

DISCOVERING PRESCOTT

Lesson 1

Welcome to Prescott

Introduction:

As you begin your journey to discover the church, we want to help you to understand who we are as a church family. We want you to see the heart of our ministry and our vision for the future. God is at work at Prescott! This is your opportunity to discover what He is doing firsthand and participate in the excitement. In the six weeks we spend together you will discover:

- Our Vision — What we are becoming.
- Our Values — What drives the things we do.
- Our Purpose — Why we exist as a church.
- Our Product — What we intend to produce.
- Our Philosophy of Ministry — The process we will use to accomplish our purpose.
- Our Programming — The structures in which ministry takes place.
- Your Role — The place God has for you in our church.
- Our Expectations — What we expect from our members.

It is our hope and prayer that you will discover a church family here at Prescott where you will experience a community to belong to, a mission to embrace and an ever-growing personal relationship with our Lord.

Our Vision

Prescott's vision is to be a center for Christian discovery, development and experience.

Our Values

- God is the head of the Church. He has promised to build His Church starting within us and then through us. Only as He empowers us with His Spirit and transforms us with His word can we be effective. Without Him we can do nothing.
- Prayer is the essential foundation for all effective ministry. It demonstrates our ongoing dependence on God to fulfill our mission.
- Worship pleases God. Worship is demonstrated by full devotion to Christ on an individual basis and unified celebration of God at the corporate level.
- Following Christ is a lifetime commitment characterized by an ongoing desire for spiritual growth, spiritual authenticity and submission to God's will.
- Authentic, loving relations should characterize the church. Life change happens best in the context of healthy relations.
- The church should function as a unified community of servant ministers. Every person at Prescott is a minister.
- The church should be doctrinally pure, culturally relevant and strategically organized.
- The teaching of the church should demonstrate the Spirit's power and facilitate life change.

- The unchurched are valued and loved by God, therefore the church should love and value them in the same way that God does.
- Excellence honors God and inspires people.

Our Purpose

The purpose of Prescott Evangelical Free Church is to glorify God by making disciples who exalt God, who equip each other to ministry and who evangelize the world by word and actions, starting in their own sphere of influence and extending disciplemaking throughout the world.

Our Product

The most important aspect of our church is the product we produce. That product is a mature, growing disciple. We define a disciple as a believer who walks with God, lives the Word, contributes to the work and impacts the world.

Our Philosophy of Ministry — Equipping and Equippers

1. The Senior Pastor's role and commitment is primarily to give direction, train leaders, teach the Word and be a model disciple. He should seldom perform ministries lay leaders could do unless it is absolutely necessary. The role of other staff members is the same as that of the Senior Pastor in that staff member's area of ministry.
2. The role of our lay leaders is to model discipleship, to grow in their own ministry skills and to equip the rest of the congregation for ministry.
3. The church member's role and commitment is to grow as a disciple, to be trained to use his/her gifts and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to directly minister to Christians and pre-Christians. The church will encourage and empower gifted individuals to be creative, pro-active, need oriented and decentralized in disciplemaking, and will grant permission and give resources whenever possible.
4. We will recognize servant gifts to be as equally important as leadership gifts in building a healthy, disciplemaking church.
5. All staff, policy makers and group leaders must be growing disciples committed to the church's philosophy of ministry.
6. Leaders will be recognized by considering both character and giftedness.
7. All leaders of key church ministries will take part in ongoing leadership training twice a month to constantly improve the gifts God has given them.

Our Philosophy of Ministry — Church Programs

1. The purpose of every activity of our church is to produce and further develop disciples. We will evaluate every activity by its effectiveness in producing disciples and will modify or discontinue activities that ineffectively do this.
2. One primary method of making disciples is the decentralized small group. We see one-on-one approaches as valid, sometimes necessary, but only as a secondary method for most in our church.
3. We will offer small groups and other ministries at multiple commitment levels to develop sequential growth for disciples.
4. Our evangelism will focus on multiple specific groups rather than using a generic approach.

