

DISCIPLESHIP PIPELINE

We can think of the journey of discipleship as a series of pipelines, where as a church we are looking to facilitate individuals progressing along these to grow in their faith and formation. The problem is we often find gaps or blockages in some of the pipelines, and this can mean people can 'get stuck' at a particular stage. This tool can help you to assess what areas of your church discipleship may be under-resourced and where gaps might be in your discipleship pipeline so everyone in your community is able to grow in the likeness of Jesus.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Print the attached worksheet and work with a team of key leaders/stakeholders/elders. This is best done with others rather than the vicar/pastor just sitting down and doing it her/himself. Take time to write under each line what you are doing in this area to disciple groups and individuals. Think about the obvious things and the understated things that can get hidden or overlooked.

Having filled in the pipeline you can celebrate all that is going well in your church discipleship, but also identify the areas where people might get 'stuck.' This could be obvious as there might be a pipeline where little is written in, but also more subtle or for a particular group - for example, if all your discipleship opportunities are in the evenings, could this mean parents of young children are missing out?

WHAT DOES EACH PIPELINE MEAN?

First contact: What are you doing to make first contact with a non-Christian. Discipleship starts before conversation.

Deeper Contact: What are you doing to develop your contact with this person so trust develops and openness can emerge?

Faith sharing: What are you doing that will help someone have the Christian faith shared with them, be it individual conversations or group settings.

Faith Foundations: When someone has accepted the faith shared we now need to put down basic Christian foundations. This can be through mentoring or group settings or other associated courses.

Jesus living: Once someone has accepted Jesus and started to understand the basics of the Christian faith we now need to help people work out how you life the life of Jesus and do the things Jesus did.

Jesus Reproduction: “Therefore go and make disciples”. Each person is called to reproduce the way of Jesus in others, how are you helping people make disciples for themselves.

Leadership: What are the means within your church community for someone to develop and grow as a leader in their own right.

CREATIVE WAYS OF USING THE TOOL

This tool can be done in many creative ways. We have seen it done created on the floor of a hall using masking tape where people walk through the pipeline naming everything they do on A4 sheets of paper. Group’s have projected this onto a white board and written around the projection. You could imagine various examples of people you are in contact with as a church moving through the pipeline, where might they get stuck? What is needed for their development?

SCENARIOS

Imagine the discipleship journey of specific people. What are you as a church doing to facilitate their discipleship? You could use these examples, but the activity works best if you come up with examples relevant to your church.

I am 12 years old and come to the church twice a month. My parents are too connected to the church but don't engage heavily.

I am a married man working long hours during the week. I get home from work just as my kids are going to bed. I come to church every Sunday but don't have much time to give during the week to my discipleship.

I am a young woman new to the Christian faith who finds reading really hard.

I am a young student who has never been to church but loves going to music events and hanging out with friends at the local pub.

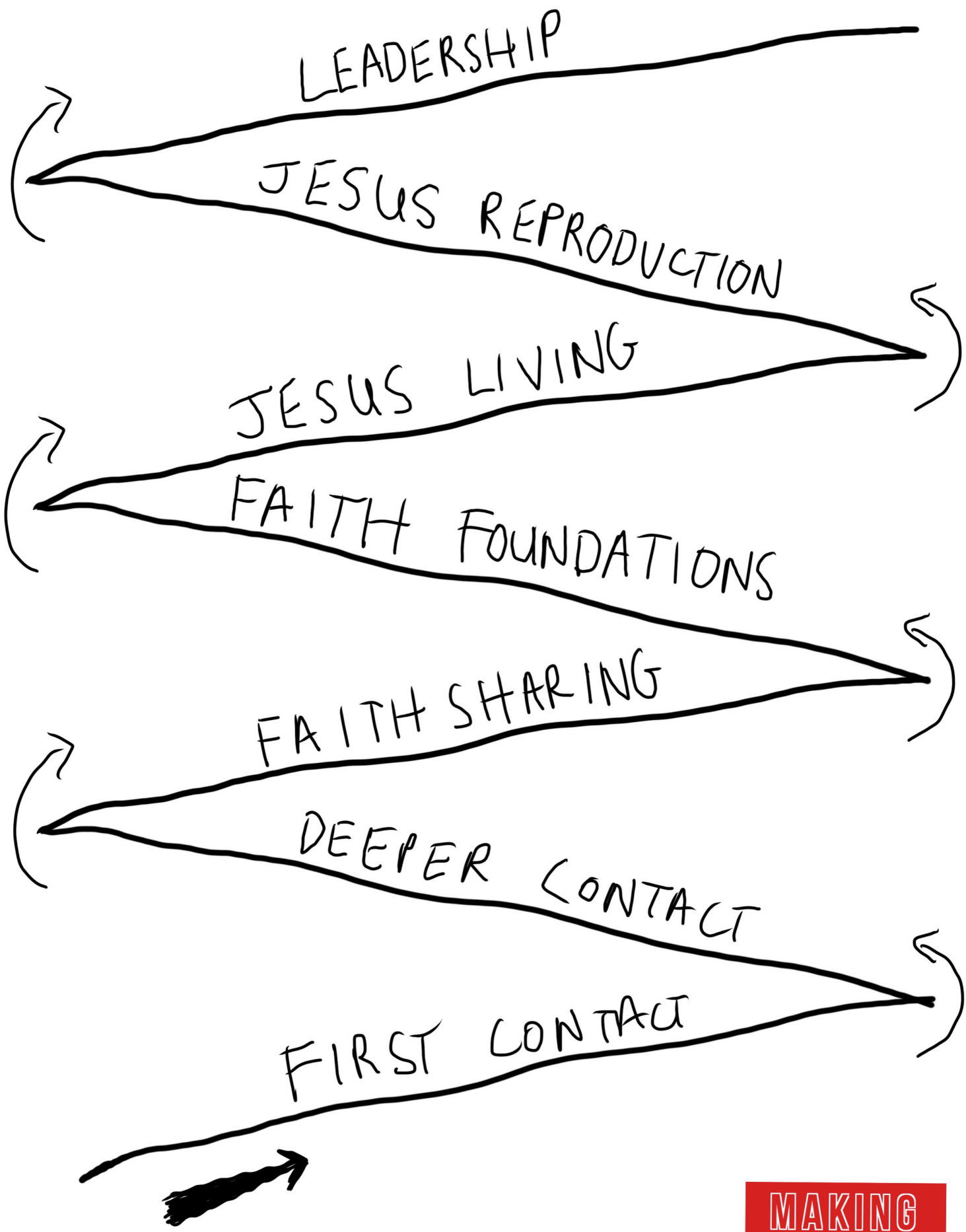
I am 67 year old man who has time to give and willing to serve in my retirement.

I am a middle-aged woman who is free on a evening and Saturdays. My kids have grown up so have a little more time on my hands.

I am a 26 year old student who is feeling called to grow in leadership.

I have been at the church 20 years and feel the last few years I have not grown in my passion or understanding of my faith. I feel stuck in a rut.

I am a middle-aged man who's son goes to the church but I have little contact with the church but love football and DIY



**MAKING
DISCIPLES**