Five Finger Discipleship Method
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Imagine being able to share Christ with your friends, and then helping them to learn to grow in their new faith commitment to Jesus. Then imagine them leading others to do the same! Wouldn’t that be amazing?

This simple method of discipleship was developed for you to do exactly that. It takes five key priorities of what it means to live for Christ — and uses the five fingers on your hand to help you remember them and teach them to others. It’s not rocket science—but it’s simple and powerful.

Each of the five lessons takes one of your fingers — and uses it to teach you an important truth about following Jesus. These five powerful truths will empower you to live for Christ in a healthy and growing way.

It’s so simple that a child can understand it! And, an adult can study the Bible with this method for years to come! Take any passage of Scripture and look for these five important priorities and see what you find. You’ll be really surprised to see these truths all over the Bible!

Think about all the people you will shake hands with in the next 24 hours. Let each handshake remind you that they too need this message of hope in Jesus. Pray for an opportunity to share Christ with them and to teach them the Five Finger Method of Discipleship!

“Act Now” buttons challenge you in each lesson to put action to what you’re learning. God wants us to know Him in deeper ways — and this always means some form of trusting and obedience as we grow closer to Him.

Every lesson ends with a key memory verse. Take these verses seriously and let them remind you of what you are learning and how to apply it to your life. Following Jesus does take effort and being intentional about our faith commitment. Memorizing Scripture will always help you stay on track and keep moving forward in your walk with Christ.
Five Finger Discipleship Lessons:

Index Finger (pointer finger): OBEDIENCE
God wants to be #1 in our lives. Jesus said that if we love him, we would obey his commandments (John 14:15). Therefore, in order to show God is #1 in our lives we will seek to follow His leading. One of the main ways we obey God is to share our faith in Christ with others (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). This means that obedience is how we mainly grow as Christians, not just knowledge.

Middle Finger (longest finger): AUTHORITY of SCRIPTURE
Just as the middle finger is taller than the others, there is an authority that is higher than any other for us — the authority of Scripture. We believe it is God’s Word to us and should be our guide for all matters in faith and practice. It is God-breathed which means that it is more than inspired and critical to our spiritual health as a Christian (2 Timothy 3:16). By it we will better connect with Christ, other believers, and know God’s will for our lives and the world we live in (see also Psalm 119:9, 11).

Ring Finger: LOVING CHRIST
All Christians together form the church — or the Bride of Christ. This means that Jesus deeply cares about us like a husband cares about his wife and family. Our relationship with God through Christ is one of love and faithfulness. As such, we need to spend quality time with God everyday in prayer and Bible study to grow and know Him better (John 15:1-5). The Bible also refers to us as the “body of Christ” — meaning that together we all represent Jesus to our community and world at large (1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12).

Pinky Finger: CONFESSION OF SIN
God wants us to live holy lives. But sin (doing wrong things) has a way of interrupting our fellowship with Him and with each other (Psalm 51:3). Therefore, we need to make sure that we keep a “short list” with God when it comes to sin. We should be quick to confess our sins and claim His forgiveness — so we can be all He made us to be for His glory. We have the promise that He stands ready to forgive our sins and restore us to a closer relationship with Him (1 John 1:9).

Thumb: SERVING OTHERS
Jesus said he came not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45). He also challenged us to look for ways to serve others in ways that bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16). We should always be looking for ways to serve others. The thumb works with any of the other fingers. Therefore, we can serve any kind of person around us in any kind of situation for the glory of God. Plus, with the thumb you can get busy using your hands to serve in practical ways! In all that we do, our goal is to share the love of Christ and to show the love of Christ.

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Five Finger Discipleship

Lesson One: **Obedience**

**Index Finger (pointer finger): OBEDIENCE**

God wants to be #1 in our lives. Jesus said that if we love him, we would obey his commandments (**John 14:15**). Therefore, in order to show God is #1 in our lives we will seek to follow His leading.

One of the main ways we obey God is to share our faith in Christ with others (**Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8**). This means that obedience is how we mainly grow as Christians, not just knowledge.