5. While making all our ministries sensitive to newcomers, the primary function of our worship services will be true worship and proclaiming the Word of God.
6. The primary function of our Church Board will be to set broad policies, macro-manage the church and keep all ministries in line with the doctrinal statement, constitution and philosophy of ministry.
7. The micro-management of all ministries will be delegated to leaders of those ministries, and accountability will be maintained through leadership training meetings and normal discipling channels.
8. We will, whenever possible, use ministries, task forces and discipleship structures, rather than boards and committees, to make decisions and do ministry. We will seek to minimize our policy makers and maximize the number of persons doing ministry.

Our Philosophy of Ministry —Methods and Principles to Help Us Best Make Disciples

1. We will, at all times, have an intentional strategy to accomplish each aspect of our purpose.
2. We will primarily make disciples as a team, as a church, but not just as a collection of independent individuals.
3. We are committed to the principle of multiplication of ourselves by evangelizing, discipling, training and delegating ministry to others who are faithful.
4. We will multiply ourselves and train others, using the method of apprenticeship.
5. Reasonable accountability is an indispensable method in making disciples. We define accountability as helping one another keep our commitments to God.
6. Evangelism (including pre-evangelism) is the starting point and indispensable catalyst to all discipling.
7. Evangelism and discipleship are most effective in the context of healthy relationships.
8. We will promote the belief that the church's most important identity and ministry takes place while it is decentralized.
9. Our organizational structure and leadership styles will flex and change as we move through our life-cycle as a church.
10. This philosophy of ministry will be pursued with grace, and takes full effect on January 1, 2001.
11. This philosophy of ministry will be as binding as our bylaws and can be amended in the same way as our bylaws.

Assignment for next week:

Write out a description of how you became a Christian, and highlights of your spiritual journey.

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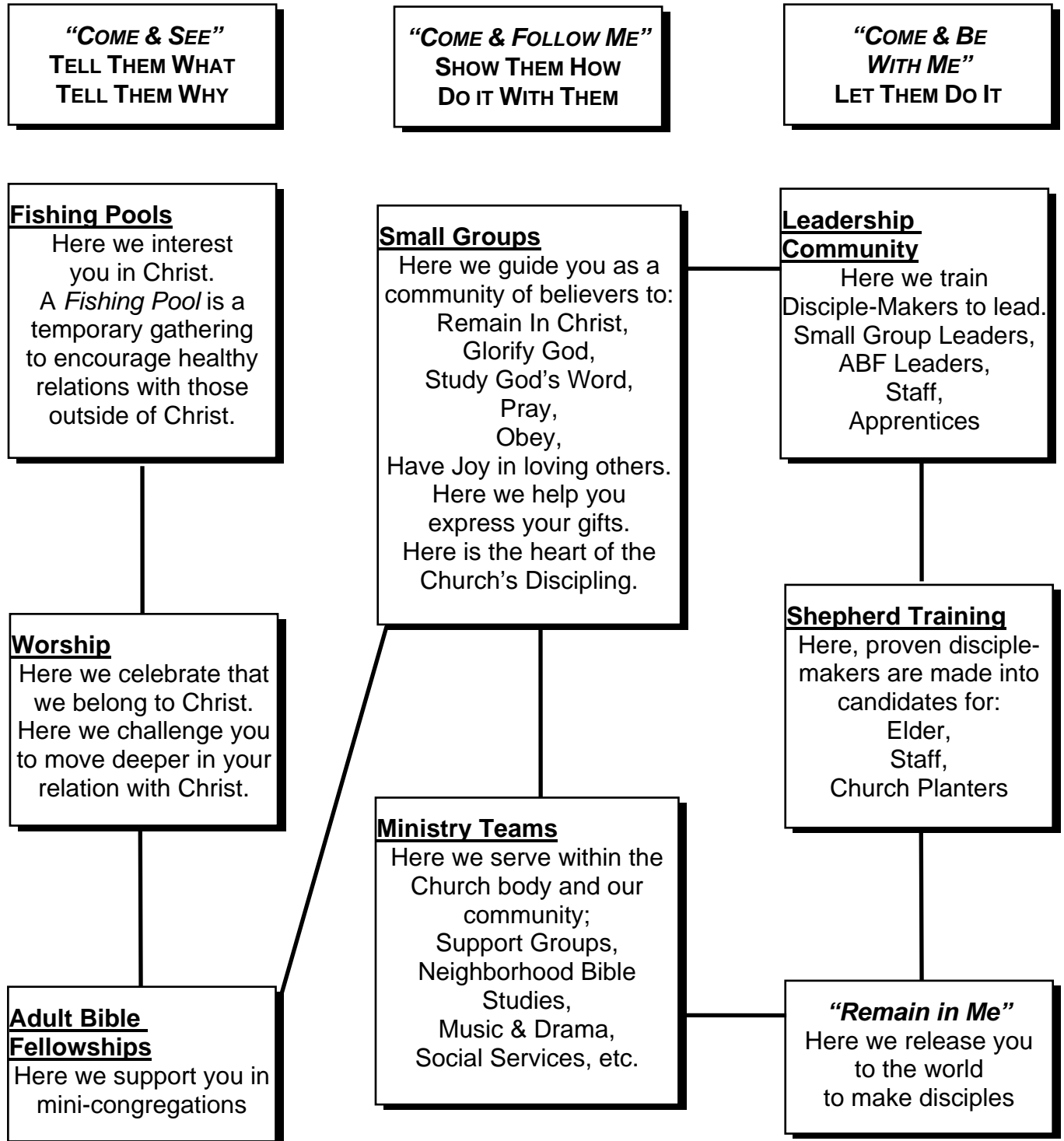
Lesson 2

