

DISCOVER 2

Student Guide
Prototype 1.9
Updated: 03-03-18

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I. why a sequel?

Maybe you've had the thought—"Wait, I already went to a 2.5 hour Discover Class. Why do I need to be in another one?" Great question. Here's why...

Why do we all know people who started going to church or "got saved", but their lives don't seem to be much different now than they were before? Not much has changed or improved. It doesn't appear to have affected their attitude, actions, or ability to navigate life. Maybe you've noticed this about your own life—your _____ don't always match your _____.

- o **Romans 7:15** – *I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.*

Maybe you've noticed getting married doesn't necessarily guarantee a great relationship. Just because you say, "I do," doesn't mean you don't have to follow through. Saying yes to a spouse is a starting point. The purpose of marriage isn't just to stay married, but to grow in love.

In the same way, saying yes to Jesus is a _____, and the purpose of the spiritual life isn't just to go to church, but to _____; to continually think, speak & serve more like Jesus.

- o **Ephesians 4:15** – *We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way, more and more like Christ.*

Maybe you've noticed not everybody who joins a gym gets in shape. Just because you sign a contract doesn't mean you don't have to show up consistently and sweat it out. Saying yes to a gym is a starting point. The purpose of a gym membership isn't just to have one, but to leverage that environment to put in the work necessary to get healthy.

- o **1 Timothy 4:8** – *Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.*

There's a difference between _____ and _____.

Decisions are about having a realization and setting a direction.

Disciplines are the consistent steps we take in that direction.

You need to say, "I do," AND follow through. You need to sign a contract AND do the workouts. You need to say the prayer of _____ AND submit to the process of _____.

Salvation is admitting your need for God by saying yes to His acceptance, forgiveness & guidance.

Sanctification is partnering with God to think, act & live more like Jesus on an ongoing basis.

In other words, there are aspects of your spiritual life you need to do _____, and other things you need to do _____.

ONE TIME THINGS—Saying Yes to Jesus, Getting Baptized, Committing to a Local Church

ALL THE TIME THINGS—Attending Church, Serving on a Team, Worshipping, Praying, Studying the Bible, Tithing, Giving to Beyond Our Walls, Participating in a Growth Group

II. why so many farming illustrations?

Scripture is full of _____:

- **Genesis 2:9** – The Lord God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- **Leviticus 27:30** – One-tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain from the fields or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy.
- **1 Chronicles 17:9** – I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed.
- **Psalms 1:3** – They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.
- **Ecclesiastes 3:2** – For everything there is a season... A time to plant and a time to harvest.
- **Jeremiah 29:4-5** – This is what the Lord... says... “Plant gardens & eat the food they produce.”
- **Matthew 7:16-17** – You can identify them by their fruit... by the way they act... A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit.
- **Matthew 13:3-6** – A farmer went out to plant some seeds. [Some] fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died.
- **Matthew 13:24-25** – The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came & planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away.
- **Matthew 13:31-32** – The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree.
- **Luke 10:2** – The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields.
- **Luke 12:16-17** – A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, ‘What should I do? I don’t have room for all my crops.’
- **John 12:24** – I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives.
- **John 15:1-2** – I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.
- **1 Corinthians 3:7** – It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.
- **Galatians 6:7** – Don’t be misled... You will always harvest what you plant.

These are metaphors for _____.

Since most of the original audience lived in small, rural farming communities, their implications would have been obvious & immediately understood. But today, we live in a world of microwaves, drive-thrus, iPhones & Amazon. The more removed we are from an agricultural society, the less we understand the _____ of growth. Technology has short-circuited our view of _____. Our culture tells us we can have whatever we want instantaneously.

But, _____ looks more like a fragile plant growing slowly & seasonally through a process of consistent cultivation—as opposed to a chemically-flavored microwave gas station burrito moving from the freezer to your face in 90-seconds flat.

The process of cultivating spiritual growth is a _____ between God and us. There are certain things we _____ do without God, and certain things God _____ do without us.

We participate in our own growth through _____.

This class is about the four most essential. We want you to know what they are, where they came from, how they can benefit you & how to get started.

III. praying

*“The function of prayer is not to influence God,
but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.”
—Soren Kierkegaard*

WHAT IS IT?

Prayer is a _____ to the _____.

