PURPOSE-LED DISCIPLESHIP

WALKING TOGETHER

Truth, Grace, and the Way We Walk

Participant Workbook · Truth, Grace, and the Way We Walk

THE HEART OF THE EXPERIENCE

Walking together does not mean becoming identical. It means belonging to Christ first and learning to walk with one another in truth, grace, wisdom, and love.

Purpose-Led Discipleship

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WELCOME

A place to practice the way of Christ together

Walking Together is for churches, families, friends, ministry teams, small groups, and people who are still learning what Christian community can look like. No one needs to have read a book or attended another retreat. A person who is new to faith, returning to church, rebuilding trust, or simply longing to grow can begin here.

The experience does not promise perfect relationships. It gives people a Christ-centered place to examine the way they listen, disagree, repair, carry burdens, establish boundaries, receive correction, encourage growth, and remain faithful without control or self-erasure.

CORE DECLARATION

Christ is the Vine. We are branches. We need one another, but no person is meant to become another person's source, savior, conscience, or entire support system.

What participants should leave with

- A clearer understanding of unity without sameness or control.
- A practical way to listen before assuming, defending, correcting, or solving.
- Language for conflict, apology, forgiveness, trust, reconciliation, access, and boundaries.
- A healthier way to carry burdens without taking ownership of another person's choices.
- One walking agreement and one accountable next step toward becoming safer and more faithful in relationship.

How this connects

The retreat stands on its own and also complements Walking Together: Learning to Love, Grow, and Walk With Others. It gathers the book's central relational themes into five movements that can be practiced in community without requiring participants to refer back to the book.

MOVEMENT 1 | SATURDAY 9:20–10:05 AM

Christ Leads the Walk

Anchor Scripture: Amos 3:3; John 15:5; Ephesians 4:15–16 (KJV)

CENTRAL TRUTH

Walking together does not begin with getting another person to follow us. It begins with each person learning to follow Christ.

Read Along teaching

Every relationship gathers two whole histories in one place. We bring different personalities, family patterns, fears, strengths, wounds, expectations, and stages of growth. The strain that follows does not automatically mean the relationship is failing. It often reveals how each person has learned to walk.

Unity is not sameness. Christians may process at different speeds, carry different responsibilities, and serve through different gifts. Shared direction means that Christ remains the One we return to when we disagree. It does not mean one person's preference, calling, or personality becomes the pattern everyone else must copy.

Jesus is the Vine. We are branches. People can love, pray, encourage, correct, and help carry what is heavy, but they cannot become the source of our identity or security. When we stop asking another person to be our savior, we become freer to love them as a person.

Relationships also reveal our gait. Fear may make us control, chase, withdraw, please, fix, or become fiercely independent. Those patterns may once have helped us survive, but understanding where they came from does not mean they must keep leading us. Before we correct everyone else's walk, we can surrender our own to Christ.

Guided response

Complete a personal gait inventory: When I feel afraid, I tend to ____. When I feel unheard, I tend to ____. When someone disagrees with me, I tend to ____. The person or outcome I am tempted to make responsible for my security is ____. One way I can return to Christ is ____.

Conversation

- Where have I confused unity with agreement with me?
- What does relationship reveal about the way I respond to fear, disappointment, or correction?
- How can I receive help from people without asking them to take Christ's place?

Prayer

Lord, show me what is leading the way I walk. Help me surrender fear, pride, control, and the need for approval. Teach me to belong to You first so I can love the people beside me with open hands.

ONE FAITHFUL PRACTICE

This week, notice one repeated relational reaction. Pause before acting and ask, What would following Christ look like here?

MOVEMENT 2 | SATURDAY 10:15–11:00 AM

Listen Before You Answer

Anchor Scripture: James 1:19; Proverbs 18:13; Proverbs 15:1 (KJV)

CENTRAL TRUTH

Listening does not require agreement. It requires enough humility to understand before defending, assuming, correcting, or solving.

Read Along teaching

We can hear every word while building our defense. Listening asks a different question: What are you actually trying to tell me? It leaves room for information before assigning motive. A delayed message, a quiet tone, a disagreement, or a boundary may stir a conclusion that the other person never intended.

Healthy communication separates the event from the meaning we attached to it. What happened? What did I decide it meant? What do I still need to ask? Curiosity can turn an accusation into an invitation: I noticed something changed. Can you help me understand what happened?

Intent and impact can both be real. A person may not have meant to hurt us, and what happened may still have hurt. We can acknowledge impact without inventing malicious intent. We can also validate another person's experience without agreeing with every conclusion.

Listening includes learning to hear no, correction, and requests for space. A healthy pause names a return: I need an hour, and I will come back. Silence used to punish, pressure, or make someone panic is different. Gentleness does not weaken truth; it helps truth remain clear enough to be heard.

