



— SOUTH RIDGE —

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

(Philosophy of Discipleship)

A cursory examination of the early church in Acts 2:42-47, reveals a church that was alive, growing, and full of people who were experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. God moved powerfully in their lives and people were amazed. Often when we compare our 'church life' experience it falls far short of what we see in the New Testament. But should it?

Jesus' mission to the church has not changed, He still calls us to 'make disciples' (Matthew 28:19). His promise of the Holy Spirit powerfully impacting our life is still real (Acts 1:8). So why do we often wince, when we hear the word "discipleship"? Is it because discipleship has often been viewed as a program or a series of classes that you attend and upon completion you receive your 'discipleship diploma' proclaiming you a mature disciple?

So what did Jesus have in mind when He called us to be His disciples? A life spent in a classroom? An existence defined by boredom only occasionally punctuated with fleeting moments of Holy Spirit living? Or does He have a grander vision store for us?

As you study the New Testament, you come to the realization that all of the early apostles understood discipleship simply to be the reality of allowing the gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit to make us 'more and more like Jesus'. This journey is a daily, life-long, life-style. We never arrive, we never finish (at least not in this life!)

Although discipleship may simply be defined as becoming 'more and more like Jesus', we believe that the definition needs to be expanded in order to understand some of the New Testament nuances of discipleship, therefore:

Discipleship is the daily, life-long journey of having our whole life saturated by the gospel and empowered by the Holy Spirit so that we become more and more like Jesus.

One of the fascinating observations when you study the early church, is that believers had a very simple rhythm to their life that allowed them to fulfill the disciple-making mandate that Jesus had given them. This rhythm consisted of 5 continually repeated elements; they celebrated big, found community with a few, followed Jesus daily, served one another, and engaged in mission together.

By engaging in these 5 repetitive actions the early disciples were able to solidify their faith and experience the Holy Spirit on a continual basis which led to a dynamic faith and resulted in an undisputed impact on their culture.

We believe God wants the same thing for SouthRidge.

As we have researched, discussed, and debated what discipleship should consist of at SouthRidge, we have arrived at a number of conclusions which we believe form the core principles of discipleship at SouthRidge.

Core Discipleship Principles

1. We are called to be **Jesus followers** who make disciples
2. Spiritual growth requires experiencing God on a regular basis
3. God has provided a simple rhythm for life that ensures that we will become 'more and more like Jesus'
4. Spirit filled people trust that the Holy Spirit will direct their 'next step'
5. **Spiritual growth** is almost never linear, in fact for most people it is circular in nature
6. **Every Jesus follower has a responsibility for their own discipleship**
7. The church has a responsibility to create environments that help facilitate spiritual growth

At SouthRidge we believe that if we focus on incorporating the same simple rhythm found in the early church in our lives, we will grow a church full of spiritually vibrant, Holy Spirit empowered disciples. We also realize that the enemy will do everything in his power to disrupt the flow of that rhythm in our lives. Therefore we will be very intentional as a church to focus on living out this rhythm.



CELEBRATE BIG



We believe in coming together as the church to celebrate who God is and what He has done in our lives.

We are called to celebrate God regardless of our circumstances.

What happens as part of this rhythm:

gather together, worship together (music / praise), vision casting, giving, celebrate GWS, practical teaching, opportunity to receive prayer

Values:

celebration, authenticity, participation

How we encounter God:

God's Word, Worship, Baptism and Lord's Supper, prayer

Scripture:

Acts 2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts

Colossians 3:16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

1 Corinthians 14:26 What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

1 Chronicles 16:23-31 Praise

Psalms 100 Praise

Psalms 150 Praise him with music

Psalms 145 Praise

Psalms 34 Praising God no matter our circumstance (Different translations)

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 Lord's Supper

Matthew 28:16-20 Great Commission (Baptism)

James 5:13 ...Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise..

SouthRidge:

Sunday morning service

Partnership Covenant:

Revised: I will regularly participate in the worship celebrations of SouthRidge



COMMUNITY WITH A FEW



We can only find authentic community when we do life together with small groups of people. Our Community Groups are an example of a place where you will be encouraged in your spiritual journey and cared for when things don't go well.

