

A photograph of four people (two women and two men) standing on a grassy hill, looking out over a vast landscape at sunset. They are all facing away from the camera, and the two people in the center have their arms around each other's shoulders. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of the setting sun, which is visible as a bright glow on the horizon. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Principles of Biblical Discipleship

A Life-on-Life, Christ-Centered Approach

Matthew 28:18–20

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20)

- “And 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.”

What Is Biblical Discipleship?

- One person intentionally impacting another toward Christlikeness
- Not merely information, but transformation
- Not just for leaders (2 Timothy 2:2)

Biblical Discipleship Is...

- Intentional – purposeful and relational
- Impactful – changes values, beliefs, and lifestyle
- Personal – life-on-life involvement
- Christlike – modeling Jesus, not personalities

Principle 1: Incarnational (Life in the Flesh)

- God revealed Himself through incarnation
- Jesus modeled discipleship through presence
- Discipleship requires shared life, not distance

Incarnational Discipleship – Scripture

- John 1:14 — “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”
- 1 John 1:1 — “That which we have heard, which we have seen... and touched with our hands...”
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8 — Sharing not only the gospel, but our lives

Principle 2: Reproductive

- Biblical discipleship aims at multiplication
- Focus on people becoming like Christ
- Character over position or productivity

Reproductive Discipleship – Scripture

- Matthew 28:19 — “Go therefore and make disciples...”
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6–8 — Faith sounding forth through example
- A lifestyle that produces spiritual descendants

Principle 3: Personal Discovery

- Truth must be discovered personally
- Discipleship invites thinking, wrestling, faith
- Jesus taught beyond surface understanding

Personal Discovery – Examples from Jesus

- Born again (John 3)
- Living water (John 4)
- Eating His flesh and drinking His blood (John 6)

Principle 4: Reasoning & Evidence

- Biblical discipleship engages the mind
- Faith is reasonable and grounded in truth
- Scripture is explained and proven

Reasoning & Evidence – Scripture

- Isaiah 1:18 — “Come now, let us reason together...”
- Acts 17:2–4 — Paul reasoned and proved Christ from Scripture
- Acts 18:4 — Persuading Jews and Greeks

Principle 5: Counting the Cost

- Discipleship requires sacrifice
- Jesus calls for deliberate commitment
- Following Christ above all else

Counting the Cost – Scripture

- Luke 14:26–28 — Sit down and count the cost
- Matthew 10:39 — Losing life to find it
- True discipleship is costly but worth it

Principle 6: Giving

- Discipleship is extravagant love
- Giving time, life, and resources
- Love gives without expecting return

Giving – Scripture

- John 15:13 — Greater love lays down its life
- John 3:16 — God so loved that He gave
- Ephesians 5:25 — Christ gave Himself for the church

Principle 7: Eternal Perspective

- Jesus lived fully focused on the Father
- Discipleship looks beyond the present moment
- Living now in light of eternity

Eternal Perspective – Scripture

- John 5:19 — Doing only what the Father does
- John 5:30 — Seeking the Father's will
- 1 Corinthians 11:1 — Imitate me as I imitate Christ

Reflection & Application

- Who is discipling me?
- Who am I intentionally discipling?
- Which principle do I need to grow in most?
- What is one next step I will take?