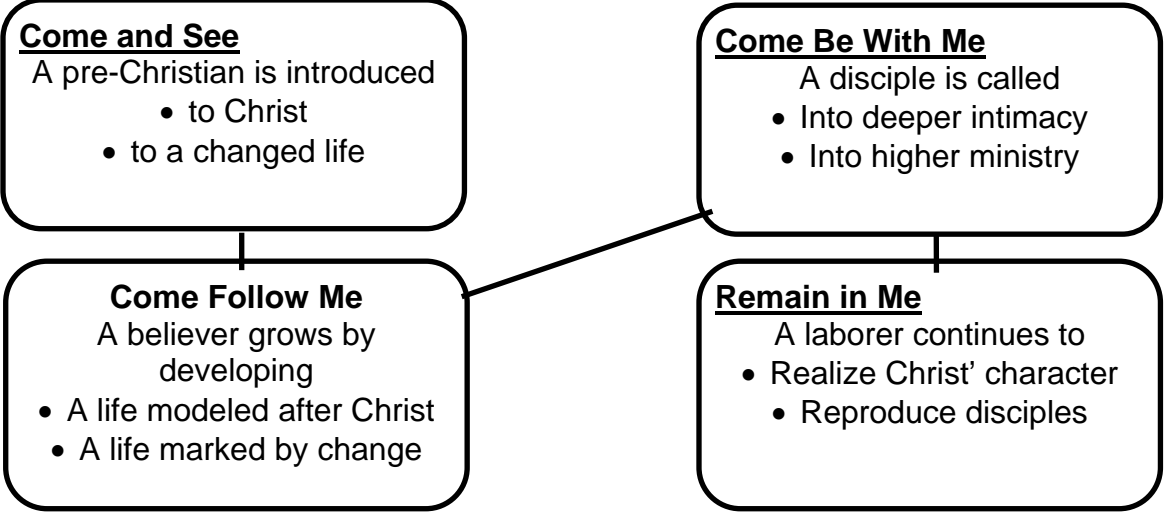
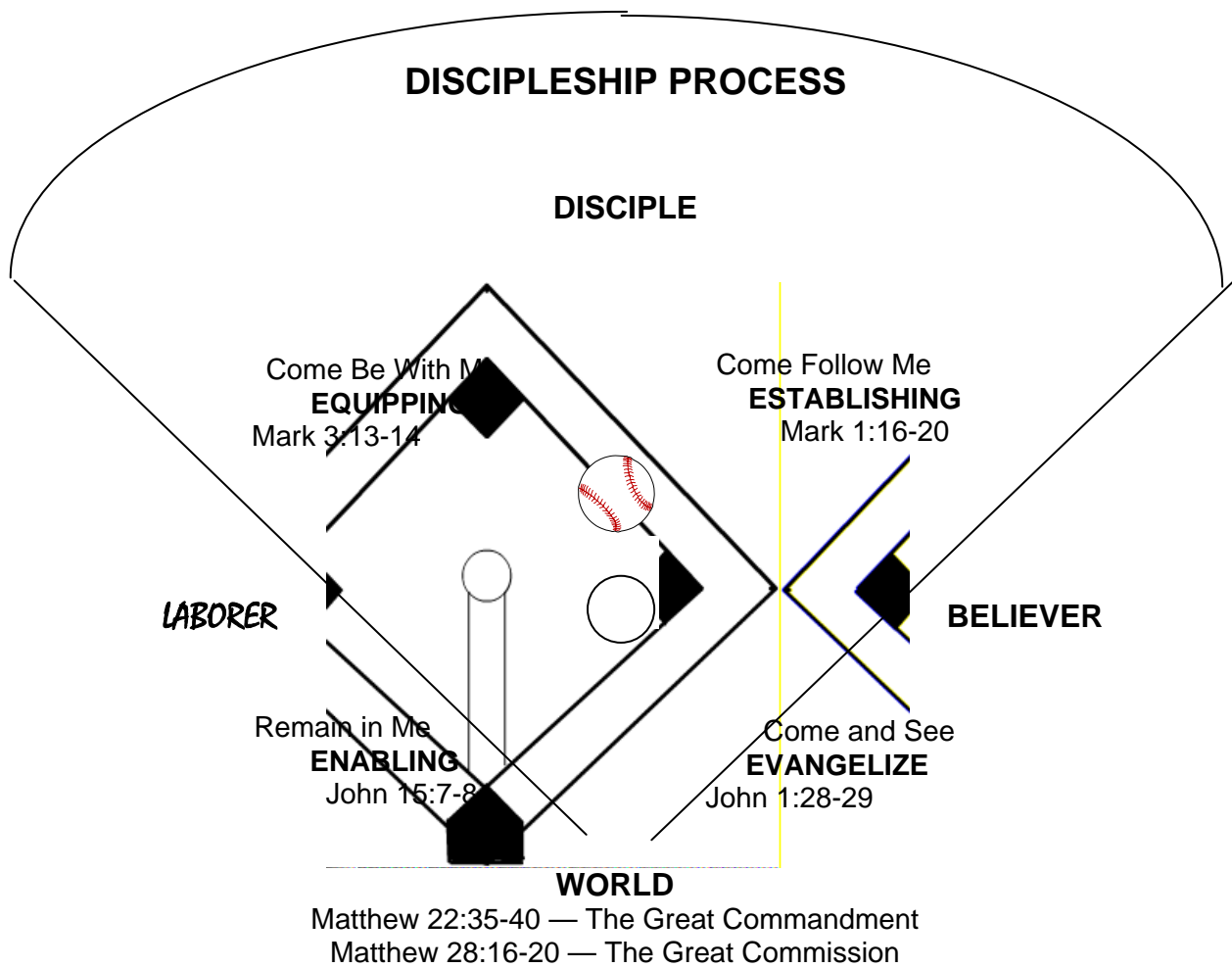
CHURCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Church infrastructure is the organization of the church's ministry to develop healthy relationships so that effective numerical and spiritual growth can occur and healthy disciples can be continually produced.

