

Discipling Meals

Deut 6

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. **Talk about them when you sit at home** and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.

From these verses and the example of Jesus, we learn that discipleship should happen in the regular events of life. We shouldn't rely just on services, programs or even training events.

One of the most regular events of life are meals

Here are three simple elements you can add to a meal to make it a discipling meal. These can work for meals with people of almost every age, except the youngest children. The language level, but not the significance/importance, of conversations will obviously vary with age.

1. Ask people to share events from their day/week that have been **Good, Funny, Bad or Sad**
 1. These words are easier for children to understand than 'highlights and lowlights'.
 2. This is helpful because a critical practice for discipleship is reflection on life.
 3. It is often in these events that we will identify a Kairos where God is wanting His kingdom to break into our lives. There might be opportunities to share something about Jesus, about what to do etc. This practice helps people learn to learn from the moments of life - just like Jesus' first disciples. When you read the gospels carefully we see they are full of moments from life with Jesus.
2. **Pray** about the events that were shared
 1. Give thanks for good things
 2. Pray about needs
 3. Keep prayers simple, but as people learn the Lord's prayer, model praying for these needs using the six themes of the Lord's prayer:
 1. God's Character
 2. God's Kingdom
 3. God's Provision
 4. God's Forgiveness
 5. Gods' Leading
 6. God's Protection
3. Share some **Fresh Bread**
 1. This is a couple of minute talk about a passage from the bible (often a story from the Gospels), not a bible study.
 2. This isn't about preparing a sermon, rather sharing about a recent passage you have read from the bible - you model regular reading of the bible.
 3. Use the Head (what does the passage say), Heart (what does it say to me), Hand (how will I respond) format when you share.
 1. This model's the different ways we need to engage with the bible - particularly applying it to our lives.
 4. After you have shared, a simple way to help people to engage with the story is to read it and ask people to imagine what it would be like to be different characters in the story.

At dinner it could work like this:

1. Say Grace
2. Eat your main course and during that time have a Good, Funny, Bad, Sad conversation
3. Pray about the events from the conversation
4. Share 'Fresh Bread'
5. Eat dessert

But you could also add these three elements to a breakfast, lunch or even a morning or afternoon tea.

Which meal(s) in the coming week could you intentionally turn into a discipling meal?

(You might like to program a reminder into your phone!)

Which meals could become regular discipling meals?

Don't try and go from no discipling meals to every meal being a discipling meal. Think about which meals are more relaxed, which don't have scheduled events immediately afterwards, which are at a time when people aren't too tired or rushed. **Try and establish an achievable rhythm and then add to it over time.**

If your initial plans don't work out - don't be discouraged or give up - have another go. It will be worth it!!!!!!

For those who have children and young people at home - if you can help make these simple practices a habit for your children, it will greatly enhance their life of discipleship which they can in time pass on to their children.

For those who don't have children or no longer have children at home - you might think about who you could have regular discipling meals with to help establish these practices which they could then pass on to others.

Accountability

Who could you ask to check in with you to see how you have gone with your plans?