That definition may sound broad. There’s a reason for that—it is. Throughout Scripture and the Christian tradition, prayer takes many forms (outside of hushed whispers with closed eyes & clasped hands). It looks like reading, writing, reflecting, singing, dancing, crying, questioning, sitting in silence, and observing nature. And those are just a few examples.

What all forms of prayer have in common is:

- Prayer is conscious—meaning aware, _____ and _____.
- Prayer is a response—meaning God initiates and humans acknowledge, _____ and _____.
- Prayer engages the presence of God—meaning it’s built on two basic beliefs:
(1) the assumption that God _____, is everywhere, available & listening;
AND (2) the hope that God _____ about the scope of human feelings & experiences, and has the capacity & intention to help.

Spiritual writer, Anne Lamott, sorts prayer into three basic categories of...

- _____ – **admission of our _____ for God** (in all things—to give us an accurate picture of who we are, forgive our sins, meet our physical and emotional needs, direct and protect us & empower us to do the right/best/wise thing).
- _____ – **gratitude for the _____ of God** (in all things—life, breath, food, water, health, safety, friendship, family, forgiveness, purpose & fulfillment).
- _____ – **awe over the _____ of God** (in all things—His love, power, creativity, expansiveness, compassion, justice, presence, strength & sufficiency).

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

Ever since there were people, there was prayer. In the second chapter of Genesis, God creates humans, who walk and talk with Him from the inception of their existence. God initiates conversations with Israelite forefathers. And by the time we get to Moses, there's a system of _____, rhythmic prayer. In the Old Testament, there are few individual interactions between a person and God, but a lot of corporate interactions with God and a _____ of people.

Ancient Jews tended to view prayer as a set of shared phrases collectively recited according to particular dates, times & locations. Some scholars suggest Jesus virtually invented _____ prayer. No one in the Old Testament directly addressed God as father. Jesus did 170 times. He spoke to God about common issues in common language. His approach was revolutionary to his religious followers who were raised with a more ritualistic, as opposed to _____, model of prayer. Which is why it's no surprise that, even though his disciples grew up praying, they pled with Jesus, "teach us how to pray!"

You may be familiar with his reply, it's been nicknamed The Lord's Prayer:

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Jesus wasn't giving them phrases to _____ as much as patterns to _____.
Here's how we might say it in everyday common English:

*God, you want a close fatherly connection with us,
Yet you're perfect, all powerful and have unlimited perspective.
Help us understand the way you see things.
Bring peace, balance and wholeness to our lives and the world at large.
Give us what we need to live healthy today.
Help us not to live in shame.
Help us to let go of things others have done to hurt us.
Protect us from self-destructive impulses,
And any influence that distorts how we see you, ourselves and others.
You are good, you can do anything, and you get the last word. Amen.*

WHY DOES IT BENEFIT ME?

_____ : An intimate awareness that God is with & for you, knows everything about you, loves & accepts you, and can be trusted unconditionally. **(See Hebrews 10:22, Galatians 3:26, 2 Corinthians 6:18)**

_____ : A soothing sense of inner peace, lack of anxiety, freedom from fear, and an ability to be present—not replaying the past or worrying over the future. **(See Matthew 6:25-34, John 14:1, Philippians 4:6)**

_____ : An ability to rise above your current emotional state in order to gain God's perspective & apply the wisdom needed to rightly respond to your circumstances. **(See Psalm 119:130, Matthew 7:5, Ephesians 1:17-18)**

_____ : A holy boldness built on an accurate understanding of who God has gifted you to be, what you're here to do and why it matters. **(See Hebrews 4:16, Philippians 4:13, 1 John 5:14-15)**

Not only that, but...

- Psychology Today tells us that five scientifically-supported benefits of prayer are: improved self-control, reduced aggression, a greater willingness to forgive, increased feelings of unity & trust toward others, and more resilience against the negative physical health effects associated with stress.
- The National Institute of Health found that people who pray daily are 40% less likely to have high blood pressure, and that regular prayer deactivates genes that trigger inflammation and prompt cell death, extending the prayer's life.
- NPR reported that consistent prayer increases neuro-plasticity, which controls the brain's ability to learn, adapt, change, heal and grow.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

*“There’s only one way to learn how to pray—by praying.”
–Phillip Yancey*

1. Pick _____.

- Be realistic
- Be consistent
- Get comfortable

2. Remove _____.

- Lower the lights
- Play music
- Write down stray thoughts for later

3. Tell _____.

- Use your own words
- Talk out loud
- Be open & honest

4. Structure _____.

- Utilize the categories of Help, Thanks, Wow
- Use The Lord’s Prayer as a guide
- Leverage a devotional, list of needs, scripture, or sermon quote

IV. relating

*"I feel that there is nothing more truly artistic than to love people."
--Vincent Van Gogh*

WHAT IS IT?