For this lesson, focus on three simple things:
1. **You have a story to tell others**
2. **God wants to work through you to introduce others to Christ**
3. **Following God everyday means obeying His call to live out your faith in practical ways**

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1. **YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL OTHERS**
   - Check out these Scripture passages about the new life you now have in Christ (John 3:3; John 5:24; and 2 Corinthians 5:17)
   - Notice how the apostle Paul shared his story with others: Acts 22:1-16; 24:10-21
     (Optional: Mark 5:1-20; John 9)
   - Tips on how to tell your story:
     - My life before Christ was like: ________________________________ (one minute)
     - I trusted in Christ as my Lord and Savior when: ____________ (one minute)_____________
     - The biggest change I have experienced in my life is: _____________ (one minute)

   **Act Now** Take a few minutes to practice telling your story. It should be short and sweet, but unique to you. Try to keep it under three minutes in total length — don’t get bogged down with details.

2. **GOD WANTS TO WORK THROUGH YOU TO INTRODUCE OTHERS TO CHRIST**
   - Check out these Bible verses about leading others to Christ (John 1:40-42; Matthew 28:18-20)
   - Notice in Acts 2:43-47 how God worked through normal people to bring others to Jesus
     (Optional: Acts 8:4; 11:21)

     **Act Now** Make a list of people you know who are ‘far from God’. **Select five people** that you can pray for daily for an opportunity to introduce them to Jesus. Keep in mind, sometimes God will bring you strangers to share your faith with too! **Write their names here:**
3. **FOLLOWING GOD MEANS OBEYING AND LIVING OUT YOUR FAITH IN PRACTICAL WAYS**

- What things in your life need to go or change? Read what these Christians gave up to follow Jesus (Acts 19:17-20)
- Check out how God wants to guide you every day: Psalm 25:9; Psalm 32:8 (Optional: Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 48:17; Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 6:33; John 16:13; James 1:5)

**act now**

What things do you need God’s guidance in? Take a few minutes now to pray to Him about them. Remember, pray is simply talking to God in honesty and humility.

**BAPTISM:**

- Baptism is a way to show the world that you are serious about following Jesus
- It’s one of the first things that Jesus expects us to do to express our new faith in him: Matthew 28:18-20 (Optional: Acts 2:41; 8:12; 8:36)
- Optional: How does baptism by being immersed in water signify your new relationship with Christ? Think about the ways it symbolizes the change you’ve experienced in your mind, heart, and life:
  - When you are baptized, it represents the “old you” being buried—and the “new you” rising up (see Romans 6:3-4)
  - When you are baptized, it is a picture of how Jesus has washed away your sins and made you clean in God’s eyes (Titus 3:5-6; 1 John 1:9)
  - When you are baptized, every part of you gets wet. In the same way, every part of your life now reflects Jesus: how you handle your job, your family and friends, your dating relationships, your finances, etc. (2 Corinthians 5:15-17)

**act now**

If you haven’t been baptized as a new follower of Jesus, consider doing it soon. If you were baptized as an infant, why not do it as an adult — now that you are making the choice and not someone for you?

**Memory Verse**

*Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)  
Rev. 06.2014
Middle Finger (longest finger): AUTHORITY of SCRIPTURE
Just as the middle finger is taller than the others, there is an authority that is higher than any other for us — the authority of Scripture. We believe it is God’s Word to us and should be our guide for all matters in faith and practice. It is God-breathed which means that it is more than inspired and critical to our spiritual health as a Christian (2 Timothy 3:16). By it we will better connect with Christ, other believers, and know God’s will for our lives and the world we live in (see also Psalm 119:9, 11).

For this lesson, focus on three simple things:
1. The Bible is a gift from God to you
2. God wants to speak to you through His Word, the Bible
3. The Bible should be our authority in all aspects of our life as we follow Christ

1. THE BIBLE IS A GIFT FROM GOD TO YOU
   Every potential truth about God and the world is subject to the authority of the Bible. It was written over a 1,500 year span by over forty authors in three languages. It records over 1,000 references to fulfilled prophecies and eye witness accounts of supernatural miracles in most of its 66 books. The Bible is regarded as the most reliable text of any piece of literature ever. It has been translated into other languages more than any other book. And for 2,000 years countless lives have been transformed by its message. The Bible is God’s special Word to us. He said perfectly what He wanted to say through imperfect people, and continues to speak to us today through these words.
   • Notice these Scriptures about the authority of the Bible: Psalm 19:1-7; Psalm 119:89-91; Psalm 119:160 (Optional: Luke 24:27, 44-45; John 5:39-40; Hebrews 4:12-13; and 2 Peter 1:20)
   • What do you believe about the Bible?

   Take a moment to thank God for the Bible and ask for His help in understanding it.