- I. The Nature of Healthy Relationships — Mark 12:28-31
(Healthy relationships are built on three distinct levels, requiring the believer to make three or four commitments to ministry.
 - A. Unity — Ephesians 4:3-4
 1. Literally: Oneness
 2. Unity describes a surface relation within the church based on a common root and purpose in Christ.
 3. We experience unity in the worship service.
 - B. Fellowship — Acts 2:42. . .
 1. To share, to partner with, to co-participate
 2. Fellowship defines both the feeling and function of a Christian community.
 3. Activity is always a part of the fellowship.
 4. The “one another” passages help define fellowship.
 5. Fellowship requires knowledge of another person.
 6. We experience fellowship in an A.B.F. or similar group.
 - C. Intimacy
 1. Intimacy is based on the relation of Christ to the twelve apostles.
 2. This is an in-depth relation that by necessity can only be maintained with a few people.
 3. Examples: Paul relating to Timothy and Titus, confessing sin and admonishing one another.
 4. We experience intimacy in small group ministries.
- II. Principles that Effect Healthy Relations
 - A. The principle of 70
 - B. The principle of 17
 - C. The principle of competition
 - D. The principle of continuation
 - E. Myers Law

PRESCOTT'S DISCIPLE-MAKING PLAN





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Lesson 3

THE WORSHIP CELEBRATION

Every part of the church's infrastructure should contribute to the disciple-making process. This includes the worship celebration. We define worship as an expression of our love to God based on who He is, what He has done and what He is doing. We live for Christ as an act of worship on an individual basis, but the corporate worship service plays an important role in an effective disciple-making church.