To relate is to form a _____ with and _____ to anything other than yourself.

It's an interaction, an exchange, a commingling. At its core, it's a sense of community; a belief that we've bonded to and _____ with a particular group of people that help us understand who we are and how to _____ & interact with the world around us.

We form connections and attachments to all sorts of things—teams, brands, bands, shows, hobbies. We're most likely to feel a connection with people who connect with what we connect to, and vice-a-versa. In other words, "I like you because you like what I like. And I like what I like because I like you."

The most important relationship we have is our relationship with God. And we're most likely to have a growing relationship with God when we're in growing relationships with others after the same thing.

This plays out in a couple different environments...

1. _____ – Formal gatherings where lots of people to come together to learn, pray, sing & serve. These "services" are essential, but incomplete because they can only get so intimate. Certain things just aren't appropriate or effective in a crowd.
2. _____ – Informal gatherings of just a few people who come together to connect relationally and grow spiritually; doing life up-close and personal, continually challenging and inspiring each other to grow to live and love like Jesus.

These smaller environments are where we find the freedom to say anything; to confess, confront, doubt, argue, inspire, encourage, celebrate, comfort, and counsel one another safely. These relationships push us to take the principles we're learning and apply them to the particulars of our story.

At South Hills, we call these _____.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

Small groups have been around since people have.

Ancient humans quickly learned that their chances of survival were heightened by helping one another. They relationally organized themselves to hunt prey, gather food, build shelter, defend against threats, care for the sick & injured, and _____ from each other's successes & failures.

God tells the first humans to "be fruitful & multiply" (Genesis 1:22). They did.

The trouble is, the more people there are, the harder it is to ensure everyone is cared for on an individual basis. We barely make it to the second book of the Bible before God's people number in the millions. Although they continue to gather and identify as a large group, Moses wisely organizes them into small groups to give everyone the opportunity to develop _____ connections and attachments to others (Exodus 18:17-23).

In the New Testament, Jesus taught, prayed for, sung with and served large groups of people, but chose to live life up-close with a small group of only twelve. After his death and resurrection, those twelve carried on this tradition by meeting together regularly in small groups of their own. These groups spent time reflecting on the teachings of Jesus and sharing _____ (Acts 2:42).

Small groups became the backbone of the early church.

WHY DOES IT BENEFIT ME?

_____ : The freedom to safely share your true self, and be lovingly confronted, challenged, encouraged & held accountable by others.
(See Acts 2:42-47, Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 10:24-25)

_____ : A support system to highlight your strengths, build your confidence, celebrate your wins, & commemorate big moments.
(See Romans 12:10 & 15, 1 Corinthians 12:26, 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

_____ : A committed group of close friends who will show up when you need them, inconvenience themselves & leverage their resources to help you succeed.
(See John 15:12-13, Mark 12:31, Ephesians 5:2)

_____ : A diverse collection of perspectives to learn from, expand your thinking, grow your faith, and continually enable you to see world through new eyes.
(See Ephesians 4:2-3, Galatians 3:28, Acts 10:15)

Not only that, but...

- Research from the famed Alameda County Study, which tracked 7,000 people over 9 years, found that the most isolated people were 3 times more likely to die than those with strong relationships. They also discovered that those who had bad health habits (such as smoking, poor eating habits, obesity, bad sleep habits, no exercise or excessive alcohol use), but strong social ties lived significantly longer than people who had great health habits but were isolated.
- A 1994 Harvard study of people who had dramatically changed their lives revealed that the pivotal moment for each was joining a group that consisted of the type of people they wanted to become.
- In the study, Social Isolation in America, the authors found that in 1985 most people reported having three confidants in their lives. In 2004, the most common response was, "zero." And having few friends is statistically more dangerous than obesity & is the equivalent health risk of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

*"The only way to have a friend is to be one."
–Ralph Waldo Emerson*

1. Join _____.

- Fill out a Connect Card
- Visit the Connect Counter
- Explore our website

2. Go _____.

- Make it a priority
- Put it in your calendar
- Don't make excuses

3. Commit _____.

- Maintain an open mind
- Listen & share proportionately
- Keep others' confidence

4. Apply _____.

- Allow others to challenge you
- Experiment with new ways of living
- Be open about obstacles

V. studying

*“The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”
—Dr. Seuss*

WHAT IS IT?

