Discipleship Terms and Concepts Review

Here is a Brief Review:

Definition of Disciple

A definition of being a disciple of Jesus is found in the invitation to His first followers. In Matthew 4:19 Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Do you remember the definition of a disciple from this verse?

Fill in the blank below:

1. A disciple is someone who _____ Jesus.
2. A disciple is someone who is being _____ by Jesus.
3. A disciple is on _____ with Jesus.

A disciple surrenders his or her life to *follow* Jesus. As they enter into a relationship with Christ, they will be *changed* or *transformed* by Jesus. Subsequently, a disciple’s perspective shifts about the people around them. Therefore, a disciple joins the cause of Christ. We call that being *on mission* with Jesus.

Head, Heart, Hands, and Feet

People learn and grow in many ways. One way to describe how a person grows is by using the terms Head, Heart, Hands, and Feet. These four words represent different parts of an individual that work together to learn and apply new ideas and concepts, leading to change.

Head - We follow Jesus because we have surrendered to Him as Lord. Jesus guides our thoughts and ideas. Our minds, or what we know and think, are submitted to His leadership. Jesus is our teacher, and He fills our minds with His understanding of truth.

Heart – Because we are committed, we follow Jesus. He changes how we relate to God and others at a heart level. In the Ten Commandments, the first four address our relationship with God, and the last six focus on our relationship with others. As disciples of Jesus, our hearts change through our relationship with God, which improves how we interact with others.

(Margin note: 10 Commandments)

Hands –A disciple of Jesus shows this commitment and change through their actions. Jesus's mission was to reach people with the gospel and grow them in God's kingdom.

Being on a mission with Jesus means serving Him with everything He has given us—our gifts, abilities, and resources—with our hands.

(Place in the margin the diagram of the journey that was built into the disciple's journey that culminates in the five spheres?)

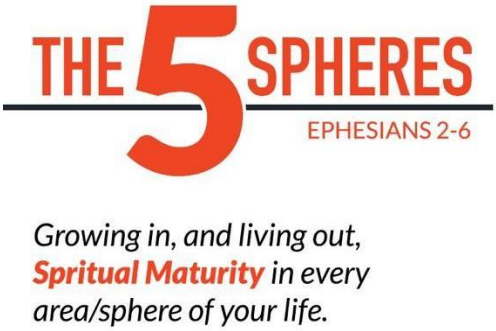
Feet –The term *Feet* refers to the different environments in which a disciple lives out his new life in Christ. **We will discuss the **Feet** more in the next section on The Five Spheres of Discipleship.*

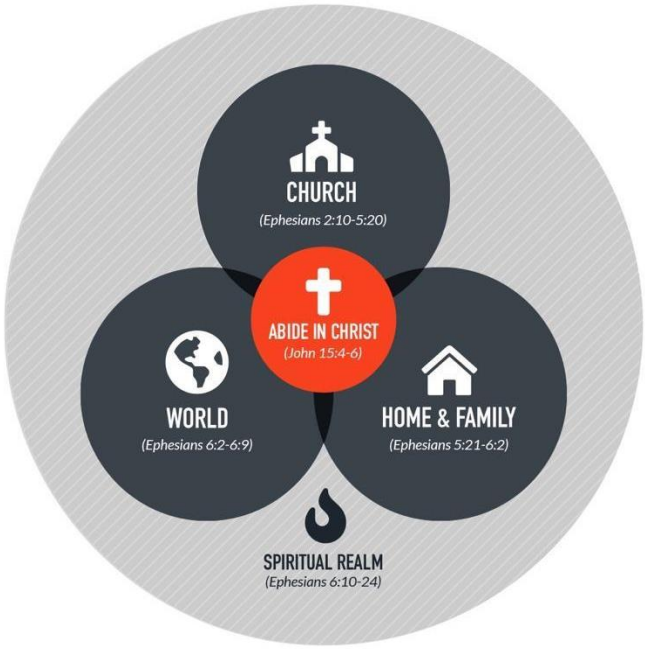
The Five Spheres of Discipleship -

Building on Head, Heart, and Hands, let's take a look at the meaning of Feet.