I. The Function of the Worship Service

- A. The celebration allows a disciple to express himself/herself through corporate worship.
- B. The celebration is a place to plant the seed of the Word.
- C. The celebration can be used to develop values and priorities.
- D. The celebration can be used to disseminate corporate information.
- E. The celebration can be used to challenge individuals to start or continue the disciple-making process. It can direct them to specific applications and entry points.

II. The Principles of the Worship Service

- A. Don't forsake worship.
- B. Preach the Word.
- C. Feed people on three levels: new information, emotional appeal, and practical application.
- D. Maintain proper group dynamics.
- E. Emphasize quality.
- F. Intentionally develop values. (Worship is service not "serve us")
- G. Balance reflective and celebrative styles.
- H. Avoid ruts.
- I. Present a clear challenge and direction to the appropriate next step.
- J. Express excitement and expectancy over God's working.

ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

An Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) is a group or community of people committed to knowing and applying the Word together in a caring fellowship, with organization to bring pastoral care, discipleship, and outreach. By providing ABF's the entire church body can be organized into smaller groupings of people who love and care for each other.

ABF's revolve around four main objectives:

1. Bible Teaching – ABF's challenge adults to study God's Word and apply it to real life situations they may be experiencing. The friendly environment provided within the ABF enhances this study, because people are able to see and hear how the Bible has impacted others.
2. Bible Fellowship – ABF's provide an informal environment that enhances the development of healthy relationships. As these relationships blossom the church is more effective at doing "one another" ministry. In addition the ABF can take on special projects that enable class members to share relationally in more meaningful ways.
3. Pastoral Care – ABF's are structured so that no one should slip through the cracks in times of need. Care group leaders are intentionally trained to lead the charge in pastoral care ministries. The leaders work with their individual teams, so that the entire ABF can be drawn into the work of the ministry. Care teams can provide a number of services at a highly relational level, so that no one is left out.
4. Proactive Outreach – ABF's are an integral part of a church's evangelistic efforts. Many who come to Christ, do so in the context of a relationship with a Christian. An ABF can provide a highly relational and non-threatening environment for the seeker to be drawn to Christ. In addition to spontaneous evangelism (lifestyle or relational evangelism), an ABF can develop strategic outreach projects to reach others for Christ.

ABF's seek to redefine:

1. The Mission – We intentionally evaluate ministry based on its effectiveness in making disciples. An ABF facilitates the establishment of healthy relationships vital to this process. The entire group revolves around a disciple making purpose.
2. The Ministers – These would be the individuals who are a part of the ABF. They are called by God to do the work of ministry and not simply view Christianity as a spectator sport.
3. The Ministry – The class recognizes all the important facets of disciple making and partners together to accomplish this goal as a ministry team.

ABF's bring health to the church by encouraging people to obey the Lord's command to "love your neighbor as yourself." This is accomplished as the ABF prays, plans, trusts, ministers, and grows together as a ministry team. ABF's help people become effective ministers who obey the "one another" commands; help people develop leadership skills; and help the church to more effectively do outreach and assimilation.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

In the church's Philosophy of Ministry we state that small groups are the primary means of training disciples. We define a small group as being 7 to 17 people who meet regularly in an interactive format, where group members influence, and are influenced, by one another.

I. The Effectiveness of Small Groups

A. Based on their dynamic:

1. Intentional — In small groups we can focus on specific needs based on the principle of segmentation and sequence.
2. Relational — In small groups believers experience healthy relationships that are an integral part of the disciple making process.
3. Training Oriented — In small groups truth is discovered, applied and modeled in the life of the group members. Small groups are highly effective in equipping people for more intensive ministry, and drawing people into greater intimacy with Christ.
4. Accountability — In small groups a built-in support system exists which facilitates our growth in Christ. Because of depravity we all need accountability, which we define as helping one another keep our commitments to God.