2. GOD WANTS TO SPEAK TO YOU THROUGH HIS WORD, THE BIBLE
   • Check out these Bible verses about God speaking to you through the Scriptures: Isaiah 30:21; Matthew 4:4; Romans 10:17; 1 John 1:3; Optional: Revelation 2-3

   In the Bible passages you have just studied, what is God saying to you? Get in the habit of always listening and expecting God to speak to you.
Here is a practical method for helping you to study the Bible: **S.O.S.**

**S** = What does this passage **SAY**?

**O** = What do I need to **OBEY**?

**S** = Who can I **SHARE** this with?

- **Optional:** Try this right now with 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Luke 10:38-42

### 3. THE BIBLE SHOULD BE OUR AUTHORITY IN ALL ASPECTS LIFE AS WE FOLLOW CHRIST

- Historically, there have been three different approaches to the Bible by people of faith — two are flawed and one is consistent:
  - **Flawed:** “The traditions of the established church define what the Bible means...” (Flawed because it exalts human tradition over Scripture; Example: Jesus said: “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!” Mark 7:9)
  - **Flawed:** “I determine what this passage means to me—regardless of its intended meaning and historical interpretation by Christians throughout the ages.” (Flawed because with this approach you can make the Bible say anything. Example: The commandment in the Old Testament that the Jews couldn’t wear cloth made from two different kinds of material (Leviticus 19:19) — the Christian is not required to live by this law anymore.)
  - **Right Approach:** “I will let the Bible speak, by first seeking to understand its original meaning for the original audience and then by asking the Holy Spirit to show me how to obey in my life today.” (Best approach because every passage was written with a specific meaning to a specific people in a specific situation. The Holy Spirit will then show you how to obey in your present situation too.)

- When in doubt, Scripture should always interpret Scripture. Since all Scripture comes from the one mind of God, it will not contradict itself nor violate His holy character. Therefore, seek to let the whole counsel of the Bible help you to grapple with some of its tougher parts.

Pick a book of the Bible to study. Perhaps the Gospel of Mark would be a good place to start. Read a chapter a day and apply your S.O.S. method to each section. Remember, it’s not how much you read the Bible, but how much it reads you that is important.

Remember the five people you are praying for in hopes of sharing your new faith in Christ? How have you had a chance to talk with them personally about your decision? Remember, God wants to use you to reach others — so keep praying for them every day and ask God for opportunities to share with them. And then watch! It is God’s heart to reach others through you — He will use you if you are willing!

*Memory Verse*

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God’s way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.*  
2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)
Ring Finger: LOVING CHRIST

All Christians together form the Church — or the Bride of Christ. This means that Jesus deeply cares about us like a husband cares about his wife and family. Our relationship with God through Christ is one of love and faithfulness. As such, we need to spend quality time with God everyday in prayer and Bible study to grow and know Him better (John 15:1-5). The Bible also refers to us as the “body of Christ” — meaning that together we all represent Jesus to our community and world at large (1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12).

For this lesson, focus on two simple things:
1. You were created for a love relationship with God
2. Everywhere people are trying to fill this need in their lives — and we’ve got the answer!

1. YOU WERE CREATED FOR A LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Everyone is unique — no two people are exactly alike. The Bible teaches us that we are all made in the ‘image of God’. This means that each of us has a divine handprint from God upon our souls that only He can fill. And it also means that God is never more than an arm’s distance away.

In the story of humanity, sin has always come between us and God. It has been like a wall that keeps Him away (see Isaiah 59:2). But through the gospel, Jesus came to die on a cross to bury the sin that always separates us from God (Optional: Romans 6). By rising from the dead he promises each of us a restored relationship with God for all who receive this by faith in him.

Check out these verses that speak about God’s love for you as His precious child: Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 8:31-39. Optional: Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:4-5; 1 Peter 5:6-7; 1 John 3:1; and 4:9-11

- How would you put in your own words how God loves you?
- How does this reality impact your self-esteem? How does it free you to be you?
- Think of all the things you worry about. How does God’s love for you give you peace?

Take a moment to thank God for His undying love for you as His precious son or daughter.
2. **EVERYWHERE PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO FILL THIS NEED IN THEIR LIVES — AND WE’VE GOT THE ANSWER!**

Because we are all made in the image of God, we have a divine handprint upon our souls that only God’s hand (presence) can fill. But people everywhere are trying to fill it with other things.

There’s a story in the Bible about a rich man who came to Jesus. He was very wealthy and had many things going for him. But notice how those things affected his ability to follow Christ (see this story in Mark 10:17-27).

