

Visual Models of Discipleship Systems with Suggested Development Opportunities

Model #1

Two visual models for a discipleship system are presented here. The first model is a “Church-Driven System” that views the discipleship process from the perspective of the church and the opportunities that the church provides for the individual. The stages of discipleship development are described as phases, Jesus Meeting, Jesus Message and Jesus Mission, and three formats for delivering the opportunities are defined as Bible Study or the Information Process, Small Group or the Formation Process and Immersion Experience or the Transformation Process. University UMC in San Antonio, Texas is an example of this process and can be found at <http://www.uchurch.tv/pages/home>.

The Discipleship System for Youth and Children is an extension of the adult version adapted to the child’s ages, but maintaining the same vision for discipleship development. All the charts are listing sample opportunities for discipleship development. Also, the process of disciple making is not a tidy, straight line from one set to the next, and not every experience falls neatly into one category. People can enter the process at various points and move through the process at their own speed and direction.

ADULT

Pathway to Discipleship (A Church-Driven System)

Example: University UMC, San Antonio, Texas

<i>Pathway to Discipleship</i>	Bible Study (Information)	Small Group (Formation)	Immersion Experience (Transformation)
Jesus Meeting Phase (Emerging Faith)	~ Jesus 101 Class ~Knowing the Bible 101	~Alpha Course	~ Weekend: Jesus for Seekers & Skeptics
Jesus Message Phase (Growing & Developing Faith)	~New Testament Survey Class	~ Disciple1 Bible Study ~Church Membership Class	~ Forum Online Course
Jesus Mission Phase (Deepening & Mature Faith)	~ Coach’s Directed Study ~ Discovering Gifts for Ministry Class	~Pastor’s Academy ~Spiritual Gifts Inventory	~ Walk to Emmaus Weekend

YOUTH

Pathway to Discipleship (A Church-Driven System)

<i>Pathway to Discipleship</i>	Bible Study (Information)	Small Group (Formation)	Immersion Experience (Transformation)
Meeting Phase (Emerging Faith)	~Youth Group	~Age Level Home Study Group	~Church Camp
Message Phase (Growing & Developing Faith)	~Sunday Morning Classes	~ Weekly Family Time Training	~Youth Group Events
Mission Phase (Deepening & Mature Faith)	~Mid-Week Youth Classes	~Accountability Groups ~Confirmation Class & Church Membership	~Mission Trips Local/USA – Jr. High USA/Int – Sr. High

CHILDREN

Pathway to Discipleship (A Church-Driven System)

<i>Pathway to Discipleship</i>	Bible Study (Information)	Small Group (Formation)	Immersion Experience (Transformation)
Meeting Phase (Emerging Faith)	~Sunday Morning Classes	~Pioneer Clubs	~Church Camps
Message Phase (Growing & Developing Faith)	~Rotational Model Programming	~After School Bible Clubs ~Weekly Family Time Training	~Vacation Bible School
Mission Phase (Deepening & Mature Faith)	?	?	?

Model #2

The second model is a “Person-Driven System” that views the discipleship process from the perspective of the individual and opportunities that are available through personal action and church programming. The stages of discipleship development are described as markers, Mile Marker 1, Mile Marker 2 and Mile Marker 3, and three formats for defining opportunities are Developing the Head, Developing the Heart and Developing the Hands. Tempe First United Methodist Church in Tempe, Arizona is an example of this process.

People enter the discipleship lifestyle at many different points. The process is not a tidy, straight line from one set to the next, and not every experience falls neatly into one category. Many experiences can fall into several areas. The system should be flexible enough to allow for variations, uniquenesses, and personal preference.

ADULT

My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship (A Person-Driven System)

Example: Tempe First UMC, Tempe, Arizona

<i>My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship</i>	Mile Marker 1: Emerging Faith	Mile Marker 2: Growing & Developing Faith	Mile Marker 3: Deepening & Mature Faith
Developing the Head: (Increasing our knowledge and understanding of God) -inform-	~Attend a Bible 101 Class ~Pray for the choice God wants you to make	~Take the Alpha Course ~Purchase a study Bible	~Lead a group or teach a class ~Take a Disciple Bible Study course
Developing the Heart: (Improving our spiritual connection and our relationship with God) -form-	~Purchase a daily devotional and use it ~Join a small group and attend regularly	~Look for ways to slow down and pay attention to others ~Join a “Companions in Christ” class ~Join the church membership class	~Memorize the 10 Commandments ~Ask 3 trusted people how they see you living the fruits of the spirit
Developing the Hands: (Serving God daily in our world by putting our hands into action) -transform-	~Devote two hours every month to serving God and others ~Think about things you love doing and find ways to do these for God	~Identify your God-given spiritual gifts ~Increase your giving until you tithe 10%	~Review your calendar and ask if it reflects the importance of God in your life ~Develop and share your faith story

YOUTH

My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship (A Person-Driven System)

<i>My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship</i>	Mile Marker 1: Emerging Faith	Mile Marker 2: Growing & Developing Faith	Mile Marker 3: Deepening & Mature Faith
Developing the Head: (Increasing our knowledge and understanding of God) -inform-	~Attend Sunday morning youth classes	~ Participate in an Age-level home youth group	~Help plan and lead a youth study or activity
Developing the Heart: (Improving our spiritual connection and our relationship with God) -form-	~ Attend Youth Group	~Read the Bible and ask, "How is God speaking to me personally through this scripture?" ~Join Confirmation Class	~Start a gratitude journal. Study the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) & list how you see them emerging in your life.
Developing the Hands: (Serving God daily in our world by putting our hands into action) -transform-	~ Devote at least one hour every month to serving God and others. ~Help with VBS this year	~Study what it means to tithe. Begin or increase your regular plan giving to the church.	~Mission Trips Local/USA – Jr. High USA/Int. – Sr. High

CHILDREN

My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship (A Person-Driven System)

<i>My Spiritual Journey to Discipleship</i>	Mile Marker 1: Emerging Faith	Mile Marker 2: Growing & Developing Faith	Mile Marker 3: Deepening & Mature Faith
Developing the Head: (Increasing our knowledge and understanding of God) -inform-	~Attend Sunday Morning Classes	~Obtain a Bible for your age level and begin to read it regularly. ~Attend VBS this year.	?
Developing the Heart: (Improving our spiritual connection and our relationship with God) -form-	~Ask your family to begin a weekly Family Time Training and participate fully.	~Join a Pioneer Club for your age level.	?
Developing the Hands: (Serving God daily in our world by putting our hands into action) -transform-	~Invite a friend or neighbor to attend a church activity with you.	~Find ways to help around your house and tell your family that God loves them and so do you.	?