CITY CHURCH MARIETTA

DISCIPLESHIP PATH

Make Disciples who live to Glorify God and Enjoy Him together

"They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor."
ISAIAH 61:3

THE DISCIPLESHIP TREE



Why a Tree?

Isaiah 61:3 says that God's people will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor. David also writes of a flourishing believer in Psalm 1:3, "He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers." An oak does not grow overnight. It is planted, watered, rooted deep, and then grows sturdy enough to bear weight, wide enough to give shade, and fruitful enough to leave a legacy for generations after it. This happens slowly and over great lengths of time. That is the picture we want for discipleship at CCM: not a program to complete, but a life that grows deep roots in the gospel and bears visible fruit over time.

The roots represent our hidden life with Christ. This is the unseen work of formation that anchors everything else. The trunk represents our shared mission: to make disciples who live to glorify God and enjoy Him together. And the branches represent the eight values that grow out of that mission, each one bearing its own kind of fruit in the life of our church.

How to Use This Document

Use them personally to honestly evaluate your own walk with Jesus. We must always be asking where we are thriving and where we need to grow. Use them in your Community Group as a framework for honest conversation about spiritual health. And use them as a church to ask: where are we strong as a community, and where do we need to invest more deeply?

Each section that follows corresponds to one of our eight core values, providing a brief description, anchoring Scripture, and concrete practices for how we live out this value both individually and together as a church.

GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS

Fruit, Not Root

Before you walk through the eight values on the pages that follow, we want to say plainly what this document is NOT. The Discipleship Path is not a ladder to climb to earn favor with God, and the tree is not a scorecard of achievements that make us more acceptable to Him. Every branch pictured here is fruit; it's not the root. These eight practices are the visible, growing outworking of a righteousness that is already fully ours in Christ, not the means by which we obtain it.

We are justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Nothing in this document adds to that, and nothing in it can take it away. The practices described in each section are not requirements for acceptance. They are the natural, Spirit-empowered response of people who have already been fully accepted, adopted, and secured in Jesus.

> *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."*
> **— Ephesians 2:8–9**

> *"He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit."*
> **— Titus 3:5**

> *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*
> **— Romans 8:1**

Growth, Not a Gauge of Standing

So read what follows as a description, not a condition. These eight values describe what a Spirit-transformed life increasingly looks like. They are not the price of admission into this kind of life. Growth in any of these areas is evidence of grace already at work in you, not the cause of God's favor toward you. And slow, uneven, or interrupted growth in any one of them does not put your standing with God at risk. Your standing before God was settled at the cross and rests on Christ's finished work alone.

Use this document, then, the way you would look at fruit on a tree that is already alive and already rooted: with hope, with honesty about where growth is slow, and with deep confidence that the life in the roots does not depend on the fruit in the branches.

THE JOURNEY

Gospel-Centered Formation

DESCRIPTION

At City Church Marietta, we believe that following Jesus is not a destination but a lifelong journey of becoming. Jesus is concerned not only with where we are going but with who we are becoming along the way. He is shaping our character, affections, and desires to look more like His. Formation happens daily as we submit ourselves to the Word, prayer, and the rhythms of grace that God has given us. We are a church committed to walking together in this process, knowing that none of us arrives this side of eternity.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."*
> **— Philippians 1:6**

> *"For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."*
> **— Romans 8:29**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Committing to a daily time of Scripture reading and prayer, allowing God's Word to shape my mind and heart.
- Practicing the spiritual disciplines, i.e., fasting, solitude, simplicity, and Scripture memorization, etc. as a means of grace for your formation.
- Participating in a Community Group where you can grow alongside others in honest, gospel-centered relationships.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Providing Community Groups as the primary vehicle for relational discipleship and spiritual formation.
- Participating in the Welcome to City Church experience, which introduces members to the vision, values, and expectations of life together at CCM.
- Leaders and pastors being committed to teaching and modeling a life of ongoing formation through the rhythms of the church.