- What things in your life are hindering you from following Christ more closely?
- Think about all the things you want. How will getting those things help you to follow Christ more closely? (It’s easy to get distracted by all the things around us, isn’t it?)
- **Optional:** Check out these verses about following Christ more closely: Luke 9:23-26; Philippians 3:7-11
- **Optional:** Read the story about Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11. How were they trying to fill the emptiness in their lives? In contrast, how did the old widow in Mark 12:41-44 fill her life? How can you be more like her?

If you are going to reach your world for Christ, you’ve got to live differently. It doesn’t mean that you don’t buy new things — it just means that you no longer live for those things. Take a few minutes in prayer to listen to what the Holy Spirit is telling you about your life. Is your love relationship with God the most important relationship in your life? How can you move in this direction?

**Challenge:** Jesus said that where your heart is, your treasure is too (Matthew 6:21). Try to live so that the biggest check you write every month is for the work of the Lord. How can you take steps towards really living this way?

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A young salesperson was disappointed about losing a big sale. He said to his manager, “I guess it just proves you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink.” The manager replied, “Son, take my advice: your job is not to make him drink. Your job is to make him thirsty.” May our lives be so filled with Christ that they create a thirst for him in the hearts of those around us.

Keep praying for the five people you are trying to share Christ with. Seek to live a life that will make them thirsty for Christ! Look for that one opportunity to share Christ with them. God will help you!

**Memory Verse**

"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful apart from me." **John 15:4** (NLT)
Five Finger Discipleship

Lesson Four: *Confession of Sin*

Pinky Finger: **CONFESSION OF SIN**

God wants us to live holy lives. But sin (doing wrong things) has a way of interrupting our fellowship with Him and with each other (Psalm 51:3). Therefore, we need to make sure that we keep a “short list” with God when it comes to sin. We should be quick to confess our sins and claim His forgiveness so we can be all He made us to be for His glory. We have the promise that He stands ready to forgive our sins and restore us to a closer relationship with Him (1 John 1:9).

For this lesson, focus on two simple things:

1. Sin is something we’re all guilty of — no exceptions!
2. When we confess our sins, we are free to have closer fellowship with God and each other.

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1. **SIN IS SOMETHING WE’RE ALL GUILTY OF — NO EXCEPTIONS!**

The word “sin” means “missing the mark” — kind of like aiming for a target and then missing completely. But the Bible says it is even worse than this — it is an inner state of rebellion against God and His holy ways. The bottom-line? We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners in need of God’s grace and forgiveness.

There are no such things as different levels of sin. In God’s holy eyes, one sin is just as bad as any other sin. Why? Because every sin marks a moment in time and eternity in which God and His ways were in some way rejected by His creation. Therefore, that little ‘white lie’ you told this morning is still something that strikes at the heart of God.

**Optional:** Consider the following passages that talk about our sinfulness: 1 Kings 8:46; Romans 1:18-3:23; Romans 7:18; and 1 John 1:8-10. In light of these passages, do you think differently about your own sin?

Listen to how Jesus described the state of the human heart: “And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”” *Mark 7:20-23*

- God takes sin so seriously that He sent Jesus to die as the perfect sacrifice for it. How does that affect your view of sin? In God’s eyes, can there be true love without true justice?
- Can you see that the root cause of every social problem is sin in the hearts of people?
2. **WHEN WE CONFESS OUR SINS, WE ARE FREE TO HAVE CLOSER FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH EACH OTHER.**

Consider this story: A husband and wife have a big argument. Throughout the day they are both upset, but by the end of the day they decide their relationship is more important than the disagreement. So what do they do? They apologize to each other — and the relationship can now heal. But what if they had just gone on with life and ignored the hurt? Eventually it would eat away at their trust and intimacy with one another. Their relationship and marriage would begin to slowly die.

God loves us too much to let our relationship with Him die. That’s why He has provided a quick and sincere way for us to experience His forgiveness: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

- Notice: You just need to go to your Heavenly Father in true sincerity — and He promises to forgive you and to cleanse you

**Optional Study:** When Jesus’ disciples asked him how to pray, Jesus taught them these words that we call the “Lord’s Prayer”. Notice how forgiveness works in this prayer: God stands willing to forgive us — but we must stand willing to forgive others too.

