

Workshop: Discipleship 02

Session: Creating Flexible Discipleship

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Before figuring out the route (eg discipleship system), what's the destination? Where do you want people to arrive on their faith journey? What characteristics do you want them to exhibit?

One possibility: "The plain fact is this: I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him. They love their neighbor as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' Their souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is plan, sound, scriptural experience; and of this we have more and more living witnesses."

--John Wesley, a letter to Elizabeth Hardy, Dec 26, 1761 (From "A Heart Strangely Warmed: John and Charles Wesley and Their Writings" by Jonathan Dean)

There are many excellent models out there for discipleship systems

(<https://www.seeallthepeople.org/intentional-discipleship-systems/>) but it also is imperative to know your ministerial context and discern which is the best fit for where your folks are in their lives. This can be a challenge as other well-meaning guides may choose a system for you.

Then Saul dressed David in his own gear, putting a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David strapped his sword on over the armor, but he couldn't walk around well because he'd never tried it before. "I can't walk in this," David told Saul, "because I've never tried it before." So he took them off. He then grabbed his staff and chose five smooth stones from the streambed. He put them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag and with sling in hand went out to the Philistine. (1 Samuel 17:38-40)

Urban Village Church's context: urban, young adult, transient. We are not usually going to have folks stick around for long periods of time. Two ways UVC has addressed this

Way I

Discipleship system as L train. Each stop/station represents a component of a person's faith life.

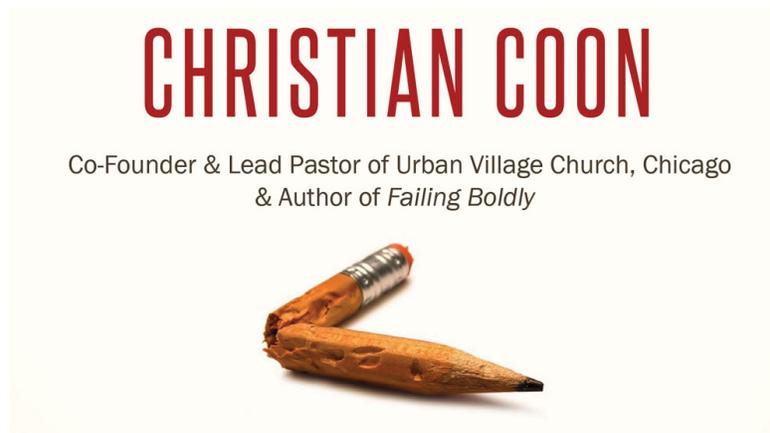


Individuals become a part of a small group and explore different “stops” along the way though it doesn’t have to be in a particular order. The group spends a certain amount of weeks at a certain stop.

Way II

All newcomers to UVC begin with Starting Point, a 6-week class that we developed that gives folks an overview of the Wesleyan understanding of grace, the Three Simple Rules, a spiritual gift assessment, and an overall look at our church.

After Starting Point, each individual gets a meeting to help with next step: Life group, Intentional Discipleship Relationship, short-term group, retreat, spiritual direction, anti-racism work. We try to measure every 6 months using fun “Buzzfeed” surveys. The surveys measure where they want growth, not necessarily “scores”



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