

KNOW GROWTH

A Guide for Leaders to Identify and Cultivate Students' Spiritual Growth



LeaderTrekks



Making Disciples...Developing Leaders

Know Growth: A guide for leaders to identify and cultivate students' spiritual growth

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 *A deeper look at each of the 8 discipleship roots, including key Bible passages to study and focused mentoring questions.

KNOW GROWTH

A guide for leaders to identify and cultivate students' spiritual growth.

Why use Know Growth? This book is a tool designed to help you get the most out of relationships with students. So often we think that if we just spend time with a student, we are doing the work of the Lord. Relationship building is important, but it must have a goal. Are you willing to settle for friendship? Or is your goal to lead students into a deeper walk with Jesus? By default students who are rooted disciples of Christ positively influence other students. The goal of this journal is to help you develop strong relationships with students who will make disciples and influence others.

This type of intentional relationship starts with dreaming about the greatest things God will do in your students' lives. Often we in ministry limit God because we forget that he wants to do incredible things through our students. We get caught in the lie that he only wants students not to smoke, drink, or get bad grades. In reality God stands ready to do great things in and through each of his children. This journal will get you thinking about how God is using your students now, and how you can help prepare them for future service. This means helping your students learn to follow him and discover that he has a mission for their lives.

This book is divided into three sections: Student Profile Pages, Discipleship Maps, and Individual Growth Plans.

Who is this for? Are you a small group leader, coach, youth volunteer, or mentor? Are you influencing and investing in students' spiritual growth? Then this book is for you.

When do I use this? This book is best used as a bookend to your time with students—not in a time-consuming, need-to-study kind of way; but in a short-glance-before-meeting-with-a-student way. It will help you focus your time so you'll know where you can whisper support and what challenging questions you can ask. The same is true *after* you spend time with students. Then you can track the growth you see in their lives and pray intentionally for them.

In this book, you'll track students' progression, identifying the fruits of a disciple and discovering challenge areas as well as areas in need of encouragement.

How To Use This Book:

This book comes with space for you to encourage and cultivate 10 students on their discipleship journeys. Each student has a *Profile Page*, a *Growth Plan*, and a *Discipleship Map*. As your relationships grow, so do the goals, prayers, and challenges you set for students in the following pages. These pages will morph to accomodate the changes in each student's spiritual journey. And last but not least, mentoring questions, deeper descriptions, and additional Bible passages are included in the back of this book.

STEP 1: STUDENT PROFILE PAGES

The students in whom you are investing are uniquely designed by a very creative God, as I'm sure you've figured out. No two are the same, no matter how many stereotypes they fit into. The profile pages are designed to grow in sync with the depth of the relationship you are building with each student. You'll probably fill out the baseline questions about who they are and the activities they are involved in pretty easily. But deeper questions about their families, passions, burdens, and spiritual gifts might take some time to discover. As you think about these things, your ability to pray for, encourage, and walk the road with each student will be enhanced. The trust and intentionality this knowledge brings will give you an opportunity to grow these students into deeply rooted disciples of Christ. So as your relationships grow, keep referring back to each student's profile page and use this knowledge to guide your words, challenges, activities, and prayers on this road.

SAMPLE

Name:	
Family life:	
Activities:	
Passionate about:	
Inspired by:	
Influenced by:	
Testimony:	
Spends free time:	

SAMPLE

STEP 2: GROWTH PLAN

God is working in and through our students. They are in families, on teams, in peer groups, and at schools. God is doing something in their hearts through their circumstances. Unfortunately, God’s work often goes unseen or unrecognized. This happens because students get stuck in the minutia of their own lives, and they may not have someone to point it out and whisper in their ear:

“I see God working in you,” or “I see God working through you.”

The *Growth Plan* page is for you to take note of the things that God is doing. It’s divided into different areas of the student’s life so you can write down what God is doing *in* and *through* them. As your relationship grows, this page will become more full. If there’s an area on this page that you know nothing about, take it as a challenge to get to know your student better. Go to a game or play they are in, ask questions about their family, serve with them at a church event. This will not only help you see more of God’s movement in their lives, but it will also help you to challenge them on consistency. One of the biggest struggles for students is being the same person regardless of the place and circumstances. There are many students who know exactly what to say and how to act at church, but they become completely different people at school or work. So get to know your students in a variety of ways and places, and your impact will be much greater.

SAMPLE		
	How is God working IN this student?	How is God working THROUGH this student?
Family		
Peers		
Spiritual Gifts & Ministry		
Leadership		

SAMPLE

Growth and Goals: *consider these questions for your student*

How can I encourage the work God is doing IN and THROUGH this student?

How can I challenge this student to grow?

What personal conversation do I need to have with this student?

What short term and long term goals do I have for this student?