EXPECTANT WORSHIP

Gospel-Centered Encounter

DESCRIPTION

We gather each week not merely as a routine but with expectation. We believe that Jesus meets us when His people assemble in His name. Expectant Worship means we come prepared in heart and mind to hear from God through His Word, to respond in song, prayer, and confession, and to be changed by the encounter. We believe corporate worship is one of the primary ways God shapes His people and draws the lost toward Himself. At CCM, we value gathering together as an act of faith and a gift of God's grace, not just an item on a weekly schedule.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."*
> **— Psalm 95:6–7**

> *"Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*
> **— Hebrews 10:25**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Preparing my heart before gathering with the body through prayer, confession of sin, and an active expectation to meet with Jesus.
- Engaging fully in the weekly worship gathering through attentive listening, sung worship, and responsive prayer.
- Seeing my life wholistically as an opportunity to worship by offering myself in service to the Lord each day.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Gathering in weekly worship centered on the preaching of God's Word and the response of God's people.
- Offering other opportunities throughout the year (Nights of Worship, Women's Worship Nights, etc.) to gather for times of fasting, extended worship, and corporate prayer as a gathered community.

KINGDOM MINDED

Gospel-Centered Advance

DESCRIPTION

We exist not for ourselves but for the expansion of God's Kingdom locally in Marietta and globally to the ends of the earth. Being Kingdom Minded means we see our resources, relationships, and rhythms as instruments of God's redemptive purposes in the world. We are committed to partnerships that advance the Gospel where it has not yet gone, including among unreached people groups who do not yet have access to God's Word in their own language. Our vision is that CCM would be a sending church, looking for ways to send people, resources, and prayer wherever the Kingdom is advancing.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*
> **— Matthew 6:10**

> *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."*
> **— Matthew 28:19–20**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Praying regularly for our local and global ministry partners by name, asking God to advance His Kingdom through their work.
- Considering ongoing participation in serving a local ministry partner, and/or one of CCM's annual mission trips to serve alongside our partners.
- Giving generously and sacrificially to support the spread of the Gospel locally and globally.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Maintaining ongoing local ministry partnerships that address spiritual and physical needs in the Marietta community.
- Sending teams annually to the nations to serve and strengthen our global partners in Gospel ministry.
- Partnering with the Seed Company, investing in the translation of Scripture into the languages of unreached people groups around the world.

CHANGED LIVES

Gospel-Centered Transformation

DESCRIPTION

We believe the Gospel is not merely a message we believe once but a power that transforms us continually. At CCM, we expect changed lives. This is not the exception for a spiritually elite few, but the norm for every person who has encountered the risen Christ. This transformation touches every area of life: our relationships, our finances, our habits, our words, and our hopes. We are a community that tells and celebrates stories of change, knowing that each one is a testimony to the ongoing work of God's grace.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."*
> **— 2 Corinthians 5:17**

> *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."*
> **— Romans 12:2**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Pursuing ongoing repentance and faith as a daily practice, not merely a one-time event.
- Being willing to share your story of Gospel transformation with others in my community group and beyond.
- Seeking out trusted brothers and sisters who can speak into my life with honesty and grace through confession of sin and regular accountability.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Celebrating baptism as a public declaration of life change and new identity in Christ.
- Coming alongside every person who takes a step of faith or connection, walking with them toward next steps in their journey.
- Maintaining a referral network of trusted, gospel-centered counselors and therapists for those navigating significant life struggles.

BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

Gospel-Centered Connection

DESCRIPTION

We were not made to follow Jesus alone. Biblical community is the commitment to pursue life together. This corporate pursuit is marked by prayer, honest confession, repentance, mutual service, and deep encouragement. At CCM, we believe community is not a program but a posture: a willingness to be known and to know others in the light of God's Word. This kind of fellowship is both a gift and a discipline, requiring intentionality and vulnerability in a culture that prizes self-sufficiency.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."*
> **— Acts 2:42**

> *"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."*
> **— Proverbs 27:17**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Committing to a Community Group as my primary context for being known and for knowing others in the Gospel.
- Practicing honesty and confession within safe, trusted relationships in the local church.
- Making it a priority to not isolate myself during my time at CCM, but intentionally and deliberately giving my time for the good of others.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Offering Community Groups for men, women, couples, and others. These are the primary vehicles for Biblical community in the life of our church.
- Observing seasons of fasting and communion together as a community, breaking the fast corporately in worship.
- Hosting men's and women's events throughout the year to cultivate gender-specific discipleship and friendship.