Guided response

Choose one recent misunderstanding. Write four short statements: What happened; what I decided it meant; what I know and do not know; the question I can ask before I assume. Then name what belongs to the present conversation and what may be coming from an older wound.

Conversation

- Do I listen to understand, or do I listen for the place where I can defend myself?
- How do I respond when the answer is no or when someone asks for time?
- What would help me speak specifically instead of using always, never, or everything?

Prayer

Lord, make me swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath. Help me tell the truth about my feelings without making assumptions into facts. Give me curiosity, self control, and words that make room for understanding.

ONE FAITHFUL PRACTICE

Ask one sincere clarifying question in a conversation before explaining your own side.

MOVEMENT 3 | SATURDAY 11:00–11:50 AM

Conflict, Trust, and Repair

Anchor Scripture: Proverbs 15:1; Ephesians 4:26–27; Matthew 7:20; Romans 12:18 (KJV)

CENTRAL TRUTH

Conflict can be faced without destroying the relationship, but forgiveness, trust, reconciliation, and access are not the same thing.

Read Along teaching

For some people, disagreement feels like danger because conflict once meant yelling, rejection, punishment, abandonment, or silence. That history deserves compassion, but it does not have to write every present conversation. Conflict becomes healthier when we identify the actual problem and keep the rest of the relationship out of one disagreement.

We do not protect love by fighting to hurt. Name calling, threats, mockery, public embarrassment, diagnosing someone during an argument, dragging in every old failure, or threatening the relationship to force agreement buries the real issue under new harm. A pause should lower escalation and include a clear return, not become punishment.

Repair begins with honest ownership. We can apologize for our part without taking responsibility for everything. A complete apology names what happened, recognizes impact, accepts responsibility, and changes behavior. It does not demand immediate trust as payment for saying sorry.

Forgiveness releases revenge before God. Trust looks for fruit over time. Reconciliation requires participation from more than one person, and access may change while safety and truth are established. Serious harm, abuse, threats, or ongoing deception require appropriate pastoral, professional, or legal help. A retreat circle must never pressure immediate reconciliation.

Guided response

Build a repair map for one safe and appropriate relationship: the actual issue; what belongs to me; what belongs to the other person; what apology, boundary, or changed behavior is needed; what evidence of fruit would support trust; and when the situation should be reviewed. Do not use this exercise to contact someone unsafe.

Conversation

- What happens inside me when someone disagrees or expresses hurt?
- Can I own my part without taking all the blame or shifting all of it away?
- Am I confusing forgiveness with immediate trust, reconciliation, or unchanged access?

Prayer

Lord, teach me to pursue peace without hiding truth. Show me what belongs to me, give me courage to repair what I have damaged, and give me wisdom to protect what must be protected. Keep me from using either forgiveness or boundaries as a weapon.

ONE FAITHFUL PRACTICE

Choose one repair step that is honest, specific, and safe. If direct contact is not wise, begin with prayer and counsel instead.

MOVEMENT 4 | SATURDAY 12:30–1:15 PM

Carry With Compassion and Boundaries

Anchor Scripture: Galatians 6:2, 5; Romans 12:15; Proverbs 4:23 (KJV)

CENTRAL TRUTH

Love helps carry what is heavy without taking ownership of another person's choices, responsibilities, healing, or relationship with God.

Read Along teaching

Scripture tells us to bear one another's burdens and also says each person must bear their own load. Some weight becomes lighter when another person listens, prays, brings a meal, shares a practical task, or remains present. Other responsibilities cannot be transferred: repentance, honesty, decisions, healing work, and obedience still belong to the person living them.

Helping can quietly become control. We may overfunction, rescue, repeatedly absorb consequences, or keep giving because being needed feels like being loved. Then resentment grows because we are carrying more than love assigned. A boundary can return responsibility without withdrawing compassion.

Boundaries are not indifference, punishment, or proof that we do not forgive. They clarify what we can offer, what we cannot continue, and what another person remains responsible to carry. Healthy support can say, I will walk with you to help, but I cannot do this for you.

The body carries together. No friend, spouse, pastor, parent, or leader should become the entire support system. Some needs belong with a church community, counselor, medical professional, advocate, recovery group, or legal authority. Wise love knows when to widen the circle instead of becoming someone's only lifeline.

Guided response

Draw three circles. In the first, write what belongs to me to carry. In the second, write what love may ask me to help carry. In the third, write what I must stop trying to control or complete for someone else. Add one person or resource that can help widen the circle of support.

Conversation

- Where has helping begun to create resentment, control, exhaustion, or dependence?
- What support can I offer without removing another person's responsibility?
- Where do I need to receive help instead of insisting that I can carry everything alone?

Prayer

Lord, give me compassion without control and boundaries without hardness. Show me what love is asking me to carry, what belongs to someone else, and where I need the strength of the body of Christ around me.

ONE FAITHFUL PRACTICE

Offer one concrete form of help, name one necessary boundary, or ask one trustworthy person to help carry something with you.