What should you do with the info in the *Growth Plan* journal? Well, start by telling the student what you see. In fact, even if you just did that, you would be miles beyond the investment that most people have made in their lives. Students are used to hearing generic encouragement and challenges, but if you were to actually finish the sentences, “I see God working in you in *this way*...” and “I see God working through you in *this way*...” it would be a powerful moment. Luke 10:27 says, “*He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind (what’s happening in you); and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’*” (what’s happening *through* you). Imagine if someone sat across from you at a coffee shop and answered these questions for your own life. It builds confidence, inspires, and helps students get comfortable in their unique identities and wiring. From there, tell students where you see their growth potential and whisper some challenges in their ear to live out the same love and grace with their little brother as they do their peers. Use this info to set goals for your student and to cast vision for them about how God could be training them for some future kingdom work and where you could see them a year from now. Challenge them to be faithful, courageous, and consistent

As your student grows, this page will morph. New goals will replace challenges that have been achieved. And your prayers will become more specific and intentional.

STEP 3: DISCIPLESHIP MAPS

The reality is heartbreaking. Students once involved in churches and youth groups are walking away from their faith *en masse*. Dozens of books have been written documenting the extensive studies about this phenomenon. Unfortunately, each new statistic reinforces the sad truth. Our students are leaving. Once they hit college, many desert the religion of their youth and uproot their faith. Like seeds planted in rocky soil, they look healthy as they sprout up, but their lifespan is short. They wither away and fall to the wayside because they weren't rooted deep in the soil.

While no one but the Holy Spirit can transform the heart of a student, we are responsible for reflecting, uncovering, and resembling the truth that saves lives and makes disciples. We offer nudges, whispers, and embraces along the way.

The problem is that we all make assumptions when we disciple students, especially when they have been in the church for a long time, or have grown up in a Christian home. It's easy to assume these students understand the weight of sin (after all, they've memorized the verses) and their need for a Savior. But have we seen repentance or confession as a part of their lives? We may assume they have embraced the gospel, but have we ever seen them stand for their faith, defend it, or explain it beyond a "God loves you" line?

Hopefully the answer is yes, but in many cases that's not true. In discipleship mapping, you'll look at eight core roots of discipleship and identify which roots your students have shown a deep connection with, and on which ones their grip is looser. You won't do this by making sure the topics have been covered in their small group or Sunday School. You'll do this by watching for traces of depth that come out of someone who deeply embraces the truth.

For example, the natural reaction of someone who deeply understands the truth about God's character is a growing awe and a declining pride. If we see these signs in a student, we can tell which areas of their faith are deeply rooted and which areas need a little more care.

Insight into the depth of a student's faith roots will change the questions you ask them, the truth you speak into their lives, and the challenges you offer them. It can bring a new level of intentionality to your limited time with them and help them become rooted followers of Christ.

****The appendix of this book has additional information, questions to ask, resources to use, and further explanation of each discipleship root.**

WARNING: Discipleship mapping is not black and white. Ultimately, only God knows the heart of a student, only he can measure faith. This tool is designed to give you clues and signifiers that allow you to dive intentionally into a student's life; to ask questions that lead to growth and to offer road signs that help guide students toward Christ. In the same way that church participation in small groups can be a sign of church health, it is not a measurement of faith. Only God holds that measuring stick. Discipleship mapping simply looks for signs and clues that give us a direction to take our students.



Student Name

[]

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus
as Lord, **continue to live your lives in him,**
ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM, strengthened in
the faith as you were taught, and overflowing
with thankfulness. **Colossians 2:6–7**

DISCIPLESHIP MAP

1. Check the boxes of words or phrases in both columns that represent or describe your student. If you are unsure or don't know this student in a particular area, then feel free to leave the box empty.
2. When you are finished, look at which of the eight areas (Rescue, Identity, and so on) show a lot of depth—many items checked on the left side and few on the right. Consider how you can encourage or support this student in those areas (an encouragement note, text, or even pointing them to an opportunity where they could continue to grow deeper).
3. Next, decipher which of the eight areas is a struggle for your student, where the warning signs are greatly mounted against the traces of depth. Consider how you might challenge and come alongside your student. A great place to start is with prayer (check out the prayer page for each student) and by adding step-by-step goals or challenges to the Growth Plan (page 18).



RESCUE: Students who are deeply rooted in their story of being rescued by Christ (salvation and redemption) often show these traces of depth. Students who might not completely grasp this part of discipleship show these warning signs. Check the boxes of words or phrases in both columns that reflect your student's lifestyle.

*For a more complete definition of "Rescue," Scripture verses, as well as some questions to guide a student in their discipleship journey related to this area (and all eight discipleship areas), check out the appendix on page 116.