Study is the _____ and _____ of something in detail.

It’s the act of examining closely; placing ideas and actions under a microscope, peeling back their layers, and peering below the surface. It’s a search for truth; the pursuit of what’s credible, reliable, applicable & helpful. It asks, “What is this?”, “Where did it come from?”, “What does it mean?”, and “What are we to do with it?”

All of us end up studying a variety of things—some out of interest, others out of necessity. But, few things have significantly shaped society, cultivated contemporary consciousness, and warrant our attention quite like the _____.

One of its writers tells us that, “Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us (1 Timothy 3:16-17 MSG).”

Now, I know you’re thinking—“Well, of course he said that. He wrote part of it.” True. But the same guy also said—“Don’t be gullible. Check out everything, and keep only what’s good (1 Thessalonians 5:21 MSG).”

In other words—We’re encouraged to explore, analyze, and apply the Bible; To examine its meaning in the context of history and wrestle with how it might be speaking to how best to live life to the full in the here and now.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

First off, the Bible is not a book. It's a collection of carefully curated poems, letters, and stories written over the course of thousands of years, in three different languages, by multiple authors, and later compiled, translated, and bound together in a single volume.

It didn't drop out of the sky. It was written by real people living in real places at real times, who felt inspired to say something specific about God & humanity, all of which was shaped by their times & places & psyches & economies & politics & religion & technology, etc.

When it comes to understanding scripture, you have to know what it meant to _____ before you can know what it means to _____. There's a word for this: _____.

To understand context, begin by asking, "What _____ was this written in?"

- Historical Narrative – stories that exemplify the people & cultures we came from
- Genealogies – family trees
- Laws – foundational rules for successful living in a primitive society
- Proverbs – common sense sayings about how the world works
- Poetry – emotional expressions of real life experiences
- Prophecy – predictions about where patterns of behavior are headed
- Apocalyptic – cryptic descriptions of future world-altering events
- Parables – accessible metaphors to express elaborate ideas
- Letters – practical guidance on Christian living directed toward early churches

If you don't know what genre you're reading, you may ask questions of the text that it was not meant to answer. The Bible is to be read _____, not _____.

But we shouldn't stop there. Context is complex. We should also ask:

- What else was happening at that time in history?
- What was the power structure, government, class system & economy like?
- How did people live? What customs were the norm?
- What weight did the words being used carry in that culture?
- How does this fit with what was written before and after it?

Ever since these stories & sayings were made available to the masses, people have dissected, debated, translated & meditated on their _____ and _____ to individual & communal life, believing this _____ text holds the answers to what it means to be _____.

If all this feels overwhelming to you, you're not alone. You're also not out of luck. There are all sorts of tools & translations to help make the text more accessible. The King James Version (KJV) is more traditional & formal (lots of "thee's" & "thou's"); The NLT is modern & conversational. The Message is poetic, painting vivid word pictures. So, which translation is the best? Whichever one you will actually read.

WHY DOES IT BENEFIT ME?

- _____ : An understanding of who you were created to be, what you're here for, and how to make the most of your life.
(See Psalm 32:8, Romans 12:4-6, Proverbs 3:6)
- _____ : A sense that you are not alone, that God is real, good, with, and for you; desiring to partner with you in the restoration of his creation.
(See Ephesians 2:10, John 15:5, 1 John 3:16)
- _____ : The ability to cultivate healthy core relationships, know how to partner with & learn from others and interact with those you disagree with.
(See Romans 12:16-19, Matthew 5:44, Acts 2:44)
- _____ : A view from which to extract wisdom from the successes & failures of those who've gone before; to learn lessons via the experience of your ancestors.
(See Deuteronomy 32:7, 1 Corinthians 10:12, Ephesians 5:15)

Not only that, but...