What happens as part of this rhythm:

community, care, specific teaching, on mission together, prayer for each other, eat together

Values:

accountability, authenticity

How we encounter God:

God's word, worshipping together, exercising our Spiritual Gifts, sharing the Gospel

Scripture:

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another...

Acts 2:46 ...They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer

Colossians 3:16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

SouthRidge:

Spiritual Gift Inventory and serving profile, community group leader training, apprentice training

Partnership Covenant:

Revised: I will regularly participate in a Community Group



FOLLOW JESUS DAILY



*We have to take personal responsibility for our own discipleship journey.
We believe that spiritual disciplines like prayer, solitude, reading God's
word and many others are guaranteed places to encounter Jesus.
When you commit to daily following Jesus, we know that it may not
always be an emotional experience but if you intentionally follow Jesus
we know that the Holy Spirit will change your life.*

What happens as part of this rhythm:

Spiritual Disciplines, obedience (fearing the Lord), living your purpose, prayer, hearing the Holy Spirit, fruit of the Spirit

Values:

daily time in God's word, obedience, creating space for God to speak

How we encounter God:

sharing the Gospel, God's Word, practicing Spiritual Disciplines, exercising Spiritual Gifts, entering into suffering

Scripture:

Acts 2:43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

SouthRidge:

into FJD (Alpha, new believer, Bible reading plans)
Help for what hinders FJD (freedom sessions, grief share, counselling)

God's Word:

Read, listen, obey, share (daily)

Partnership Covenant:

Revised: I will commit to following Jesus daily



SERVE ONE ANOTHER



As disciples of Jesus we are expected to love one another and use our spiritual gifts to help advance the Kingdom of God and encourage the church. Spiritual gifts are a guaranteed place of power to serve from. When we work within our spiritual gifts, we will experience joy and unity and that unity will be a witness to the community.

What happens as part of this rhythm:

Use of Spiritual Gifts, passions and experiences, encouragement of the body, work and serve together

Values:

a place for everyone, no retiring (no one stops serving)

How we encounter God:

use of Spiritual Gifts, *immersing ourselves in God's work*

Scripture:

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love

John 13:35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in love

Hebrews 13:1 Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 Corinthians 12 Chapter on Spiritual Gifts and the body

Acts 2:43, 47 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles...enjoying the favour of all the people.

SouthRidge:

Leadership development, mentoring, serving opportunities

Partnership Covenant:

Revised: I will use my spiritual gifts, passions, and experiences to serve God and my brothers and sisters.



ENGAGE THE MISSION TOGETHER



We are called to turn outward and share the Gospel with a world that desperately needs it. But we are not expected to do this by ourselves, we are called to do this together because together we achieve more. God gives us opportunities to be generous with our time and money to invest in Kingdom initiatives both locally and globally.

What happens as part of this rhythm:

Being the hands and feet of Jesus to people, sharing the Gospel, generosity is expressed, prayer corporately

Values:

generosity, partnerships, sacrifice, being strategic

How we encounter God:

sharing the Gospel, using Spiritual Gifts

Scripture:

Matthew 28:19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Philippians 1:4-5 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now

3 John 1:7-8 It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer...

SouthRidge:

Short term global teams, local outreaches (James Hill, Langley Township?), Community group missional focuses, Thursday morning prayer

3 C's of evangelism:

Initiate a conversation, invite into community, call for a commitment

Partnership Covenant:

will you reach out with love and compassion to the people God has placed in your life by being involved in their lives?

Revised: I will partner with others to turn outward with love and compassion to lead the people in my life to Jesus.

EXTRA INFO WE NEED

A study of Scripture reveals that we will encounter God when we participate in the following 8 activities:

- Sharing the Gospel
- Immersing ourselves in God's work
- Practicing Spiritual Disciplines
- Exercising our Spiritual Gifts
- Worshipping together
- Participating in the Lord's Supper
- Experiencing Baptism
- Entering into suffering

Image—for rhythm—a heart beat—signifying life

Circular—ongoing circles