TRACES OF DEPTH	WARNING SIGNS
<input type="checkbox"/> passion for evangelism <input type="checkbox"/> thankfulness <input type="checkbox"/> sacrifices for God and/or others <input type="checkbox"/> uncompromising <input type="checkbox"/> lifestyle consistency in all places and circumstances <input type="checkbox"/> confession of sin and need for grace <input type="checkbox"/> offering forgiveness <input type="checkbox"/> showing grace to others and self <input type="checkbox"/> a realized need for a Savior <input type="checkbox"/> understands consequences of sin	<input type="checkbox"/> works-based faith <input type="checkbox"/> tries to earn God's love <input type="checkbox"/> points fingers <input type="checkbox"/> holds others guilty and shame <input type="checkbox"/> holds grudges <input type="checkbox"/> keeps score <input type="checkbox"/> excuses <input type="checkbox"/> acts entitled <input type="checkbox"/> blames others often <input type="checkbox"/> takes God's grace for granted

KNOWLEDGE: Students who are deeply rooted in the truth about who God is and their pursuit of knowing him often show these traces of depth. Students who might hold a false sense of God, or haven't pursued knowing God may display these warning signs. (Go deeper on page 118.)

TRACES OF DEPTH	WARNING SIGNS
<input type="checkbox"/> a growing awe <input type="checkbox"/> healthy fear of God <input type="checkbox"/> value for God's Word <input type="checkbox"/> knows the name of the Bible <input type="checkbox"/> humility/surrender/obedience <input type="checkbox"/> growing love/desire to know him <input type="checkbox"/> worship <input type="checkbox"/> God is a part of decisions <input type="checkbox"/> relationship with God exists beyond the church walls <input type="checkbox"/> reflects wisdom	<input type="checkbox"/> growing pride <input type="checkbox"/> acknowledges more than one God <input type="checkbox"/> lies from God <input type="checkbox"/> selfishness <input type="checkbox"/> no love for God's word <input type="checkbox"/> apathy <input type="checkbox"/> seeks beyond God <input type="checkbox"/> anger at God <input type="checkbox"/> expects God to have no involvement <input type="checkbox"/> makes him/herself God of their life

APPENDIX

RESCUE:

What is it? We are slaves, held captive by terrible enemies: sin and death. In this fallen, corrupt, and shattered world, we need a rescuer—Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer. In fact, he's the only one who can save us from this mess that started way back with Adam and Eve. He gave his followers freedom from sin and its effects when he took them on at the cross. This freedom comes at a great cost, but it gives us a new life and reconnects us with God forever. And once we've been freed, we have the opportunity to join in the rescue mission for others.

Questions To Go Deeper: *Use these as mentoring or small group questions, or even just as a way to get to know where your student is in this area.*

- What does it mean to be saved?
- What does it mean to be a child of God?
- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus?
- What difference does Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection make in your life?
- If you were explaining to a friend how to follow Christ and be his disciple, what would you say?

Key verses and passages regarding salvation:

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12–13).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16–17).

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10).

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved” (Rom. 10:9–10).

Go deeper by studying:

- * John 3:16–21—Jesus explains salvation to Nicodemus
- * Romans 6—(It might be helpful to split this into two studies.)
- * Romans 10:1–13—The process of salvation
- * Matthew 19:18–26—The wealthy man and the commandments
- * Matthew 13:1–23—Parable of the Sower

NOTES:

WHO IS KNOW GROWTH FOR? Are you a small group leader, coach, youth volunteer, or mentor? Are you influencing and investing in students' spiritual growth? If so, then this book is for you.

WHAT IS IT? *Know Growth* is a tool to help you develop the kind of relationships that will grow students into disciples who will influence others. In this book, you'll track the growth you see in their lives, identify the fruit they're producing, and discover areas to challenge and encourage each student.

No one but the Holy Spirit can transform the heart of a student, but as leaders we are responsible for reflecting, uncovering, and resembling the truth that saves lives and makes disciples. We offer nudges, whispers, and embraces along the way.

This book comes with space for you to encourage and cultivate 10 students on their discipleship journeys. For each student, you will find a *Profile Page*, a *Growth Plan*, and a *Discipleship Map*.

Profile Page: Designed to grow in sync with the depth of the relationship you are building with each student.

Growth Plan: A place to note the things God is doing, identifying his movement in and through a student's life.

Discipleship Map: An innovative tool to help you observe eight core roots of discipleship in your students. By watching for traces of depth and warning signs, you'll identify which roots each student has deeply connected with.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- 10 sets (enough to disciple 10 students) of:
 - Profile Pages*
 - Growth Plans*
 - Discipleship Maps*
- Mentoring questions for each discipleship root
- Prayer pages
- Definitions and Scripture for each discipleship root
- Bible passages to Go Deeper

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