**The Lord’s Prayer:** “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

Then Jesus immediately says: “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6:9-14)

**Pause and ask yourself the following:**
- Do you need God’s forgiveness about a specific sin?
- How many times do you need to ask God to forgive you about that particular one?
- Do you need to forgive someone who has hurt you? Or, have you offended someone?
- Helpful tip: Ask, “Did I offend you when I ...”
- Forgiving others doesn’t mean we just let other people walk all over us. But it means that in your heart you are not holding a grudge or becoming bitter towards them.

Remember your focus five? How are you doing in sharing Jesus with them? Don’t make it more complicated than it should be. If you’re having a bit of trouble, simply ask them how you can pray for them, and then see if that turns into a special conversation in which you can share your faith in Christ.

**Memory Verse**

*If we saw we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.* 1 John 1:9 (NLT)
Five Finger Discipleship
Lesson Five: *Serving Others*

**Thumb: SERVING OTHERS**

Jesus said he came not to be served, but to serve *(Mark 10:45)*. He also challenges us to look for ways to serve others in ways that bring glory to God *(Matthew 5:16)*. We should always be looking for ways to serve others. The thumb works with any of the other fingers. Therefore, we can serve any kind of person around us in any kind of situation for the glory of God. Plus, with the thumb you can get busy using your hands to serve in practical ways! In all that we do, our goal is to *share* the love of Christ and to *show* the love of Christ.

For this lesson, focus on two simple things:

1. Jesus was the perfect servant
2. In serving others, we can point them to Christ

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1. **JESUS WAS THE PERFECT SERVANT**

Jesus came from a perfect state in Heaven to our sinful world in order to obey the Father. God sent Jesus, His Son, to live a perfect life of mission and sacrifice in order to rescue us. Over and over again, Jesus modeled a life of serving others and putting their needs ahead of his own. He even washed the feet of his disciples when he was having his last meal before his eventual crucifixion.

Listen to the following passages talk about Jesus as the perfect servant of God: Isaiah 53:11; Matthew 8:16-17. *(Optional: Matthew 12:18; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; Acts 4:30; Philippians 2:3-4, 5-11.)*

Pause right now to consider this incredible truth. Jesus is God who came as a real human being into the world. And he came as a servant — with the same heart of his Heavenly Father. This means that God delights in serving — and He’s God! Do you delight in serving? Take a moment to pray and ask God to make you more like Jesus—a servant to others.

2. **IN SERVING OTHERS, WE CAN POINT THEM TO CHRIST**

Read John 13:1-20. Notice how Jesus modeled for us what true servanthood looks like (back in Bible days, usually only the lowest servant would wash the feet of others). How can you put this into practice today?

*Optional:* In Mark 10:35-45 he challenges us to be first by becoming a servant to those around us. This is counter-intuitive to the way the world works. In the world, you’ve got to scratch and claw to get ahead. But in God’s kingdom, we are promoted by looking for ways to serve others in the name of Jesus.
In Luke 14:7-11 Jesus teaches us to be humble and let God promote us. The apostle Peter said “Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God” (1 Peter 2:16).

Let’s take a moment to see the difference between serving others with selfish motives instead of serving them for the sake of representing Jesus:

- **Selfish Service** = “Look at what I did!”
- **Christ-centered Service** = “I’m glad to do it, even if no one else seemed to notice.”

- **Selfish Service** = “What’s in it for me?”
- **Christ-centered Service** = “If it costs me, I’m reminded of how much Jesus sacrificed for me…”

- **Selfish Service** = “I’m doing this because it makes me feel important.”
- **Christ-centered Service** = “I’m doing this because I am obeying God—regardless of how I feel.”

In what ways can you have more of a servant’s heart toward others? What about in traffic? In the line at the grocery store? On the job with your coworkers? With your family and friends? Pause to pray and ask God to help you be more of a servant like Jesus, and start pointing others to Christ by your example. Remember, we want to **share** the love of Christ (introduce him to others) and **show** the love of Christ (by being a servant).

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How are you doing with your focus five? Have you had a chance to share your faith with them? If not, try this for a tip: Think of something amazing that you can do for each of them. Something totally unique for each person that will show them how much you care about them.

Don’t try to label it as a “Jesus thing” — just let it speak for itself and let the Holy Spirit use it for His glory. Pray that it will turn into a conversation about Jesus — but it’s OK if it doesn’t.

Again, you’re serving them because it is more like Jesus — and if God is the only One who sees that truth, then that’s enough. Just keep praying for them to see Jesus in you — and for an opportunity to share the gospel.

*(Jesus said): For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.  **Mark 10:45** (NLT)*