- According to Bart Ehrman, Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of North Carolina, “for any educated person, it is absolutely essential to know something about the Bible. Whether a person is a believer or not, the Bible stands at the foundation of our form of civilization.”
- “There are at least 129 Biblical phrases which any cultivated English speaker will instantly recognize. And many use without knowing their provenance: ‘salt of the earth’, ‘go the extra mile’, ‘I wash my hands of it’, ‘through a glass darkly’, ‘wolf in sheep’s clothing’, ‘hide your light’, ‘no rest for the wicked’, ‘how the mighty fall’. To not know the Bible is to not know English.” –famed atheist, Richard Dawkins
- “The Bible is absolutely essential reading, due to its cultural, historical, and literary value. Without it, you will miss 50%+ of the literary & cultural allusions in Western art, thought, and society.” –Nancy Hua, CEO & Founder of Apptimize

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

*"Renewal of the mind begins with reading and meditation of the Scriptures."
–Lailah Gifty Akita*

1. Select _____.

- Find something easy to understand
- Utilize the YouVersion Bible app
- Consider a study Bible to help with context

2. Set _____.

- Make it a priority
- Put it in your calendar
- Early is best

3. Begin _____.

- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, AKA The Gospels
- Go slow; quality over quantity
- Imagine yourself in the story

4. Think _____.

- What most stood out to you?
- Is there a transcendent principle you can take away?
- How can you put the big idea into action?

VI. giving

*"It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving."
—Richard Braunstein*

WHAT IS IT?

To give is to _____ what you have for the _____ of someone else.

Giving can take many different forms. We can give our time, energy, resources & abilities. But, since the dawn of man, giving has been synonymous with material possessions—livestock, crops, property & money. In other words—giving costs. It's a selfless act; A choice to leverage for someone else what you could've kept all to yourself.

In the Christian tradition, giving is divided into two categories:

_____ & _____.

- To **tithe** is to give the first tenth of all you get back to God through your local church
- An **offering** is anything you give above & beyond your tithe

God asks His people to give to His work on multiple occasions throughout Scripture.

He has always elected to partner with people to accomplish His purposes on earth.

And while resources are required to bring vision to life, it wasn't their _____

God was ultimately after. It was their _____.

It just so happens that the two are intertwined.

- **Matthew 6:21** – *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

According to Jesus, you can steer your heart with the way you spend your money.

God wants the heart of His people to beat for Him & His church. And when you give

the first & best of your money, what you're really giving is the first & best of your heart.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

In Genesis 4, there's only four people on the planet, and they're tithing. What's interesting about it is that there's no rule saying they should do this. There's no law requiring it. There is no religious order telling them they ought to. It's something they chose to do because they believe everything that exists was made by God & ultimately belongs to God. Their impulse when receiving anything good was to instantly honor God with the best of it.

This belief prevailed for generations. In fact, in the New Testament, James the brother of Jesus re-iterates this idea that was birthed in the book of Genesis:

- **James 1:17** – *Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above. These gifts come down from [this God], who is the creator of the heavenly lights, in whose character there is no change at all.*

God's people believed giving Him their best first demonstrated that He was their _____ and their _____.

Though tithing is often thought of as an Old Testament ritual, New Testament Christians, when freed by Jesus from religious obligation, were motivated to give _____, not less.

- **Acts 2:42** – *They sold their property & possessions & shared the money with those in need.*

Why? To be a Christian is ultimately about becoming more like Christ. And our God is a giver.

- **John 3:16** – *This is how God **loved** the world: He **gave** his one & only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

There is an undeniable connection between _____ & _____.
We give to things we love & we fall in love with things we give to.

We are most like our God when we sacrificially give what we have to benefit others. Consequently, because we were created in the image of our God, we are truest to ourselves when we are imitating Him. And we can feel it. It's for this reason that Jesus tells his followers: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). In other words—Giving feels good; it feels right; it makes us feel better.

WHY DOES IT BENEFIT ME?

_____ : A habitual reminder pulling your focus back to what & who is most important, heightening your awareness of God as provider & priority.
(See Deuteronomy 14:23, 1 Timothy 6:18-19, Leviticus 27:30)

_____ : A freedom from want, envy, materialism, comparison, and the faulty core belief that “If I only had _____ I’d be happy.”
(See Proverbs 3:5 & 9, Acts 20:35, Luke 6:38)

_____ : The ability to do what’s best for you & those around you, especially when you don’t want to; doing what is good even when it doesn’t feel good.
(See Galatians 6:9, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Titus 2:7-8)

_____ : A sense that you are becoming the best version of yourself by modeling your life after the Way of Jesus, giving your best like God gave his best.
(See 2 Corinthians 8:7-8, John 3:16, Romans 12:2)

Not only that, but...

