ☐ 2 Corinthians 7

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:33-35

WEEK 22

- ☐ Mark 15
- ☐ Mark 16
- ☐ Romans 1
- ☐ Romans 2
- ☐ Romans 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 5:45-46

WEEK 27

- ☐ Acts 27
- ☐ Acts 28
- ☐ Colossians 1
- ☐ Colossians 2
- ☐ Colossians 3

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:7-8

WEEK 32

- ☐ Hebrews 9
- ☐ Hebrews 10
- ☐ Hebrews 11
- ☐ Hebrews 12
- ☐ Hebrews 13

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:19-21

WEEK 37

- ☐ 2 Peter 3
- ☐ John 1
- ☐ John 2
- ☐ John 3
- ☐ John 4

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 6:31-32

WEEK 42

- ☐ 1 John 4
- ☐ 1 John 5
- ☐ 2 John
- ☐ 3 John
- ☐ Jude

Memorize:

- ☐ Matthew 7:7-8

An Addendum to the Discipleship Handbook

The intention of this handbook is to provide a clear, intentional pathway for leading a discipleship group. Our goal in building this was to put together a process that we have seen work and impact lives firsthand.

But one of the questions we have been asked is: how flexible is this Handbook? Must we follow it to a T? Is there room to take the core concepts of this Handbook and fit them to my group's current needs?

The simplest answer is, "Yes." There is some wiggle room here. Again, we did not create this handbook to constrain you but rather to free you. We wanted people to be free to follow the clear path without worrying about what to do each week and which direction to take. And we trust you as a dGroup leader to use your wisdom in how to best lead and disciple your group.

Now, there are some things we consider essentials. For example, practicing the spiritual disciplines is vital to being a disciple of Jesus. Daily Bible reading, prayer, journaling, and scripture memory are the bedrock of this process. But there is freedom in what Bible reading plan you choose and how much to read each week.

There is also freedom in the scripture memory. We understand that memorizing two verses every week will be challenging for some. And while we believe challenging yourself is crucial to discipleship, we understand those who are new to scripture memory may need to work up to this. So you may choose as a group to memorize one verse a month. Or to start with John 3:16 and focus on shorter or simpler verses. Then you can work your way up to doing more as you're able.

What about the weekly meetings? Some have said, "Between my work schedule, kids, and upcoming planned travel, there's no way I can meet every single week for an entire year!" We understand that adding another planned hour each week to your already packed schedule is difficult for many. But we believe gathering together as a group each week is an essential part of the process. Doing that may require sacrificially eliminating something else to fit this hour in.

With that said, everyone is going to miss on occasion. Sickness, travel, and other unexpected conflicts happen. For a group member to miss once every other month is pretty average. The group may also elect to cancel for holiday weeks or to move the group meeting time to better accommodate everyone. We simply ask that all dGroup members do their best to make discipleship a priority in their lives and weekly schedules.

Jesus called us to count the cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33). That means there will be some things we may need to give up in order to better follow him and lead others to do the same. But at the same time, it's important that we meet people where they are and not portray discipleship as something for Super-Christians only. Again, this requires leaders using wisdom and tailoring the group to their disciple's needs.

If you have any other questions or feedback about this Handbook or the Discipleship Process, please don't hesitate to reach out! More than anything, we want people to enjoy and experience God through this process. We want this to be a delight, not drudgery. Let's make disciples!