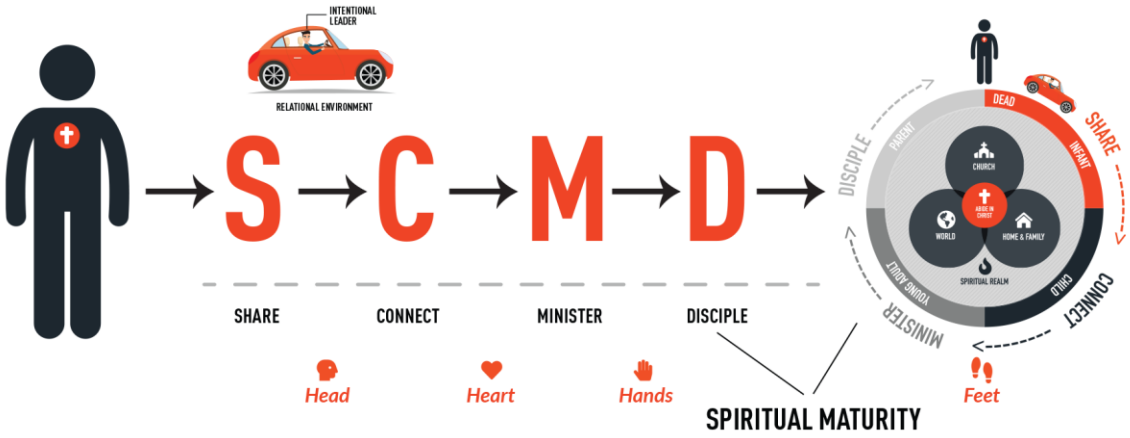
Feet: Discipleship is lived out in different environments, the spaces where life happens. These are mentioned in Paul's letter to the Ephesian church. We call them the 5 Spheres, and they are listed below:

1. **The Abide Sphere** - A personal and life-giving relationship with Christ.
2. **The Church Sphere** - The regular assembling of Christians for growth and encouragement.
3. **The Home Sphere** - The people who live underneath your roof.
4. **The World Sphere** - Where we work, go to school and engage our community.
5. **The Spiritual Realm** - Unseen by the naked eye, but the influence of powers and principalities around us.





The Discipleship JOURNEY



The Abide Sphere

Here's a revised version for clarity:

At the center of this diagram is a red circle, symbolizing the Abide Sphere. The core principle of "Abide" is encapsulated in the phrase "in Christ." In John 15:4-5, Jesus explains that an abiding relationship with Him is essential for a disciple's life. In the first chapter of Ephesians (NIV), this phrase appears five times. Our ability to produce godly results, both at home and in the world, comes solely from Him.

Read the verses below that reference this abiding relationship with the phrase *in Christ*:

Ephesians 1:1&2 - Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful *in Christ Jesus*: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

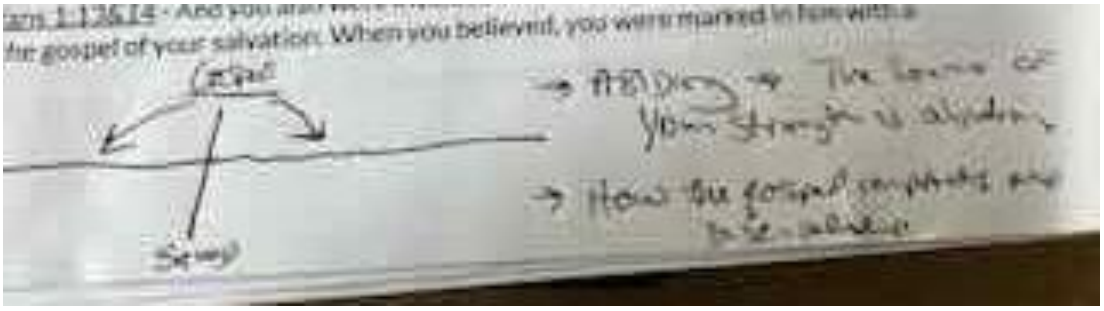
Ephesians 1:3&4 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing *in Christ*. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 1:8b-10 - With all wisdom and understanding, **9** he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed *in Christ*, **10** to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Ephesians 1:11&12 - In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, **12**

in order that we, who were the first to put our hope *in Christ*, might be for the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:13&14 - And you also were included *in Christ* when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.