- In a 2006 study, Jorge Moll and colleagues at the National Institutes of Health found that when people give to charities, it activates regions of the brain associated with pleasure, social connection, & trust, creating a “warm glow” effect.
- In a 2006 study by Rachel Piferi of Johns Hopkins University and Kathleen Lawler of the University of Tennessee, people who gave to others had lower blood pressure than participants who didn’t, suggesting a direct physiological benefit to those who give of themselves.
- “Being kind and generous leads you to perceive others more positively and more charitably.” –Sonja Lyubomirsky, from her book *The How of Happiness*

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

*"The best things to do with the best things in life is to give them away."
–Dorothy Day*

1. Pick _____.

- Start anywhere, work your way to 10%
- Stretch yourself
- Be consistent

2. Write _____.

- Put it at the top of the list
- Decide what else to cut
- Track every dollar

3. Pay _____.

- Put God & His church your first priority
- In person, online, cash, or check
- Make no exceptions

4. Automate _____.

- Download PushPay
- Connect the app to your bank account
- Select an amount & auto-draft date

VII. what's next?

Now you know what all these things are, what are you going to do with that information?

What are your immediate and eventual goals in these four core areas?

In order to increase your chances of reaching them, make your goals **S.M.A.R.T.**

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time-Bound

PRAYING – I plan to consistently, consciously respond to the presence of God by...

RELATING – I plan to consistently form healthy connections and attachments to others by...

STUDYING – I plan to consistently investigate and analyze Scripture in detail by...

GIVING – I plan to consistently offer what I have for the benefit of others by...

In order to stay on track, I'm communicating all my goals to _____,
and asking for their help to keep me accountable to this new way of living.

Are there any DISCOVER ONE Next Steps you've been delaying? Here's a quick review:

1. **Begin attending regularly**

With the internet at our fingertips, you don't even need to get out of bed to explore transformative content, but you do to experience true community. There's something powerful about gathering together with other imperfect people learning what it means to live and love like Jesus. We believe the best part of a weekend service is not the information, but the interactions. The people here need you, and you need them.

Hebrews 10:25 – Let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now...

2. **Say yes to Jesus**

Saying yes to Jesus means saying yes to grace; to love; to the idea of further exploring a relationship with a God who isn't surprised or scared of your flaws, who can handle your hurt and doubt, and who knows, sees and loves you just as you are. It means inviting Christ to be the center point of your life and to lead you toward better ways of seeing, thinking, talking and living that are more consistent with your true self.

Romans 10:9 – If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

3. **Get baptized in water**

Baptism is an outward demonstration of an inward transformation, an ancient faith practice dating back to the early church. When someone decided to devote their life to follow Christ, they invited friends and family to watch them commemorate their decision by getting dunked in water to symbolize the washing away of their sins (made possible by the death and resurrection of Christ), and their awakening to a new way of living.

Romans 6:4 – For we died & were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead...now we also may live new lives.

4. **Find a Growth Group**

The spiritual life isn't just about knowing Scriptural passages and principles, but allowing yourself to be known. Everybody needs a few somebodies who know everything about them; people they can say anything to, who will accept them as they are, yet challenge them to continue growing into all they were created to be. And that kind of deep connection can't be accomplished in a large group, which is why we all need to be in a small group.

Acts 2:46 – They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper & shared their meals with great joy & generosity.

5. **Join a serving team**

People are often amazed at how open, inviting, and affirming our church feels. And that's because of all those who invest their time and talent to make it so. The New Testament describes the church as an interconnected body working together for the greater good, each part unique and essential. And yet none are fully alive if not connected and contributing to the body. You were made to serve, and part of finding fulfillment is finding your fit.

1 Peter 4:10 – God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

6. **Start giving consistently**

Everything you love about South Hills exists because somebody gave so others might have a chance to live a better story. You may never meet them, but they didn't give to get your gratitude. They gave out of gratitude to God for all He has given them, which is everything they've got. God knows the best way to fight materialism and foster gratitude is to pre-decide to give a percentage of whatever you get away. This ancient discipline, called tithing, is a practice God is so confident will improve your life that he openly challenges us to test that truth.

Acts 20:35b – You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

7. **Commit to the South Hills family**

Church, like family, isn't something you show up to, but something you belong to. As we mature we realize we don't have to work for God's love, but we begin to love doing God's work. We find ourselves feeling compelled to give to others the grace we've been given. And we commit to contribute to the community that helped toward a belief in God and an understanding that we belong to his family.

Mark 3:35 – Anyone who does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.