MOVEMENT 5 | SATURDAY 1:25–2:15 PM

Become Safe and Help One Another Grow

Anchor Scripture: Proverbs 27:17; Hebrews 10:24; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Corinthians 13:4–8 (KJV)

CENTRAL TRUTH

Safe people make room for truth, growth, boundaries, correction, encouragement, and increasing dependence on Christ rather than themselves.

Read Along teaching

Safety is not the promise that every conversation will feel comfortable. A safe person can tell the truth without intimidation, receive no without punishing it, protect confidence, admit wrong, and allow another person to grow without feeling threatened. Honesty should not become expensive simply because it is difficult to hear.

Encouragement is not flattery. It notices grace, effort, gifts, and growth while remaining truthful. We can make room for people to try, fail, learn, and become without defining them by one mistake. Correction should aim toward restoration, not superiority or shame.

Mentoring, friendship, leadership, and family love should not make people more dependent on our approval. Healthy influence keeps pointing toward Christ. It celebrates when another person learns to hear God, practice wisdom, accept responsibility, and walk faithfully without needing us to control every step.

Faithful love is patient and kind, rejoices in truth, and does not keep score. It also does not call harm good or require permanent closeness in every relationship. Love can remain faithful while access changes. The goal is not to become everyone's answer. It is to become someone beside whom truth, grace, responsibility, and growth can live.

Guided response

Complete a walking agreement with God: One behavior I need to stop; one safe practice I need to begin; one relationship in which I need to listen, repair, encourage, or establish a boundary; one person who can provide accountability; and one way I will point people toward Christ rather than toward dependence on me.

Conversation

- What is it actually like to walk beside me?
- Can people be honest, say no, grow, and receive attention without fearing my reaction?
- Who can I encourage toward one faithful step without deciding who they must become?

Prayer

Lord, make me a person who is safe for truth and growth. Help me listen, repent, protect confidence, encourage honestly, and love without control. Let the people beside me become more secure in You, not more dependent on me.

ONE FAITHFUL PRACTICE

Within seven days, carry out one part of your walking agreement and share it with a spiritually mature person who can pray and follow up with you.

CLOSING RESPONSE

The gospel and a quiet invitation

Everything explored in this experience rests on Jesus Christ. Christian community cannot save us, and healthy relationships cannot make us good enough for God. The gospel is the foundation beneath every faithful relationship and every lasting step of growth.

Suggested gospel explanation

God created us to know Him, but every person has sinned, and sin separates us from God. We cannot repair that separation by becoming better, more useful, more relationally healthy, or more religious. Because God loves us, He sent Jesus Christ, His only Son. Jesus lived a blameless life without sin, died on the cross for all our sins, and rose again. He stood in our place and bridged the gap we could never cross. Jesus is the only way to the Father.

John 14:6 (KJV): Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Romans 10:9–10 (KJV): That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Prayer is a conversation with God. It is the response of faith in which a person acknowledges sin and the need for God, confesses Jesus as Lord, believes God raised Him from the dead, accepts His gift of salvation, and receives Christ as Savior and Lord. Prayer does not earn salvation; Jesus saves. A participant may speak honestly to God in their own words or use the prayer below.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I believe You are God's only Son. You lived without sin, died on the cross for all my sins, and rose again. I know I have sinned and cannot make my own way to God. I turn from my sin and trust You alone. Forgive me. I accept Your gift of salvation and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Come into my life and help me follow, serve, and love You. Thank You for giving Yourself for me, standing in my place, and making the way for me to know the Father. In Jesus' name, amen.

Assurance and celebration

Confidence rests in Jesus, what He has done, and His promise rather than in a feeling or perfect words. If you trusted Christ today, speak privately with a mature believer or leader who can celebrate with you, answer questions, pray, discuss baptism, help you begin reading Scripture, and connect you with a healthy Bible-believing church. Your response is worth celebrating, and you do not have to be put on display for it to be real.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Keep walking after the gathering

Within one week

- Carry out one part of your walking agreement and share it with a spiritually mature, trustworthy person.
- If you received Christ, tell a mature believer or pastor who can pray with you and help you understand your next steps.
- Begin reading Scripture, continue talking with God in prayer, and ask about baptism and a healthy church community.
- Ask for pastoral care, counseling, advocacy, or practical support when the weight you are carrying needs a wider circle of help.

After thirty days

- Review what changed in listening, conflict, burden bearing, boundaries, safety, and encouragement.
- Ask where old patterns returned and what support or accountability is still needed.
- Celebrate fruit without pretending every relationship is repaired or every outcome is resolved.
- Choose one more faithful relational practice for the next thirty days.

CLOSING WORD

We were never meant to walk alone, and we were never meant to make another person our source. Keep returning to Christ, keep making room for truth and grace, and keep learning how to walk together.