COURAGEOUS FAITH

Gospel-Centered Witness

DESCRIPTION

The Christian life requires courage to believe what we cannot see, to obey what is countercultural, and to speak the name of Jesus in a world that would rather we stay quiet. At CCM, we believe faith is not passive but active: it moves us toward the uncomfortable, the risky, and the unknown for the sake of the Gospel. Courageous Faith means living in a way that is visibly different from the surrounding culture. This kind of faith impacts our ethics, our generosity, our speech, and our priorities. We encourage one another to take steps of faith, knowing that God is faithful to those who trust Him.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*
> **— 2 Corinthians 5:7**

> *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*
> **— Joshua 1:9**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Sharing the Gospel with those in my relational network (i.e., neighbors, coworkers, friends, etc.), trusting the Spirit to work through your witness.
- Practicing counter-cultural obedience in areas where Scripture calls me to live differently from the world around me.
- Volunteering within CCM's ministries that stretch me beyond m comfort zone.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Sending members on local and global mission trips as concrete expressions of courageous, Gospel-driven faith.
- Calling our church to be faithful stewards with their resources, trusting God with our finances.
- Offering volunteer opportunities within CCM's ministries areas as an ongoing invitation for members to step out in faith and serve.

LOVING PEOPLE

Gospel-Centered Care

DESCRIPTION

The Gospel compels us to love. This kind of love is not mere sentimentality, but truthful and sacrificial, the way that Jesus loved us. At CCM, we are committed to loving all people with both truth and grace: refusing to trade one for the other, knowing that genuine love requires both. This love expresses itself in hospitality, care for the vulnerable, and a gospel hospitality that leaves no one feeling invisible. We believe the church is called to be a preview of the Kingdom, a transformed community where every person is seen, valued, and invited into the family of God.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*
> **— John 13:34–35**

> *"Show hospitality to one another without grumbling."*
> **— 1 Peter 4:9**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Practicing Gospel hospitality by opening my home and table to others.
- Being aware of those in your community group or church family who are in need and taking steps to care for them practically.
- Engaging locally and globally through CCM's partnerships, looking for ways to love your neighbors near and far.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Creating and cultivating a culture of warm, intentional hospitality every time we gather.
- Maintaining benevolence resources for members and neighbors facing financial hardship or emergency needs.
- Serving the city of Marietta and the world through local and global engagement partnerships rooted in the love of Christ.

INVESTMENT

Gospel-Centered Legacy

DESCRIPTION

We are a church that thinks in generations. We are looking at not just who we are today, but who will carry the Gospel forward after us. Investment means giving our lives away: our time, our money, our wisdom, and our presence to the people who will outlive us and outlast us. At CCM, we believe the greatest legacy any of us can leave is a faith that is passed on to our children, to younger believers, and to those who are yet to know Jesus. We are stewards of a Gospel that does not belong to us, entrusted to give it away.

ANCHORING SCRIPTURE

> *"And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."*
> **— 2 Timothy 2:2**

> *"We will not hide them from their children, but tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done."*
> **— Psalm 78:4**

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES

As a member of CCM, I live out this value by:

- Giving sacrificially of my time and resources as an investment in the work of the Gospel at CCM and around the world.
- Pursuing intergenerational relationships within the church, intentionally investing in those younger in faith than myself.
- Consistently praying for our children and students at CCM, asking the Lord to continue giving them the grace to walk in obedience and repentance.

CORPORATE PRACTICES

As a church, CCM lives out this value by:

- Equipping parents to disciple their children; discipleship endeavors begin in the home, and the church serves as a supplemental resource to what is already happening in families.
- Pairing younger members with older, seasoned believers for mentorship and intergenerational discipleship upon request.