Being in Christ comes from Jesus' words in John 15:4: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me." (ESV)

In the upper room, on the night before His death, Jesus shared this "secret to success" with His disciples. We call it the *Abide Sphere*. Abiding means regularly seeking Jesus through Bible study, prayer, spiritual disciplines, and fellowship with other believers. These practices help align our thoughts, attitudes, and actions with Jesus' design for every area of our lives.

The entrance to abiding in Christ is also explained in the book of Ephesians.

> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV

By grace through faith, our lives submit to God, who shapes and forms us to accomplish the good things He has prepared. God empowers and equips us to bear fruit through an abiding relationship with Him. In other words, we follow Christ and actively engage in His plan for redeeming the world.

The Church Sphere

Paul's longest section in Ephesians talks about the Church (Ephesians 2:11-5:14). He says there's no wall dividing Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus. He explains how

people can form the body of Christ and live as Children of Light. The Church and home support each other. Just like the Old Testament nation included homes, the New Testament church includes homes too. This is called the "homesphere" of discipleship.

In Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12, and Romans 12, Paul calls the church the Body of Christ. The Church is made up of our relationships with other disciples. We are supposed to encourage and train each other to build God's Kingdom. This is God's family, people who follow Jesus. Paul writes that the church shows the world God's mystery. This means it's essential for Christians to work together with God's plan and do the good works He wants us involved in every day.

The Home Sphere

Your family, or Home sphere, is where some of the most important discipleship occurs. Marriage is a space where God refines and grows men and women into the image of Jesus Christ. Through challenges and victories, couples can uniquely experience God's protection and blessing by living out God's design for their homes. In Deuteronomy 6, husbands and fathers[1] were responsible for leading their families spiritually. Ephesians 6:1-2 also highlights the father's role in parenting. Both passages stress that parents, both fathers and mothers, are accountable for purposefully raising children to know God, supported by the church or spiritual community.

Children's most formative years are mainly influenced by their homes. Like a savings account, small deposits of discipleship early on will grow into great value for the future. As in marriage, parenting according to the truth of God's word helps kids experience the blessing and protection of God. Parenting can be the purest form of discipleship when Jesus is placed at the center of your home.

The World Sphere

Matthew 5:14 records Jesus' words, "You are the light of the world." In our day-to-day lives, everyone interacts with other people at work, school, and in the community. This, too, is an environment where the life of a disciple is lived out for others to witness and becomes a place where sharing Christ with others often occurs.

[1] In the original language, there's a clear emphasis on the responsibility given to fathers. Today, there's confusion about gender roles, with some portraying masculinity as toxic. While distorted masculinity can be harmful, it's also important not to downplay positive masculinity. This confusion has partly arisen due to extremes in feminism. It's crucial to acknowledge the vital role women play in the parenting partnership ordained by God, without overreacting. Studies emphasize the significant impact of fatherless homes, highlighting the importance of both parents.

Being on a mission with Jesus includes sharing our lives and His gospel with other people. Making disciples in the world around us is at the core of Jesus' commission to us: "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19 NIV).

The Spiritual Realm

Paul warned that the war against God's Kingdom is a spiritual war against an unseen enemy who influences the world. It is easy to see people as the enemy until we realize that our true enemy, Satan, has taken them captive with his lies and deception. Knowing the truth of God and becoming confident about our identity in Christ as God's children are fundamental to successful warfare in the spiritual realm.

The Roles of Change - *God's Part*, *Their Part*, *My Part*

Remember that there are three parts to the change process: God's Part, My Part, and the Part that Other People Must Play.

Keep in mind:

- **God's Part** - I cannot do God's part to change or change someone else's habits or attitudes.
- **My Part** - I am responsible for what I control. God will do His part in our life as we abide in Christ.
- **Their Part** - Often, a situation can only change if others are willing to do their part. *In these times our role is to pray and wait on God.*

*Completing the *Disciple's Journey* workbook is a more comprehensive study of the terms and concepts of discipleship. In the *Disciple's Journey* study, two weeks are dedicated to the Home Sphere. It explains the key terms and ideas that are important for discipleship. Here is a link to get that study - LINK (need to be linked)