

- **What is a disciple** – one who submits themselves to Jesus and His way of life ... **Why make disciples** – who Jesus is, and God’s plan of redeeming the nations through Jesus ... **Who makes disciples** – God working through each of us ... We’re saved on purpose, for a purpose ... **Where are disciples made** – in every location; particularly in our everyday relationships ... **How are disciples made** – God working through His people by His Spirit and Word ...
- How do we apply this at Grace? ... We begin with our purpose for being a church in this town, in this neighborhood, composed of the different people, families, backgrounds, and giftedness within ... At Grace, we’re **connecting with others to grow together in Jesus** ... All we do as a church, filters through this objective: every ministry, every event, every worship gathering seeks to connect with one another, so to grow together as family and disciples of Jesus ...
- As we pursue Jesus together, it’s important that our life as a Jesus-disciple is balanced ... Just like we need to have a balanced diet to be healthy, so we need a balance in our relationships to be healthy disciples – our relationship with Jesus, our relationship with those in God’s family, and our relationship with those not yet apart of God’s family ... Up / In / Out ... Discipleship Triangle ... At Grace, we want to use the words: **Abide, Grow, Connect** ...

ABIDE IN JESUS

- Jesus regularly gets away with His Father ... In all ways, He submits Himself to the will and work of the Father ... He does not seek to fulfill His own will ... He does what He sees the Father doing ([Jo5:19](#)), and He speaks what He hears the Father saying ([Jo7:16, 12:49](#)) ... He is equal in divinity and attribute and glory as the Father and the Spirit – yet Jesus chooses to submit Himself to the Father’s will, for our salvation ... [Phl2:5-8](#) ...
 - How does Jesus manage this? ... Relationship with the Father is primary ... Lives dependent on the Father and Spirit to live as He was called to live ... [Heb5:7-8](#) ... Example of Jesus to be our own ... If relationship with God is not primary – above your spouse and children, then your life is unbalanced ... We are chosen and secure, but not immune from daily needing Christ ... Jesus regularly reminds us of this ...

GROW AS A FAMILY

- Picking the 12 apostles, Jesus is committed to the mission He’s sent to fulfill ... He doesn’t pick men of importance ... He doesn’t pick them based on what they can do for Him ... They’re a rag-tag group – they each come from a different background and occupation; their faith is not fully developed; they routinely make mistakes ... They’re not perfect, but they are called to come together as one and to follow Him ... He is their common denominator; the One they seek after to imitate ...
 - As they each follow Him, they learn together how to be His disciples ... No one disciple is greater or more faithful than another disciple ... Even the one whose nickname is the Rock stumbles over himself ... Jesus calls together a group of guys who would not have naturally come together as friends ... And He calls them to not only a new way of believing, but also a new way of living – together, as they imitate His way of life ...
 - Our relationships, with each other, are to be authentic, reciprocal, intentional, and transformative ... Need to move beyond an individualistic mindset ... Need to learn how to trust one another, and take down walls that hold people at a distance and from truly entering in to know one another ... It’s not that we can’t have any differences in opinions and personal convictions about secondary issues ... It’s more that we refuse to allow these differences to keep us separated from authentic fellowship; we refuse to look down upon each other because our personal convictions differ ... As a church – as a local expression of God’s family and Body of Christ, you and I refuse to live together in any way less than how the NT commands us to live ... This is counter-cultural of society and of many modern-day churches; but it’s the type of culture that the NT consistently demands from those belonging to the Church ... [Col3:12-17](#)

CONNECT WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

- Jesus stepped onto level ground with humanity ... Meaning, while He does not endorse the sins of people, neither does He reject people because of their sin ... Beautiful facet of the gospel – a Holy God willingly chooses to enter into the filth of our sin in order to save all who call upon His name to be saved ... Jesus went through great lengths to redeem every person whom the Father was already pursuing ... He expects every disciple that He sends out to do the same within the relationships and context He has put us and brings us into ... Jesus encounters us where we are – not to leave us there, but to call each one of us to something greater beyond ourselves and current place ... Jesus does not gloss over sin, but He does see past our sin – meaning, He intentionally and graciously looks beyond the sin a person is engaged in, and sees them as they are: made in His image, in need of His salvation ... He is the Good Shepherd who is searching out every one of His sheep, no matter how far they've gone and where He finds them living ...
 - Those who have been rescued and redeemed by Jesus are sent out to look for those needing rescuing and redemption – just like He sent people after us, so He sends us after others (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers) ... We'll be mistreated, endure hardship, be misunderstood, rejected, hated, all because of Him ... And as we endure these things, we mustn't reciprocate the same harsh behavior towards those who do it to us ... So, we're mistreated, but we don't mistreat them ... We're rejected, but we don't reject them ... We're hated, but we don't hate them ... We're spoken ill of, but we don't speak ill of them ... We're mocked, but we don't mock them ... That's not how Jesus calls you and I to imitate Him ... [1Pet2:21-23, 4:8](#) ... [2Tim3:12-14](#) ...
- Abide, Grow, Connect – helps us to grow as balanced disciples, as we obey the Great Commission and the Great Commandment of loving God and loving others ... There's going to be normal unbalance to our relationships as we go this ... We shouldn't overwhelm ourselves with striving for absolute perfection every day – that's being legalistic ... At different times, we may need to intentionally work on a particular area – our abiding, or growing, or connecting ... The caution is to remain aware of the overall balance of our abiding, growing, and connecting, so that, we don't allow ourselves to live in a way that neglects one area at the expense of the other two ...
- Here at Grace Missionary, we're about [connecting with others to grow together in Jesus](#) ... We do so as we Abide in Jesus, Grow as a Family, and Connect with our Neighbors ...