B. Based on their diversity:

1. Small groups are effective in the area of outreach.
2. Small groups are effective in spiritual growth.
3. Small groups are effective in the area of support for hurting, needy people.
4. Small groups are effective in performing specific tasks.
5. Small groups are effective in leadership training.

C. Based on their ability to be decentralized

1. Off-campus ministry provides an environment that leads to greater group intimacy.
2. Off-campus ministry is much less threatening to the unchurched.
3. Off-campus ministry better models authentic Christianity.
4. Off-campus ministry allows us to follow the pattern of the "great commission."

- II. The Purpose of Small Groups
 - A. Outreach Groups — These groups are designed to build bridges from the church into the world of the unchurched. The goal of these groups is to bring people to Christ through the discovery process. These groups are marked by general fellowship, short-term commitment and a high level of relevance. These groups work best when unbelievers outnumber believers and the group environment is non-threatening.
 - B. Growth Groups — These groups are designed to facilitate the growth of believers into fully mature fruit-bearing disciples. Believers are on many different levels spiritually, so these groups are divided into several categories. The key to successful growth groups is to make sure all group participants abide by the group covenant, and are on the same spiritual level.
 - 1. Covenant Groups — These are low commitment, value building groups aimed at the “come and see” level. Here we tell you what, and tell you why.
 - 2. Basic Accountability Groups — These are high commitment, habit-building groups aimed at the “come and follow me” level. Here we show you how, and do it with you.
 - 3. Ongoing Accountability Groups — These are also high commitment groups. They are designed to allow the believer, who has grown in his/her values and habits, to practice them for the rest of their lives in the context of healthy, supportive relationships. These groups are aimed at the “come be with me” level. Here we let you do it.
 - C. Support Groups — These groups are designed around a common need or life experience that allows the group to bond. Encouragement, support, understanding and acceptance are important elements in support group ministry. These function at the “come and see” level with varying degrees of commitment based on the nature of the groups. These groups often include believers alongside unbelievers as they work through group issues.
 - D. Task Groups — These groups exist to accomplish tasks in the context of healthy relationships. They are organized and disbanded as needs arise.
 - E. Leadership Groups — These groups are designed to develop spiritually gifted disciples into leaders of ministry. They have a high level of commitment aimed at the “remain in me” phase of discipleship. Here we are deploying disciples to a lifetime of Christian service. In these groups the leaders of the church’s ministry receive training, support, encouragement and direction within the context of healthy relationships that build unity, teamwork and enthusiasm.

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Lesson 4
THE STRATEGY OF PRESCOTT

One of the statements in our Philosophy of Ministry is, “We will, at all times, have an intentional strategy to accomplish each aspect of our purpose.” This session is intended to clearly identify that strategy. No matter where you are on your personal spiritual journey, we want to help you experience all that God has in store for you as you develop to full maturity in your relationship with Him.

- I. Evangelism — This is the starting point for discipleship.
 - A. Two Distinctive Types
 1. Spontaneous
 2. Strategic
 - B. Action Steps
 1. Spontaneous evangelism
 - Live authentically
 - Pray evangelistically
 - Develop redemptive relations
 - Learn to invite
 - Learn to verbalize your faith
 2. Strategic
 - Training (Contagious Christian, Living Proof, etc.)
 - Relevance
 - Demographics
 - Outreach Council
- II. Exaltation — Recognizing and Responding to God
 - A. In corporate worship we begin to experience God. Our personal relationship with God begins to develop. We begin to recognize who He is, what He has done and what He is doing.
 - B. In corporate worship we are challenged to journey to a greater depth in our relationship with Christ.

III. Edification — Spiritual Formation

A. Life change happens best in the context of healthy relationships . . . an intimate small group. Here we equip/train you to serve with us to fulfill the “great commission”. Here you experience encouraging relationships to support your spiritual journey.

1. Entry Level Groups — Spiritual Discovery
2. Basic Accountability Groups — Spiritual Formation

3. Ongoing Accountability Groups — Spiritual Continuation

B. Service

1. The Body
2. Spiritual giftedness
3. Network

C. Stewardship

1. Time
2. Resource

IV. Extension — The Cycle Continues